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TRUMP impeached again

US politicians charge president with inciting deadly riots at the US Capitol; his ouster unlikely in Senate trial

AGENCIES

A bipartisan majority of lawmakers in the House of Representatives yesterday voted to impeach Donald Trump seven days from the end of his term, assuring he becomes the first US president to be impeached twice.

With nearly all votes counted, the number supporting impeachment on the single charge of "incitement of insurrection" for Trump's role in whipping up a violent mob surpassed 217, the majority threshold out of 433 current House members. At least 10 Republicans joined the Democrats.

But it appeared unlikely that the extraordinarily swift impeachment would lead to Trump's ouster before the Republican president's four-year term ends and Democratic President-elect Joe Biden is inaugurated on Jan 20. The Senate's Republican majority leader, Mitch McConnell, rejected Democratic calls to convene the Senate in emergency session to begin an immediate impeachment trial,



according to a spokesman.

The House voted on a single article of impeachment - a formal charge - accusing Trump of "incitement of insurrection," focused upon an incendiary speech he delivered to thousands of supporters shortly before the pro-Trump mob rampaged through the Capitol. The mob disrupted the formal certification of Biden's victory over Trump in the Nov. 3 election, sent lawmakers into hiding and left five people dead, including a police officer.

During his speech, Trump repeated false claims that the election was fraudulent and exhorted supporters to march on the Capitol.

Yesterday, before the vote, Trump broke his silence from the White House only to issue a brief statement insisting on his opposition to violence.

"In light of reports of more demonstrations, I urge that there must be no violence, no lawbreaking and no vandalism of any kind. That is not what I stand for," he said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



The Sadapathar area, a major tourist attraction in Companyganj, Sylhet, is almost empty even at this time of the year. People who make a living selling goods and services to tourists are passing difficult times although the coronavirus restrictions have been lifted there.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

3 VACCINE CANDIDATES

Govt mulls allowing human trial

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government may allow human trial of three vaccine candidates in the country to enhance the possibility of getting more Covid vaccines, say officials.

Health Secretary Abdul Mannan told The Daily Star yesterday that allowing clinical trial of vaccine candidates is part of the government's initiatives to find more sources of vaccines.

"If any vaccine producer gives us detailed [research] data, we will make decisions based on that...," he noted.

Now three foreign companies are moving ahead with their plans to run last-stage human trial of their vaccine candidates in Bangladesh. They are India's Bharat Biotech, and China's Anhui Zhifei Longcom Biologic Pharmacy and the Institute of Medical Biology Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences.

Besides, Bangladeshi company Globe Biotech Ltd will submit to Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Confusion reigns over vaccine price

Govt, Beximco restate Bangladesh will get the Covid-19 jabs at the same price as in India

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and WASIM BIN HABIB

As confusion continues over the price of Oxford-AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine, the government and the Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd have reiterated that Bangladesh will get the vaccine at the same price India is paying.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque said there was no scope for deviating from the tripartite agreement signed between the government, the Serum Institute of India (SII) and its local partner Beximco.

Beximco Pharmaceuticals Managing Director Nazmul Hassan Papon said Bangladesh would not pay a single cent more than India for the shots branded Covishield.

"Many countries, not one or two, will produce vaccines. If one country charges more, we will try to go for another country. We have that option."

AHM MUSTAFA KAMAL FINANCE MINISTER

They made the comments while talking to The Daily Star after Reuters ran a report on Monday that SII would sell the AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine to Bangladesh at \$4 a dose, "about 47 percent more than India will pay for its inoculation campaign".

The same day, the Indian

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

US military leaders issue rare warning

REUTERS, Washington

The US military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, the uniformed leaders of the military branches, on Tuesday put out a rare message to service members saying the violent riots last week were an assault on America's constitutional process and against the law.

The joint message broke nearly a week of silence by the military leaders after the assault on the Capitol by supporters of President Donald Trump sent lawmakers into hiding and left five people dead.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Govt's withdrawal of case filed by ACC HC calls it 'naked interference'

Govt cannot even recommend withdrawal of graft cases, observes the top court

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government attempt to get a corruption case withdrawn in Sylhet is a "naked interference" into the affairs of the Anti-Corruption Commission, observed the High Court.

The government can neither withdraw nor recommend the withdrawal of any corruption cases filed and moved by the ACC.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman in the full text of the verdict on a revision petition filed by the ACC on the issue said the law does not allow the government to do so.

However, the bench said the government could make requests to the ACC on such matters but it was up to the independent body whether to entertain them.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



As stated in the signboard, left, the High Court strictly prohibits parking inside New Market in the capital. But the drivers who left the vehicles, presumably of government officials, on the premises right in front of the stores clearly don't care much about the rules, let alone the shoppers and pedestrians. One of the vehicles does not even have the BRTA standard issue number plate as well. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

গনমাধ্যমে প্রকাশিত সংবাদ প্রসঙ্গে উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের ব্যাখ্যা

শেয়ারহোল্ডার, আমানতকারী, ঋণ প্রদানকারী, ঋণ গ্রহণকারী, নিয়ন্ত্রক সংস্থা সহ সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানাচ্ছি যে, "উত্তরা ফিন্যান্স এন্ড ইনভেস্টমেন্টস লিমিটেড" পাবলিক লিমিটেড কোম্পানী হিসেবে রেজিস্ট্রেশন ও বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের লাইসেন্স প্রাপ্ত হয়ে ১৯৯৫ইং সাল হতে দীর্ঘ ২৫ বছর যাবৎ স্টক, সুচারু ও সুনামের সহিত আর্থিক কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করে আসছে। উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের পরিচালকগণ অত্যন্ত সং, নিষ্ঠাবান ও সেরা উদ্যোক্তা হিসেবে বাংলাদেশে সুপরিচিত। উদ্যোক্তাগণের ক্রিন ইমেজের কারণে ও ম্যানেজমেন্টের সত্যতা ও দক্ষতার জন্য এই ফাইন্যান্স কোম্পানীটি বিনিয়োগকারী ও ঋণ গ্রহীতাদের নিকট দারুন আস্থা অর্জন করেছে। বর্তমানে এই কোম্পানীর শেয়ার মূল্য ৪৭.৯০ টাকা, যার অভিহিত মূল্য ১০ টাকা। উল্লেখ্য যে, বর্তমান করোনাকালীন দুর্ঘোষণেও এই কোম্পানী শেয়ার হোল্ডারদের ১৫% নগদ ও ৫% স্টক লভ্যাংশ প্রদান করেন। বাংলাদেশে ৩৬টি লিজিং কোম্পানী তাদের কর্মকর্তা পরিচালনা করে আসছে। তারমধ্যে দায়-দেনা ও সম্পদ, বিনিয়োগকৃত অর্থ, ডিপোজিট, ঋণ আদায় ও ব্যবস্থাপনা দক্ষতা সহ সামগ্রিক বিচারে আমরা শেয়ার বাজারে "A" ক্যাটাগরীতে অবস্থান করছি। সর্বশেষ ক্রেডিট রেটিং অনুযায়ী উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের অর্জন AA+। উল্লেখ্য আমরা ২০১৫-২০১৮ পর্যন্ত পরপর ৪বার অ-ব্যাংকিং আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান খাতে সর্বোচ্চ করদাতা হিসেবে "জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড" কর্তৃক পুরস্কৃত হয়েছি।

গত চার দিন যাবৎ বিভিন্ন গনমাধ্যমে উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের কার্যক্রমের উপর বেশ কিছু বিষয়ে প্রতিবেদন প্রকাশ করেছে, যা অত্যন্ত দুঃখজনক।

উল্লেখ্য যে, ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০১৯ইং বার্ষিক প্রতিবেদনের উপর বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের বিশেষ পরিদর্শন দল কোম্পানীর উপর পরিদর্শন শেষে পত্র মারফত কিছু বিষয়ের ব্যাখ্যা চান। তারই প্রেক্ষিতে আমরা গত ১৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০ইং এবং ০৫ জানুয়ারী ২০২১ইং তারিখে আমাদের প্রতিউত্তর দালিলিক প্রমানাদি সহ বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকে প্রেরণ করেছি।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক আমাদের নিয়ন্ত্রক সংস্থা বিধায় তাদের নির্দেশনা আমরা এখনো না পাওয়ায় গনমাধ্যমে প্রকাশিত বিষয়ে আমাদের পক্ষে কোন ধরনের মন্তব্য দেয়া আপাতত সম্ভব নয়। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক হতে প্রতিবেদন পাওয়ার পর বিষয়টি আপনাদের সম্মুখে উপস্থাপন করতে পারব বলে আশাবাদ ব্যক্ত করছি।

উপরোক্ত বিষয়ের আলোকে "আমি তথা উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের চেয়ারম্যান" সকল গনমাধ্যমকে বিনীতভাবে অনুরোধ করছি এ ধরনের বক্তব্য প্রকাশ না করার জন্য। কেননা এ ধরনের বক্তব্য এই আর্থিক খাতকে অনাহুত বিপদের দিকে ঠেলে দিবে এবং জনগণের আস্থা সম্পূর্ণরূপে ব্যাহত করবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, এখন পর্যন্ত দীর্ঘ ২৫ বছর ব্যবসা পরিচালনাকালীন সময়ে কোন গ্রাহক তথা "আমানতকারী, ঋণ প্রদানকারী, ঋণ গ্রহীতা, পাওনাদার ও অন্যান্য সকলের" আমাদের প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে লেনদেনে কোন ধরনের ব্যাঘাত ঘটেনি এবং ভবিষ্যতেও এ ধারা অব্যাহত রাখতে আমরা বদ্ধপরিকর।

আমরা দৃঢ়চিত্তে আমাদের বিনিয়োগকারী ও শেয়ার হোল্ডারগণকে আশ্বস্ত করতে চাই তাদের বিনিয়োগকৃত অর্থ সম্পূর্ণ নিরাপদ এবং তাদের প্রত্যাশা অনুযায়ী লভ্যাংশ প্রাপ্তিও নিশ্চিত।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সার্বিক তত্ত্বাবধানে এই কোম্পানীটি দীর্ঘ ২৫ বছর যাবৎ আমানতকারী ও ঋণগ্রহীতাদের আস্থা অর্জন করে আসছে। ভবিষ্যতেও বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সকল রীতিনীতি মেনে এই প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিচালিত হবে বলে আপনাদের আশ্বস্ত করছি।

গনমাধ্যমে যে সকল কথা বলা হয়েছে তার ফলশ্রুতিতে আমাদের কোন সম্মানীত গ্রাহক বা আমানতকারী আর্থিক ভাবে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত হবেননা মর্মে আমরা পরিচালক ও উদ্যোক্তাগণ সকলকে শতভাগ আশ্বস্ত করছি। আপনাদের এবং আমাদের প্রতিষ্ঠান সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের যে কোন পরামর্শ সন্মানে গৃহীত হবে।

পরিশেষে উত্তরা ফিন্যান্সের পক্ষ থেকে সম্মানীত আমানতকারী, ঋণ প্রদানকারী ও ঋণগ্রহীতাদের নিঃশঙ্কায় আমাদের উপর সম্পূর্ণ আস্থা রেখে পূর্বের ন্যায় যাবতীয় লেনদেন অব্যাহত রাখতে সনির্বন্ধ অনুরোধ করছি।

ধন্যবাদান্তে

কোম্পানীর পক্ষে

রশীদুল হাসান

চেয়ারম্যান



BANGLADESH UPDATE



890
New cases in 24hrs



5,24,910
Total cases



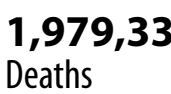
7,833
Deaths



4,69,522
Recoveries



1,979,334
Deaths



92,441,754
Total cases

BGB stops BSF move to build border fence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) has stopped installation of a barbed wire fence along the zero line of the Fultala-Batulji border in Moulvibazar's Juri upazila following objections of Border Guard Bangladesh.

Lt Col Gazi Shahidullah, commanding officer of BGB 52 Battalion, yesterday over the phone said BSF started setting up a barbed wire fence 150 yards from the zero line on Sunday.

He claimed that the BSF did not follow the international rule that no fence could be installed within 150 yards of the zero line. This created tension between the two sides, he said.

Later in the day, the BSF stopped installation of the fence after a flag meeting between BGB and BSF.

The situation at the border is calm, the BGB official added.

Masuk Mia, chairman of Fultala union parishad, said the BGB and the BSF intensified patrolling along the border.

Pompeo's remarks irresponsible

Foreign ministry says refuting claim Al-Qaeda carried out attacks in Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has termed Washington's remarks linking terrorist group Al-Qaeda with Bangladesh irresponsible and unfounded.

In a statement on January 12 on the US state department's website, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, "Imagine too the potential to completely upend fragile places with an established Al-Qaeda presence like Libya, Yemen, and the Maghreb, or increase turmoil in places like Bangladesh, where Al-Qaeda cells have carried out attacks."

In response, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement yesterday strongly rejecting Pompeo's comments as "irresponsible." There is no evidence

of any presence of Al-Qaeda in Bangladesh, it said.

"Such irresponsible comments by a senior leader is very unfortunate and unacceptable," the foreign ministry said.

Bangladesh, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, maintains a "Zero Tolerance" policy against all forms of terrorism and violent extremism, and has been undertaking all possible measures and actions to address the menace, it said.

"If any such claim could be substantiated with evidence, the government of Bangladesh would be happy to take necessary measures against such activities."

Trump impeached again

FROM PAGE 1

"I call on all Americans to help ease tensions and calm tempers. Thank You."

With a large presence of rifle-carrying National Guard troops inside and outside the Capitol, an emotional debate unfolded in the same House chamber where lawmakers crouched under chairs and donned gas masks on Jan. 6 as rioters clashed with police officers outside the doors.

"The president of the United States incited this insurrection, this armed rebellion against our common country," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, said on the House floor. "He must go. He is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love."

Democratic congressman Julian Castro, a former presidential candidate, called Trump "the most dangerous man to ever occupy the Oval Office." Congresswoman Maxine Waters accused Trump of wanting civil war and fellow Democrat Jim McGovern said the president "instigated an attempted coup."

No US president ever has been removed from office through impeachment. Three - Trump in 2019, Bill Clinton in 1998 and Andrew Johnson in 1868 - were impeached by the House but acquitted by the Senate.

Some Republicans argued that the impeachment drive was a rush to judgment that bypassed the customary deliberative process such as hearings and called on Democrats to abandon the effort for the sake of national unity and healing.

"Impeaching the president in such a short time frame would be a mistake," said Kevin McCarthy, the House's top Republican, before the vote. "That doesn't mean the president is free from fault. The president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters."

Trump's closest allies, such as Ohio Republican Jim Jordan, went further, accusing Democrats of recklessly acting out of pure political interest.

"This is about getting the president

of the United States," said Jordan, who received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from Trump in a private White House ceremony this week. "It's always been about getting the president, no matter what. It's an obsession."

A handful of Republicans backed impeachment, including Liz Cheney, the No. 3 House Republican.

"I am not choosing a side, I'm choosing truth," Republican Jamie Herrera Beutler said in announcing her support for impeachment, drawing applause from Democrats. "It's the only way to defeat fear."

In a break from standard procedure, Republican House leaders refrained from urging their members to vote against impeachment, calling the vote a matter of individual conscience.

Under the US Constitution, impeachment in the House triggers a trial in the Senate. A two-thirds majority would be needed to convict and remove Trump, meaning at least 17 Republicans in the 100-member chamber would have to join the Democrats.

McCormack said no trial could begin until the Senate was scheduled to be back in regular session on Jan. 19, one day before Biden's inauguration. The trial would proceed in the Senate even after Trump leaves office. A source said earlier yesterday that the Republican Senate leadership had discussed whether to initiate a trial as early as Friday.

McCormack said in a memo to his fellow Republicans he has not made a final decision on how he will vote on impeachment in the Senate.

No Republican senators have said they would vote to convict. Two have called on Trump to resign.

The FBI has warned of armed protests planned for Washington and all 50 U.S. state capitals ahead of Biden's inauguration. Trump on Wednesday urged his followers to remain peaceful, saying in a statement, "I urge that there must be NO violence, NO lawbreaking and NO vandalism of any kind. That is not what I stand for, and it is not what America stands for."

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"Thus, it is patent that the government has nothing to do in respect of withdrawal of a case filed under the Act of 2004 or the Act of 1958. Be that as it may, if the government wants to withdraw a case pending before the Court of Special Judge, in that event it can only make a request or express its pious wish to the commission and if the government makes such a request, the commission is free to decide indifferently whether it would consider such request or proposal of the government or not," the HC judges said.

Khurshid Alam Khan, the ACC lawyer, told The Daily Star that it is the established provision of the law that the government cannot withdraw any corruption case filed or moved by the ACC and even it cannot recommend for their withdrawal.

The HC in the full text clearly interpreted the law in detail, he added.

Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi refused to make any comment on the HC observation.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Frontline health workers collecting samples from a boy to get him tested for coronavirus. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon at the outdoor section of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital. Many of the employees contracted the virus, recovered and returned to the testing process over the months.

Confusion reigns over vaccine price

FROM PAGE 1

government placed firm orders for over six crore doses, according to Indian median reports.

Serum, which stockpiled 50 million doses of the vaccine in India, has signed an initial deal to sell 11 million of the shots to the Indian government for 200 rupees (\$2.72) per dose, said the Reuters report.

Serum is the world's largest vaccine producer by volume.

Following the Reuters report, Bangladesh Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal faced questions from the media about Bangladesh paying more.

"I am not aware whether the price is higher [for Bangladesh]. If India produced [the vaccine], then their production cost will understandably be less ... When they would sell it, they would add their expenditure with the profit," he said.

"We cannot expect that we will get [the vaccine] at the price same as their production cost. But we will look into at what price vaccines are being sold in the international market. We will try to control the price at which we will get the vaccines."

"Many countries, not one or two, will produce vaccines. If one country charges more, we will try to go for another country. We have that option," Mustafa Kamal said.

Following the Reuters report and the statement of the finance minister, The Daily Star contacted the health minister and the Beximco authorities.

"We will speak as per our agreement. We will get it [the vaccines] at the same price the Indian authorities purchased from Serum Institute of India. So if India gets the vaccines at prices lower than what has been fixed for us, we will also

get the vaccines at lower prices," Zahid Maleque said.

"If India buys the shots at prices lower than us, then it is a good news for us. We will then get more shots from Serum," he said.

The health minister insisted that there was no room for confusion over the prices. "Everything will be done according to the agreement. The lower the price is, the more we will get."

Asked whether the contract will be made public, he said the agreement was signed publicly and claimed that everything written on the papers had already been made public. "The agreement does not have any hidden clause."

The tripartite agreement between the government, Serum and Beximco was signed on November 5 last year to purchase three crore shots of Oxford vaccine from Serum at \$4 per shot.

The government has recently said the first instalment of 50 lakh doses would arrive on January 25 and the vaccination would start in the first week of next month.

Each jab, however, will cost the government \$5 as it will have to pay Beximco in service charges and for transporting the vaccines to the government vaccination centres.

Contacted, Nazmul Hassan Papon said Bangladesh government would get the vaccine at the same price India is paying and that there was no reason to be worried.

"Bangladesh is purchasing the vaccine at \$4 per shot, but it's a tentative price. But if India purchases the vaccine at a lower price, Serum will also reduce the price accordingly for us."

"As per the agreement, there is a guarantee that Serum will give us the

vaccine at the same price it sells to India. There is no room for deviation [from it]."

"We will not pay a single cent more [than India]," Papon said.

"Since we are yet to receive the first instalment of vaccines, it would be too early to make any comment on what would be the final price. Because India bought each shot at 200 rupees in the first phase and it might go up to 250 rupees," he added.

Earlier in the month, the health minister, the health secretary and the Beximco MD insisted that Bangladesh would get the vaccine at the same price as Indian government.

BEXIMCO TO SELL VACCINES AT PRIVATE MARKET

The drug-maker will import 10 lakh doses from SII for private distribution. Beximco is buying each dose at \$8 from SII.

"Among the doses, various pharmaceuticals companies have already ordered for eight lakh doses," Papon told this newspaper.

He said they would sell the vaccine after the commencement of government's mass vaccination programme.

Beximco Chief Operating Officer Rabbur Reza said the price of the vaccine in the private market was yet to be decided.

After arrival of the vaccine, the Directorate General of Drug Administration will fix the price, he said.

