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## WORKERS TRICKED, TRAFFICKED

## Sold in Algeria, waiting for rescue

ZYMA ISLAM

A group of at least 55 Bangladeshis had paid recruiting agencies over Tk 3 lakh each for jobs in Algeria and the promise of illegal passage into Spain -- what they got instead was indentured labour under subhuman living conditions.

It was nothing but modern-day slavery in the guise of construction jobs -- when they attempted to release themselves from their exploitative contracts and leave the country, they were told they had been "bought".

Tushar, who worked in a project in Mascara, Algeria, said according to his contract, he was recruited to a company called SARL Yuan Xiang Construction de Chine.

"I was told I need to pay back the \$1,500 I was bought for," said Tushar.

The fact that they cannot leave and must bear the horrendous working conditions

was bad news for the workers for whom Algeria was only a pit stop to their final destination.

"Let me be honest with you, we had gone there to go to Spain. At the Singapore Skills Training Centre [their recruiter], they had maps of the countries on every table. They kept saying that we would be able to go to Spain from Algeria. They would show us the map and tell us to see how close Algeria is to Spain," said Tushar.

Several other workers, contacted over WhatsApp, told this correspondent that they too were told they were "bought".

In 2019, the 55 Bangladeshis were recruited by Singapore Skills Training Centre (currently known as Asia Skills Training Centre) in Munshiganj. Their BMET (Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training) clearance was processed by Banna Bijoy Overseas Ltd.

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Sanjana Sonia, left, wife of slain Maj Mohammad Mominul Islam Sarkar, cries standing in front of her husband's grave at the military graveyard in the capital's Banani, on the 12th anniversary of BDR mutiny yesterday. Seventy-four people, including Maj Mominul and 56 other army officers, were killed in the carnage in 2009. Story on page 3.

## TIPU MURDER CASE No headway in 10 years

Prosecution fails to produce witnesses

CHATANYA HALDER and  
EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

The trial of Sayeed Ahmed Tipu's murder case did not make any headway in around a decade due to the prosecution's failure to produce witnesses before court for their statements.

Tipu was the young brother of Army Chief General Aziz Ahmed, who filed the case in 1999 after his brother was shot dead in the city. Aziz Ahmed gave his deposition before court on January 6, 2004.

Till May 22, 2011, 32 out of 41 prosecution witnesses had given their depositions, according to the prosecution.

The remaining nine however did not appear

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## Death sets Mushtaq free from DSA, jail

Brought dead to hospital in Gazipur from Kashimpur jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He was denied bail six times and finally passed away last night before he could ever walk free.

Writer Mushtaq Ahmed, who had been locked up under the controversial Digital Security Act for over nine months, was in the Kashimpur High Security Jail-3 in Gazipur.

"He lost consciousness suddenly around 7:10pm. Immediately, we took him to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital. There, doctor declared

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## COLLEGES UNDER NU Students protest exam deferral

7 hurt as police charge baton in Netrakona; 18 detained in capital

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Students across the country took to the streets demanding the continuation of ongoing and previously announced exams, protesting the authority's decision to postpone ongoing exams.

When they were staging a demonstration demanding the continuation of National University (NU) exams, police swooped on them. At least seven students were injured.

After postponing all exams on Monday,

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## Pay back loan or go to jail

HC tells defaulters of People's Leasing

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court yesterday warned loan defaulters that if they fail to pay back money to People's Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (PLFSL), they will be thrown into jail.

It said the loan defaulters must return the money to save the non-bank financial institution, which is facing liquidation.

The non-performing loans (NPLs) are not the money of thieves or scammers. This is the money of the country's common people, the HC bench of Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar said while hearing a petition regarding the liquidation.

"You [defaulters] have taken a huge amount of money from PLFSL and

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## THE THIRD VIEW



MAHFUZ ANAM

Time for a code of conduct for the lawmakers

SEE PAGE 8

bKash



৫ কোটি  
মানুষের  
বিকাশ

আপনার আস্থায়, নতুন সম্ভাবনায়

দশ বছর ধরে আধুনিক সব ডিজিটাল সার্ভিস-এর পাশাপাশি গ্রাহকের লেনদেনের নিরাপত্তা রক্ষায় বিকাশ থেকেছে দায়িত্বশীল। তাই, সারাদেশের আস্থায় বিকাশ আজ ৫ কোটির পরিবার।

বাংলাদেশের ৫ দশক পূর্তিতে এগিয়ে যাই একসাথে, নতুন সম্ভাবনায়।

**BANGLADESH UPDATE**



**410**  
New cases in 24hrs



**544,954**  
Total cases



**8,384**  
Deaths



**494,755**  
Recoveries



**2,514,534**  
Deaths



**113,393,091**  
Total cases

## Follow Covid guidelines after shots: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday renewed her call to the people to strictly maintain the health protection guidelines even after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine.

"[You] don't think that all problems will be over after taking the Covid-19 shots. You will have to wear masks always and follow all health guidelines to keep yourselves protected. I hope everyone will do it," she said.

The premier made the call while addressing the Mujib Year Graduation Parade of the 55th Batch Cadets of Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) in Chattogram. She joined the programme through a video conference from the Gono Bhaban.

Hasina said though the government is implementing the vaccination programme, all the people should follow all health protection guidelines, including using face masks and keeping their hands clean always as these are essential.

She said her government was making all-out efforts to ensure all types of health services for the people and it took appropriate measures to that end.

Talking about the graduating cadets, the PM urged them to brighten the country's image at home and abroad through performing their respective responsibilities with utmost honesty, sincerity and competence.

Hasina asked the cadets to follow all existing laws and rules during their work at home and abroad.

Noting that the ocean transport is the most effective to keep the world economy moving, the PM said the graduating cadets will have to perform a big responsibility not only for Bangladesh but also for other countries as the navigation in the sea is a very challenging job and tough task.

She said her government found Bangladesh Marine Academy in a very poor state, but it was implementing massive programmes to modernise the academy, set up by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hasina said her previous government had established Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University in 2013. The government has recently established four more marine academies which will start functioning this year.

She said the waterway is the most important for riverine Bangladesh and the country is constructing a deep sea port.

The government was creating various educational scopes for the students of the country, the PM added.

"We will have to catch up with the pace of the world. We need to receive the highest education and training to do that. We are creating this scope."

**MODERNISING MARINE ACADEMY**  
About the development of the marine academy over the last 10 years, Hasina said its teaching method was digitised, navigation simulator was set up (in 2019), and the academy got many international recognitions.

Besides, a process is underway to set up Engine Control Simulator at the academy this year for the sake of improved marine engineering training, she said.

The PM also commissioned two training lifeboats at the academy's lake virtually.

Cadet Captain Adnan Hasib Shawon was awarded "Shipping Corporation Medal" for the best performance among 192 cadets of the 55th Batch, while the "Honourable President Gold Medal" was conferred on Chief Cadet Captain Abir Md Sadman Noor for the best all-round performance.

On behalf of the PM, State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury handed the medals to them.

## Plan to vaccinate 15k convicts in jail in first phase

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The Department of Prisons has finalised a plan to vaccinate for Covid-19 convicts and inmates in 68 jails in the country.

Convicts who are 40 years old or older would be vaccinated first.

Once all the convicts aged above 40 are vaccinated, people in jail who have not been convicted of any crime and are 40 or above would get the shots.

Brig Gen Md Mominur Rahman Mamun, inspector general of prisons, revealed the plan to The Daily Star yesterday.

"We were working to ensure vaccine in jails as per the policy enacted by the government. . . . As part of continuous discussions, we held talks with the home ministry's senior secretary today [Thursday]," he said.

The home ministry asked for a finalised list of over 15,000 convicts, said the IG Prisons.

"After the list is prepared, we will try to ensure they [convicts] are vaccinated with priority. Besides, we are also trying to complete the registration of inmates who are 40 or above," he said.

There are 83,107 inmates and convicts in the 68 jails of the country, according to yesterday's tally. Among them, around 68,000 have not been convicted of any crimes.

Regarding vaccination of these inmates, Brig Gen Mamun said they would decide about them after giving shots to the convicts since those inmates could leave jail securing bail or getting acquitted.

He said that it did not mean those inmates would not get the jabs, rather they would get the shots in later phases.

Asked when the vaccination would start, the IG prisons said he had talked to the home ministry and now they would write to it regarding the matter.

"We will start ensuring the vaccine soon after the ministry responds. We are hopeful of starting the vaccination in jail

within the next month," he added.

Sayed Belal Hossain, additional secretary (jail wing) of the home ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday that they have decided in principle to start vaccination in jails.

"We are hopeful of starting it soon," he added.

At least 18 convicts in Luxmipur jail, all above 55 years of age, were given the shots on February 9 following an initiative of the civil surgeon concerned.