He also said Beximco had already sent a proposal to Serum for purchasing another 20 lakh doses.

Contacted, DGDA Director General Maj Gen Md Mahbubur Rahman said the price of the vaccine to be sold in the private market would be finalised under government regulation.

Govt mulls allowing human trial

FROM PAGE 1

Medical Research Council (BMRC) a proposal for conducting first-stage human trial of its vaccine candidate, say officials of the firm.

3 VACCINE CANDIDATES
The icddr,b has applied to the BMRC for permission to run third-stage clinical trial of "COVAXIN" developed by Bharat Biotech.

Contacted, BMRC Director Dr Mahmood-uz-jahan declined to comment on the issue.

"It is not ethically right to comment on such research-related issue. You will know when it will be made public."

Meanwhile, the authorities of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and Anhui Zhifei Longcom Biologic Pharmacy are working to finalise a plan to run last-stage human trial of the Chinese firm's vaccine candidate. The two sides last week agreed to run the trial.

Prof Kanak Kanti Barua, vice chancellor of the BSMMU, told The Daily Star recently, "We have replied to them [Anhui Zhifei]. We will run the trial... It will require time to complete the procedures."

Besides, the Institute of Medical Biology Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences is planning to run last-stage human trial through a private research organisation in Bangladesh, a health official told this newspaper, seeking anonymity.

Bangladesh has so far confirmed purchase of Covid vaccines from two sources. Three crore doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines will come from Serum Institute of India (SII) and another 6.8 crore shots from global

initiative called COVAX.

Recently, the COVAX, co-led by WHO, GAVI, CEPI, offered four lakh doses of Pfizer vaccine to Bangladesh to vaccinate its frontline workers. The Pfizer vaccine needs to be stored at minus 70 degrees Celsius while the SII vaccine can be kept at 2-8 degrees Celsius.

Talking to this newspaper yesterday, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said, "We will take Pfizer vaccine. We have enough storage capacity for that."

Earlier on Monday, Prof ABM Khurshid Alam, director general at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said the government was exploring the existing storage capacity to that end.

According to health ministry officials, the government is also thinking about allowing private companies to import Covid vaccines to sell those in the domestic market.

'SELECT RIGHT VACCINE'
Experts have called for prompt exploration of sources of those vaccines, which will give the Bangladeshi population herd immunity for a long time and are cost-effective and compatible with the country's cold chain infrastructure.

At a recent discussion, a number of experts said it is uncertain how long the vaccines approved so far will give immunity. Besides, if the novel coronavirus mutates regularly like the influenza virus, there may be a need for regular vaccination.

There should be two vaccination goals -- one is to reduce mortality and morbidity, and the other is to gain herd immunity, they said.

US military leaders issue

FROM PAGE 1

While a number of Trump's cabinet members including acting Defense Secretary Chris Miller condemned the storming of the top US general, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley, was silent until now.

"The violent riot in Washington DC on January 6, 2021 was a direct assault on the US Congress, the Capitol building, and our Constitutional process," the seven generals and one admiral said in an internal memo to troops, adding that the military remained committed to protecting and defending the Constitution.

"The rights of freedom of speech and assembly do not give anyone the right to resort to violence, sedition and insurrection," the memo, seen by Reuters, said.

The military leaders said that

President-elect Joe Biden would be inaugurated on Jan. 20 and become their commander in chief.

"Any act to disrupt the Constitutional process is not only against our traditions, values, and oath; it is against the law."

US officials said Milley had not commented on last week's events because he wanted to stay out of politics.

The silence was in sharp contrast to June, when Milley made a controversial walk to a church with Trump after law enforcement officers backed by National Guard troops used tear-inducing chemicals and rubber bullets to clear the area of peaceful protesters.

Some service members have privately expressed concern that senior leaders did not provide direction in the aftermath of the attack on American democracy on Wednesday.

On Twitter, the head of US forces in South Korea said that what happened occurred in Washington DC on Wednesday was an "attempted insurrection."

"If you are serving in uniform and think it was something else, I would encourage (you) to sit down and read the constitution that you swore an oath to support and defend," General Robert Abrams said.

There has also been a renewed focus on extremism within the US military after the Capitol storming.

The Army told Reuters on Tuesday that it was working with the FBI to see if any attackers were current service members and with the Secret Service to see if any of the nearly 10,000 National Guard troops securing Biden's inauguration would need additional screening.

14 more die, 890 get Covid

UNB, Dhaka

With 890 new Covid-19 patients detected in the 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, the total number of infections in the country rose to 524,910.

As per the latest data, the daily infection rate dropped to 5.66 percent. The country recorded 8.29 percent infection rate on January 10, 7.52 percent on January 4, and 8.18 percent on January 1.

The country's fatality number rose to 7,833 with 14 deaths in the 24 hours. The death rate stands at 1.49 percent.

So far, 3,40,1506 tests, including 16,338 new ones, have been carried out.

The overall infection rate stood at 15.43 percent, the Directorate General of Health Services said.

However, 469,522 patients - 89.45 percent - have recovered so far.

The country's infection number reached the 500,000-mark on December 20. The first cases were reported on March 8. The death toll exceeded 7,000 on December 12.

CASE UNDER DSA

Baul singer Rita Dewan granted ad interim bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday granted ad interim bail to Baul singer Rita Dewan in connection with a case filed for "hurting religious sentiment" under the Digital Security Act.

Dhaka Cyber Tribunal Judge Mohammad Ash Sams Joglul Hossain granted bail to Rita till January 27 after she was produced before the court, seeking bail in the case, Shamim Al Mamun, bench assistant of the tribunal, told The Daily Star.

The tribunal on December 2 last year issued arrest warrants against Rita, Shahjahan Kabir and Iqbal Hossain, accepting the probe report of the case. The report was filed by the Police Bureau of Investigation.

Shahjahan is now behind bars, while Iqbal is on the run, the prosecution said.

On February 2 last year, lawyer Imrul Hasan filed the case against Rita with the cyber tribunal. There were three other cases filed against Rita in Dhaka, Chattogram and Jhenidah, said Rita's lawyer Abdullah Al Noman.

The Jhenidah case was dismissed by the district court, but the Dhaka court accepted the case filed by Imrul and issued an arrest warrant on December 2.

A hearing for the other DSA case filed in Dhaka's Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court will be held tomorrow, and the court will decide whether or not to accept the case, her lawyer said.

This means even though Rita received ad interim bail in one case yesterday, she will still need to get bail in two other cases.

The probe report details that Rita was doing a "Pala Gaan" session with fellow artiste Shah Alam Sarkar, where the topic being debated was "Living Beings versus The Greatest". The event was held on the night of December 10, 2019, at Shahjahan's house in Tangail's Kalihati upazila.

Shahjahan and Iqbal had uploaded Rita's songs to their YouTube channels, according to the case documents.

On February 1 last year, complainant Imrul was at home when he came across the video on social media.

"The complainant was extremely angry and hurt," said the PBI report. "And upon finding no way out, the complainant went to Kadamtai Police Station to file the case."

The complainant alleged that Rita was making "derogatory comments" about religion.

The PBI report "investigated the matter" and wrote in their report, "Upon investigating videos of Rita's songs, we have found evidence of the crime. The words she chose to debate this issue hurt the religious sentiment of the audience."

Following the filing of the lawsuit, Rita, along with her two daughters, had posted another video on social media apologising for "causing hurt".

France court probes minister for conflict of interest

AFP, Paris

A French court has launched an investigation into Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti for alleged conflict of interest relating to his time as a lawyer, prosecutors told AFP yesterday.

The Court of the Republic, which deals with cases involving suspected misconduct by sitting cabinet members, launched the probe following complaints by Anticor, an anti-corruption association, and three magistrates' unions.

One killed in AC explosion

Subsequent blast injures six

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mechanic was killed and at least six were injured in an air conditioner explosion and another subsequent blast in a high-rise at the capital's Gulshan yesterday.

The deceased -- Azizul Haque (35) -- was working at the AC chiller plant on the roof of a 14-storey commercial building "Empori Financial Centre", said fire service.

The explosion took place around 1:45pm on the roof, caused another blast in the UAE visa processing centre on the ground floor, said Abul Kalam Azad, senior station officer of Baridhara Fire Station.

He said they have to find out whether it was another AC explosion that also caused a fire, said the fire official.

Sudip Kumar Chakraborty, deputy commissioner of Gulshan Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the same.

The injured, whose identities could not be known immediately, were receiving treatment at a nearby hospital, said police and fire officials.

The explosions shattered the building's glass, damaged the furniture the visa processing centre's wall.

Two firefighting units rushed to the spot and were seen removing debris from the area.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Abdul Quader (in helmet), former ward councillor of Chattogram City Corporation and 'rebel AL' candidate for the upcoming polls, was produced among others before a Chattogram court in a case filed over the clashes on Tuesday night that left one person dead. The court granted three-day remand for 11 accused in the case.

CLASH OVER CCC POLLS CAMPAIGN

Citizens, cops wary of further violence

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

The furious clash between activists of two councillor candidates at Mogoltuli Mogpukur Par area in the port city on Tuesday evening has made both the city dwellers and law enforcing agencies worried over further clashes in different areas ahead of polls day.

Their worry is mainly over the Awami League (AL)-backed councillor candidates and their rival candidates from AL who did not get party support in different wards.

A man identified as Azgar Ali Babul (52), was shot dead and another was hit by a bullet during a gunfight between activists of Nazrul Islam Bahadur, an AL-backed councillor candidate in Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) ward-28, and that of former councillor of the ward Abdul Quader, a Jubo League leader who failed to get party support for candidacy, on Tuesday. Police and local sources said both the deceased and injured men were activists of Bahadur.

A joint team of police and Rapid Action Battalion during a drive on Tuesday night detained 26 people including Quader following the clash, said Sadip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge of Double Mooring Police Station in the port city.

Sources in the area said the clash on Tuesday ensued over removing posters of Quader by some of Nazrul's activists on Monday evening. Quader lodged a complaint with the Returning Officer (RO) against Nazrul's men over removal of his posters on Tuesday morning, said sources in the RO office.

The clash erupted on Tuesday evening when both the candidates went to same area for campaigning, said locals.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Rab arrests 'bitcoin trader mastermind'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab arrested 29-year-old Raihan Hossain, an alleged mastermind behind an illegal bitcoin operation on Tuesday night.

In a special drive, members of Rab-1 arrested Raihan from Gazipur last Tuesday.

Col Tofail Mostofa Sarwar, additional director general (operation) of Rab, disclosed the arrest and spoke about Raihan's activities yesterday, while talking with a group of reporters at the elite force's headquarters in the capital's Uttara.

Rab recovered 19 fake national identity cards, 22 SIM cards, Tk 1,275 and USD 25 in cash, a computer, three mobile phones, three fake invoice books, a trade license, a TIN certificate, a recording microphone, a camera, a router, a headphone, a modem, and four check books of different banks from Raihan's possession.

Sarwar said Raihan has been involved in "online sourcing business" for the last eight years.

Rab officials said he became involved in illegally earning through bitcoin with the help of a Pakistani national named Sayed.

Now, he has around 250 bitcoin accounts.

He used to buy bitcoin after hacking credit cards. So far, Raihan has swindled over 30 thousand US dollars by monitoring local and foreign online bank accounts using different smart devices.

Col Sarwar said that they have found transaction history of USD 35 lakh in Raihan's account in just one month. Meanwhile, about Tk 35 lakh was found in one of his bank accounts, he said.

Raihan, the alleged mastermind behind online bitcoin trading and fraud, has recently bought an Audi worth Tk 1.8 crore, said the Rab high official.

Raihan has been stealing from ordinary people by colluding with Pakistani, Nigerian and Russian smugglers, credit card hackers and illegal smugglers through bitcoins, according to Rab officials.

He would use the banner of a fake company named MRH Software Development to lure people.

Col Sarwar further said that they are working to trace another racket of bitcoin trading, and illegal bitcoins will not be allowed to take root in Bangladesh.

Want to see boats plying Rupnagar canal: Mayor Atiq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Md Atiqul Islam yesterday said authorities want to see boats plying from Rupnagar canal to Turag river.

He made the comment while observing cleaning activities of Rupnagar canal.

Atiqul, who walked around one kilometre beside the canal, said there was huge solid waste in the canal and they cleaned it. Around 50 workers cleaned the canal, working for 15 days.

The canal is 2 km long and 60 feet wide, and now authorities are planning to beautify both sides of it, he said.

Atiqul said primarily, they will plant trees on the sides and create cycle-lane later. If they can make cycle-lanes and walkways running along the canal, then pressure on roads will reduce.

"We have already started planting trees for its greenery," said Atiqul, who also planted a mango tree beside the canal.

Urging all encroachers to remove illegal structures beside the canal, the mayor said otherwise, they will evict them with help from locals.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CHATTOGRAM CITY POLLS Rebel candidates a headache for AL

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

Failing to get support from Awami League, the ruling party's rebel councillor candidates are desperately trying to get the support of BNP-Jamaat to win the election race of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) polls scheduled for January 27, sources in Awami League and an intelligence report of police say.

Anxious of the prospect of losing the mayoral race due to division of voters following rebel councillor candidates' leaning into BNP-Jamaat, the AL high command is desperately trying to neutralise its rebel candidates and work united in favour of party-supported candidates in the local body polls, sources in AL said.

Admitting that the party is facing problems due to rebel candidates in the CCC elections, AL joint general secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star that the party's vote bank and voters are divided in elections, due to presence of rebel candidates.

"It becomes difficult for party-backed candidates in the mayoral and councillor posts. That's why we are working hard so that rebel candidates leave the election field and work in favour of party-supported candidates," he told The Daily Star.

Although he admitted that they are finding it difficult to manage rebel candidates, Hanif said whenever the party high-ups talk with them, the rebel candidates assure them verbally that they will not stay in the election field.

"But the reality is different," Hanif also said.

Asked whether AL's "rebel" candidates are trying to get support of BNP-Jamaat, Hanif said, "We are careful so that BNP-Jamaat voters cannot ride on the shoulders of rebel councillor candidates of AL, and come to the polling stations paving the way for BNP candidates to win in the election," he also said.

AL party insiders said several meetings had taken place at the residence of AL-nominated mayoral candidate Rezaul Karim Chowdhury where senior leaders of AL in Dhaka and Chattogram were present to resolve the rebel issue and the party's internal feuds ahead of the polls.

Former minister and AL presidium member Engineer Mosharrar Hossain and Mahbulul Alam Hanif were present in an emergency meeting. The party's central leaders warned to take tougher organisational action if rebel candidates do not leave the election race and work in favour of party-backed candidates.

Despite the warning, rebel candidates are yet to step down from the election race. Due to the situation, election campaigning of AL is also being disrupted, according to sources.

A field-level intelligence report of police recently also said AL's rebel candidates are trying to get support from BNP-Jamaat to win the election race.

In the report, it was also apprehended that clash and violence might take place among rebel candidates before election, as well as polling day.

This newspaper has a copy of the report, that states details of current political unrest in two blocks of Chattogram AL, pointing to some serious issues.

According to the report, AL-nominated councillor candidates and rebel candidates will be desperate to collect votes for themselves on polling day, leaving AL mayoral candidate Rezaul Karim Chowdhury alone in the election battle.

Due to severe rift and feud within the party, violence may also break out before or on election day.

Sources said former councillors of 13 wards failed to get party nomination for election. Of them, 12 are contesting the election independently. Only in ward-13, former ward commissioner Mohammed Hossen Hiran withdrew his candidacy.

The report stated that the 12 rebel candidates for ward councillor are followers of Chattogram city unit AL's General Secretary AJM Nasir Uddin, adding that immediate-past mayor of CCC AJM Nasir has been doing his best to make his followers win, which will go against mayoral candidate Rezaul.

According to AL insiders, a rift is prevailing between Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel and AJM Nasir. On Tuesday night, a clash between two councillor candidates -- AL-backed Nazrul Islam Bahadur and AL rebel candidate and former councillor Abdul Quader -- left one person dead and another with bullet wounds.

Several people were injured in five prior clashes surrounding the election.

Party sources said activists and leaders backed by AJM Nasir were frustrated as Nasir did not get the party ticket for mayoral post of CCC. His followers believe that Nowfel is responsible for that.

Apart from that, a number of followers of late Mohiuddin Chowdhury, father of Nowfel, got party tickets to contest ward councillor posts. As a result, leaders and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Exam dates for 41st and 42nd BCS announced

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Preliminary exams for the 41st and 42nd Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) will be held on March 19 and February 26 respectively, Bangladesh Public Service Commission said in a statement released yesterday.

For the 41st BCS, exams will be held across centres in Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Barishal, Khulna, Sylhet, Rangpur, and Mymensingh. The two-hour exam will be held from 10am to 12pm.

Meanwhile, the test for the 42nd Special BCS will be held in Dhaka from 3pm to 5pm, the statement said.

Information regarding exam venues, seat plans, and other instructions will be available at the BPSC website: www.bpsc.gov.bd.



DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam takes time out of his work to play a friendly game of cricket, while onlookers cheer him on at Rupnagar area. He also visited Rupnagar canal to observe its cleaning yesterday, inset.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Kabiraj arrested for rape in Dhamrai

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A kabiraj (uncertified village doctor) was arrested on charge of raping a woman in Dhamrai upazila on the outskirts of Dhaka on Tuesday night.

The arrestee was identified as Salam Kholzar (45), son of late Warej Mia of Dokkhin para village of Chouhat union in the Upazila, said police.

Dipok Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Dhamrai Police Station yesterday told The Daily Star they arrested Salam from his house on Tuesday around 11pm, hours after a woman filed a rape case against him.

Quoting the case statement and the survivor, the OC said the woman had paid a visit to Salam as she superstitiously believed that he could help solve her personal problems with her partner.

On Tuesday, Salam called the woman saying that he would give her a tabiz (amulet) to help her reconcile with her boyfriend. The woman rushed to Salam's house around 4pm to get the amulet. She was raped there. Salam threatened to take her life if she disclosed the matter to anyone, said the OC.

The woman was sent to One-stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for medical screenings.

'UNREST OVER RECRUITMENT' VC, wife leave HSTU campus in the dark

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The vice-chancellor of Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) left the campus on Wednesday dawn, allegedly in fear after some job seekers in presence of high officials of the university allegedly mounted pressure on him to finalise a recruitment before the end of his tenure on January 31.

Dr Abul Kashem and his wife left the campus at around 3:40am Wednesday by his official vehicle.

All of this unfolded in presence of the university's treasurer Dr Bidhan Chandra Haldar and registrar Dr Fazlul Haq, the VC told the Daily Star over the phone.

The jobseekers allegedly confined the VC and his wife for seven hours. He said the jobseekers stormed his official residence at the campus on Tuesday morning. Around 30 people got inside his residence and mounted pressure on him to finalise the human resources recruitment, but the VC turned them down as he could not do so.

Later, raged jobseekers cut off the power line of his official residence at around 3:30pm Thursday. "I was in complete darkness for hours and without water," he told the newspaper.

Till 9:30pm, the situation continued, he said. Informed, a police team rushed to the campus and kept monitoring the situation. Mithun Sarkar, ASP of Dinajpur Sadar circle, said, adding police personnel were deployed to keep the situation calm.

"I left the campus as I was feeling unsafe there," said the VC over the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A woman loses her cool, after her rickshaw was hit by an empty ambulance near the capital's Central Shaheed Minar. Though the passenger managed to jump off the vehicle unhurt, the rickshaw puller sustained minor injuries in the accident. Reckless driving is an all-too-common scene in the capital, and minor accidents are an everyday occurrence.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Emphasise voices of the poor: Gowher Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The voices of those at the bottom of the wealth pyramid should be emphasised during the preparation of the National Governance Assessment Framework, Prime Minister's International Affairs Advisor Gowher Rizvi said yesterday.

He was speaking as chief guest at Dhaka Division consultation programme on National Governance Assessment Framework (NGAF).

The Governance Innovation Unit of the Prime Minister's Office and the United Nations Development Programme, in collaboration with Centre on Budget and Policy, Dhaka University organised the programme at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

The NGAF is a country-contextualised governance assessment framework that aims to assist in creating an inclusive and peaceful society with access to justice for all alongside effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

"In our society we need to create a system for institutions and laws so that every citizen has equal access and opportunity," Prof Gowher Rizvi said.

UNDP Bangladesh National Consultant Radwan Mujib Siddiq; Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Dr Ahmad Kaikaus; Resident Representative of UNDP Sudipto Mukerjee and Development Studies Professor at DU Kazi Maruful Islam also spoke at the opening session.

Rebel

FROM PAGE 3

activists loyal to Nasir are not interested to work for Rezaul as well as their rival group.

Election campaign started from January 8, after months of deferment of the polls due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The previous election date was March 29, 2020.

Two hundred candidates will contest under 41 general wards and 14 reserved wards. However, lone candidate of East Bakalia ward-14 has won the election uncontested.

The intel report also says AL-backed mayoral candidate Rezaul is less known before the public but has a fair political image, but there is no combined effort and enthusiasm from the AL leaders for Rezaul, the senior joint general secretary of the city AL unit.

His BNP counterpart Shahadat Hossain is president of the party's Chattogram city unit.

AL rebel councilor candidate for Firingi Bazar and AJM Nasir follower Hasan Murad said, "I am the candidate of public; they want me. Those who secured party nomination are trying to oppress me through attack and case."

"I have no connection with BNP-Jamaat. People will vote for me and I will contest in the election at any cost," he said.

Lalkhan Bazar ward rebel councilor candidate AF Kabir Ahmed Manik said "I am contesting the election as an independent candidate. People will vote for me. They don't want to be the patron of drug and teenage gangs."

Mahabubul Alam, BNP-nominated councillor candidate for Chandgaon, said, "It is true that everyone wants to get vote from all political parts to win the race. We have no connection with Jamaat now but Jamaat voters may cast vote in the election. Now the question is if they cast votes, who get those votes," he added.

Contacted, AJM Nasir Uddin, AL Chattogram city unit general secretary and member secretary of AL election management committee for CCC polls, said the party is strict in its decision of taking stern action against rebel candidates. "If one wants to stay in the party, they must follow its decision," he said.

Despite repeated attempts, Rezaul was not available over phone for comments.

Citizens, cops

FROM PAGE 3

AL insiders said Nazrul, a follower of late AL leader ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, was a councillor of the ward between 2010 and 2015 while Quader, a follower of former CCC mayor AJM Nasir Uddin, was elected councilor in the polls held in 2015.

Both of them tried to get party backing this time but Nazrul succeeded, they said, adding that Quader was adamant to vie in the polls, defying party decision.

Locals apprehended more clashes in the area between followers of two in days to come.

"We afraid to go out of home," said a local of Mogoltuli area preferring anonymity. "Gunfight between activists of two rival candidates might have killed an innocent passerby."

"The more polls day is coming closer, the higher the tension is between rival candidates," said another local.

Meanwhile, law enforcing agencies are also worried over the tensions. Sources in police said they were not too worried about tensions between BNP-backed councillor candidates and AL-backed candidates, rather they were worried over issues between AL-backed candidates and their rival candidates from the party.

A total of 12 former ward councilors who did not get support from AL are vying in the polls defying party decision.

Law-enforcing agencies are anxious of violence in those wards, particularly ward-14 (Lalkhanbazar), ward-33 (Firingibazar), ward-28 (Pathantuli) and ward-12 (Saraipara).

Contacted, CMP Commissioner Saleh Mohammad Tanvir said police and law enforcers were alert to thwart any untoward situation in the city over CCC polls.

"We will maintain law and order situation at any cost," he said.

Asked about the incident at Mogoltuli on Tuesday, he said police rushed to the spot immediately and arrested a number of people, who were being quizzed.

11 INCLUDING COUNCILLOR CANDIDATE REMANDED

Meanwhile, a Chattogram court yesterday placed 11 arrestees including Abdul Quader, acouncilor candidate in the polls, on three-day police remand in a case filed for killing of a man in Tuesday's clash.

The court of Chattogram Metropolitan Magistrate Shafi Uddin passed the order after police produced the arrestees before the court with a 10-day remand prayer, said Inspector Shahadat Hossain Khan of Detective Branch of CMP, also investigation officer of the case.

VC, wife

FROM PAGE 3

phone, who arrived in Dhaka at around 3pm Wednesday, adding that his wife was stunned and distraught.

Before leaving, he handed over the charge to the treasurer.

The four-year contractual term of the VC was set to end on January 31.

A tense situation prevailed at the campus for the last couple of days over recruitment, allegedly mostly among students of HSTU and relatives of officials, teachers, and staffers.

VC Dr Abul Kashem said he was pressured to finalise recruitment of 22 officials, 62 teachers, and 50 staffers on an ad-hoc basis. That violated the terms of UGC, said the VC.

Contacted, HSTU treasurer Dr Bidhan Chandra Halder denied the allegation against him, saying he came to know of the VC leaving after coming to office yesterday.

Dr Fazlur Haq, the registrar, also denied the allegation against him.

Want to

FROM PAGE 3

About the holding tax, the mayor said residents of DNCC areas will be able to pay their holding tax from home from March.

He also distributed face-masks among garbage management workers.

After visiting the canal, the mayor went to Mohammadpur BRIC Bus Depot and announced expansion of road demolition of the depot's boundary walls to reduce traffic congestion.

He also visited Tajmahal Eidgah and Shaheed Park playgrounds. BRTC Chairperson Md Ehsan-E-Elahi, DNCC Ward-31 Councillor Shafiqul Islam Sentu and Ward-33 Councillor Asif Ahmed, among others, accompanied him.

Indomitable

FROM PAGE 12

front of my house."

"Many of my friends, relatives and neighbours discouraged me about opening the shop. But I was determined. Now, I am running my shop efficiently. I have even learned to swim, cycle, operate computers and mobile phones using just my legs," he said.

Kamrul's wife Julia Begum was happy with his husband's decision and determination. "We were all very uncertain [regarding finances] after the accident. But his courage, willpower and hard work changed all of that."

Wasa MD

FROM PAGE 12

that the compliance report submitted by Wasa MD did not show that the HC directives had been implemented.

He prayed to the HC to issue a deadline for the Wasa MD to implement the 2011 directives.

On September 14, last year, during hearing the same petition, the HC bench observed that the Wasa MD was not voluntarily implementing its 2011 directives.

The court also said the Wasa MD has been violating his commitments and making delays in complying with its directives by submitting different affidavits to it and seeking times from the court.

HRPB lawyer Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star that Wasa MD Taqsem A Khan had appeared before the HC bench on March 4 last year and apologised to it for not implementing the 2011 directives.

He submitted an undertaking to the HC, saying that he would take steps to fully comply with the HC directives, he added.

হাসিলেছে

আমার রাজউক পূর্বদিক নতুন শহর প্রকল্প এলাকায় ০৯ সেক্টরের ৩০০নং বাজার ০০৬নং প্রটেক্টন ফুডস্ট্রাক্স ব্যবসায়ের মালিক হারিয়েছে। কোকোয়ালি মডেল বানা কুমিল্লার তারিখ নং-১১০২/১৭, তারিখঃ ১৯/০১/২০১৭খ্রিঃ। কাজী মহিদুর রহমান, পিতাঃ মৃত কাজী আব্দুল মতিন, মাতাঃ মৃত হাসিনার বেগম, গ্রামঃ কালিকাপুর, পোঃ বাজার চৌরাসা-৩৫০০, কোকোয়ালি, কুমিল্লা আদর্শ সদর, কুমিল্লা।

Bangladeshi averts it thru'

FROM PAGE 12

both ambient and household, was an extremely high risk factor in the 572,600 deaths in Bangladesh that were caused by noncommunicable disease in 2018.

The court took into consideration the fact that the drugs the man is receiving in France are not available in Bangladesh, and that the Bangladeshi health system can only provide the night-time ventilation equipment he needs for his sleep apnoea in hospital.

It also heard evidence that the man's father had died of an asthma attack at the age of 54, Riviere said, and that since arriving in France and beginning treatment, his respiratory capacity had increased from 58 per cent in 2013 to 70 per cent in 2018.

"For all these reasons, the court decided that sending my client back to his country would mean putting him at real risk of death," the lawyer said. "Respiratory failure as a result of an asthma attack would be almost inevitable."

The man arrived in France in 2011 after fleeing persecution in his home country, The Guardian reported. He settled in Toulouse, found work as a waiter, and in 2015 was given a temporary residence permit as a foreign national requiring medical treatment.

In 2017, however, doctors advising the French immigration authorities recommended that his condition "could

be adequately treated in Bangladesh", and two years later the local Haute-Garonne prefecture issued an expulsion order.

A lower court in Toulouse overturned the deportation order in June last year, purely on the grounds that the relevant drugs were not in fact available in the man's home country. The Bordeaux court also rejected the prefecture's appeal, saying that the environmental criterion must also be taken into account.

Dr Gary Fuller, an air pollution scientist at Imperial College London, said this was the first case he was aware of in which the environment had been cited by a court in an extradition hearing. "The court has effectively declared that the environment -- air pollution -- meant it was unsafe to send this man back," he said.

Fuller said the case fed into a steadily growing broader agenda about the right to a healthy environment. "There's a UN rapporteur on this issue, and people around the world -- particularly in countries with less developed environmental and health laws -- who are developing thinking about declaring a right to a healthy environment."

Many countries set standards for air and water quality, for example, but "stop short of actually saying you have a right to be protected from environmental harm," Fuller said.

To light from dark spiral

FROM PAGE 12

surrender programme.

Earlier, seven militants were brought back to normal life under a pilot project, Rab said. Of the seven, one was at an extreme stage of militancy but is now leading a normal life.

That person will deliver a speech at the programme today.

Relevant sources said the possibility of de-radicalisation is kept till extremists cross a certain limit. If that limit is exceeded, legal action is inevitable.

There are usually five stages leading to the peak of extremism, culminating in violent activities. Initially, the target is sympathetic to extremism. In the second stage, he or she becomes a supporter of extremism.

In the third phase, the person takes part in extremist activities and in the fourth, they become extremists. In the final stage, they carry out violent extremist activities.

According to Rab, arrangements have also been made to repatriate militants who are willing to surrender. For this, everyone is

being helped to return to the right profession for them.

One young woman who was about to surrender went abroad to study. But her family did not know that she returned to the country as part of a militant group. Now, after returning to normal life, an initiative is being taken for her to finish her studies. In this manner, some are being given cows for farming, while others are given power trailer machines.

Col Sarwar said, "We have considered what can be done other than handing over those involved in extremism to the law. It is difficult to solve this problem by knocking them down only through campaigns."

In addition to operational activities, Rab has started de-radicalisation activities to eradicate militancy, he said. "That is why we have involved people from different walks of life."

As a result of the concerted efforts of all, it will be possible to get rid of the so-called ideology of militancy, said the Rab ADG.

Six killed as three wheeler

FROM PAGE 12

the injured were taken to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital.

The people carrier flipped over after it was hit at Madandanga Bus Stand area, and another truck rammed it within moments, the officer added.

A bystander said the second hit was the hardest. The workers were returning home from Abdalpur, Kushtia.

Medical Officer Rezona Parvin of Jhenidah Sadar Hospital said four of the victims were admission to the hospital and three of them were in critical condition.

All-women pilots complete

FROM PAGE 12

"I'm extremely proud to be a part of this and I have been personally preparing for more than a year for this flight," she said.

"The view from the North Pole is superb," said her co-pilot, Captain Thanmei

Papagari, who flew the second half, adding that as women, they "had a point to prove that we can do the job."

They were joined by two first officers: Captain Akansha Sonaware and Captain Shivani Manhas.

Cops allowed to conduct dope test

FROM PAGE 12

Prevention Act after his 17-year-old daughter, an O-level student, was allegedly raped and murdered in the capital's Kalabagan area.

According to the case statement, Dihan tricked the schoolgirl into going to his flat and raped her when his family members were away from home. The victim bled profusely and fell unconscious. Dihan then took her to a hospital to deflect blame, the plaintiff alleged.

On January 8, Dihan gave his confessional statement before a Dhaka court. He is now behind bars.

Meanwhile, the victim's family yesterday demanded exemplary punishment for those involved in the incident through holding a speedy trial of the case.

The parents of the schoolgirl said attempts were being made to divert the investigation by blaming their daughter.

"I want no other parents to lose their beloved child like we did," the victim's mother said at the press conference, organised by Bangladesh

Mahila Parishad (BMP), at the Jatiya Press Club.

She alleged that her daughter was abducted by Dihan and his associates on January 7. "She was tortured, raped and murdered brutally at Dihan's home. I went to the hospital and saw Dihan and his three companions sitting there. Dihan begged me to save him."

The victim's mother further complained that police did not record the case the way they expected to file it. She said a quarter was trying to save Dihan and his associates and assassinate her daughter's character.

On behalf of her family, the mother placed four demands before the government. The demands are: bringing criminals to justice, transferring the case to a speedy trial tribunal, conducting a transparent DNA test, and making sure that the family is not harassed.

Maksuda Akhter, director of BMP, read out a statement at the event.

It said unwarranted statements were being made on social media denigrating the victim. The victim's family was worried over a fair and

neutral investigation into the incident as the physicians concerned and the police administration were making unwanted remarks from the very beginning, the statement added.

Mahila Parishad also expressed concern over the involvement of increasing number of teenagers and youths in various sexual offenses, including rape. It demanded the authorities take effective measures to control pornography and increase activities for mental development of children and youths.

Speaking at the press conference, BMP acting president Fauzia Moslem said the family, society and the state should take the responsibility for Dihan being spoiled. Blaming of the victim over any rape case or violence against a woman should be stopped, she observed.

Showing a photo taken by the victim's mother, Fauzia said the autopsy did not find any sign of torture on the schoolgirl's body. But the photo shows that there were injury marks on her waist, she added.

The schoolgirl's father was also present at the press conference.

PK Halder's aide Abantika arrested

FROM PAGE 12

institutions (NBFIs) abroad.

Contacted, ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin said Abantika owns a flat in Dhanmondi. "The property was actually bought by PK Halder," he added.

The graft watchdog last week arrested Halder's another aide, Shankha Bepari, over owning a flat bought by the former.

The ACC investigation officer seized Halder's two flats and six acres of land following a court order in this regard last month.

According to the case statement,

Halder invested about Tk 123.54 crore in Lipro International. He purchased 589 decimals of land for Tk 1 crore in Mymensingh.


During the enquiry, the ACC found that he invested about Tk 67.35 crore in eight companies.

Besides, documents show that Halder has moveable properties worth Tk 32.25 crore. The total amount of his moveable property stands at Tk 99.61 crore, which he amassed directly and indirectly using others' names, reads the FIR.

The graft watchdog found that Halder, now staying abroad, has a legal income of about Tk 12.48 crore against his total wealth, including moveable and immovable properties, of Tk 287.39 crore.

"He has amassed Tk 274.91 crore beyond his known sources of income," it said.

Halder had joined NRB Global Bank as its managing director in 2015. Several enquiries over embezzlement of crores of taka from NBFIs by Halder are now pending with the ACC.



EAST WEST UNIVERSITY

Progoti Foundation for Education and Development


Permanent Sanad Holder

INVITATION FOR TENDER

1.	Tender Name	Construction of Shaheed Minar at East West University
2.	Source of Funds	East West University Own Fund
3.	Tender No	EWU (Logistics) 75/2021/15
4.	Eligibility of Tenderers	This invitation for Tenders is open to all eligible Tenderers as mentioned in Instructions to Tenderers and Tender Data Sheet (TDS)
5.	Tenderer's Qualification	This invitation for Tenders is open to all qualified Tenderers as mentioned below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The minimum required numbers of years of general experience of the tenders in the construction works as prime contractor or Sub contractor or Management Contractor shall be 5 Years. Years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper/web site. (b) The minimum specific experience as a prime contractor or sub-contractor or management contractor in construction works of at least 1(one) contract of similar nature of work including situ pile, Pile Cap, RCC frame work brick masonry work, plumbing work, electrical work, arboriculture work, successfully completed in government/Semi Government /Autonomous organization/Private Corporate company of Bangladesh with in the last 5(five) years with a value of at least TK=100/- (One Hundred) Lac. Years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT on the newspaper/website. (c) The Minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit lines of the tenderer shall be TK=100/- (One Hundred) Lac. Documents Submitted along with the tender must be issued in between publication date and submission date of tender. Bank statement / letter of Commitment for Bank Undertaking for Line of Credit (Credit must be Approved by the Bank Authority) (d) The required average annual Construction Turnover shall be more than TK=200/- (Two Hundred) Lac in the last 5 (five) Years. Years counting from the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper/website. Payment certificate is to be obtained from the respective Executive Engineer or pay master.
6.	Price of Tender Document	: Taka 1,500.00 (Taka One Thousand and Five Hundred Only)
7.	Name and address of the Office(s) Selling Tender Document	: Office of the Director of Finance (1 st Floor, Room# 202)
8.	Name and address of the Office(s) Receiving Tenders	: Office of the Treasurer (2 nd Floor, Room# 316) in the Tender Box.
9.	Name and address of the Office Opening Tenders	: Conference room (4 th Floor, Room# 508)
10.	Lot No	Identification of Lot
	1	Construction of Shaheed Minar at East West University
		Location
		Aftabnagar, Dhaka
		Tender Security
		Taka 375,000.00
		Completion Time
		05 (five) months
11.	Last Date and Time for Selling Tender Document	: During office hours up to 1:00 P.M. within 27 January 2021
12.	Tender Closing Date and Time	: Up to 12:00 noon of 28 January 2021
13.	Date and Time for Opening of Tenders	: Tender will be opened on 28 January 2021 at 12:15 PM at the Conference room (4 th Floor) of East West University
14.	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Telephone No. 09666775577 (Ext: 347, 271) e-mail: maniruzzaman@ewubd.edu mahzabeen@ewubd.edu
15.	Special Instructions	(a) The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. (b) This tender notice is brief and the details of the tender can be seen from the office of the HR & Logistics during office hours.

Chief of HR & Logistics

IN MEMORIAM



Thirtieth Death Anniversary of

Late Abul Qasem FCA (1919-1991)

Founder President (ICAB),
Former President (DCCI),
Founder, A. Qasem & Co., Chartered Accountants

In Fond Remembrance

Shakil, Farzana, Sohel, Jabeen, Sanjida, Mostaq Sadaat, Sajid, Navid, Sadaaf, Omair, Ahnaf, Afraz

All Partners, Directors, Staff and Students of A. Qasem & Co.



Position Vacancy Announcement

Position: Development Outreach & Communication (DOC) Specialist, FSN-10

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Bangladesh is seeking applications from qualified Bangladeshi nationals for the position of **Development Outreach & Communication (DOC) Specialist** in the Office of Program (PRO).

Location: USAID/Bangladesh, Deadline for application submission: February 11, 2021.

For a complete job description, required qualifications and detailed information on how to apply please visit www.usaid.gov/bangladesh/work-with-us/careers and www.bdjobs.com

D-14

Concrete wall on market land!

Local influential continues the construction work blocking way of 28 shops of the market

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A local influential man continued constructing a concrete wall occupying front side of a market, erected on a private land, near Kalaiya Launch Terminal in Bauful upazila.

Due to the illegal construction work entrance to at least 28 shops have been completely blocked, causing financial losses to the shop owners as they are unable to open their shops.

Several workers, engaged in the construction work, said AKM Farid Mollah, younger brother of local ruling party Lawmaker ASM Feroz is constructing the wall.

During a visit to the area on Saturday, this correspondent found that some workers were constructing a wall in the front of Haji Shahid Market, owned by one Shahid Alam.

While talking to this correspondent Shahid said he owned 65 decimals of the land on the west side of the launch terminal, while Delwara Runu, wife of Lawmaker ASM Feroz, possesses another 65 decimals of land on the opposite side.

In 2013, he built a 375-foot-long market beside the government road that connects the launch terminal, he said, adding that there are a total of 28 shops, including groceries, hardware, medicine and fruit shops, in the market.

Besides, there is another shop on the land owned by the lawmaker's wife on the east side of the terminal.

Shahid alleged that Farid started erecting the wall in front of the market blocking way of all the shops in his market on last Thursday.



PHOTO: STAR

Worker, engaged by a local influential man, constructing a wall, blocking the entrance of Haji Shahid Market in Patuakhali's Bauful upazila.

Shahid said they are not dared to protest the illegal act as Farid belongs to a local influential family.

One of the traders, seeking anonymity, said one can clearly see that the wall is of no use but to obstruct the way to the only market in the area.

Contacted, Farid Mollah said the government had built the road on that land.

They have another eight-foot land on the west side of the road, he said, adding that he is constructing the wall on that land.