The jail has 625 inmates, of whom 102 are convicts.

Md Shakhawat Hossain, jailer of Luxmipur jail, told The Daily Star yesterday that they completed Covid-19 vaccine registration of all inmates and convicts there.

"We will start giving the vaccine after the district civil surgeon approves," he said.

Shakhawat said the 18 convicts, who go the jabs, did not have any side effects. "Still, we have kept them under observation of the jail doctor and nurse," he said.

**VACCINE PROCESS**  
IG Prisons Brig Gen Mamun said that they are planning to give the shots at the medical centres inside jails bringing in trained nurses.

"If we fail to give vaccine inside the jail, then we would take the registered convicts and inmates to the government listed vaccine centres after corresponding with the civil surgeon and deputy commissioners," he said.

Meanwhile, two jail guards and a jail pharmacist are in isolation as they started showing Covid-19 symptom yesterday.

Yesterday, there were 38 people in quarantine in Dhaka Central Jail and five people in Chattogram jail.

Md Mojmam Khan, deputy jailer at the Department of Prisons, said Covid-19 could not affect the jails severely since they kept new arrivals on 14-day quarantine. Besides, meeting relatives has been suspended, he added.

## No headway in 10 years

FROM PAGE 1

before court to testify since then. Of them, five are investigative officers of the case, who are to give their depositions after the remaining four witnesses.

The court issued several summonses against the four remaining witnesses, the prosecution said.

On February 18 this year, Judge Begum Chaman Chowdhury of the Special Tribunal for Prevention of Public Safety Disturbances of Dhaka issued non-bailable arrest warrants against the four absentee witnesses that include Anis Ahmed, brother of Aziz Ahmed, for failing to comply with multiple court orders.

The other three witnesses served with non-bailable arrest warrants are Md Kamrul, Md Alauddin and Md Nizam Uddin.

The tribunal also directed Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner and Superintendent of Police to take necessary steps to produce all four witnesses before court on March 11 -- the next scheduled date of hearing in the case.

Police is the only agency obliged to produce witnesses before the court as per provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, Anwar Shahadat Shawon, special public prosecutor, told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

Despite the summonses issued many times, police failed to produce any witness since May 2011 before the court, which is delaying the trial proceedings, he said, adding, "Most of the remaining

witnesses are also not appearing before the court due to security concerns as the accused are top listed criminals."

Anis Ahmed has remained a fugitive since May 2004 when he was convicted of murdering a businessman.

In May 2004, the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 of Dhaka sentenced him and his brothers Haris Ahmed to life-term imprisonments in connection with the murder of businessman Mustafizur Rahman Mustafa.

However, according to a government circular, the home ministry on March 28, 2019, issued a notification pardoning both Anis and Haris.

Tipu was shot dead around 7:30pm on March 13, 1999 on Airport Road in the capital's Khilkhet area when he was in a private car, according to the FIR.

Aziz Ahmed filed a murder case with Badda Police Station in this regard on March 13, 1999.

On July 22, 2001, Md Mokbul Hossain, an inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police, submitted a charge sheet accusing six people -- top listed criminals Sanjidul Islam Imon, Mohammad Islam Munna, Shamsur Rahman Mona, Anisur Rahman Zaved, Tarique Saif Mamun and Sagor Hossain Osman.

The court framed charges against the six on December 10, 2003.

Of them, Osman died during trial, Imon, Mona and Mamun are now on bail, while Munna and Zaved are on the run.



Students of the College of Home Economics demonstrate near the institute's gate yesterday, protesting the authorities' decision of not taking pre-announced examinations.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Students protest exam deferral

FROM PAGE 1

The NU authorities yesterday said in a statement the postponed examinations of all courses, including the second-year degree exams and certificate courses of 2019 and the final year master's exam of 2018, will begin from May 24.

Besides, the first-year admission test process (2020-2021) will begin on June 8, 2021. The NU authorities have called upon students to prepare accordingly.

Meanwhile, police also charged batons on students of Home Economics College, which is under Dhaka University, as they were staging a demonstration in front of the college demanding continuation of exams, students alleged.

Meanwhile, police detained at least 18 students of different colleges under the NU for several hours when they went to Shahbagh to stage protests over the postponement of exams.

Besides, students of Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, and various colleges in Sylhet, Chandpur and Netrakona, held demonstrations with the same demands.

Protesting students said their educational institutions have been closed since March 17 because of the Covid-19 pandemic, due to which they lost academic time. Some universities, including NU, had started to hold final exams.

Shahbagh police detained at least 18 of the NU students, who were gathering in the area to stage a protest against exam postponement, said Mohammad Al Amin, a protest organiser and student of Siddheshari College.

He said that they were released after several hours.

"We are giving authorities time till Sunday to cancel their decision of postponing all exams. Otherwise, we will hold sterner programmes," he warned.

Students of different colleges of Netrakona gathered in front of the district Press Club at noon. When they were marching toward the DC office, police charged batons on them, said Fahim Khan, a demonstrator.

Akbar Ali Munsif, Netrakona's

superintendent of police, said that two police officials were withdrawn to the SP office and they are inquiring into the incident.

In Sylhet, Students from MC College, Sylhet Govt College, Madan Mohon College and several other colleges formed a human chain under the banner of General Students in front of Sylhet Central Shaheed Minar at Chowhatta point.

"Male police officials charged batons on us around 11:30am, women officials tried to drag us inside the campus," said Ayesha Siddika, one of the protesters of Home Economics College, adding, "We will continue our movement until our demands are met."

The protest started around 7:00am at Nilkhet intersection. The students later moved in front of their college and were continuing the protest until this report was filed at 2:45pm.

Sanowar Hosen, assistant police commissioner of Lalbagh Zone, said that they tried to disperse the protesters with permission from the college authority.

"However, batons were not charged on them," he said.

Students of Rajshahi University started demonstrations at Paris Road of the university around 11:00am and postponed it at 1:00pm until next Sunday, upon assurance from the authorities, reported our RU correspondent.

Tomalika Haque, a student of Geology and Mining department, said, "The university authorities postponed our exams as per the instruction of the Education Ministry. We want the examinations to continue even if our dormitories aren't reopened. Seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka University have been successful in realising their demand. It's possible to take examinations on our campus as well."

RU proctor Prof Lutfor Rahman said he will request the vice chancellor of the University to restart the examinations.

Students of Chittagong University held a rally in front of the university's Shaheed Minar.

Pratoy Nafak, a student, said that

they also demanded the introduction of bus service between the campus and Chattogram city and submitted a memorandum to the vice chancellor in this regard.

CU proctor Robiul Islam said that university authorities will hold a meeting on the issue on Sunday and take a decision.

Barisal University students blocked the Barisal-Kuakata highway when protesting the continuation of all examinations that started in January last.

Khorshed Alam, general secretary of BU Teachers' Association, said, "We'll contact the higher authorities over resuming the examinations as the students are demanding it."

Chandpur district Chhatra Adhikar Parishad also held a human chain in front of Chandpur Government College with similar demands.

Students of different universities have been demonstrating in and outside their campuses since Saturday with different demands, including reopening of their educational institutions and halls.

Against the backdrop of protests at Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University and others, the government on Monday announced that all universities would reopen on May 24 after the Eid-ul-Fitr.

No examinations will be held before reopening of the universities, but online classes will continue, Education Minister Dipu Moni announced.

The NU cancelled all their exams on Monday until further notice. Dhaka University took the same step the next day.

Frustrated by the decision, a group of students of DU's seven affiliated colleges blocked Nilkhet intersection and some other roads near the DU campus on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning.

DU authorities on Wednesday decided to hold all ongoing and previously announced exams of its seven affiliated colleges in the wake of student protests.

## Five die, 410 get infected with Covid

UNB, Dhaka

Five more Covid-19-related deaths and 410 new cases were reported in the country in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

A total of 957 people recovered during the same period, said the Directorate General of Health Services in a handout.

With the updated figures, the Covid-19 fatalities climbed to 8,384 and the number of total infections to 544,954 in Bangladesh.

The daily infection rate now stands at 2.63 percent which was 2.65 percent on Wednesday, the latest figures showed.

The overall infection rate slightly fell to 13.61 percent, which was 13.66 percent on Wednesday.

The mortality rate remained steady at 1.54 percent for the past few days, the DGHS handout said.

So far, 494,755 patients (90.79 percent) have recovered from Covid-19.

The authorities have so far tested 4,003,236 samples, including 15,560 in the same 24-hour period.

Bangladesh reported its first novel coronavirus cases on March 8 last year and the first death on March 18.