Bauful Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Zakir Hossain said it is totally wrong to obstruct other people's movement by building concrete wall just beside a government road.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach Lawmaker ASM Feroz for his comment in his regard as he didn't received the phone calls.

Their request went unheeded for 47 years!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Before every public election in Joychondi union of Kulaura upazila over the last 47 years, many contenders made the promise.

But after the elections were over, none of the winners lived up to the promise of replacing the makeshift bamboo bridge, over the Gogalichhara river, with a proper concrete one.

The 30-metre-long rickety bridge is the only means of communications with the upazila headquarters for around 12 thousand inhabitants of Abutalipur, Mithupur, Rampasha and Begmanpur villages in Joychondi union.

With no more than a metre in width and without any handrail on its sides, the bridge becomes extremely risky especially during the monsoon when its uneven platform gets slippery and the rising current below flows with an enormous force.

During a visit recently, villagers including children, women and the elderly were seen risking their lives while passing each other on the narrow rundown bridge.

Abutalipur village resident Bashir Mia, aged 60, said, "We've been suffering for the last 47 years, since I was a child."

He also said the villagers turned in petitions for a bridge on numerous occasions to offices concerned in the union as well as in the upazila, but their appeal has gone unheeded all these years.

Arab Mia of the same village has four cows and he has to consult the upazila livestock office on the other side of the river quite frequently.

But while crossing the unsafe bridge, he cannot help but think of falling down in the river, he said.

Journalist Abdul Ahad, a resident of



PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

As if they are participants in an extreme sport, women in this recent photo are taking extreme risks while testing their balancing skills to cross the rundown bamboo bridge on the Gogalichhara river in Joychondi union of Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila.

Rangirkul area in Joychondi union, said the ramshackle bridge with uneven platform poses high risk to local farmers and others who oftentimes get into accidents while carrying produce and other goods on it.

A permanent bridge is urgently needed on the river to ensure safety of everyone -- especially children, women, the elderly and those who require emergency medical care at hospitals in the upazila town.

The number of service seekers at Mithupur Community Clinic drops significantly during the wet season when the bamboo bridge becomes highly hazardous for crossing, said Kamal Ahmed, a community healthcare provider at the facility.

Sutrisna Rani Sarkar, head teacher of Rahmat Mia Government Primary School,

observed that dropout rate of students from the four villages by the bridge is higher than that in surrounding areas and a permanent bridge would help overturn the scenario.

"We went to every office concerned for a bridge and we get lots of promises from candidates when the election comes. But we never got the bridge," said Bimal Das, a member of a local ward.

Joychondi Union Parishad Chairman Kamar Uddin Ahmed said that he raised the demand in vain for a proper bridge at the spot several times during the monthly coordination meeting of Kulaura Upazila Parishad.

Asked, Kulaura Upazila Nirbahi Officer ATM Farhad Chowdhury said he was not aware of the situation, but he would take necessary steps after visiting the area.

Bangladesh Land Port Authority
T.C.B Bhaban (5th Floor)
Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
www.bsbk.gov.bd

Memo No. 18.15.0000.020.07.075.20.45 Dated: 12/01/2021

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of following package from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through and registered bank's branches.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Tender ID	Last date and time for tender/proposal security submission	Tender/proposal opening date & time
	Supply repair & maintenance of ICT related accessories at Benapole Land Port, Benapole, Jessore	534889	31 January 2021 13:00	31 January 2021 14:00

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Anisul Islam
Director (Amin)
Phone: 55013831

GD-87

Expat's wife stabbed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A housewife was stabbed allegedly by a local union parishad (UP) member in Jashore's Chaugachha upazila on Tuesday night as she rejected his illicit proposal.

The alleged culprit also snatched some gold ornament and cash from the victim's house.

After taking treatment at Chougachha Upazila Health Complex, the injured victim, wife of a Malaysia expatriate and mother of two children, lodged a written complaint with Chaugachha Police Station accusing Ali Ahmed, a member of Narayanpur union parishad, yesterday.

According to the complaint, Ali along with his two to three accomplices entered the victim's house around 10:30pm and stabbed her with a knife as she has been rejecting his illicit proposal for long.

Two teens 'kill selves'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Frustrated over their families decision two teenagers, who were in a relationship, took their own lives by taking poison at Tungbaria village in Rangabali upazila on Tuesday.

The deceased, Rajib, 18, son of Zahir Pada of Tungbaria village, and Rabeya, 15, daughter of Ripon Hawladar of the village, were both Class IX students at local Katakhal Secondary School.

Victims' family sources said an affair developed between the two a few months ago and when the matter came to light both the families refused to accept their relationship.

Aggrieved by their families' decision, the duo met at a secluded place at the village on Tuesday evening and took poison there.

Local people spotted their unconscious bodies and took them to Kalapara Upazila Health Complex by a trawler, where the doctors declared them dead.

3 bodies recovered in Natore, Naogaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police yesterday recovered three dead bodies, including a young woman, from different spots in Natore and Naogaon.

Police recovered two bodies, including an unidentified young girl, from separate places in Lalpur upazila of the district yesterday morning.

Selim Reza, officer in charge of Lalpur Police Station, said villagers found the body of a man lying in a wheat field in Chasudanga area under Kadimchilan union and informed the police.

The deceased, Yakub, 38, was son of Alauddin Ali of Lokmanpur village in Bagatipara upazila.

Meanwhile, the body of an unidentified young girl, aged about 20 years, was found lying beside the rail tracks in Patikabari area in the same upazila.

Being informed, police recovered both the bodies and sent those to Natore Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Away in Naogaon, locals spotted the body of a man at a cropland in Mithapur area in Manda upazila yesterday morning and inform them, Officer in Charge of Manda Police Station Shahinur Rahman said.

Being informed, a police team went to the spot and recovered the body of one Abdus Sattar, 52, of Nurullabad village, and sent it to hospital for autopsy.



Workers and employees of Shyampur Sugar Mill, situated in Rangpur's Badarganj upazila, and local sugarcane growers jointly form a human chain in the city's Kachari Bazar area yesterday, urging the government to cancel its decision to shut down six state-owned sugar mills of the country.

PHOTO: STAR

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Four (4) floors each measuring 5000sqft of a modern elegant commercial building at Airport Road, Nikunja-2 Commercial Area is for sale or long-term lease. The building is very close to famous 5-star hotel Le Meridien, Hotel Regency and under-construction Terminal 3 of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. The building is suitable for any business requiring modern facilities with strategic location. Interested parties please contact with confidence to the following number/e-mail. +880-175555101 dreampropertybd@gmail.com

D-15

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মুজিব শতবর্ষে পেনশনারদের জন্য সুখবর!

বেসামরিক পেনশনারগণকে (প্রতিরক্ষা, রেলওয়ে, বিটিসিএল ও ডাকবিভাগ এর পেনশনার ব্যতীত) পেনশন গ্রহণের জন্য আর হিসাবরক্ষণ অফিসে যেতে হবে না। হিসাবরক্ষণ অফিস সরাসরি পেনশনারের ব্যাংক একাউন্টে Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) এর মাধ্যমে পেনশন প্রদান করবে। ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ গড়ার ধারাবাহিকতায় মুজিব শতবর্ষে হিসাব মহানিয়ন্ত্রক এর কার্যালয় তথা অর্থ বিভাগের 'EFT-র মাধ্যমে শতভাগ পেনশন প্রদান' এর অঙ্গীকার বাস্তবায়নে উল্লেখযোগ্য অগ্রগতি সাধিত হয়েছে এবং প্রায় পাঁচ লক্ষ বেসামরিক পেনশনারকে ইতোমধ্যে EFT এর মাধ্যমে পেনশন প্রদান করা হচ্ছে।

পেনশন সেবা সহজীকরণের এ উদ্যোগ বাস্তবায়নে, যে সকল পেনশনার এখনও EFT-র মাধ্যমে পেনশন পাচ্ছেন না তাদেরকে সংশ্লিষ্ট হিসাবরক্ষণ অফিসে নিম্নোক্ত ডকুমেন্টসহ অনতিবিলম্বে উপস্থিত হওয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলোঃ

ক) পূরণকৃত EFT ফরম (ফরমটি www.cga.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইট হতে ডাউনলোড করা যাবে এবং যেকোন হিসাবরক্ষণ অফিস হতেও বিনামূল্যে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে)।

খ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের ফটোকপি।

গ) পেনশনারের নিজ ব্যাংক একাউন্টের MICR চেক বই এর কভার পৃষ্ঠার ফটোকপি।

ঘ) মূল পিপিও বই।

উল্লেখ্য যে ইতোমধ্যে ব্যাংক হতে পেনশন প্রদান বন্ধ করা হয়েছে, এবং ১৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখের পর হিসাবরক্ষণ অফিস হতেও চেক বা এডভাইসের মাধ্যমে কোনো পেনশন প্রদান করা হবে না।

সম্মানিত পেনশনারদের জ্ঞাতার্থে আরও জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, EFT এর মাধ্যমে পেনশন সংক্রান্ত হালনাগাদ তথ্যাদি চিফ একাউন্টস এন্ড ফিন্যান্স অফিসার এর কার্যালয়, পেনশন ও ফান্ড ম্যানেজমেন্ট এর ওয়েবসাইট (www.cafofm.gov.bd) এ পাওয়া যাবে।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
মোঃ জহুরুল ইসলাম
হিসাব মহানিয়ন্ত্রক
হিসাব মহানিয়ন্ত্রক এর কার্যালয়
হিসাব ভবন
সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা-১০০০

জিডি-৮২

JAHANGIRNAGAR UNIVERSITY
Department of Microbiology
Savar, Dhaka 1342, Bangladesh

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)

Ref No.	JU/Microb/BAS/OTM-1	Date:	14.01.2021
1	Division/Ministry	Bangladesh Government BAS-USDA Research and Development (R&D) Programs.	
2	Agency	Bangladesh academy of sciences.	
3	Procuring Entity Name	Department of Microbiology, Jahangirnagar University.	
4	Invitation for	Supplying, installation, testing and commissioning of Real - Time Thermal Cyclor	
5	Invitation Ref No.	JU/Microb/BAS/OTM-1	
6	Procurement Method	National Competitive Tender Open Tendering Method	
7	Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA),	
8	Project/Program Name (if applicable)	The BAS-USDA Endowment Program-4 th Phase, HN 28	
9	Tender Package No.	OTM-1 (Goods)	
10	Tender Package Name	Supplying, installation, testing and commissioning of Real - Time Thermal Cyclor	
11	Tender Publication Date	14.01.2021	Not applicable
12	Tender Last Selling Date	26.01.2021	2:00 PM
13	Tender Closing Date and Time	27.01.2021	2:00 PM
14	Tender Opening Date and Time	27.01.2021	2:30 PM
15	Name & Address of the office(s)	Dr. Md. Salequul Islam, Professor & Principal Investigator, "One - Health Assessment of Manure" Project, 4 th phase BAS-USDA JU HN-28, Department of Microbiology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342.	
NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS			
	Receiving & Opening Tender Document	Dr. Md. Salequul Islam Professor & Principal Investigator, "One - Health Assessment of Manure" Project 4 th phase BAS-USDA JU HN-28, Department of Microbiology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342. Phone: +88-01717-213260.	
16	Eligibility of Tenderer	The Tenderer shall have: • The maximum of one (01) number of arbitration against the Tenderer over a period of last five (05) years. • The Tenderer shall have a minimum of five (05) years of overall experience in the supply of goods and related services. • The Tenderer shall have satisfactorily completed supply of similar goods of minimum 16,00,000.00 (Sixteen Lakh BDTK only) under single contract in the last three (03) years, i. e., years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the news paper. • The Tenderer shall have a minimum amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility of 15,00,000.00 (Fifteen Lakh BDTK only.)	
17	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Supplying, installation, testing and commissioning of Real Time Thermal Cyclor	
18	Price of Tender Document (BDTK)	Cash.2, 000/- (Two Thousand BDTK only) non-refundable.	
19	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location
		Supplying, installation, testing and commissioning of Real Time Thermal Cyclor	Dept. of Microbiology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka 1342
20	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Professor Dr. Md. Salequul Islam	
21	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Principal Investigator, 4 th phase BAS-USDA JU HN-28, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences.	
22	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Principal Investigator, 4 th phase BAS-USDA JU HN-28, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences. Department of Microbiology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342, Bangladesh.	
23	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone:+88-7791045-51, EXT-1566	Fax: +880-2-7791052 E-mail: salequul@gmail.com
24	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.		

GD-80

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hunt for cockpit tapes after Indonesia jet crash

Bad weather forced scores of divers to temporarily suspend their hunt for a crashed Indonesian jet's cockpit voice recorder yesterday, as investigators worked to read critical details on a flight data device that had already been salvaged. The two "black boxes" could supply key clues as to why the Sriwijaya Air Boeing 737-500 plunged about 3,000 metres in less than a minute before slamming into the Java Sea soon after take-off on Saturday, taking with it 62 people. Divers just off the coast of Jakarta had hauled the data recorder to the surface Tuesday, with the hunt now focused on finding a voice recorder on the wreckage-littered seabed. So far authorities have been unable to explain why the 26-year-old plane crashed just four minutes after setting off from Jakarta, bound for Pontianak city on Borneo island, a 90-minute flight away.

Forest loss 'hotspots' bigger than Germany: WWF

More than 43 million hectares of forest -- an area bigger than Germany -- have been lost in a little over a decade in just a handful of deforestation hotspots, conservation organisation WWF said yesterday. Swaths of forest continue to be flattened each year -- mainly due to industrial-scale agriculture -- as biodiversity-rich areas are cleared to create space for livestock and crops. Analysis by WWF found that just 29 sites across South America, Africa and South East Asia were responsible for more than half of the global forest loss. The Brazilian Amazon and Cerrado, the Bolivian Amazon, Paraguay, Argentina, Madagascar, along with Sumatra and Borneo in Indonesia and Malaysia were among the worst affected, it said. Forests are an enormous carbon sink, together with other vegetation and soil sucking up roughly a third of all the carbon pollution humans produce annually. Yet they continue to disappear rapidly, threatening irreparable losses to Earth's crucial biodiversity.

Thousands arrested in South Africa for not wearing masks

South African police have arrested more than 7,000 people caught without face masks in public since the end of December, the government said yesterday. Officials made face coverings mandatory in May last year at the same time as they gradually eased movement restrictions imposed in March to stem coronavirus infections. Police Minister Bheki Cele said more than 20,000 people had been arrested or fined since December 29 for breaching the new rules, including 7,455 people detained for not wearing face masks.

Dynasty politics major cause of social corruption: Modi



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called upon the youth of the country to contribute selflessly and constructively in politics. Speaking at the valedictory function of the second National Youth Parliament Festival yesterday, Modi remarked that politics is a big medium to bring about meaningful change and like every other field, presence of youth is critical in politics also. He called upon the youth to root out dynastic system. Dynasty politics gives rise to incapability and dictatorship in a democratic setup as these dynasts work towards saving the politics of their family and the family in politics, he said. He exhorted the youth to come into politics as their entry will ensure the end of dynasty politics.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS, ANN

US suffers worst day of pandemic

Sees a record 4,470 deaths in 24 hours; Chinese province of 37m declares 'emergency'

AGENCIES

The United States has endured its worst day of the pandemic, with three Americans dying every minute, as China took decisive steps yesterday to stamp out a tiny coronavirus outbreak.

Global infections have soared past 91 million, and the spikes have forced governments around the world to reimpose restrictions such as unpopular and economically painful lockdowns, including in Europe which is battling a devastating second wave.

The United States is the worst-hit nation, logging a record 4,470 deaths in 24 hours on Tuesday, as it reeled from a winter surge in infections that has overwhelmed hospitals and clinics in many areas even as vaccines are rolled out.

"It's most definitely the darkest period of my entire career," said Kari McGuire, a palliative care supervisor at the St Mary hospital in Apple Valley, a small rural town in California.

"I've personally had to watch people that I know, that I care for, watch their loved ones die. It's been very difficult."

Coronavirus patients at the overstretched hospital were crammed into hallways, makeshift ICU beds and even the pediatric ward.

McGuire said there were "astronomical numbers" of Covid-19 deaths -- the United States accounts for a fifth of the world's almost two million coronavirus fatalities.

Authorities on Tuesday announced that starting January 26, all travelers entering the United States by air will need a negative Covid-19 test before departure.

Neighboring Canada also scrambled to contain a



worrying outbreak, ordering residents in Ontario -- its economic engine and most populous province -- to stay home.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford warned that the healthcare system was "on the brink of collapse."

The daily US death toll on Tuesday was greater than the official fatality count for the entire pandemic in China, where the coronavirus was first detected in late 2019.

China largely eliminated its outbreak through a number of strict lockdowns and extensive testing and tracing, but recent weeks have seen a smattering of cases. That has forced more than 20 million people under some form of lockdown in the country's northern regions.

The government of northeastern Heilongjiang province -- home to 37.5 million people -- declared an "emergency state" yesterday after 28 cases were found, telling residents not to leave the province

unless necessary.

China is rushing to inoculate millions using homegrown vaccines ahead of the Lunar New Year travel rush, which authorities fear could boost the risk of transmission.

Japan was set to expand a coronavirus state of emergency on Wednesday beyond greater Tokyo to seven more regions to counter a surge in cases.

While Japan's outbreak remains comparatively small, with around 4,100 deaths overall, medics say hospitals are under heavy strain from the spikes in the worst-affected areas.

Governments worldwide are racing to acquire and deliver vaccines to help end the Covid-19 crisis, though the World Health Organization has warned that coverage is not expected to be wide enough for population-level immunity this year.

One of the Chinese-developed vaccines, CoronaVac, demonstrated a 50 percent efficacy following tests in Brazil, the organization in charge of its production in the South American country said Tuesday.

While that figure is much lower than the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines, Indonesia -- one of the world's most populous nations -- has given it the green light and kicked off a mass inoculation drive with it on Wednesday. President Joko Widodo became Indonesia's first recipient of that shot on live television.

While criticism and fears over slow vaccine rollouts are growing in North America and Europe, there was some positive news Tuesday when the European Union started the approval process for the Oxford-AstraZeneca shot.



Iran new 'home base' of al-Qaeda

Alleges Pompeo

AGENCIES

Outgoing US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo alleged Tuesday that arch-enemy Iran has become a new "home base" for al-Qaeda, surpassing Afghanistan or Pakistan, an assertion mocked by Tehran and questioned by experts.

"Al-Qaeda has a new home base. It is the Islamic Republic of Iran," Pompeo said in a speech at the National Press Club.

"I would say Iran is indeed the new Afghanistan -- as the key geographic hub for Al-Qaeda -- but it's actually worse."

"Unlike in Afghanistan, when al-Qaeda was hiding in the mountains, al-Qaeda today is operating under the hard shell of the Iranian regime's protection."

Pompeo urged more international pressure, calling the alleged alliance a "massive force for evil all over the world."

But he announced sanctions on several individuals and a \$7 million reward for information on an al-Qaeda member he said was believed to be in Iran identified both as Muhammad Abbatay or Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrebi.

Iran, a Shia clerical state, is ideologically opposed both to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group, extreme Sunni movements that are predominantly Arab, and has fought on fronts abroad against both.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that Pompeo "is pathetically ending his disastrous career with more warmongering lies."

"No one is fooled," Zarif wrote.

Israel kills 57 in Syria in deadliest attack since 2018

AFP, Beirut

Israeli raids targeting arms depots and military positions in eastern Syria killed at least 57 pro-regime fighters, in the deadliest such strikes since 2018, a war monitor said yesterday.

The Israeli air force carried out more than 18 strikes against multiple targets in an area stretching from the eastern town of Deir Zor to the Iraqi border, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The overnight raids killed fourteen Syrian soldiers and 27 foreign militia fighters whose nationalities were not immediately known, the Britain-based monitoring group said. The monitor couldn't verify the 16 other people killed.

They wounded at least 37 others. Paramilitaries belonging to the Lebanese Hezbollah movement and the Fatimid Brigade, which is made up of pro-Iranian Afghan fighters, operate in the region, the Observatory said.

Days before the strikes, the Fatimid Brigade transported a consignment of

Iranian-manufactured weapons to eastern Syria from neighbouring Iraq.

They were stored in the region targeted yesterday, the monitor said.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment.

The latest raids came hours after separate strikes near the Iraqi border killed at least 12 Iran-backed militia fighters on Tuesday.

The Observatory said it could not identify the warplanes responsible for the earlier strikes.

It is less than a week since the last wave of Israeli strikes in Syria.

On January 7, Israel targeted positions in the south and in the southern outskirts of Damascus, killing three pro-Iran fighters.

Israel routinely carries out raids in Syria, mostly against targets linked to Iran in what it says is a bid to prevent its arch foe from consolidating a foothold on its northern border.

Observers have warned that Donald Trump and Israel could up the ante against Iran and its regional allies in the dying days of the US president's tenure.



We must strengthen our nuclear arsenal

Says Kim as key party meeting ends

AFP, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledged to strengthen his country's nuclear arsenal as he delivered his closing address to a top ruling party meeting, state television showed yesterday, days before Joe Biden takes office as US president.

Kim is looking to grab the attention of the incoming Biden administration, analysts say, with his country more isolated than ever after closing its borders to protect itself against the coronavirus pandemic.

A nuclear summit between Kim and outgoing US President Donald Trump in Hanoi in February 2019 broke down over sanctions relief and what Pyongyang would be willing to give up in return.

"We must further strengthen the nuclear war deterrent while doing our best to build up the most powerful military strength," Kim told the Workers' Party congress, footage broadcast on Korea Central Television showed.

Thousands of delegates and attendees -- none of them wearing masks -- repeatedly rose to their feet in the cavernous April 25 House of Culture venue to interrupt his speech with applause.

Earlier in the eight-day meeting, which has lasted twice as long as the previous gathering in 2016, Kim called the US "the fundamental obstacle to the development of our revolution and our foremost principal enemy."

Its policy towards the North "will never change, whoever comes into power", he added, without mentioning Biden by name.

The North had completed plans for a nuclear-powered submarine, he said -- a strategic game-changer -- and offered a shopping list including hypersonic gliding warheads, military reconnaissance satellites and solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).



EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW OF DR. MOHAMMED FARASHUDDIN AN ACADEMICIAN'S PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

During the last few decades, Bangladesh has made notable progress in the education sector across all levels. While the country has reached near-universal net primary enrollment rate, it has also made the tertiary education accessible, resulting in increasing enrollment in colleges, universities, and polytechnic institutes. One of the key drivers in achieving this change has been the support from the private sector actors, especially in establishing private universities and polytechnic institutes during the nineties.

As of 2019, according to the World Bank, 45% of the tertiary education enrollments have been in the private sector tertiary education institutions. Besides, the enhanced world-class curriculum offered by some of these institutions has helped shape a strong workforce for this fast-growing economy. One of the visionaries who has played a significant role in promoting tertiary level education in Bangladesh in the private sector is the founder of East West University, Dr. Mohammed Farashuddin. The aim was simple, "To provide quality education at an affordable cost in Bangladesh," as stated on the university's website.

To know more about what motivated the erudite scholar to resist the temptation of a comfortable life abroad and return to his motherland to work towards promoting education, we caught up with him on the second episode of Preronar Kotha.

"My education was like a religion to my mother. And my father used to think that education is imperative for contributing to the building of the nation," said the academician at the beginning of the interview.

Encouragement from his teachers greatly influenced his lifelong pursuit of education. While discussing his motivations, he shared an anecdote from his high school days, "I used to respect our headmaster Mr. Suruj Ali a lot, even though some people were afraid of him. On our second day at school, he took our English class. There, he asked a very tough question, and I answered that from the last bench. He asked some more questions, and I answered them as well. He then brought me forward to the first bench, where the class toppers used to sit."

In 1966, he joined the elite erstwhile Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) and worked in the field administration as Sub-divisional Officer (SDO). After the liberation war in 1971, he got appointed as the Private Secretary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, where he worked very close to him and oversaw the socio-economic and cultural advancement, formulation, planning, and implementation of the pro-poor and anti-poverty economic policies of the war-ravaged country.

In 1975, he went to Boston University, USA to pursue his Masters and PhD. His perseverance, hard work and focus helped him earn his PhD within 3 years 9 months, while most people take much longer than that. Economics has always fascinated him and the intriguing concept of cost-benefit analysis which he researched as part of his PhD work has later helped him in every aspect of his professional career.

Later on, despite being engaged in full-time professional commitment in his roles in the public and development

sectors including the United Nations, Dr. Farashuddin never gave up on his passion for education and teaching: "I have worked in three countries. Anywhere I went, I tried to find out if I could teach a subject there." Even today, at this age, Dr. Farashuddin loves and enjoys teaching and interacting with the young talented minds.

His dream to contribute to the education sector has made him establish East West University, the third-largest private university in Bangladesh, with the aim to disseminate knowledge and education and develop human capital. Dr. Farashuddin has always been outspoken and tough in making the right decisions. He mentioned that his ability to make tough decisions enabled him to make some positive changes in this professional life.

As the Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, he has implemented his learnings and knowledge and executed some rigorous decisions to address the issues of corporate governance. "Directors used to default loans from their own banks, political people used to sit on the director's board. I put an end to all these."

In order to encourage and attract talented officials to Bangladesh Bank, Dr. Farashuddin did one more thing, "Those who joined Bangladesh Bank with four first-class degrees would get four increments, which would ultimately make their net salary a lucrative amount."

As an academician, he believes that our education system in Bangladesh needs some major changes to reduce inequality and to build a better value system. He emphasized the importance of community-based schooling for children. "We need area based or community-based schools. Students need to interact with and go to school with children from their own locality. Uniforms and food will be the same for everyone. Currently in Bangladesh, there are only a few schools, few colleges and few higher educational institutes which are good, if we have locality based schooling and everyone is provided the same education, there won't be education/learning divide."

The devotion to give back to the country and community where he was brought up made Dr. Farashuddin leave a lucrative and rewarding career in the USA after his PhD and return to his motherland. This sacrifice and patriotism stand as an inspiration to our younger generation. He mentioned during the interview.

"I believe that if we Bangladeshis do not stick with each other, if we do not help each other, then we can't take the country to the highest level. This is why I came back."

While conversing, he even added, "If I had Aladdin's lamp, I would change the way our students think. I want them to engage in creative thinking. I feel inspired when I talk to students who came back to Bangladesh to give something back to the country."

The interview was conducted by Dr. Melita Mehjabeen, Associate Professor, IBA, University of Dhaka as part of "Preronar Kotha", an initiative by Prerona Foundation.

You can watch the full interview on the YouTube channel of Prerona Foundation.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Financial Reporting Council (FRC)

Finance Division, Ministry of Finance
House 40/A, Road No.20
Mohakhali DOHS, Dhaka-1206
www.frcbd.org



Date: 13.01.2021

Ref: No- 174/FRC/Admin/2020/330

Enlistment of Panel Lawyer for FRC

Financial Reporting Council (FRC), a statutory authority, established under the Financial Reporting Act, 2015 (Act No. 16 of 2015) is requesting application from qualified Lawyer's for enlistment as Panel Lawyer under the following procedure, terms and conditions:

Procedure of application:

Application must be submitted by post/courier within 25th of January, 2021 to the Chairman, Financial Reporting Council along with Curriculum Vitae (CV) with personal details & attested copies of all academic certificates, mark sheets, Bar Council Enrolment Certificate, Certificate of High Court Permission Test (if any), Appellate Division Enrolment (if any), Testimonial from concern Bar Association as a member, NID, Two copies passport size photograph, Experience certificates (enlistment to any other organizations, if any).

Terms and conditions/Terms of references:

Applicant must be enrolled in the Bangladesh Bar Council with minimum 05 (five) years of experiences (on the date of publishing this advertisement) of working in the relevant filed with profound knowledge in Company Law, Banking Law, Commercial Law, Securities Law, Civil Law, Criminal Law, Land Law, Procurement Law, Financial Reporting, Auditing and Employment related Laws. Other terms and conditions may be seen at website.

Application Form, Terms of References and chart of fees may be downloaded from the website of FRC.

For any queries please communicate to: Dr. Ahamduzzaman, Executive Director (ED), Enforcement Division, Financial Reporting Council. Phone: +88 02 9833746.

(Dr. Md. Hamid Ullah Bhuiyan)
Chairman
Financial Reporting Council.

BOOK REVIEW: NON-FICTION

Shashi Tharoor Looks Through A Glass Darkly, For Democracy

FAKRUL ALAM

This is a must-read book for anyone worried about the vulnerability of democracy in our time and the rise of authoritarian governments everywhere. It is an apt reminder of the importance of democratic alternatives to totalitarian tendencies masquerading under populism. Surely, the dire consequences of tampering with democracy's fundamental principles should be disturbing anyone concerned even a bit about human civilisation. The phenomenon of Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Jair Bolsonaro, Viktor Orban, Recep Tayyip Erdogan—all "strong" men marring democracy—though depressing, is worth reflecting on.

In *The Battle of Belonging: of Nationalism, Patriotism and What It Means to Be Indian* (Aleph Book Company, 2020), Shashi Tharoor mentions these democracy-threatening leaders (he dubs them "oxymoronically" as constituting a "Nationalist international"), as well as ideal ones we can continue to seek guidance from, while ruminating about the state of democracy in his nation. As the inside cover flap informs us, he is (in his third term) "the longest serving member of the Lok Sabha" from his Kerala constituency, winner of India's Sahitya Akademi award, debater par excellence (watch him speak on YouTube at the Oxford Union debate, "Britain Does Owe India Reparations"), a former Under Secretary-General of the UN, and a State Minister in the last Congress government. The book under review is only the most recent of his other widely-read and thought-provoking titles.

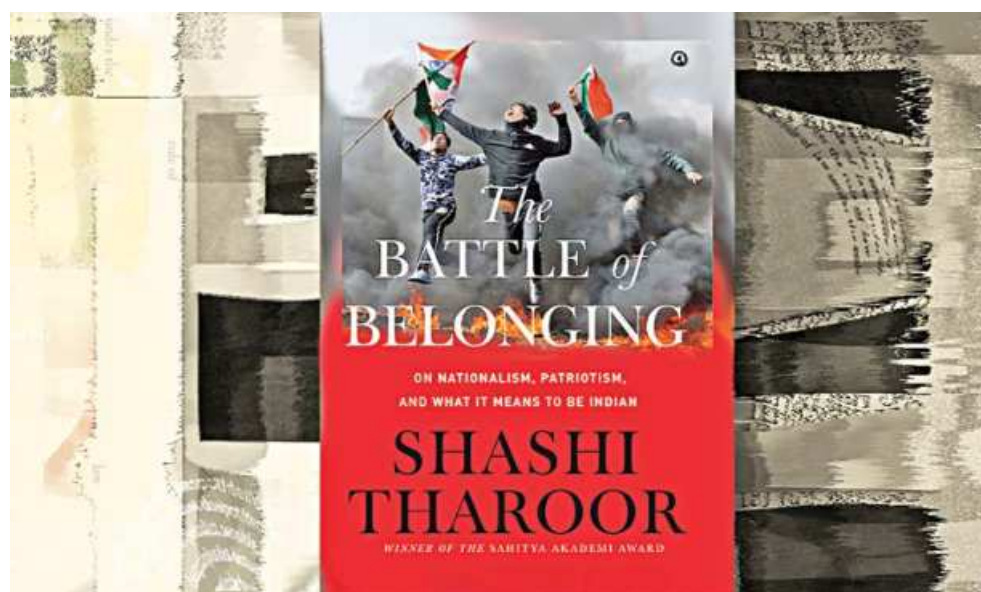
Tharoor's is a learned and up-to-date work—it has 492 footnotes and a bibliography 25 pages long in addition to many in-text references to happenings only some months old at this time. He has read extensively and thought at length about the crisis imperiling democracy in his country. Seeing Trump-intoxicated demonstrators storm Capitol Hill, Tharoor would have surely linked CNN images of the rabid mob assaulting the citadel of American democracy to Indian media images of recent times—Kashmiris paralysed by the security "lockdown" and the communications "blackout" imposed on Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, or working-class Indians and immigrant labourers stranded everywhere after the Coronavirus lockdown enforced by India's central government in March 2020.

On the one hand, *The Battle of Belonging* is a paean to an India heir to "a rich and diverse and plural civilization". This is the India that Tagore, Gandhi, Ambedkar (three

of Tharoor's heroes) and others envisaged in their different ways. This was an India that was a herald of parliamentary government, of "liberal constitutionalism", and a vibrant even if not always perfect postcolonial democracy, of democratic pluralism, and the kind of civic nationalism where diverse peoples of different origins, religions, languages, classes and castes kept overcoming all sorts of odds in their bid for integration. On the other hand, as far as Tharoor is concerned, is present-day India where democracy is being undermined by a majoritarian rule that has been taking advantage of democratic norms only to subvert them. He sees in his India today the nurturing of the cult of the strong man-ruler, "ethno-

sense of belonging, not just to a physical country called India, but to the idea that it represented in the world." Tharoor's passion does make him insistent and repetitive at times, but he has a mission to persuade his Indian readers through this book. He absolves himself on this point with a sentence worth quoting—"As I never tire of pointing out, the fundamental DNA of India, then, is of one land embracing many."

And why should I, a Bangladeshi, value his book? Bangladeshi nationalism is central to my thinking, but I see it as part of a quartet, along with socialism, democracy, and secularism—all embodied in our 1972 constitution. From what I can deduce from his book, his vision



COLLAGE: MEHRUL BARI

religious nationalism" in ferment, and people being cajoled for devious purposes through surreptitious use of new media channels.

Tharoor writes with passion, urgency, and learning. His 410 pages of text is in very readable and often eloquent prose; however, he wears his learning with ease and wit. He illustrates his concerns and his convictions with impressive writerly skills and telling examples from world history. He has, obviously, a phenomenal memory and a gift for apposite quotes. Most important, he writes about his country entirely as a patriot; as he tells us in his Prologue, although he has "spent a lifetime acquiring and embodying a cosmopolitan, even globalist, sensibility", his father had passed on to him "a passionate

of India is not dissimilar. Also, like Indians, Bangladeshis can lay claim to a heritage that has evolved out of "a shared history". Like him, we should be wary of, and vocal against, encroachments on basic human rights in our country every which way we can and articulate our concerns as best as we are able to from where we are. Finally, like him too, let us look forward to the optimal functioning of "pluralist democracy," operating "under the rule of law" in our beloved country.

The Battle of Belonging is available for sale at Bookworm Bangladesh.

Fakrul Alam is UGC Professor of English at the University of Dhaka.

BOOK REVIEW: DRAMA

The Fall of A Great America

SARAH ANJUM BARI

In a near-perfect echo of today's world, Nobel Prize-winning Elfriede Jelinek's *On the Royal Road: The Bergher King* (Seagull Books, 2020) is stuffed breathless with metaphors, innuendoes, and anecdotes as it satirises US President Donald Trump.

The foremost of these lies hidden in the title itself—the play follows the journey of an unnamed land after its petulant and destructive new "King" has just been voted into power; but the "Bergher" in the subtitle refers both to the German word, *bürger*, for "citizens", and to the US President infamous for his plump, garish, golden-orange aesthetic. Such is the nature of Jelinek's humour, translated from the German by Gitta Honegger. The things they write of are funny because they critique the obvious and the discomfiting—the fact that the people "cast their vote, but don't know who they voted for, even though they did it themselves," for instance.

Jelinek finished writing the script three weeks after Trump was elected President on November 8, 2016. By the time Honegger began writing her Introduction to the English translation in September 2019, wheels were turning on Trump's impeachment inquiry. The text, therefore, evolved almost at par with the pace of life under Trump's rule, which, as the play recounts, has included everything from word vomit on Twitter to tax fraud, displays of aggression, sexual predation, denial of truth, and individuals being stripped of finances, citizenship, and human dignity. In one of the most relatable instances, Jelinek writes, "Everyone has his own facts and everyone else also has his facts, but different ones. Of course, they are not the same, but both are true. Thus everybody has a weapon against everybody." At the centre of this storm brewed by misinformation stands the golf-loving, gold-loving King, who insists, "Only I tell the truth, I alone, I have been legitimized, here is my king's id which has been forged for a

long time, but now no longer, now it's the real thing."

To control all this chaos, Jelinek presents the play entirely in the form of a monologue, delivered by a blind seer in the Bergher King's court. This seer is a manifestation of Tiresias of *Oedipus Rex*, who foretold Oedipus' destiny. Here, though, the seer-narrator is a woman—that creature that both Trump and his predecessors of classic literature so loved to silence, and she is also Ms Piggy of *The Muppet*



COLLAGE: SARAH ANJUM BARI

Show—as fitting a soothsayer for a cartoonish King as can be.

Seasoned readers will notice how the play engages with Greek myths and the philosophies of Heidegger and Girard to reveal the ironies and failures of our modern existence, buoyed and weighed down by capitalism, neighbourly competition, and the violence it all brews. For many, however, the rambling sentences and absence of a plot and chapters can be difficult to digest. But if one can find the time, each and every word by

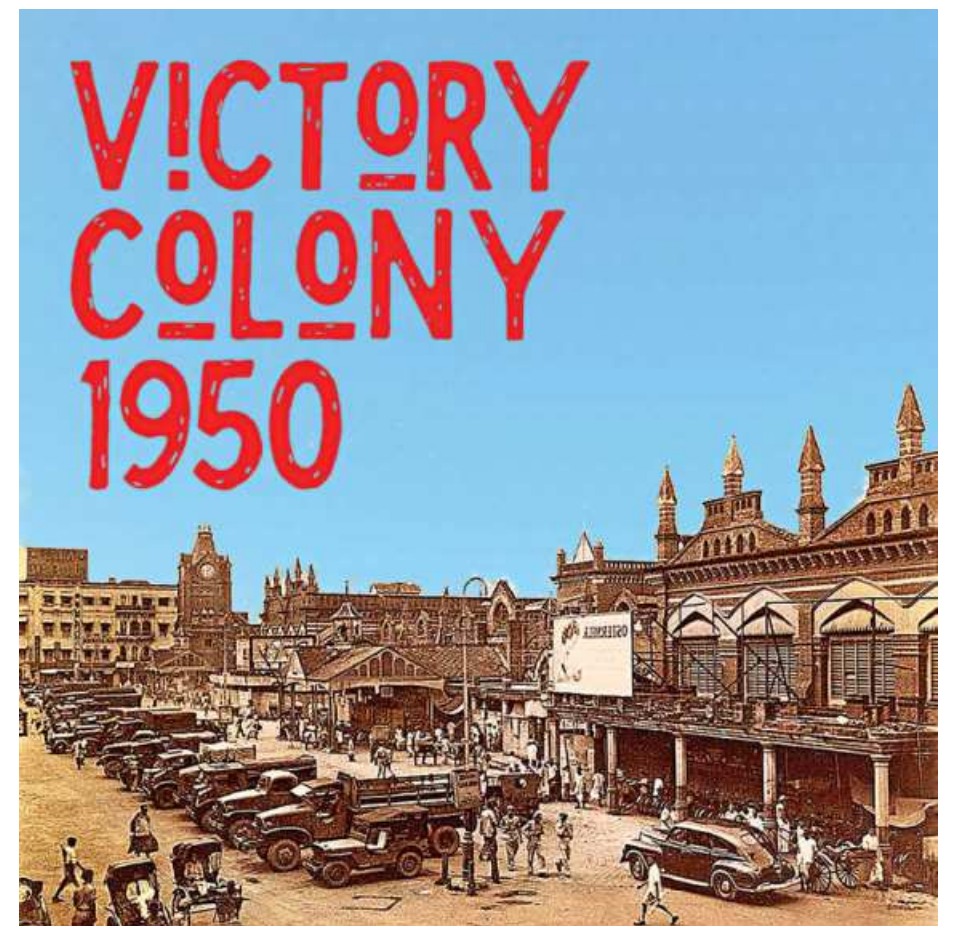
Jelinek can be examined to reveal harrowing truths about a world endangered by voice given to the blind, i.e. the world of January 6, 2021, when hundreds of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol to challenge a free and fair election after being incited by his speech.

Jelinek's play was published before the breach of the Capitol, but in a fitting warning against the power of hate speech, it begins with a reminder that, "In the Beginning Was the Word", that "[e]verything has happened



already, but isn't over yet." In the pages that follow, the play reveals unflinchingly how complicit everyone has been in the entire spectacle of the Trump presidency. And because Jelinek never actually names the country nor the leader, it becomes a raw and scary tale of power left unchecked which can apply anywhere in the world.