## Dhaka-NJP train service to start on March 26

STAR REPORT

A new passenger train between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri (NJP) of India's West Bengal state will start its service on March 26 as part of the golden jubilee celebrations of Bangladesh's independence.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, who would travel to Dhaka on March 26, are expected to flag off the new train service as part of the efforts to revive the rail connectivity that had existed till 1965 between the two neighbours.

The operation of the nonstop ten-coach train between Dhaka and NJP, which will cover a distance of 513km, was discussed at a two-day meeting between a team of Bangladesh Railway officers and Ravinder Kumar Verma, divisional railway manager of India's Katihar division in New Jalpaiguri on Tuesday and Wednesday, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

Mohammed Shahidul Islam, the divisional railway manager of Paksey division, who led the Bangladesh team to the meeting, told the media in Siliguri on Wednesday that Bangladesh wanted to operate the train between Siliguri and Dhaka. "But Siliguri didn't have the required infrastructure, so it had to be New Jalpaiguri instead," he added.

New Jalpaiguri has the biggest railway station in the northern part of West Bengal and is just six km away from Siliguri. It is a key junction between mainland India and north-eastern India.

The Dhaka-NJP train would take the same route as the Haldibari-Chilahati train that was flagged off last year.

The name of the Dhaka-NJP train and its fare are yet to be decided, said Verma.

## Sold in Algeria, waiting for rescue

FROM PAGE 1

Without an Algerian embassy in Dhaka, their visas were processed from Islamabad in Pakistan, their passports show.

Brac Migration Programme's head Shariful Hasan attested to the fact.

"We had even officially sent letters to the ministry in 2019 saying that workers are being recruited for Algeria, for the purpose of being sent to Spain," he said.

Copies of these letters show that these were sent to the Bangladesh Embassy in Algeria, which in turn wrote to the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister, and to the Director-General of the Wage Earner's Welfare Board.

"Whenever the workers complain about the working conditions, they are encouraged to contact the agency's people in Algeria for passage to Spain," said the letter.

Shariful commented, "We need to take steps immediately to investigate why people are going to informal labour markets, and how they are being trafficked from there."

At least one worker, Abdul Hai, died while trying to make the trip.

On January 4, in a drive on both the skills training centre and the processing agent's office which recruited these workers, a total of three arrests were made by Rab-3.

The arrestees are Mohsin Madbor and Shakil Chowdhury, the executive director and cashier respectively of the training centre in Munshiganj, and Barun Debnath of Banna Bijoy Overseas Ltd.

"This is a clear case of labour trafficking, according to the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act and we have charged them accordingly," said Additional Superintendent of Police Bina Rani Das of Rab-3.

"The workers were recruited by the local agent, but their BMET clearances were processed by Banna Bijoy Overseas Ltd. This is illegal. As a result, they were sent to jobs under exploitative working conditions."

"When the workers were in trouble, or were not getting their payments, they

contacted the local agent who had no legal responsibility over them. The legal responsibility lies with Banna Bijoy, but they do not even know which workers they sent."

While Singapore Skills Training Centre is still operational as Asia Skills Training Centre, Banna Bijoy Overseas Ltd's licence has been temporarily suspended, said the Rab official.

No other officials from the two companies could be contacted as the phone numbers The Daily Star got were found switched off.

BMET Director-General Shamsul Alam said, "The only way a recruiting agency can send workers recruited by another agency is if they formally let the BMET know that they are taking over the workers of the agency. They have to provide a written statement pledging that they will take the responsibility of the workers. If this was not done, then it is unacceptable."

"If the lower officials of BMET are facilitating such processes then they should be found out. I am deeply against this."

**SUBHUMAN LIVING CONDITIONS**  
As the barometer dips to 10 degrees Celsius in the city of Boumerdes of Algeria, with gusts of wind coming from the Mediterranean Sea, Sohel Rana and his group bathe and defecate outdoors.

These workers, constructing a housing project, sent videos over WhatsApp to this correspondent to prove their claims.

A single PVC pipe hanging over a muddy cesspool, comprises their bathing area.

Their toilet is a hole in the ground, with raised planks for squatting.

"We were asked to defecate in the open when we got here, but we could not do that, so we created these structures. They docked a day's worth of wages for all those who spent the day constructing a toilet," alleged Sohel Rana in a clip, while another worker wearing a woollen cap and scarf wrapped around his face walked out of the "toilet."

This correspondent spoke to Sohel earlier this month.

"Just three days ago, we were allowed to move into these [ship] containers to give us some weather protection. Up until then, and throughout winter, we had been living in an under-construction building with no doors or even walls to catch the draught coming in from the sea," he said.

The under-construction buildings had damp dirt floors and were littered with construction materials stored in the living quarters of the workers.

The irony of the matter is that they are constructing a luxurious ocean-view multi-story housing project. The project is in an area called Ouled Abdel Krim and is done by a Chinese company.

Tushar, who worked in another project, said, "It was very cold. It used to snow but we did not have any gloves. If we asked for gloves, they said to talk to the Bangla boss."

"We had knee-deep snow, but we are not allowed to heat water for bathing because it would use up the gas cylinder, and then we would have nothing left for cooking."

While Tushar managed to escape -- his family sent him money and he bought a ticket back to Dhaka on December 30 last year -- others however have not yet been that fortunate.

**DEBT-LADEN FAMILIES**  
The workers seen in the videos and contacted by this correspondent unanimously spoke about how they do not get their monthly wages in time, and have tens of thousands in arrears.

When the wages are paid, the worker's employers send the money directly to the Bangladeshi recruiting agent. Several workers said their families got paid only once or twice.

"We only got money twice from the agent, and that was only Tk 80,000 in total," said Abdur Razzak, the father of one worker. This is about three months of his son's salary, even though he had been working for a year by then.

"When he asked for his salary after six months, his company told him that they bought him," said Razzak.

His son ran away from these exploitative conditions and is elsewhere now, but where he does

not know, because they have had no contact in three months.

"I cannot even die in peace because I loaned a lot of money to send him," he said.

Similarly, Kanon, the wife of a worker Swapan Sardar, waits for the monthly wages her husband had been promised.

"I was once told by the agent that my husband sent me Tk 30,000 but whenever I went for that money, they drove me away. I have not gotten a single taka from the agent," she said.

Nilufa, the widow of the worker Abdul Hai, who attempted to make the trip in December 2019 and died after his boat capsized, told this correspondent that she, too, was in debt.

"I got his body back in February of last year. To this day, I don't know how he died, or even when he died. When he was in Algeria, he used to complain about not having enough to eat."

She sent a photo of his dead body -- drenched, blue with cold, lying against what seems to be the bottom of an orange lifeboat.

Next, she sent a photo of her kids, aged three, eight and 10. The eldest, a boy, is the spitting image of his dead father.

"He had gone to Algeria after borrowing Tk 3.5 lakh in 2019. I only got money from him twice, a total of Tk 1.2 lakh. The minute I got the money, the loan sharks took it away. I had to sell my house for Tk 45,000 to pay off another lender. The next day I was told he died. What am I and my children to do now?"

Meanwhile, the Bangladeshis in Algeria wait to return home.

## 12th anniversary of Pilkhana carnage observed

STAR REPORT

The nation yesterday observed the 12th anniversary of Pilkhana carnage, which left 74 people, including 57 army officers, dead.

At 9am, President's Military Secretary Major General SM Salah Uddin Islam placed a floral wreath on behalf of Abdul Hamid at Banani Military Graveyard. Then Prime Minister's Military Secretary Major General Nakib Ahmed paid tribute to the martyrs on behalf of Sheikh Hasina.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, chiefs of the three branches of armed forces -- army chief General Aziz Ahmed, acting navy chief Rear Admiral M Abu Ashraf and air force chief Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Seraniat -- and Border Guard Bangladesh (BCB) Director General Major General Md Shafeenul Islam also placed wreaths at the graveyard.

They later observed a minute of silence and prayed for the eternal peace and salvation of the departed souls.

Families of the deceased placed floral wreaths on their graves as well, according to an ISPR press release.

According to UNB, BGB had organised Quran-khwani as well as doa and milad mahfil.

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Members of the armed forces pay tribute to the army officials who lost their lives in the Pilkhana carnage. The nation yesterday observed the 12th anniversary of the carnage, where 74 people, including 57 army officers, were killed, after then Bangladesh Rifles staged a revolt. The photo was taken from the capital's Banani Military Graveyard.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Railway to begin recruitment soon

Says minister, adding 100+ stations remain closed due to manpower shortage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manpower shortage forced Bangladesh Railway (BR) to shut down more than 100 stations, Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan yesterday said, adding that they would recruit 10,000 to 12,000-strong manpower in the first phase.

"We hope to publish advertisement [for recruitment] within this month," Sujan said, adding, "We will be able to get rid of manpower shortage within two or three years."

Speaking at a programme at capital's Rail Bhaban, he said more than 100 stations of Bangladesh Railway remain shut down currently due to manpower crisis in the state-run transport agency.

He said they were working hard to give service to people but there is a huge shortage of railway infrastructure including rail tracks, which is holding them back.

Whenever they introduce new train, it causes more delay to rail operations and pose more security risks as most of the railway network is single-line, he said.

Schedule-related problem may not go until the construction of double-lines across the country, he added.

BR SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH WATERAID

BR yesterday signed an agreement with Water Aid to establish or renovate public toilets and carry on "horizontal learning programme" to improve water, sanitation and hygiene at railway stations.

BR's Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder and Hasin Jahan, BR's Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder and Hasin Jahan, BR's country director of WaterAid Bangladesh, signed the agreement on behalf

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Retired cop, accused in graft case, 'threatens' ACC official in Barishal

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

An official of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Barishal has allegedly been cornered and threatened by a retired police official when the ACC deputy assistant director went to the court premises on Wednesday to testify against the former constable accused in a corruption case.

Later, the deputy director of ACC Barishal integrated district office rescued him.

The incident took place on Barishal Divisional Special Court premises in the afternoon. The ACC official, Md Al-Amin, filed a general diary with Barisal Kotwali Model Police Station that night.

According to ACC, they have informed the higher authorities regarding the incident for taking legal action against the accused.

Al-Amin, deputy assistant director of

ACC's Barishal unit, said he filed the case against retired constable Md Alauddin Dhali and his wife Maksuda Begum on October 10, 2018 with Barishal Model Police Station over not submitting proper wealth documents and concealing information.

Also, Dhali could not provide information of around Tk 57 lakh in his and his wife's name to the ACC, Al-Amin added.

The charge sheet was submitted to the court on October 11 last year.

"I went to the court in the afternoon to testify against the accused. Dhali threatened and detained me on the court premises around 1pm on the day," he said. "Afraid, I took shelter at the police booth. The ACC deputy director rescued me an hour later," he added.

According to ACC sources, the accused

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## Dispose of Pilkhana carnage case by this year, demands BNP

UNB, Dhaka

Expressing displeasure over the delay in punishing perpetrators, BNP yesterday demanded announcement of BDR mutiny murder case's final verdict by this year.

"Twelve years have elapsed, but it has not been possible to finally dispose of the [Pilkhana] murder case. We're disappointed, and people are shocked over the delay in the trial. This case is moving at a very slow pace," said BNP Vice Chairperson Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed.

"We don't see any sign that the process of leave-to-appeal will begin this year. We urge the judiciary to ensure speedy trial of the murder case. We hope the final verdict will be delivered within this year," he said.

The BNP leader also expected that the convicted will be executed soon after the verdict is pronounced.

Hafiz came up with the remarks while talking to reporters, after placing wreaths at a monument set up at Banani graveyard, in memory of the army officials killed in the Pilkhana carnage, on its 12th anniversary.

A total of 74, including 57 army officials, were killed during the mutiny that took place at Pilkhana headquarters on February 25-26, 2009.

On November 5, 2013, a Dhaka court gave death sentence to 152 people, and life imprisonment to 160 in the case. On November 27, 2017, the High Court confirmed death penalty for 139 out of the 152 accused.

Hafiz, a retired army officer, demanded that the report of the Court of Inquiry, headed by then quartermaster General Lieutenant General Jahangir, be made public.

He said the perpetrators of the heinous massacre should be punished through a fair investigation and trial, as this incident could have a serious impact.

The BNP leader alleged that Pilkhana carnage was carried out to weaken Bangladesh's military. People also want to know clearly who exactly the beneficiaries of the tragic incident are.

He alleged that an Awami League leader, who had been sentenced to life imprisonment by a lower court, was later

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Freedom fighter Wahid Ullah passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Freedom fighter Wahid Ullah passed away at his residence in the capital's Siddheshwari early yesterday.

He was 72.

Wahid breathed his last around 12am due to complications arising from advanced stage Parkinson's disease.

Born in 1948 in Feni, he fought valiantly against the Pakistani occupational forces during the country's Liberation War in Sector-1 under Sector Commander Captain Rafiqul Islam.

He left behind his wife Sureaya Akhter, sons Karim Al Waheed and Mahmood Al Waheed, and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

His elder son Karim is the digital editor of The Daily Star.

Wahid was given guard of honour by Bangladesh Police following his namaz-e-janaza at Ramna Thana Jaame Masjid after Zohr prayers.

Later, he was buried at Banani graveyard in Dhaka.



## Country's food production plan not nutrition-sensitive

Experts say at discussion on nutritional challenges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the pressing issue of malnutrition casts a shadow over the country's public health situation, experts suggest the government take necessary measures to ensure nutrition in food.

This, they said, is especially important following the adverse impact of Covid-19 on the country's economy, which might lead to a rise in the number of stunting and wasting cases in children.

They also underscored the need for co-operation to ensure proper data collection on malnutrition, as Bangladesh lacks sufficient data on the issue.

The prognoses came as part of a discussion titled 'From Evidence to Action: Future Challenges for Better Nutrition in Bangladesh' held yesterday at a hotel in the capital. The programme was organised by Helen Keller International (HKI) Bangladesh.

During his speech, Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, Executive Director of ICDDR,B, said Bangladesh is doing well in solving stunting and wasting problems in children under the age of five.

He, however, expressed fear that the situation might deteriorate following the disruptive impact of Covid-19.

Senior Policy Advisor of NIPN M Asaduzzaman presented the keynote paper. He said, though malnutrition is a major problem for Bangladesh, no government organisation is charged with looking after the issue as a whole.

"Some organisations only partially look over malnutrition-related issues. Even the health ministry cannot be held responsible on the matter," he said.

He added that government policies, specifically in food production, are not nutrition-sensitive and in some cases lack proper directives on nutrition.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## MINI BYTES



## Amazon is facing off Reliance in India, here's why

ZARIF FAIAZ

Amazon, world's largest e-commerce business is facing off Reliance, India's largest company in a legal battle that could shape the growth of the Indian e-commerce scenario. Amazon is pitting itself against the local giant with home ground advantage, which analysts think will pose a major challenge unlike anything Amazon has faced before.

### WHAT THE FEUD IS ABOUT

The apple of discord is an Indian retailer - Future Group. Since 2019, Amazon has owned a 49% stake in Future Coupons, with an indirect ownership stake in Future Retail.

Earlier this year, Future Group made a deal with Reliance Group to sell \$3.4bn worth of its retail assets. Amazon argued that, its indirect ownership of Future Retail prevented Future Group from selling its assets to a selected group of Indian companies, including Reliance - setting off a one-of-a-kind of feud between two of the largest companies in the world in the Indian market over a brick and mortar business.

Last Monday, the Supreme Court of India ruled in favour of Amazon - halting the Future-Reliance deal until further notice - against the Delhi High Court's earlier decision to allow the Reliance purchase to go ahead.

### WHY IT MATTERS

For the past few years, Amazon has been aggressively expanding in India, to utilise the growing Indian e-commerce market, where Reliance is one of its primary competitors.

If Reliance's purchase of Future Retail's assets goes through, Reliance will gain access to over 1500 stores in more than 400 cities in India, along with Future's wholesale and logistics -- a major disadvantage for Amazon in India.

If the court ultimately decides to rule in favour of Amazon, it will slow down Reliance's push in the e-commerce where Amazon is currently set to dominate.

### WHAT IT INDICATES

The feud between two of the richest men in the world are an indication of the growth potential of the Indian e-commerce market. It also shows how difficult it can get for foreign players to operate in the Indian market.

Analysts claim that Reliance, the local hero, has a home ground advantage under the leadership of Mukesh Ambani who is known as being disruptive. Although the latest round of court ruling suggests a tough battle ahead.

It is highly unlikely that Amazon will give up without a fight since the e-commerce giant will not want to lose years of difficult expansion -- under tight government rules that favour local e-commerce companies over foreign ones -- to Reliance's local advantage.

## ROAD ACCIDENTS

### JU student among 3 killed

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed and 11 injured in road accidents in three districts during the last two days, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Natore, a Jahangirnagar University student died as his motorbike hit a roadside tree in Bagatipara upazila on Wednesday night.

Abdullah Al Mahmud Shafi was a student of the public administration at JU, said department Chairman Prof Md Nurul Amin.

Shafi lost control over the bike, said the professor.

He was rushed to Bagatipara Upazila Health Complex and later shifted to a Natore hospital, he added. He was then transferred to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he was declared dead, he quoted family as saying.