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COLLAGE: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

Sweet, Sour, and Savoury: A Post-Partition Tale

MURSA LIN MOSADDEQUE

There are few pleasures in the life of a Bangali that come close to the sheer delight of basking in the rare but sweet Sun on a winter morning on the balcony, accompanied by the aroma of a cup of tea, sweetened with milk and sugar, while you immerse yourself in a book that won't spoil the harmony of this experience. Bhaswati Ghosh's debut novel *Victory Colony, 1950* (Yoda Press, 2020) fills this role quite well.

Amala is a young refugee whose parents were the victims of communal riots in East Pakistan after the Partition. She also loses her only brother soon after arriving in Kolkata. When Amala is being escorted to one of the refugee camps, we meet Manas, a sensible young man from an educated, upper class Kolkata family.

The strength that imbues Amala gives the novel its heart. She is the symbol of the refugees' endurance in the face of constant struggle for survival. Manas's perspective on the influx of refugees to his city sounds like the voice of conscience. If Amala represents the refugees from the East, Manas can be read as the bright side of Kolkata which has opened its doors to welcome the stranded.

Manas's attraction for Amala is easily felt from the beginning of the novel and the progression of their relationship does not come as much of a surprise. Through their bond, the novel aims to symbolise the harmonious existence of the refugees and their culture in Kolkata.

As an instrument of storytelling, the novel is delightful in its reliance on Bangalis' love for food, which has not been done before. From Chitra Mashi's *macher jhol* and fried fritters to the moments when Amala and Manas share a pack of *muri-makha* in the refugee camp, it effortlessly penetrates the personal and cultural spaces with food.

In fact, reading *Victory Colony, 1950* at

times feels like a trip to my maternal aunt's place. The probability that the trip will end badly is slim to none, it is filled to the brim with affection and warmth, and not an hour goes by when my palate is not treated with a delicacy. (I hope my mother doesn't read this, or she will certainly yell—*keno, toke ami khete dei na?* One of the great things about this novel is that it has no shortage of dotting *mashis*.)

While the book spends considerable time in detailing Manas's aristocratic home, however, it dwells surprisingly little on the existential crisis of the refugees. Nor does it aim to portray a complete picture of how the people of Kolkata responded to this huge influx to their city. We see Manas's enthusiasm in helping the refugees but he is a college educated member of an aristocratic family. The confrontation of the local zamindar with the residents of the Bijoy Nagar (Victory Colony) cannot be taken as representative of the response by the general people of Kolkata across classes and communities.

Over the recent years, we have seen Donald Trump and his supporters' reaction to Mexican immigrants pouring in from America's southern border. In our own backyard, we have been reluctant to share our resources with Rohingya refugees who have narrowly fled the grasp of death. Unlike Manas and his group of volunteers, the incessant buzz here is—when will they go away?

As an antidote, *Victory Colony, 1950* makes a case for finding hope and resilience when life throws its harshest weather at you—the cold and foggy early hours of the morning making way for the glimmering, warm rays of the Sun.

Mursalin Mosaddeque grew up in the suburban town of Rangpur in Northern Bengal. Instagram: @bluets001

THE BOOK REPORT

Blistering Blue Barnacles, That Red Haired Kid is 92!

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Read our tribute to *Tintin* comics online, on *The Daily Star* website, @thedailystarbooks on Instagram, fb.com/DailyStarBooks on Facebook, and @DailyStarBooks on Twitter.



The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 2021, POUISH 30, 1427 BS

Police officials are not above the law

Higher authorities cannot absolve themselves of responsibility for corruption of those under them

WE must applaud the recent observation from the High Court which stated that “a handful corrupt police officials who have been tasked with the duty to protect and preserve the life of innocent people of this country became errant...”, asking “how will the general people repose faith on the police force and find the police station as their safe place to register their grievance?” This observation was made in reference to the wrongful arrest and incarceration of Md Arman, who spent five years in jail for a crime he didn’t commit.

What is important to note here is that the HC did not just limit its observation to the errant police officials in question. It added, “...their higher authority has miserably failed to hold these corrupt, defiant police officials accountable for which they cannot absolve their responsibility”, specifically stating that in the case of Arman, the IGP in question “cannot skirt around his responsibility on such a planned, deliberate and wrongful act”.

While the observations were delivered as part of the 39-page full text verdict on Md Arman’s unlawful incarceration, we hope that the implications for the police force will go far beyond this one case. The HC has clearly outlined a fundamental issue that is rotting the Bangladesh Police from within, and fast depleting public trust and confidence in our nation’s law enforcers—a blatant abuse of power that allows certain police officials to hold themselves above the law, even while “enforcing” it, and use their influence to engage in corrupt and unscrupulous activities. And although the HC has pointed out that this does not mean the entire police force is to blame, it is clear that we can also no longer shift the blame onto rogue officials without acknowledging the failure of the higher authorities to hold these officials to account. As long as they choose to look away, they too are complicit in these crimes.

It is no secret that arbitrary arrest and detention, along with custodial torture, is a common occurrence in Bangladesh. As recently as January 3, police were accused of the custodial torture and subsequent death of 30-year-old law student Rejaul Karim Reja in Barisal. The stereotype of the violent, corrupt police officer from Bangladesh is of great concern, not just for the higher authorities of the police force but also for the government and the entire nation. At this point, simply taking disciplinary action is not enough. There must be a cultural shift from within the police force itself that expels such abusive and immoral practices from within, and all such corrupt officials must be tried for breaking the laws that they are meant to uphold. Without radical change, it is the marginalised citizens of this country like Md Arman who will continue to suffer and have their human rights violated, with little recourse to justice.

Community initiative for building roads commendable

But why doesn’t the union parishad have funds for such development work?

IT is encouraging to see what people can achieve when they join hands to make a difference in their own lives and communities. As reported in The Daily Star on January 13, around 700 inhabitants—around 500 men and 200 women—of Netrakona’s Kalmakanda upazila have been working voluntarily to build a new road which, once completed, will reduce the sufferings of around 15,000 villagers. The volunteers hope that they will complete the work of the 4.5-kilometre road within a week, which is quite impressive.

Reportedly, building a road through these villages has been a long-time demand of the residents but it could not be done due to financial constraints of the union parishad. According to the local union parishad chairman, with their limited budget it is not even possible to repair the roads, and building new ones is just impossible.

It is easily understandable what happens when there is no proper road in a village. It is not only that communications with the nearby villages and towns get hampered, the villagers also cannot have their basic rights ensured. Education of children becomes very difficult as schools and colleges are usually situated miles away. It gets particularly difficult for girls to continue their education after the primary level if the schools are far away and the road communication is not good enough. And getting healthcare at upazila health complexes or nearby hospitals during emergency situations also becomes a challenge. Moreover, people’s sufferings increase during monsoon, especially when they have to transport their agricultural produce or other goods to the nearby bazars.

While we commend such a community initiative to build the much-needed road in Netrakona, we also wonder why the local union parishad does not have funds to build the road. According to the union parishad chairman who inspired the villagers to build the road on their own, his appeals to the upazila parishad and local administration for building a new road through the villages have fallen on deaf ears. The authorities concerned must give an explanation regarding this. Finally, we hope the new road will bring better days for the people in the eight villages in Netrakona.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Why sex education

Sexual education is not about encouraging one to have sex. Rather, it teaches one to have a safe and responsible sexual life. It teaches consent and can cure many problems. I think the government should incorporate sexual education in school and college curriculums.

Iftekhar Ahmed Sakib, Dhaka



GOLAM MORTOZA

But that wasn’t the end of it. The post-incident scenario is turning out to be more pathetic.

First, a section of people reached the conclusion that the victim and her family were responsible for this. Why did she go to her friend’s residence? Why did her mother allow her to go there? Social media has been flooded by such types of questions. For many, the rape was a foregone conclusion. They also raised questions about the dress of the girl, her intention to go to her friend’s house, and her “love affair” with the boy, thus conveniently shifting the blame onto the victim herself. In short, she created the situation that led to her eventual murder.

Unfortunately, our society is accustomed to blaming a rape victim whether she belongs to the lower class, the middle class or the upper class. Maybe this mentality is a new phenomenon, or maybe it has been going on for long. It’s hard to determine since there was no social media in the past that could give us unfettered access to the deepest reaches of people’s minds. But social media has certainly brought this to the fore, and its impact has been far-reaching as more people seem to be influenced by this toxic mentality.

Several factors are responsible for the growing trend of victim blaming. When a “responsible” person or institute in our society expresses such mentality, it influences others. Recently, a lawmaker, while delivering his speech in parliament, blamed women’s attire and their “freedom of movement” for the growing incidence of rapes. It met no strong protest either inside or outside the parliament. The question is, how much impact does a comment like this from a lawmaker have on our society? A more pertinent question is, what do such remarks and the fact that they meet no significant resistance tell us about the entire society?

The role of police in such cases has long been a thorny issue. Police are often seen to spread unfair claims and insinuations centring the victim. Then the gossip mill goes into overdrive, spreading these insinuations far and wide. In case of the Kalabagan rape victim, police have adopted almost a similar approach. A short summary of what police said would be that she was not raped. Rather, everything happened through mutual

understanding. It appears police were rather quick to conclude that it was consensual sex.

After the incident, the accused, Dihan, took the girl, who was suffering heavy bleeding, to hospital and said she was 19 years old although, in reality, she was 17 years and three months old. When the girl was dying, Dihan could sense that she would have to be presented as being above 18. Police picked it up and mentioned the girl’s age as 19 in their case statement. Even when the victim’s mother showed a certificate proving she was indeed 17, police refused to correct it and instead gave priority to Dihan’s statement. The mother brought this allegation against the police. The law enforcement agency members reasoned that they had collected her age from hospital documents. But hospital authorities only recorded it based on Dihan’s statement without any verification.

fact that some of them did makes it a burden for all.

The media should have asked police why they tried to shift the responsibility onto the victim. Instead, they readily accepted the police version. This is irresponsible journalism. There is no chance to get the victim’s version of the story as she is no more. But attempts are being made to justify the crime by pushing forward the theory of “mutual understanding”, so much so that it would appear as if the victim gave consent to her own murder.

The fact of the matter will be known after a fair investigation. The irony is, police will conduct that investigation. If police have made those comments based on assumptions or bias before the actual investigation, it already constitutes a breach of trust. This is a fate that many victims of various crimes have to suffer from.



SOURCE: BULLYINGRECOVERY.ORG

Two things become apparent from police activities: First, police want to hold on to the claim of “mutual understanding”. Second, they want to prove that the victim was above 18. If these two things can be proved, the pressure on Dihan would be significantly less.

Why would police want that? What are the reasons for such attitude? Why would police give priority to Dihan’s statement instead of the victim’s age certificate?

There are other issues that we should also talk about. For example, the role of media in such cases cannot be avoided. Most of the mainstream media organisations did not disclose the photo or identity of the victim. But her identity was disclosed in many substandard media outlets and social media. The police version of the story was overlaid by these platforms. The sensitivity expected of newsmen was invisible in these cases. True, not all media outlets did it, but the

Incidentally, class division continues to prevail in our society. There is an anti-English medium school sentiment among a majority of the people. It is often assumed that those who study in English medium schools belong to the upper class and are therefore isolated from mainstream society. Their lifestyle and behaviours are thought of as imports from the western society. But the fact is, not just children from the upper class, but those from the middle class now also study in different English-medium schools. Many middle-class families are opting for English-medium schools as the quality of education in Bangla-medium schools is deteriorating. The same can be said about private universities. It is wrong and even dangerous to assume that the students of these schools and universities are isolated from society. Their involvement with the movement of Gonojagoron Mancha and anti-VAT movement are

The role of police in such cases has long been a thorny issue. Police are often seen to spread unfair claims and insinuations centring the victim. Then the gossip mill goes into overdrive, spreading these insinuations far and wide.

good examples that show that they are not.

Dihan’s father has recently retired from his government service. Some media outlets have reported that he owns a huge amount of wealth. Everybody knows how much salary a sub-registrar gets. Most of them are allegedly involved with corruption and irregularities. This is applicable not just for sub-registrars, but all so for many bureaucrats. As per information from the foreign minister, those who laundered money and bought houses in the Begumpara of Canada are either former or incumbent bureaucrats. So, irregularities and corruption have become an integral part of the society. And it got institutionalised due to lack of good governance.

Now, it seems the society is facing the consequences. When a young person gains access to unlimited money and luxurious cars provided by their guardian’s illegal income, it is bound to have a negative impact on them. In such a situation, someone like Dihan can abuse his freedom and enjoy his life through unfair means. He does not have to fear the consequences of killing and rape, as he is protected by the “safety net” of ill-gotten wealth. It has nothing to do with the English vs Bangla medium division. It has become the “way” of our society.

Society is changing fast, as is the entire world, thanks to modern technology. Guardians, therefore, will have to be more careful. Research can be initiated on how parents should act with children of different ages. It is a necessary first step. But the most important thing is to change the deep-seated patriarchal attitude of the society and state machineries. We must understand that shifting responsibility onto the victim is similar to taking a stance in favour of the accused.

Golam Mortoza is a journalist at The Daily Star.

We must do more to protect our children from sexual abuse

NURJAHAN KHAN

WHAT comes to your mind when you hear the term “school”? You think of a space where children go to learn and develop their skills. A place where children learn to grow intellectually and emotionally, make friends, create beautiful memories, and feel safe. We do not think of it as a place where children might undergo horrifying experiences that can leave a life-long psychological scar on them.

Incidents of mental and physical abuse of children at the hands of their teachers and schoolmates occur all the time at educational institutions globally. Child abuse has become a global concern as it has damaging consequences for both the children and society. The violence subjects the children to unimaginable pain and humiliation, which affects their learning process and negatively impacts their personalities and prospects.

According to the Center for Global Development, a total of approximately 400,000 girls across 10 countries were reported to have experienced sexual abuse in schools in the year between March 2019 and March 2020. Often teachers are the perpetrators of sexual harassment. For example, according to PISA for Development, one in eight boys and girls in Senegal and Zambia have been reported to be harassed by a teacher or staff member within a month.

The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) programme conducted a survey among numerous countries where they asked women whether they had been sexually abused by a teacher when they were in school. The survey found that over 10 million women in India, 6 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and 3 million in Nigeria were sexually abused when they were in school.

The worst part of the situation is that most of the time, teachers are not held accountable for sexual harassment and abuse of children. Moreover, the Center for Global Development has also found that many countries do not even have a



COURTESY: AUTHOR

code of conduct for teachers that would typically ban sexual abuse or harassment of students. As a result, children lose their trust in adults and law enforcement, and it can permanently impact them. It also forces them to drop out of school, affecting their education and leading to a segment of the generation to remain uneducated and unable to contribute to the development of the economy.

In recent times, Bangladesh has also witnessed a rise in the number of child abuse cases. According to research by Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), 571 children were raped or gang-raped, and 87 kids were sexually harassed in 2018. In 2019, 164 children were raped or gang-raped, whereas 27 kids were sexually harassed between January and March last year. However, according to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), the actual number of children abused every year is much higher. As a matter of fact, many incidents are not reported to the local authorities or any authorities at all.

The abuse is taking place on both genders but more on girls than boys. However, according to a United Nations study in 2013, definitions of violence, harassment, and abuse are not consistent globally. This further deepens the problem.

Violence against children is preventable and must not be tolerated. Children have the right to be in a safe school environment where they will be able to learn to the best of their ability. Every child has the right to go to school without fearing their teachers or schoolmates. To address this, an organisation named Darkness to Light provides a training called “Stewards of Children” to address sexual abuse of children. Stewards of Children uses real people and real stories to represent how children can be protected. The training provides in-depth information and skills development on various topics. The training is designed to help people recognise and report child abuse. It also

teaches ways in which bystanders can protect children from sexual abuse, what constitutes healthy and inappropriate touch for children, how to talk to children about protecting themselves from sexual abuse, etc.

A framework consisting of five steps has been created to protect children and prevent child sexual abuse. The first is to learn the facts. If we do not understand child abuse, then we cannot end it. Secondly, we have to create a safe environment to reduce abuse risks. Over 80 percent of sexual abuse cases occur in isolated, one-on-one situations. Thirdly, we must openly talk about the issue. Talking freely breaks down barriers and reduces the stigma associated with sexual abuse. By talking openly about our bodies, sex, and boundaries, we can encourage children to share. Fourthly, we need to recognise the signs of child abuse. Signs of abuse are not always obvious. Emotional and behavioural changes can be noticed. Lastly, it is our responsibility to react appropriately to suspicion, disclosure, or discovery of abuse. Only 4 to 5 percent of all sexual abuse reports are false; the rest are real.

Very few schools in Bangladesh have proper child protection policies and training in place to safeguard the students. Only a handful have strict child protection policies and training requirements. Schools should conduct child protection training every year. All the faculty, admin and support staff, including the gardeners, canteen staff, guards, and technicians, should participate in it.

If all schools take such initiatives, it can prevent child abuse in educational institutions significantly. The violence is preventable and proper initiatives and knowledge can tackle the issue and provide a safe environment for the children and the youth to learn and grow. Child abuse can happen anywhere, and as adults, we must do everything we can to prevent it.

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What's Eating Quader Mirza?



OF MAGIC & MADNESS
BADIUZZAMAN BAY

HOW well do you follow the headlines of your newspapers? If one were to run a quiz to see how well the readers of *The Daily Star* stack up against each other, the question that is most likely to be at the top of the list would be about the name that appeared most in the headlines of our central pages over the last week. The answer may surprise you: Abdul Quader Mirza, a local Awami League leader and incumbent mayor of Basurhat municipality in Companiganj, Noakhali. He grabbed headlines for seven consecutive days starting from January 7 in the front or back pages of *The Daily Star*, exceeding the number of appearances by his party chief, who usually has this place of honour when it comes to headlines or placement of new items in national newspapers.

I drop this little statistical truth bomb merely to illustrate the curious case of Quader Mirza, who has sparked a political firestorm with his *shatya bachan* (or truth telling) in the run-up to the second phase of municipality elections due on January 16. A two-time mayor of Basurhat, Quader Mirza is now up for re-election. But since declaring his manifesto on December 31, he has been seemingly on a warpath against his own party. In comments made in public meetings and to journalists, he let off a dizzying drumbeat of criticism, grievances and warnings, directed not just at the who's who in greater Noakhali politics but also the central leadership.

What makes his case so curious is that he is also the younger brother of Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, an obvious source of discomfort for the party rank and file. Although he claims that he merely meant to talk about corruption and irregularities in regional politics—not about national political issues—the remarks speak for themselves. Before we go into the broader implications of this issue, here's a motley assortment of Mirza's most contentious comments.

There are some sycophants involved with greater Noakhali politics who claim the BNP's fort in Noakhali and Laxmipur has been demolished under the leadership of certain

leaders," Quader Mirza is heard saying in a video clip of his December 31 speech that later went viral. "If there is a fair election, our MPs, except for the ones in three or four constituencies in greater Noakhali, will not even find a door to escape. That's the truth." On another occasion, he said, "Bangabandhu liberated the country to establish people's right to food and vote. The right to food has been established, but we have not yet been able to establish the right to vote." He, therefore, wants to ensure a fair election on January 16. He also claims there is a conspiracy afoot to rig the election against him and even to kill him, a claim he repeated several times over the week, saying he had received death threats for his bold assertions. Some local Awami League leaders also brought in illegal firearms to thwart his re-election bid, he alleged.

Without citing any name, he also talked about what leaders are like these days. "Leaders are those who burn people in broad daylight. Leaders are those who loot crores of taka through tender manipulation. Leaders are those who take Tk 5 lakh in exchange for jobs of police and primary teachers. Leaders are those who take Tk 3 lakh from a poor peon in exchange for his job," he said. In his lengthy diatribes, Mirza spared no one—local Awami League leaders, MPs, administrative higher-ups including deputy commissioner (DC) and superintendent of police (SP), and even national leaders and former ministers. He spoke passionately about the crisis in leadership, sometimes with facts to back him. Thus he painted a landscape that is utterly chaotic, where morality is a moving target.

He also spoke of his trust in the prime minister's leadership but points to those who surround her. He said, "Sheikh Hasina wants fruits (results) in elections. But in their eagerness they would uproot the whole tree for her. Some people in the administration are doing it to destroy her image." Sycophants and corrupt people are misguiding the prime minister and even bypassing her directives, he claimed. He urged her to take stern action against party leaders if they are found involved in corruption, drug abuse or scandals involving women.

As extraordinary as these accusations and insinuations are, his observations about his own elder brother came as icing on the cake. Initially, he appeared appreciative of his brother's achievements. But later he was coy on the subject, and on January 10, following



Abdul Quader Mirza. PHOTO: COLLECTED

a thinly-veiled threat from the former, he became quite vocal. He alleged that Obaidul Quader had acted as a major barrier to his emergence as a national leader. "In my student life, I wanted to study in Dhaka. But he advised me to study in Chattogram because he feared that I would emerge as a bigger leader than him. Obaidul Quader did not let us move ahead," he said.

He added: "Before the national elections, Obaidul Quader promised to arrange jobs for eligible people in every household. But where are the jobs?" he asked. He expressed further resentment at a rally on January 12, saying, "In the presence of one of his domestic helps, he said I am a self-proclaimed mayoral candidate, and that I am not a party man. Now you people tell me whether I am a self-proclaimed candidate... This is an insult." Whether there is any truth to his statement about his brother is immaterial to our discussion, but it does have the unexpected outcome of hitherto-suppressed sibling rivalry playing out on the big screen.

There is a lot to take away from Quader Mirza's bold, relentless *shatya bachan* mission, which he launched apparently after having survived a tumour surgery. Such allegations

about electoral fraud, voter suppression and widespread crimes and corruption with the connivance of ruling party leaders and loyalists usually come from opposition parties, and are roundly rejected by those in power. But coming from an "inside" man, not least one with decades of experience in grassroots politics, these acquire a veneer of credibility difficult to dismiss offhand. Allegations become revelations then, offering a window into the true state of politics in Bangladesh. While Quader Mirza appears paranoid at times and may have his own motive for turning on opponents so near to the election (after all, he equivocated on his own role in the picture he paints), he is certainly not the first politician to publicly challenge party interests/narratives. Nor is the reaction he received from party colleagues totally unexpected.

One may recall the fate of former Awami League minister and two-time MP Abdul Latif Siddiqui, who in September 2014 was widely criticised for his remarks about Muslim pilgrimage and certain Islamic organisations. Afraid to be judged unfavourably by its devout Muslim base, the party sacked him

While Quader Mirza appears paranoid at times and may have his own motive for turning on opponents so near to the election, he is certainly not the first politician to publicly challenge party interests/narratives.

from his ministerial post. Further back in time, one may also recall the dramatic removal of then-President Badruddoza Chowdhury in June 2002 following an uproar over his refusal to pay a visit to BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's grave on his death anniversary. In the not-so-short history of our democracy, we have seen many such instances of once-loyal party leaders and loyalists,

decorated freedom fighters and even justices seeing the short end of the stick for their apparent revolts against authority or party narratives.

Will Quader Mirza meet the same fate? We don't know. One thing is certain that there is still no tolerance for diversity of opinion within our so-called democratic parties, which view any reformist pushback as insubordination and therefore deserving of punishment.

To be frank, I'm not interested in the allegations Quader Mirza brought specifically against certain leaders. It's his word against theirs. But many of his comments do confirm what we already know about political crimes and corruption in Bangladesh. Awami League leaders often talk about the infiltration of outsiders leading to divisions and opportunism within the party, giving it a bad rap in the process. But seldom do they talk about how these developments may be the outcome of its own lack of discipline and intraparty democracy as well as its ideological flexibility. A recent Prothom Alo report, citing data from the police headquarters about complaints filed with police stations across the country, shows an uptick in six crimes since the start of the pandemic. These are: rape, mugging, extortion, causing panic/terror, property grabbing, and cattle theft. If past trends hold, it can be assumed that criminals enjoying the protection of local ruling party leaders have been involved in many of these cases. Quader Mirza has added only three more to the list: election violence, tender manipulation and recruitment scandals. What's surprising about it is that he chose to speak up.

Many have praised his courage. Many, especially party stalwarts, lambasted him for being hypocritical ("biting the hand that feeds him"). But for a party ruling the country as long as it has, Awami League will surely benefit from taking a page out of the book of the Communist Party of China which every now and then rejuvenates itself by exorcising corrupt party leaders and officials. Cleaning up malfeasance within party ranks, instead of punishing those who blow the whistle or demand reforms, is not just the right thing to do. It will also boost its image in the long run.

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Discovery of magnetic iron ore reserve in Dinajpur

Proper steps needed for commercial mining



BADRUL IMAM

HE holds a piece of the rock sample and brings it near to a magnet bar. Instantly, the rock sample gets attached to the magnet

and hangs on to it when the magnet bar is held up in the air. "This is magnetite ore, a magnetic iron-rich mineral valued worldwide for its content, and we have just discovered a big reserve of this mineral only 450 metres below the surface at Alihat, Hakimpur Upazila, Dinajpur," said Mohammad Masud, a geoscientist working with the Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB), a government organisation dedicated to the discovery of natural mineral resources. This was disclosed in a programme last week arranged by the GSB and sponsored by the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources aiming at exchange of ideas with national experts and academicians about the discovery.

The rock sample he shows me is small, but the implication of this discovery is far greater, because this may pave the way for opening up iron mine, a new kind of economic mineral resource development in Bangladesh. The mineral magnetite is used as one of the sources of iron, the basic element for the manufacture of steel. And the importance of steel in the infrastructural development of any nation cannot be overemphasised. Bangladesh, in its drive toward infrastructure development including the mega projects, produces about 7 million tons of steel products annually, for which it depends totally on imported material of iron.

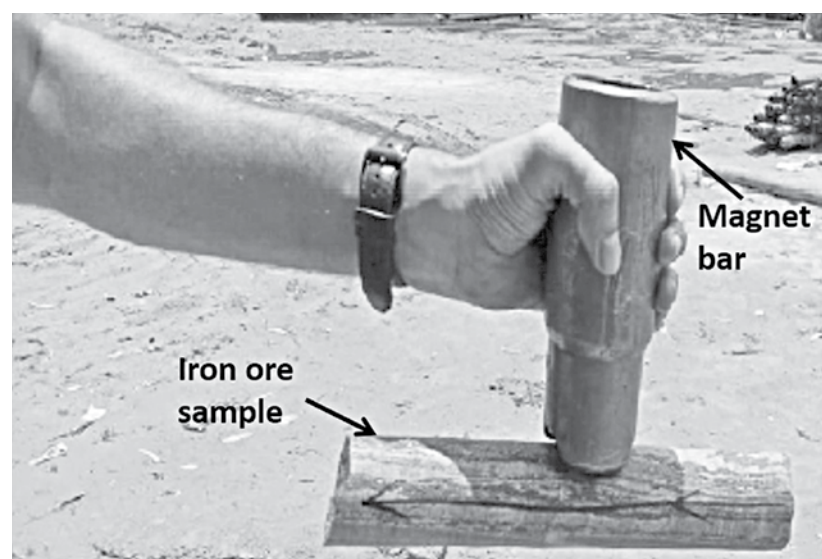
The way to discovery
It all began in early 1970s when a foreign geophysical company made an airborne aeromagnetic survey that indicated some magnetic highs beneath Dinajpur-Rangpur districts. Later in 2012, GSB conducted more systematic and targeted gravity and magnetic surveys in the area and found a few magnetic anomalies, meaning areas of high values of magnetic readings. This prompted the geologists of GSB to target specific points to drill and test the presence of magnetic mineral of commercial importance, if any. The first borehole named GDH-68/13 was drilled in 2013 and was successful in locating an iron ore mineral zone at the depth of only 445 metres.

Encouraged by the success, three more wells were drilled in the area between 2013 and 2020 and all three boreholes record the presence of iron

ore mineral zones. From the data obtained from the four successful wells, it has been primarily suggested that the iron ore body extends for about 5 to 6 sq km. The depths at which the top of the iron ore zone occurs in these wells range from 406m to 445m. The average thickness of the iron ore zone is estimated at about 50m. A preliminary and approximate reserve estimate suggests

predictions made much earlier.

Interestingly, geoscientists' interpretation and predictions often lead to resource discoveries. About 150 years ago, British geologist Robert Mallet, while inaugurating the first Indian coal mine at Raniganj in West Bengal, predicted that coal deposits of a similar kind would one day be found under the plain land of East Bengal. This prediction was



An iron ore sample from Dinajpur hangs in the air when attached to a magnet.

PHOTO COURTESY: AUTHOR

that the reserve is very significant and commercially viable.

A rough calculation would suggest that production of a million ton of ore annually (the same level of production capacity in Maddhapara hard rock mine as well as in Barapukuria coal mine) would run the mine for about 100 years. However, the database on which the above estimate is made has been considered inadequate, and there are suggestions that further wells should be drilled to more accurately delimit and define the extent and reserves of the ore body.

The overall magnetic survey results have shown that in addition to the magnetic high at Alihat area, there are positive magnetic anomalies in a few more places of Hakimpur upazila and surrounding areas. This raises hope that a similar iron ore body may be encountered nearby if these areas are tested by drilling. A cluster of iron ore bodies in close proximity would make the economy of mining iron ore more feasible and profitable.

Geological predictions
The magnetite ore samples that were extracted from the discovered borehole are crystalline, dense, heavy and hard with alternating black and white crystalline bands. It is in total contrast to the soft soil of Bangladesh beneath which it hides. This does not puzzle the geologists who are acquainted with the geological

proven right when GSB discovered the first coal reserve in Bangladesh plain at Barapukuria, Dinajpur in 1985. In independent Bangladesh in 1980s, renowned geologist Dr F.H. Khan reasoned and named the Dinajpur-Rangpur area as "Dinajpur Shield". He predicted that metallic mineral deposits were likely to be found beneath this area because shield areas are a habitat of metallic deposits as seen in the vast terrains of Orissa-Bihar to the west and other parts of very large Indian Shield. It took a new generation of geologists to prove Dr Khan's prediction right by the Dinajpur discovery in 2020.

In fact, the hard, dense, crystalline rocks found beneath only a few hundred metres in Dinajpur are the oldest rocks in Bangladesh—between 1,000 and over 3,000 million years old. These rocks formed from extremely hot and dense magmatic liquid, cooled and pressurised at the very early years of the Earth's history. These are hard, crystalline igneous and metamorphic rocks as found beneath the Dinajpur-Rangpur area. The remaining part of Bangladesh is made up of much younger and soft sedimentary rocks with the present deltaic Bangladesh only less than three million years old.

A prudent forward move required
There have been reports that a further evaluation of the discovered iron ore in

Dinajpur will be handled by a different governmental agency—the Barapukuria coal mine company. But this coal mining company has little to do with mineral or hard rock geology or mining. Furthermore, the Barapukuria coal mine has its own challenge to tackle to continue coal production after the present production ends in the central part of the mine, and with the expiry of the present contract with the Chinese mining company in about a year. On the other hand, Maddhapara Granite Mining Company Limited, also in Dinajpur, is managing the granite

hard rock production and is more suited to taking over management of the iron ore body in question. In any case, a foreign consultant is supposed to be engaged for the evaluation and mining feasibility study of the iron deposit.

However, the evaluation of the iron ore reserve by the GSB is not completed. It would be wise to let GSB continue its own evaluation of the discovered iron ore to reach a more mature and complete stage. We should know enough of a resource base before we engage a foreign company

to evaluate and mine it. That will give us more power in a negotiating table with a third party. A well-thought-out policy with respect to natural resource exploitation is important to safeguard the national interest, even if it means a slower pace of action. Bangladesh's track record on natural resource exploration and exploitation shows that national interests have been undermined in several cases in the past.

Dr Badrul Imam is Honorary Professor at the Department of Geology, University of Dhaka.

Bangladesh Election Commission Election Commission Secretariat Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka www.ecs.gov.bd					
Ref. No. 17.00.0000.026.32.015.20(Part-1)-15			Date: 12-01-2021		
Tender Notice					
1	Ministry/Division	Election Commission Secretariat			
2	Agency	Election Commission Secretariat			
3	Procuring Entity Name	Secretary, Election Commission Secretariat			
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka			
5	Invitation Ref No.	17.00.0000.026.32.015.20(Part-1)			
6	Date	12-01-2021			
KEY INFORMATION					
7	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
8	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB (Revenue Budget)			
9	Tender Package Name	Event Management for 3rd National Voters' Day-2021 celebration			
10	Tender Package No.	Lot No. 1, 2, 3			
DATE					
11	Tender Publication Date	14-01-2021			
12	Tender Last Selling Date	31-01-2021			
DATE					
13	Tender closing Date and time	01-02-2021	12.00 PM		
14	Tender Opening Date and time	01-02-2021	12.30 PM		
15 Name & Address of the Office(s)					
(a) Selling Tender Document		Assistant Secretary, Election Support-II, Room No-202 Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.			
(b) Receiving Tender Document		Assistant Secretary, Election Support-II, Room No-202. Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.			
(c) Opening Tender Document		Joint Secretary (Election Management-1), Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.			
16 Pre bid meeting					
26-01-2021					
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
17 Eligibility of Tenderers: As per Tender document.					
18 Brief Description of Services: Event management of 3rd National Voters' Day-2021 Celebration. Arrangement of Nirbachan Bhaban lighting & various road branding. Procuring Gold medal, souvenir printing and other related services.					
19	Lots No	Identification of Package	Location	Price of Tender Document (Tk) (Non-refundable)	Tender Security (Pay order) 3%
	Lot-1	Lighting, Building branding and decoration and other related services	Dhaka	Tk. 2000/-	Tk. 60000/-
	Lot-2	Nirbachoni Padok (Gold medal)		Tk. 1000/-	Tk. 10000/-
	Lot-3	Souvenir Printing		Tk. 1000/-	Tk. 15000/-
20	Name of Official Inviting Tender: Md. Musharraf Hossain				
21	Designation of Official Inviting Tender: Assistant Secretary				
22	Address of Official Inviting Tender: Election Support-2, Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Room No. 202 (2 nd Floor), Agargaon, Dhaka.				
23	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Phone : 02-55007544	Fax No: 55007515	
24	Special Instruction: Supplier must submit distributor authorization letter for Lot-1, 2,3				
25	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all Tenders.				
12.1.2021 MD. MUSHARRAF HOSSAIN Assistant Secretary Phone : 02-55007544					
GD- 78					

GRAPE VINE

Bhabna's busy beginning

In this new year, Ashna Habib Bhabna is busy working for a Mostafa Kamal Raz directed series, *Hit*. Aside from this, she has also acted in a tele-film *Porobashi Megh* for the first time under the direction of Shahiduzzaman Selim, and is also featured in the Aruna Biswa directed short film, *Thikana Bottrish Number*. In addition to these, she has finished shooting for a role in the film *Lal Moroger Jhuti*, directed by Nurul Alam Atique.

Amina Hossain



Masud Pathik's Street Philosopher

After winning eight awards in *National Film Award 2019* for his film, *Maya: The Lost Mother* in different categories, the poet, lyricists and *National Film Award*-winning filmmaker Masud Pathik has recently revealed the poster of his upcoming film, *Street Philosopher*. The film will be directed in English. Aside from direction, the story and screenplay of the film is written by Masud Pathik himself. The shooting for the film will commence on March of this year.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Sporshia's new year

The new year seems to have graced actor Orchita Sporshia with good luck. She has been highly praised for her performance in the Anonno Mamun directed film, *Nabab LLB*. She has also launched an online organisation called *Shape Sporshia*. Besides this, she recently finished shooting alongside Tahsan on the web series *Chhok* by Golam Sohrab Dodul. When asked about her recent achievements, she said, "I had plans to do something new in the new year, and that's how things are currently proceeding. *Nabab LLB* was really well-received by the audience; there is nothing to criticise. I am also getting commended for the character that I played."

Shreya Shomoyeeta



PHOTO: COLLECTED

COVER STORY

DEVOTEE OF MUSIC

Kumar Bishwajit has been a prominent figure in the music industry of Bangladesh. Throughout his career, he has made numerous hit songs which have carved a place in the minds of listeners. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, the renowned musician opens up about how he made a song in tribute to the father of our nation, Bangabandhu, and how he began his musical journey.



Rafi Hossain: Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today, we are joined by a special guest, Kumar Bishwajit. Thank you for joining us today.

Kumar Bishwajit: Thank you for having me, Rafi Bhai. I am very happy to be here.

Rafi: You recently made a song in tribute to Bangabandhu in celebration of his 100th birthday. What inspired you to do so?

Kumar: I consider myself very fortunate to have been able to witness the fight for the freedom of Bangladesh. I was not old enough to fight for liberation, but I was old enough to understand what was going on. I was around seven or eight years old, and I had seen a lot of the war. With us reaching the fiftieth anniversary of our independence, I felt that I should also celebrate the man who led us to that independence. I'm blessed to sing about Bangabandhu. We are all grateful to him for what he has done for us. Without his contributions, we would not be able to call ourselves Bangladeshi. The song that I made about

everything nowadays. (laughs). Honestly, I do not try too hard to take care of my appearance as I am more focused on conveying myself through my music. I think that when it comes to music, looks do not matter.

Rafi: When you were young, did you decide that you would pursue music as a career?

Kumar: I think that to be a musician, you must be born with a God-gifted talent. There are a lot of people in the world who are very interested to be musicians, but without that gift, it is very difficult to actually make it. Without the help of God, I would not have been able to come this far. I grew up in a very musical atmosphere, and in my family, singing or listening to music was always encouraged. That made me fall in love with music. When a teacher would come to teach my sisters music, I would stand close enough to hear, and try to pick up the songs that he was teaching. After he would leave, I would sing the songs, and it would shock my sisters, as I had managed to pick it up by

"I think that there will be good artists coming out, but to be good artists, the artists need to have passion and dedication. If they do it just for money and fame, they will not be able to make good music. When I started, I had to struggle, and at the end, with my dedication to music, all the struggle proved to be worth it."



called *Rhythm-77*. After I left *Feelings*, the band broke up and then James started a new band under the same name.

Rafi: You were very close to Ayub Bachchu. What do you think of him as a musician?

Kumar: I have known Bachchu for a long time. We grew up in the same locality and were always very close. I made him join *Feelings*, and he also played using my guitar for a while. We both had very strict families that were not very eager to let us pursue music as a career, so we were both very close. Even when we moved to Dhaka after forming the band, we lived in the same house. As a musician, he was very dedicated. He would listen to a lot of music and try to pick it up. We would listen to popular instrumentals, and we would pick them up and cover them. Bachchu would always practise until he got it perfect. He had a dream, and he turned it into a reality. I think his contributions to music are proof of his love and dedication to music. Someone like Ayub Bachchu is very rare, and we do not know when someone of his calibre will appear again.

Rafi: Are you hopeful for the future of the industry?

Kumar: I think that there will be good artists coming out, but to be good artists, the artists need to have passion and dedication. If they do it just for money and fame, they will not be able to make good music. When I started, I had to struggle, and at the end, with my dedication to music, all the struggle proved to be worth it. Now, I am proud to say that I have been working with music for almost thirty-eight years, and it is my main profession. But, it was not an easy road to be a musician. To actually make it in music, you need to make sure the songs you create are of top quality. Doing covers of songs is fine, but without original content, it is impossible to be a professional musician. If you make good songs, it will reach people. Another important thing an artist needs to remember is that they must make songs which people will remember and something that they can sing onstage with people singing along. If you have a thousand songs but people only remember four, something is not right. It is much better to have only two songs, but people completely remember both. To make songs, you have to make things you enjoy yourself.

Rafi: Do you have any message for the readers?

Kumar: I hope everyone will stay well, healthy and safe, and work to better themselves this new year.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

BRIDGERTON

Bridgerton is a television period drama series on *Netflix*, and has been based on the novel series of the same name by Julia Quinn. It has been created by Chris Van Dusen, produced by Shonda Rhimes, and stars Adjoa Andoh,

Lorraine Ashbourne and Jonathan Bailey, among others. The series has been set in the Regency-era England, and focuses on the Bridgerton family and tells their story. It premiered on December 25, 2020.



Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom is a drama film on *Netflix*, and has been based on the eponymous play by August Wilson. It has been directed by George C. Wolfe, produced by Denzel Washington, Todd Black and Dany Wolf, with Viola Davis and Chadwick Boseman in the lead roles. The movie tells the story of the acclaimed and inspirational blues singer Ma Rainey and her band. It was initially released on November 25, 2020.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.