In Manikganj, truck driver Rakib Hossain from Faridpur was killed and 10 were injured in a bus-truck collision on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Pachuria in Ghior upazila yesterday, said highway police.

The injured were taken to Manikganj Sadar Hospital.

In Munshiganj, a truck driver's helper was killed and the trucker injured as the vehicle collided head-on with an unknown vehicle on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Gazaria.

The deceased was Abdur Salam (25). Driver Md Lablu (50) was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said police.

## গণ-বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সাম্প্রতিককালে ফেইসবুক (Facebook), একটি স্বল্প পরিচিত পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত সংবাদ এবং একটি টিভি টকশোতে বিকাশ লিমিটেড (বিকাশ) বিষয়ক বেশ কিছু ভুল তথ্য ও ব্যাখ্যা প্রদান করা হয়েছে। একটি স্বচ্ছ আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে বিকাশ দেশের প্রচলিত সকল আইনকানুন মেনে আর্থিক সেবা দিয়ে যাচ্ছে। বিভ্রান্তিমূলক তথ্যের প্রেক্ষিতে সঠিক তথ্যগুলো জনসমক্ষে তুলে ধরা প্রয়োজন।

১. ইতোপূর্বে ২০২০ সালের ২৯ অক্টোবর ফেইসবুকে একটি ফেইক একাউন্টের মাধ্যমে বিকাশ-এর বিরুদ্ধে উদ্দেশ্যমূলকভাবে অপপ্রচার চালানোর জন্য জোবাইদা রহমান নামক একজনকে বিকাশ-এর অংশীদার মানি ইন মোশন এলএলসিএর শেয়ারহোল্ডার হিসেবে উপস্থাপন করা হয়। উক্ত মিথ্যা তথ্য ও অপপ্রচারের বিরুদ্ধে বিকাশ আইনী পদক্ষেপ হিসেবে মামলা দায়ের করে। কাফরুল থানা মামলা নং- ১৯(১৯)২০।

২. একই হীন উদ্দেশ্যে একটি স্বল্প পরিচিত পত্রিকায় বিকাশ সম্পর্কিত "প্রধানমন্ত্রী ও রাষ্ট্রের বিরুদ্ধে বিজ্ঞাপন প্রচার করছে বিকাশ" শিরোনামে একটি মিথ্যা, উদ্দেশ্যপ্রসোদিত এবং জিজ্ঞাসী সংবাদ প্রকাশ করা হয়। উক্ত অপপ্রচারের বিরুদ্ধে আইনী পদক্ষেপ হিসেবে সাইবার ট্রাইব্যুনালে ডিজিটাল সিকিউরিটি অ্যাক্ট ২০১৮ অনুযায়ী মামলা করে বিকাশ। পিটিশন মামলা নম্বর- ৫৪৮/২০২০।

৩. সম্প্রতি ফেইসবুকে বিকাশ-এর সুনাম ক্ষুণ্ণ করার অভিসন্ধিতে একটি বিভ্রমমূলক ডিডিও ক্লিপ সম্প্রচার করা হয়েছে। উক্ত ডিডিও ক্লিপ প্রদত্ত তথ্যবলী সম্পূর্ণ বানোয়াট, মিথ্যা এবং জিজ্ঞাসী। এ বিষয়ে বিকাশ লিমিটেড বিটিআরসি'কে অবগত করে উক্ত ডিডিও ক্লিপের সম্প্রচার বন্ধের জন্য অনুরোধ জানিয়েছে। এ বিষয়ে কাফরুল থানায় একটি সাধারণ ডায়েরি করা হয়েছে (ডায়েরি নং- ৪৯৯, তারিখ- ০৯/০২/২০২১)। একই আঙ্গিকে একটি টিভি টকশোতে ডেভিড বার্গম্যানকে বিকাশ-এর অংশীদার প্রতিষ্ঠান 'মানি ইন মোশন'-এর পরিচালক হিসেবে উল্লেখ করা হয়। উল্লেখ্য, ডিডিও ক্লিপে উত্থাপিত সকল তথ্য উপাত্ত জালকৃত ও উদ্দেশ্যমূলকভাবে পরিবর্তিত ও বিকৃত করা হয়েছে যার প্রমাণ ইতোমধ্যেই বিকাশ-এর আইন বিভাগের হস্তগত হয়েছে।

৪. বিকাশ দৃঢ়তার সঙ্গে উল্লেখ করতে চায় যে ডেভিড বার্গম্যান নামের কোনো ব্যক্তি কখনোই বিকাশ-এর সহযোগি প্রতিষ্ঠান 'মানি ইন মোশন এলএলসি'র সঙ্গে সম্পৃক্ত ছিল না এবং বর্তমানেও নেই।

বিকাশ বিগত দশ বছর ধরে কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংকের সকল নীতিমালা মেনে নিরবচ্ছিন্নভাবে মোবাইল আর্থিক সেবা প্রদান করে চলেছে। বর্তমান সরকারের 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ' রূপকল্প বাস্তবায়নের অংশ হিসেবে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সরাসরি পৃষ্ঠপোষকতায় এক দশক ধরে গড়ে ওঠা এই এমএফএস খাতকে ধ্বংসের জন্য একটি সংঘবদ্ধ চক্র বেশ কিছুদিন যাবৎ নানা রকম মিথ্যা অপপ্রচার চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে। আর্থিক অন্তর্ভুক্তিতে অবদান রাখা প্রতিষ্ঠান বিকাশকে নিয়ে এমন অসত্য ও উদ্দেশ্যমূলক অপপ্রচারের বিরুদ্ধে তীব্র নিন্দা জানাই এবং বিকাশ-এর সকল গ্রাহক ও শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষীদেরকে এ বিষয়ে সজাগ ও সতর্ক থাকার অনুরোধ জানাচ্ছি।

বিকাশ কর্তৃপক্ষ

# FREEDOM FIGHTERS' ALLOWANCE System error leaves out 15,000 in metropolitans

SUSHANTA GHOSH

The promise of convenience that the new Electronic Finance Transfer (EFT) system brought for freedom fighters has turned sour within two months of its introduction. Due to an indexing issue, around 15,000 freedom fighters living in five metropolitan areas are yet to receive their allowances for the first month of the new year.

In the past, the allowances were manually distributed through the Deputy Commissioner's office. However, the new system was introduced under which allowances would be issued digitally and go straight into the recipient's account.

But as metropolitan areas are not categorised in the payroll software, 14,958 freedom fighters living in the five cities of Barishal, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Rangpur, and Mymensingh have been left out from getting their allowances for January, and look set to miss February's as well.

Contacted, authorities concerned could not confirm when this issue will be fixed.

"We have come to see that the table (in the payroll software) is set up on an upazila-based system, meaning that there's no mention of metropolitan areas. We have

notified those in charge of the software of this issue, and hopefully they will resolve it soon, but we don't know when," said Executive Magistrate Abdul Hai, Barishal Zila Muktijoddha Sangsad's in-charge for distributing the allowances.

In December under the manual system, 1,71,080 freedom fighters had received the payments, according to the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs' website. Under the new system, 1,56,122 Freedom Fighters have already received allowances for January.

Of the 14,958 who didn't get their allowances, 394 live in Barishal city.

Contacted, Barishal DC and Commander of District Muktijoddha Sangsad Jasimuddin Haider said they are working to fix it.

"We sent a list of freedom fighters eligible for the allowance through a Management Information System to the deputy commissioner's office on Feb 14. Whatever the issue is from their side now," said Hafizur Rahman, office assistant of the social service office in Barishal District.

Putul Ghosh, general secretary of Sector Commanders Forum, Barishal unit, said many freedom fighters do not even know why they're not getting the allowances, but are passing a miserable time because of it.



The footpath in front of Dhaka Shishu Hospital has never been empty of hawkers in recent memory. But the presence of large crowds outside a hospital largely hinders the ease of movement of patients, attendants and hospital staff, who are often faced with emergencies.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Youth held in Ctg over rape of college girl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested a 22-year old youth yesterday on charge of raping a college girl in Chattogram city's Panchlaish area.

Officer-in-Charge Abul Kashem Bhuiyan of Panchlaish Police Station said police arrested Md Asman Azim Ayan (22) in a drive, after receiving complaint from the victim's father.

He raped her on Wednesday evening on a rooftop of a building; she was undergoing treatment at One-Stop Crisis Centre of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), police said.

"Ayan forcibly picked up the girl while she was going for tuition, raped and physically abused her," he added.

Police were trying to arrest two more accused in the case who assisted Ayan in this crime.

## 12th

FROM PAGE 3

BGB flags were hoisted at half-mast at all BGB installations, and all BGB members are wearing black badges to mark the day.

On February 25, 2009, several hundred Bangladesh Rifles (now BGB) men rose up in an armed revolt at the Darbar Hall of the force's Pikhana headquarters during the three-day "BDR Week".

The mutiny finally ended the following day with the surrender of firearms, ammunition and grenades through a negotiation between then government and BDR rebels.

## Retired cop

FROM PAGE 3

constable retired from Rajarbagh Police Lines in 2012.

After retirement, he moved to his home town Barishal. He has a plot in Keraniganj, a 1,068-square-foot flat on Outer Circular Road in Dhaka in his wife's name, and 59 land deeds in Dhaka and Barishal.

"He tried his best to remove his wife's name from the case, but could not. So he, along with others, threatened and cornered me on that day," Al-Amin added.

Contacted yesterday, Dhali said, "I did not detain him [the ACC official]."

"I paid him Tk 3 lakh to remove my wife's name from the case and asked him to return it as he did not do so," he further alleged.

Asked about the corruption case, Dhali

said he had provided ACC with all the information regarding his wealth and assets.

"Now I don't remember everything," he said and hung up the phone.

Al-Amin, however, refuted the bribery allegation.

Debabrata Mandal, ACC deputy director, Barishal said, "Being informed, we rescued Al-Amin from the court premises at 2pm. We have informed the higher authorities for taking action against the accused."

About the bribery allegation, the deputy director of the anti-graft body told this newspaper, "Usually in corruption cases like this one, the accused often come up with such allegations."

## Railway to

FROM PAGE 3

of their respective organisations.

Later, the minister inaugurated the programme.

Under the programme, WaterAid will renovate two public toilets at Kamalapur Railway Station and build a new public toilet in Airport Station in the capital.

Under the one-year pilot programme, a model would be developed through proper maintenance with money to be collected from toilets-users, officials said.

Besides, a guideline would be developed and good practices would be replicated in other public toilets of other railway stations, they added.

Railways Ministry Secretary Salim Reza said they would remodel and modernise 50 stations across the country within one year to mark the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Dhirendra Nath, Hasin Jahan, BR general manager (east) Jahangir Hossain, ministry's joint secretary Atiqur Rahaman and expert Santanu Lahiri spoke the programme.

## CORRUPTION CASE

# HC questions bail for Rozi Chishty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned a lower court order that granted bail to Rozi Chishty, wife of former chairman of Farmers Bank Audit Committee Mahabubul Haque Chisty in a corruption case.

The HC issued a rule asking the state, Anti-Corruption Commission and Rozi Chishty to explain in 10 days why the January 5 lower court order that granted her bail should not be scrapped.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim came up with the rule following a petition filed by the ACC on February 18, seeking cancellation of the bail order.

The anti-corruption body said in the petition that there is specific allegation against Rozi Chishty of committing corruption and, therefore, she cannot be granted bail in the case.

Lawyer Khurshid Alam appeared for the ACC while Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the state.

On December 15 in 2019, the ACC filed the case with its coordinated district office in Dhaka against Rozi and several others on charges of amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 37.38 crore.

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

**Invitation to Submit a Proposal (ITP) for Technical Support for Agricultural Production and Market Linkages Programme**

The FAO Bangladesh has launched an Invitation To Proposal (ITP) for selection of implementing partners (IP) as part of its Resilience Programme. Proposals should be submitted in the format indicated in the ITP document.

ITP document can be downloaded from the link- <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/122676>

All partners may submit requests for further information or clarification through email to: "Peter.Agnew@fao.org" and "nur.khondaker@fao.org; until Wednesday, 01 March 2021 after which point a Bidders Conference will be held for all interested parties. The deadline for submission of the proposal is Thursday, 08 March 2021 by 17:00 hrs.

**NOTE:** No proposal will be considered after the declared deadline.

## Country's food

FROM PAGE 3

Asaduzzaman suggested designing projects with a more holistic approach, with particular emphasis on economic, gender and Behavior Change Communication (BCC).

Kazi Zebunnessa Begum, Additional Secretary (WH Wing) of the Health Services Division, said the government is investing large sums in the country's nutrition sector with the aim to reduce stunting and wasting.

## Mobile banking scammer arrested

RU CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a bKash officer imposter in Rajpara of Rajshahi on Wednesday night, in a case filed for deceiving a man more than two years ago.

Selim Mia (26) was held at his home in Maharajpur in Baliakandi of Rajpara, confirmed Rajshahi Metropolitan Police spokesman Golam Ruhul Quddus.

One Salahuddin Biswas filed the case against him with Rajpara Police Station on October 10, 2018.

In the case, he said, introducing himself as an officer of the mobile financial service, Selim took his bKash PIN number and stole Tk 32,063 from his account.

A Rajshahi court sent the accused to jail when he was produced before it yesterday, the RMP spokesperson said.

## Dispose of

FROM PAGE 3

acquitted. "Only some people, not all those who had direct involvement in the killings, have been brought to justice."

He said the local and international conspirators who planned the carnage remains behind the scenes. "Their identities are not clear to people. We urge the government to bring all those who plotted and planned the barbaric incident to justice."

The BNP leader alleged that the family of a Subedar major of then BDR, who was killed during the massacre for his efforts to protect the army officers, still did not get any support from the government. "I hope the government will immediately give attention to the matter."

Stating that families of the slain army officers are living in severe misery and grief, Hafiz hoped that the offenders of this brutal incident will be brought to justice soon to bring peace to their minds and the souls of martyrs.

He said their party wants good governance, democracy and the rule of law to be "restored" in the country in a very short time. Hafiz along with party leaders and ex-army officials went to the graveyard around 10:45am and placed wreaths at the monument and offered prayers, seeking eternal peace for the departed souls.

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

**Vacancy Announcement**

**Deadline for application: 16 March 2021**

The FAO Representation in Bangladesh is inviting applications of qualified and experienced candidates for the following position to be filled under the project "Community-based Climate Resilient Fisheries and Aquaculture Development in Bangladesh (GCP/BGD/055/LDF)". The incumbents will be recruited under service contract as National Project Personnel:

- National Gender and Socioeconomic Analyst (SC9)

To apply, visit the FAO employment website at [Jobs.at.FAO](http://Jobs.at.FAO) and complete the on-line application. Only applications received through online will be considered. Interested and qualified candidates will find the post descriptions from [Bdjobs.com](http://Bdjobs.com) also.

All recruitment to FAO posts are made on a competitive and transparent basis. Candidates are encouraged to apply directly to FAO and follow the instructions on the above-mentioned website. Please note that no intermediary is allowed to expedite or facilitate such process. All those who represent themselves as such are fraudulent and should be reported to FAO immediately.

Women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

**Ready Office for Sale**  
At Panthapath, Rasel Square, Dhaka.  
Size: 1154sqft.  
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**Commercial Space Sale**  
Ready commercial space for sale with RAJUK approved for Bank, Showroom, Restaurant, Office & others modern facilities. Size: 1500 - 3000 sqft. Contact us: 01733062843, 01733062846

**Flat For Sale**  
Flat for sale at West Dhammondi, Shere-E-Bangla Road, south face corner plot with Swimming Pool, Community space, GYM, BBQ area & many more others facilities. Size: 1375 - 1480 sqft. Contact Call: 01733062843, 01733062846

**Naogaon Technical School and College**  
Naogaon  
E-mail: [naogaontsc@gmail.com](mailto:naogaontsc@gmail.com)

**e-Tender Notice No. 01/2020-2021**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under Naogaon Technical School and College, Naogaon.

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Name of works	Tender last selling (date & time)	Tender closing and opening (date & time)
1	551567	Supplying of Furniture at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
2	551566	Supplying of Learning Materials at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
3	551565	Supplying of Office Equipment at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon.	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
4	551564	Supplying of Engineering and other equipment at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon.	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
5	551563	Supplying of Computer Related Accessories at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
6	551562	Supplying of Computer Accessories at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
7	551561	Supplying of Materials and Spare Parts and Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon.	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
8	551560	Supplying of Chemicals at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00
9	551559	Supplying of Sports Goods at Naogaon Technical School and College Sadar Naogaon.	11/03/2021; 17:00	14/03/2021; 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copy will be acceptable. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 11 March 2021; 17:00.