KAAGAZ

Kaagaz is a Hindi biographical film about the struggles a man has to go through to prove he is not, in fact, dead after being declared officially dead. It was written and directed by Satish Kaushik, produced by Salman Khan and Nishant Kaushik under the banner of *Salman Khan Films* and *The Satish Kaushik Entertainment Production*, distributed by *ZEE5*, and stars Pankaj Tripathi, Monal Gajjar and Amar Upadhyay, among others. It was first released on January 7, 2021.

Amina Hossain



After having scored the opening goal and the last goal of the Federation Cup, Bashundhara Kings striker Raul Becerra (2nd from L) was in the act again as his first-half goal led the defending champions to a 2-0 win over Uttar Baridhara Club in the opening match of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Becerra keeps shining as Kings start with a win

SPORTS REPORTER

Argentine striker Raul Oscar Becerra's goal spree continued as reigning champions Bashundhara Kings got off to a winning start in the Bangladesh Premier League with an easy 2-0 win over Uttar Baridhara Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Becerra, who scored in all five matches as Kings lifted the season's curtain-raising Federation Cup, struck his first goal in the professional football league in Kings' opener before Mohammad Ibrahim sealed the win in the second half against a team that last season had held them till the 86th minute before going down 1-0 in Nilphamari.

Baridhara, who stunned everyone by advancing to the quarterfinals of the Federation Cup before being eliminated at the hands of Abahani in extra-time, hardly showed last season's

spirit or the fighting attitude they showed against Abahani in that quarterfinal.

"There is a gulf of difference between Kings and Uttar Baridhara, who have a lot of national players. And the difference was reflected on the ground," said Uttar Baridhara Club coach Sheikh Jahidur Rahman Milon. "However, I'm satisfied with the performance of the boys, who created some chances but could not cash in."

Star-studded Kings came into the match with two changes to the squad that won the Federation Cup final against Saif SC on Sunday and Oscar Bruzon's charges dominated as expected against Uttar Baridhara, who came into the match on the back of a few days of training compared to Kings' four-months of training.

Brazil's Jonathan Da Silveira Fernandes and Robson Da Silva and Argentina's Becerra were instrumental as usual and yielded at least three scoring chances within the first 25 minutes, with

Becerra rattling the crossbar in the 17th minute.

Becerra then put Kings ahead in the 35th minute with a header from a Bishwanath Ghosh cross before delivering a defense-splitting pass for Ibrahim, who raced into the box before placing the ball to the right-hand side of Baridhara goalkeeper Mamun Alif.

Baridhara twice came close to pulling a goal back but tame shots from national striker Suman Reza failed to bother Kings goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico.

"I think we are going to face the kind of defensive play that Baridhara played against us today. Baridhara played with a 5-4-1 formation and did not allow us to take up central positions," said Kings coach Bruzon. "Following a tough semifinal and final in the Federation Cup, the boys maintained the same tempo and intensity and confidence to see out the game although we had some difficulties in the first 30 minutes."

BFF rejects Oman offer

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh have refused to play their three remaining World Cup qualifying matches in Oman, rebuffing the Gulf nation's proposal to host the rest of the Group E fixtures at a centralised venue.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Teams Committee of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday, in view of the proposal sent by Oman a few days ago.

The proposal had offered to host Bangladesh's three matches against Afghanistan, Oman and India in the last week of March.

"We were offered [by Oman] to play our three world Cup qualifying matches in their country. But we have already declared our venue. So we will play all three home matches in Bangladesh as per schedule," NTC chairman Kazi Nabil Ahmed said.

BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag, however, claimed that India, Afghanistan and Qatar have given their nod to play at a centralised venue in March.



POGBA VOLLEYS UNITED TO THE TOP

Paul Pogba's 71st-minute volley gave Manchester United a 1-0 win away to Burnley on Tuesday, taking Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side three points clear of Liverpool at the top of the Premier League. The Red Devils have 36 points from 17 matches and will have the chance to extend their lead when they visit Anfield on Sunday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Mathews returns for England Tests

AFP, Galle

Former Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews has recovered from injury and was named Wednesday in a 22-player squad to face England in two Tests in Galle.

But the injured pair of batsman Dhananjaya de Silva and pace bowler Kasun Rajitha will miss the series starting Thursday after being part of the 2-0 Test series defeat in South Africa this month.

Mathews, 33, did not make the South Africa trip because of a hamstring injury

but is expected to line up against England in matches that count towards the inaugural world Test championship.

The Dimuth Karunaratne-led team will resume a series that was halted in March after England flew home because of coronavirus fears.

SQUAD: Karunaratne (capt), Janith Perera, Chandimal, K Mendis, Mathews, Fernando, Dickwella, Bhanuka, Thirimanne, Embuldeniya, Hasaranga, D Perera, Lakmal, Kumara, V Fernando, Chameera, Shanaka, A Fernando, Roshen Silva, Sandakan, N Pradeep, R Mendis.

Depleted India out to breach Gabba fortress

AFP, Brisbane

Injury-hit India head to Australia's Gabba fortress for Friday's final Test with high hopes of retaining the Border-Gavaskar trophy after securing an epic draw in Sydney to leave the series locked at 1-1.

The visitors only need to avoid defeat in Brisbane after their heroics in Sydney, when they batted out the final day against Australia's much-vaunted bowling attack.

Australia have come under fire for captain Tim Paine's sledging and accusations that Steve Smith deliberately scuffed up batsman Rishabh Pant's guard during the tense fifth day. Allegations of racist abuse from the crowd also overshadowed the Test.

But Australia will be optimistic of snatching a series win at the Gabba, where they are unbeaten in more than three decades, especially as India have been hit by succession of injuries.

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja became the latest ruled out on Wednesday after dislocating his left thumb in Sydney, while Indian media reported that fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah could miss out with an abdominal strain.

The visitors were already without experienced quicks Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav and Ishant Sharma, and batsman KL Rahul, while captain Virat Kohli is on paternity leave.

If Bumrah cannot play, their already inexperienced attack will be led by Mohammed Siraj, who has only played two Tests, alongside Navdeep Saini who made his debut at Sydney plus one of the uncapped T. Natarajan or Shardul Thakur.

They also have doubts over the fitness of number six batsman Hanuma Vihari, who tore his hamstring during his 161-ball vigil for 23 runs that helped earn the unlikely draw on Monday.

Fellow Sydney hero Ravi Ashwin, who spent more than three hours at the crease with Vihari in an unbroken sixth-wicket stand to save the game, has a back issue.

Australia go into the game after stinging criticism of their desperate last-day antics in Sydney, with Paine forced to apologise for his ugly tirade at Ashwin.

Two new frontrunners to pick up pace baton

SPORTS REPORTER

One of the most demanding and risky disciplines in cricket is pace bowling because even promising fast bowlers with all requisite attributes can fade away or suffer debilitating injuries without proper guidance.

The Bangladesh team management is considering creating a culture with emphasis on pace bowling, much like India has over the last five years or so and are now reaping the benefits.

Head coach Russell Domingo had also pressed the issue and is now looking forward to preparing a good group of fast bowlers in all three formats, both home and abroad.

Two young seamers who have caught the eye with recent performances and were called up for the Tigers' preliminary squads are left-arm seamer Shoriful Islam and right arm quickie Hasan Mahmud.

Young Shoriful showed his talent and aggression during Bangladesh's ICC Under-19 World Cup-winning campaign last year, where the youngster impressed with a consistent line and length.

The six feet three inches tall pacer uses his height well and performed well during the Bangabandhu T20 Cup last year, picking up sixteen wickets in 10 games for Gazi Group Chattogram.

Shoriful was rewarded with selection to Bangladesh's 24-member preliminary ODI squad for the upcoming three-match ODI series against the West Indies.

According to prominent pace bowling coach Sarwar Imran, it will be important that young Shoriful work on his inswing

to the right-handers, which will help him thrive in the international circuit for a long time.

"Obviously, he is a bright prospect for Bangladesh but for left-arm seamers it's very important to be able to get the ball into the right-handers. He can take the ball away from the right-handers but at times you can become predictable in international cricket."

"If you look at [former Sri Lanka pacer] Chaminda Vaas, he used to bowl at a pace of 130kmph but still became one of the best left-arm seamers in world cricket because of his ability to move the ball both ways. Shoriful needs to work on this aspect as he has got all the attributes to become better in the coming days," Imran told The Daily Star.

Another young quick, Mahmud, was named in both the ODI and Test preliminary squads after he showed his ability to bowl at a good pace.

Mahmud, who made his T20I debut against Zimbabwe last year, has a great chance to make his ODI and Test debut in the upcoming home series against the West Indies. Imran said Mahmud could become the biggest prospect for the Bangladesh pace bowling department if handled properly.

"Mahmud has a very smooth action and can bang it into the deck hard. He can bowl at a very good pace, around 140kmph, and such quick bowlers are always handy in Tests and ODIs. He is still in his early 20s, so it's important for the management to make sure he isn't over-bowled and his workload management is maintained. I am very hopeful about Mahmud as he can be the next big thing in the pace-bowling department for Bangladesh in the coming days," he said.



Liton Das (R) attempts an airborne catch at full stretch as Mushfiqur Rahim, Yasir Ali and Mohammadd Mithun look on during a training session of the Bangladesh team at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Ground fielding and catching are in focus as training intensifies ahead of the series against the West Indies.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ER		ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারী লিমিটেড		Eastern Refinery Limited	
(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, North Patenga, Chattogram-4000)					
Invitation for National Tender					
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources/Energy and Mineral Resources Division.			
2	Agency	Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.			
3	Procuring entity name	Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL).			
4	Procuring entity district	Chattogram.			
5	Invitation for & Invitation Ref. No.	1) Two yearly basis civil and sanitary maintenance work of ERL, RM-7 jetty, ERL housing estate, Joypahar Housing Estate & leased area of ERL Ref. No. ER/Civil-22/2020-2021			
KEY INFORMATION					
6	Procurement method	National one stage two envelope tendering method.			
FUNDING INFORMATION					
7	Budget and source of funds	Eastern Refinery Limited.			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
8	Tender package No.	ER/TNC-13/2020-2021			
9	Tender publication date	14 January 2021.			
10	Tender last selling date	31 January 2021, 15:00 hrs.			
11	Tender closing date and time	01 February 2021, 14:50 hrs.			
12	Name & address of the office(s):	Office of the Asst. General Manager (C&P), Eastern Refinery Limited, North Patenga, Chattogram.			
	Selling tender document (principal)	Manager (Accounts), ERL, North Patenga, Chattogram-4000, Bangladesh.			
	Receiving tender document	Office of the Deputy General Manager (Development)/ERL Board Room, Eastern Refinery Limited, North Patenga, Chattogram.			
	Opening tender document	Office of the Deputy General Manager (Development)/ERL Board Room, Eastern Refinery Limited, North Patenga, Chattogram.			
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
13		The minimum specific experience as a prime contractor or subcontractor or management contractor, who has completed at least one full contract within last 10 (ten) years in gov't/semi-gov't/autonomous organization as Civil maintenance of industrial/residential/office building/structure along with sanitary maintenance. This should not be renovation type work, where all the work is done at a time by following a specific schedule. It should be unseen small repair of building, supply-fitting of different sanitary item, fitting of window glass etc. throughout the year on instant demand basis. The contract has to be run continuously for minimum 18 month. (Summation of individual experience of 18 month repair-maintenance work will not be accepted). Moreover, the work value should at least 15,00,000.00 (fifteen lac) & as per Tender Data Sheet (Section-2) (Year will be calculated from tender publication date to backward).			
14	Brief description of works	Price of tender document	Tender opening date and time		
	Two yearly basis civil and sanitary maintenance work of ERL, RM-7 jetty, ERL housing estate, Joypahar Housing Estate & leased area of ERL Ref. No. ER/Civil-22/2020-2021	Tk 2000 (two thousand) only (non-refundable)	01 February 2021, 15:00 hrs.		
15	Sl. No.	Identification of tender	Tender security	Completion time in days/weeks/months	
	01	ERIC-22/2020-2021	Inside ERL	Two years from the date of contract agreement.	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
16	Name of official inviting tender	Ahmad Fazle Rabbi.			
17	Designation of official inviting tender	Manager (Construction).			
18	Address of official inviting tender	Eastern Refinery Limited, North Patenga, Chattogram, Bangladesh.			
19	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tele No. 88-031-2501261-67, Ext-441, Fax: 88-031-2501269. E-mail: md-office@erl.com.bd, Website: www.erl.gov.bd, www.erl.com.bd			
20	a) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings. b) If it is not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received/opened on the next working day at the same time and same venue. Contact: 01912250632/01675255742				
GD-86					



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INDOMITABLE

Faridpur man bounces back even after losing both arms

SUZIT KUMAR DAS

Even after losing both his arms in an accident, Kamrul Sheikh, 34, used the sheer power of will and determination to bounce back and change his own fate.

A resident of Faridpur's Sadar upazila, Kamrul is married with two children – a son and a daughter.

From a poverty-stricken family, he was only able to complete primary education, after which he began working to support his family. He would sometimes work as a carpenter, sometimes a rickshaw-puller, an electrician, or a day-labourer.

On August 15, 2018, while working as an electrician at the district's Khaleq Bazar area, Kamrul was electrocuted and lost both his arms in the accident.

"I climbed up an electric pole and set my ladder near the electric wires. I was repairing a faulty line. That is about as much as I can remember. When I regained my senses, I found myself on a hospital bed," said Kamrul.

From a local hospital, he was shifted to the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH), where he underwent treatment for around a month and half.

"Both my arms were badly damaged. They had to be amputated within three days of my admission [to DMCH]," Kamrul said.

"After the accident, my entire family was in financial trouble. The West Zone Power Distribution Company gave me Tk 2 lakh as compensation. I bought four rickshaws with that money and rented them out.

"But the income was not sufficient and I was getting worried. One day, a friend of mine, Lutfar Khalasi, suggested that I meet a man named Jashim, who, like me, does not have either of his arms but runs a shop himself."

Kamrul met Jashim and learned some techniques to work. "I sold my four rickshaws and opened up a grocery shop -- Zihad Varieties Store -- in

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Kamrul Sheikh editing a photo on his computer with his feet at his grocery shop in Faridpur Sadar upazila's Kafura area. The 34-year-old had lost both arms in an accident three years ago, but he has bounced back from the debilitating setback and now runs the shop in front of his house. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

KALABAGAN RAPE

Cops allowed to conduct dope test of accused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday allowed police to conduct tests to ascertain whether Fardin Iftekhar Dihan, the lone accused in the rape and murder case of a schoolgirl, had taken any narcotics or stimulant drugs.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Begum Yeasmin Ara passed the order after investigation officer AFM Asaduzzaman, also an inspector of Kalabagan Police Station, filed a petition in this regard.

On Sunday, the same court allowed police to conduct DNA tests on samples collected from Dihan, 18, and the victim's bloodstained clothes, following two petitions submitted by the IO.

The victim's father on January 7 had filed the case with Kalabagan Police Station against Dihan under the Women and Children Repression

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DEPORTATION FROM FRANCE

Bangladeshi averts it thru' pollution plea

STAR REPORT

In a rare case, a Bangladeshi man with asthma has prevented a deportation bid by the French authorities, arguing that he risked a severe deterioration in his condition, and possibly premature death, due to the dangerous levels of pollution in Bangladesh.

In a ruling believed to be the first of its kind in France, the appeals court in Bordeaux overturned an expulsion order against the 40-year-old man, reported The Guardian Tuesday.

"To my knowledge, this is the first time a French court has applied the environment as one of its criteria in such a case," the unnamed man's lawyer, Ludovic Riviere, said. "It decided my client's life would be endangered by the air quality in Bangladesh."

Yale and Columbia universities' Environmental Performance Index ranks Bangladesh 179th in the world for air quality in 2020, while the concentration of fine particles in the air is six times the World Health Organization's recommended maximum.

According to the WHO, air pollution,

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To light from dark spiral of militancy

Under a Rab deradicalisation initiative, 9 persons set to get back to normal life; a special ceremony today

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The husband is an engineer and the wife a doctor.

The couple was living happily with two children until the dark cloud of militancy destroyed their lives. The couple became involved in militancy and uncertainty engulfed the whole family.

Family members of the couple then took steps to bring them back to normal life, communicating with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) for support.

The elite force showed interest and shed light on their dark path before it was too late.

As a part of Rab's new initiative, the couple got a chance to return to normal life under the institutional de-radicalisation process.

Nine people, including the couple, were brought back to normal life under the process. All nine have received counselling for between two and six months under Rab's supervision.

They will be able to see their family members again after a formal "surrender programme", schedule to be held at the Azad Memorial Hall at Rab Headquarters today.

Of the nine are members of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Neo JMB and Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT).

Col Tofail Mostafa Sarwar, additional director general (operation) of Rab, confirmed the

development and the formal surrender programme. Prominent citizens, including academics, Islamic scholars and cultural personalities will take part in the ceremony under the slogan "Return to New Horizons", said the official.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed would be present at the programme, according to Rab.

Rab officials said that the term de-radicalisation is frequently used as a soft approach to controlling and eliminating militancy or extremism.

Militancy or extremism cannot be stopped by operations alone because it is an ideological fight. Through brainwashing, the targeted person is lured to the dark path of extremism, they said.

Therefore, along with the campaign, the so-called ideological issue of extremism has to be tackled through de-radicalisation, they added.

Rab officials said they have taken the initiative of a de-radicalisation unit much like different countries around the world.

This specialised unit is working to bring people involved in extremism back to normal life and under that process nine people have received counselling.

As there is a case against one of the nine, the person will have to face legal process after the

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All-women pilots complete Air India's longest flight

CNN ONLINE



An all-female Indian pilot team made history this week, after they completed the longest non-stop commercial flight ever operated by an Indian national airline.

The team of four cockpit crew members from Air India completed the 17-hour-long flight on Monday according to a statement released by the airline.

"We are India's daughters who were given the opportunity to make this historic flight," the commander of the flight, Captain Zoya Aggarwal, who flew the first leg of the flight, told CNN Travel. "We were able to create a new chapter in the Indian aviation history."

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Six killed as three wheeler, truck collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Six people were killed and five others injured when a truck rammed a human hauler from behind last night on Jhenidah-Kushtia highway in Shaikupa, Jhenidah.

Those who died and got injured were mostly construction workers, said Officer-in-Charge Jahangir Alam of Shaikupa Police Station.

Identities of the victims have not been confirmed yet, he said, adding that

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PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 14

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:36 7:00
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:40 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

PK Halder's aide Abantika arrested

Placed on three-day remand in graft case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Abantika Boral, an aide to PK Halder, on three-day remand in connection with a graft case.

The order was issued hours after Abantika was arrested in the capital's Dhanmondi around noon by a team of the Anti-Corruption Commission, said ACC Director (public relations) Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya.

The arrestee was first taken to the ACC office before being produced in the Senior Special Judge's Court.

On January 8 last year, the graft watchdog filed the case against Halder, former managing director of NRB Global Bank, over amassing about Tk 275 crore beyond his known sources of income.

Halder allegedly laundered over Tk 10,000 crore from four non-banking financial

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A woman weeps in front of a high-rise building in the capital's Gulshan yesterday afternoon. Allegedly a compressor of an air conditioning unit at the 14-storey Empori Financial Center exploded, leaving electrician Azizul Haque dead. The woman pictured is his mother-in-law. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

SEWERS LINKED TO BURIGANGA

Wasa MD asked to inform HC about steps, plans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked Dhaka Wasa to submit a report on what has been done to implement a 2011 order to stop dumping sewage in the Buriganga river.

The Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) was ordered by the court 10 years ago to seal off the drains and sewer pipes linked to the river.

The HC yesterday directed Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan to submit a report on what steps had been taken and what plans had been made to the court through swearing by an affidavit by January 21.

The HC bench of Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Justice Mohammad Ullah passed the order during hearing a pending writ petition filed by rights organisation Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in May 2010, seeking necessary directives to seal of the drains and sewerage lines connected to the Buriganga and to save it from pollution.

Yesterday, the HC bench observed that Dhaka Wasa was very slow in implementing the 2011 directives.

At this pace, the directives will not be implemented and the pollution of the Buriganga will not stop, the HC bench said.

Earlier in the day, the MD of Dhaka Wasa submitted a compliance report to the HC through his lawyer Umme Salma, saying that the Wasa has sealed off several unauthorised sewerage lines in some areas of the capital, including Kalabagan and Palashi, and has handed over the responsibility of the canals to the city corporations.

Writ petitioner's lawyer Manzill Murshid told the HC

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