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

**Md. Kalim Uddin Sarkar**  
Principal (in-charge)  
Naogaon Technical School and College, Naogaon  
Phone: 0741-61754

**ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিমিটেড**  
বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী  
সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ  
Web: [www.dewbn.gov.bd](http://www.dewbn.gov.bd), Email: [commercial@dewbn.gov.bd](mailto:commercial@dewbn.gov.bd)

ফাইল নং ০৬.০২.৬৭৫৮.১৬৫.০৭.১৯৪.২০.১৩৯৮ তারিখঃ ২৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২১

**পুরাতন গাড়ি বিক্রয় পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠানের পুরাতন ০১টি গাড়ি ডাকা মেট্রো-গ-৩৭-১০৬০ টয়োটা এলিও (কার) "মেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে" এবং উহার রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ, ট্যাক্স প্রকেনস ও বিটসেনস সনদ "যে অবস্থায় যে পর্যন্ত ন্যায়ন আছে" সে ভিত্তিতে লিখিত বিক্রয়ের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিক, আমায়ী ক্রেতাদার/স্বিকারদারদের নিকট থেকে সীলমোহরকৃত বামে উল্লিখিত তারিখে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

১	স্থান	ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিমিটেড, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ।
২	গাড়ির ধরণ	পুরাতন ০১টি গাড়ি, ডাকা মেট্রো-গ-৩৭-১০৬০ টয়োটা এলিও (কার)।
৪	সিডিউলের মূল্য	টাকা ৫০০,০০ (পাঁচশত) মাত্র (অফারভোগ্য)।
৫	বিল্ড সিকিউরিটির পরিমাণ	মোট দরের উপর ৩% আন্তঃমাসিক হিসাবে ব্যাংক ড্রাকট/পে-অর্ডার ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিমিটেড এর নামে দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে। (তালিকাঙ্কৃত স্বিকারদার প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য প্রযোজ্য নহে)।
৬	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	হিসাব বিভাগ, ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিমিটেড, বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ।
৭	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১০ মার্চ ২০২১ অবধি সন্ধ্যা ৬টা পর্যন্ত।
৮	দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১১ মার্চ ২০২১ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
৯	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১১ মার্চ ২০২১ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
১০	যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	মেইল: ০১৭৬৯১১৯৮৮৭, <a href="http://www.dewbn.gov.bd">www.dewbn.gov.bd</a>
১১	দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করিতে হইবে	ফ্রেড লাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আধিকার সার্টিফিকেট, ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি, পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি ০১ কপি। জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র (ব্যাকিং ফ্রেম) (তালিকাঙ্কৃত স্বিকারদারদের ক্ষেত্রে প্রযোজ্য নহে)।
১২	বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্য	ক। দরপত্র সন্ধানকৃত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র সন্ধানকৃত ব্যক্তিগত শাখা হতে জানা যাবে। খ। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ হতে ৩০ দিন পর্যন্ত দরপত্র বলবৎ থাকবে। গ। নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে মালমাল ভেলিভারী নিতে হবে। ঘ। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। ঙ। অফিস চলাকালীন সময় সকাল ০৮:০০ ঘটিকা হতে বিকাল ০৩:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত সিডিউল ক্রয়কারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের সর্বোচ্চ ০৩ (তিন) সন্ধ্যা সময় প্রতিদিন দল যানবাহন শূন্য কর্তব্যকর্ত/কর্মচারীদের মাধ্যমে উল্লিখিত পুরাতন গাড়ি সরাসরি পরিদর্শন করতে পারবেন।

জিডি-৩৮৬

পক্ষে ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক

**INVITATION FOR TENDER**

**Pubali Bank Limited**, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate in any or all of the following tenders, but in separate envelope as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned works as per terms & conditions stated below:

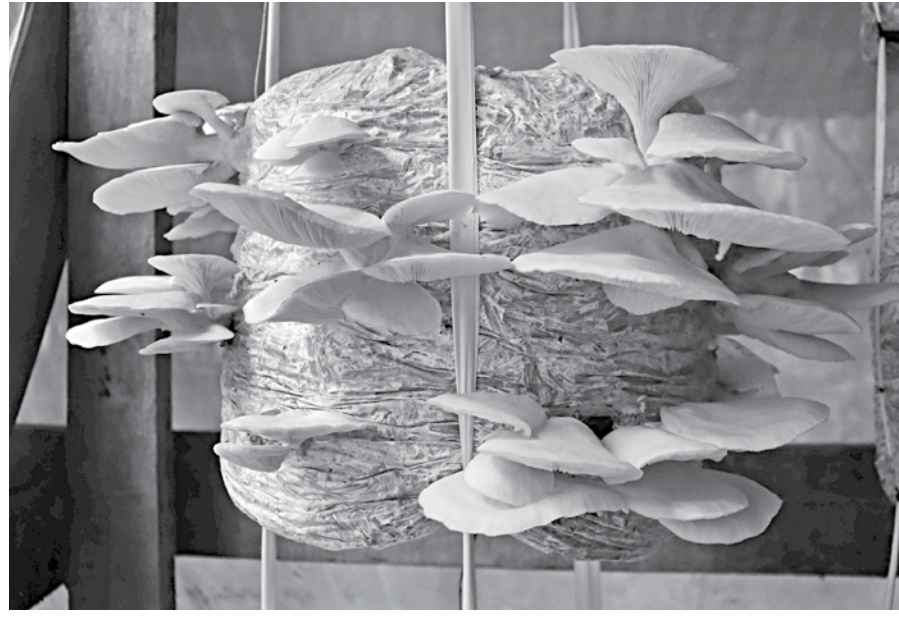
- Civil, Electrical & Networking works at proposed premises of our **Bhangura Branch (New), Pabna.**
- Civil, Electrical & Networking works of our proposed **Hatgopalpur uposhakha under Jhenaidah Branch, Jhenaidah.**
- Civil & Electrical works for exterior of our **Panthapath Branch, Dhaka.**
- Supply, installation & commissioning of **CCTV system** at different Branch/ Sub-Branches of our Bank.
- Supply, installation & commissioning of **Note Counting Machines** at different Branches of our Bank.

Please visit our web site, <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for details. Interested Parties may purchase their Tender document by **09 March, 2021** duly filled up all requirements and submit their offer in the Tender Box by **10 March, 2021** (before 11:00 A.M.). Tender will be opened on **10 March, 2021** at 11:30 A.M.

**Dilip Kumar Paul**  
General Manager

**পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

**Establishment Division**  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.



A type of oyster mushroom grown at the farm of high school student Saiful Islam, below. His monthly profits from the farm, located in Durgapur village of Pirojpur Sadar upazila, now stand between Tk 15,000 and Tk 20,000. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Mushroom does magic for high schooler

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A teenage boy, still in high school, has a head start in real-life profitable business experience after he started his very own mushroom culture farm in Sadar upazila.

Within a year of setting up the farm at his home village of Durgapur, the seventeen-year-old, Saiful Islam, started making a profit of nearly Tk 20 thousand from sales every month.

Now in 10th grade at Pirojpur Government Technical School and College, Saiful grew passion for mushroom cultivation from a very young age.

Saiful succeeded in winning support from his family with his persistent interest in mushroom farming and, in 2018, his father Noor Sayeed Mridha allowed him to get training on mushroom cultivation from Mushroom Development Training Centre in Savar near Dhaka. His elder brother Arifur Rahman's stay in Dhaka at the time was also crucial for Saiful's training.

For the initial capital of his business venture, he even managed a loan from Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC). "I used the loan money, which I got from BSCIC, to buy a machine for processing straw -- the material that is essential for producing mushroom," Saiful said.

On an average day, his farm now produces about ten kilograms of mushroom, which is sold for Tk 200 per kg at local markets. Aside from markets in Pirojpur, mushroom from Saiful's farm is available at markets in Barisal and Dhaka as well.

"Mushroom is of great demand to those who know its nutritional value," Saiful said adding that lately he has been

making between Tk 15,000 and Tk 20,000 in monthly profits from mushroom sales.

He has been considering expanding the farm and in future he hopes to make a laboratory where improved varieties of mushroom will be developed.

Arifur Rahman, Saiful's brother, said he now lives at home and tries to help out his younger brother in every possible way.

Their father Noor Sayeed said he has always been a supporter of his younger son's pursuit of passion for mushroom farming. "I am proud of my son as he is



studying while earning some money on the side."

Nazmul Islam, one of Saiful's friends from the neighbourhood, has been spending his free time with at the farm to learn techniques of mushroom farming from his friend. "I also want to start the business some day," said an enthusiastic Nazmul.

Suparna Ojha, sub-assistant agriculture officer in the upazila, said they also provided training on mushroom cultivation to Saiful, who is now the only successful mushroom producer in the upazila as well as in the district.

## Villagers setting bamboo pilings to save themselves from erosion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Villagers in Roumari upazila of Kurigram have set bamboo pilings through voluntary service on the bank of the Halhaliya river to protect themselves from erosion.

They are building 10 structures on one kilometre of the river bank in Dhanarchar Natun Gram area by piling bamboos to save themselves from erosion.

Locals said eight structures have already been built till now. The remaining two will be completed in the next three or four days.

Villager Mubarak Ali said around 5,000 families from Dhanarchar, Natun Gram, Diglapara and Charpara villages willingly came forward to protect various structures including homesteads, cultivable lands, schools, mosques, madrasas and graveyard along the river bank from erosion.

If the ten structures on the river bank are completed, erosion of Halhaliya can be prevented on a temporary basis, he said.



Villagers in Roumari upazila of Kurigram building structures on the bank of the Halhaliya river to protect themselves from erosion. PHOTO: STAR

Nasir Ali of Char Diglapara village said erosion by the river has turned serious due to fall in water levels.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities of Water Development Board, local administration and

public representatives are yet to take any steps to prevent erosion, he alleged.

Finding no other alternative, they have come forward to build the structures on the river bank by

piling bamboos to save themselves from erosion, said Nasir.

Two weeks ago, the villagers started building the structures on voluntary basis to protect erosion by the river, said Aminur Rahman, a teacher from Char Kodalkati in neighbouring Char Rajibpur upazila.

Madrasa teacher Aminur Rahman said if the river erosion cannot be stopped at the moment, it will become more severe. As a result, there will be extensive damage to various homesteads, cultivable lands and orchards.

Sarabesh Ali, chairman of Jadurchar Union Parishad, said people in the four villages have been building the structures on voluntary basis to prevent erosion.

Roumari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Al-Imran said the villagers had almost completed the structures on the river bank to prevent erosion.

He will take immediate steps to build a permanent dam after talking to the authorities concerned, said the UNO.

## 28 hurt in villagers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

At least 28 people were injured and 20 houses damaged in a clash between two groups of villagers in Saltha upazila yesterday.

Locals said there had been a conflict between one Kohinur Mattubar, 44, and Yusuf Mattubar, 56, for long.

Around 6:00am, a supporter of Kohinur broke down an earthen oven of one of Yusuf's followers.

Later, both the groups locked in a clash that left 28 people injured.

## Twins drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Twin brothers drowned in a pond at Majhapara village in Sadar upazila on Wednesday.

The deceased are four-year-old Jubayer Ali and Junayed Ali, sons of Mizanur Rahman.

Locals said the two boys went missing while playing beside a pond. Later, locals found their bodies floating in the pond water, Kamalpur UP Chairman Mazedur Rahman said.



Students of Government Sadaat College in Tangail's Karatia stage a demonstration, followed by a human chain programme, at the institution's Shaheed Miner premises yesterday, protesting suspension of the ongoing examinations of National University. PHOTO: STAR

Election Commission Secretariat	
Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project Nirbachan Commission Bhaban (8 <sup>th</sup> Floor) Agargaon, Dhaka	
Invitation for Tender (OTM)	
1. Ministry/Division	Bangladesh Election Commission
2. Agency	Election Commission Secretariat
3. Procuring Entity Name	Project Director, Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project
4. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5. Invitation for	Purchasing Spare Parts for Server (Motherboard, Hard disk, RAM, Switch and UPS)
6. Invitation for Tenders Ref. & Date	ECS/IDEA/G-5.1/2021/449 Dated: 25 Feb 2021
KEY INFORMATION	
7. Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)
8. Budget & Source of Fund	GoB
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
9. Project/Program Code	0601-5130
10. Tender Package No.	G-5.1
11. Tender Package Name	Purchasing Spare Parts for Server (Motherboard, Hard disk, RAM, Switch and UPS)
12. Tender Publication Date	26 Feb 2021
13. Tender Selling Last Date	11 Mar 2021 5:00 hrs
14. Tender Closing Date & Time	14 Mar 2021 2:00 hrs
15. Tender Opening date & Time	14 Mar 2021 2:30 hrs
16. Name of Address of the Office	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project, Election Commission Bhaban (8 <sup>th</sup> Floor), (Room No-814) Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
17. Selling Tender Documents (Other)	
18. Receiving Tender Documents	
19. Opening Tender Documents	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project, Election Commission Bhaban (7 <sup>th</sup> Floor), (Room No-721) Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
20. Place/Date/Time of Pre Tender Meeting	Election Commission Bhaban (7 <sup>th</sup> Floor), (Room No-721) 04 March 2021, 11:00 hrs
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
21. Eligibility of Tenderer	To hold eligibility for supply of same category of Items and Financial or other Capability.
22. Short Description of Goods	Purchasing Spare Parts for Server (Motherboard, Hard disk, RAM, Switch and UPS)
23. Price of Tender Documents (BDT)	Tk. 2000.00 ( Two Thousand Only)
24. Lot	Identification of Lot
01	Spare Parts for Server (Motherboard, Hard disk, RAM, Switch and UPS)
Tender Security	
Tk. 3,10,000/00 (Taka Three Lac Ten Thousand Only)	
Completion Time in Weeks	
10 (Ten) Weeks After Contract	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
25. Name of Official Inviting Tender	Brigadier General Abul Kashem Md Fazlul Kader
26. Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Project Director, IDEA Project. Election Commission Bhaban (8 <sup>th</sup> Floor), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
27. Address of Inviting Tender	
28. Contact Details of Official Inviting	Phone -55007490,01716-287641
29. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Tenders or annul the Tender Proceedings	
Brigadier General Abul Kashem Md Fazlul Kader Project Director IDEA Project	

GD-387



বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাডভান্সড অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

অস্থায়ী কার্যালয় : পুরাতন বিমান বন্দর, ঢাকা-১২১৫।

ওয়েবঃ www.bsmraau.edu.bd, ই-মেইলঃ recruitment@bsmraau.edu.bd

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নংঃ বিএসএমআরএইউ/রেজিঃ/১৫৬/২০২১/১৩৬

তারিখঃ ২৬ ফেব্রুয়ারী ২০২১

### পুনঃনিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের ২০১৯ সনের ০৫ নং আইন দ্বারা প্রতিষ্ঠিত বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাডভান্সড অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, বাংলাদেশ এর জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত পদসমূহে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকগণের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

ক্রঃ	পদের নাম ও গ্রেড	বেতন স্কেল (টাকা)	পদ সংখ্যা	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স	মন্তব্য
১।	অধ্যাপক (গ্রেড-৩)	৫৬,৫০০-৭৪,৪০০/- /৫০,০০০-৭১,২০০/-	০৫	৫৫ বৎসর	১। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতা সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.bsmraau.edu.bd) দেখুন।
২।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক (গ্রেড-৬)	৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-	০৫	৪০ বৎসর	২। আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ২৪ মার্চ ২০২১।
৩।	প্রভাষক (গ্রেড-৯)	২২,০০০-৫৩,০৬০/-	০৩	৩০ বৎসর	

### শর্তাবলী

১। আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের আবেদনপত্র ২৪ মার্চ ২০২১ তারিখের মধ্যে রেজিস্ট্রার, বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাডভান্সড অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, পুরাতন বিমানবন্দর, ঢাকা-১২১৫ ঠিকানায় ডাকযোগে / সরাসরি রেজিস্ট্রার অফিসে পৌঁছাতে হবে। আবেদন ফরমসমূহ অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট [www.bsmraau.edu.bd](http://www.bsmraau.edu.bd) বা রেজিস্ট্রার অফিস হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। প্রার্থী পদের নাম খামের উপর স্পষ্টাক্ষরে উল্লেখ করতে হবে। ডাকযোগে পাঠানো আবেদনপত্রের সাথে প্রার্থীর যোগাযোগের ঠিকানাসহ ১০ টাকার ডাকটিকিট সহলিপি ফেরত খাম সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।

২। বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাডভান্সড অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় (বিএসএমআরএইউ) এর অনুকূলে যে কোনো তফশিলী ব্যাংক হতে ৮০০.০০ (আটশত) টাকা মূল্যের পে-অর্ডার / ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (অফেরতযোগ্য) আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। আবেদনপত্রে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট / পে-অর্ডার নম্বর, ব্যাংকের নাম, শাখা, টাকার পরিমাণ ও তারিখ উল্লেখ করতে হবে।

৩। প্রার্থীকে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সদ্যতোলা ৫ সে. মি X ৫ সে. মি সাইজের ০৩ (তিন) কপি রঙিন সত্যায়িত ছবি, সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদপত্র ও নম্বরপত্রের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি, প্রকাশনার অনুলিপি (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে), অভিজ্ঞতার সনদের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি এবং বিদেশী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে অর্জিত ডিগ্রীর ক্ষেত্রে বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন হতে ইস্যুকৃত সমমান সনদের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি জমাদান করতে হবে। মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় সকল কাগজপত্রের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।

৪। মুক্তিযোদ্ধা, শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র / কন্যা কোটার প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষরিত সনদের সত্যায়িত কপি ও অন্যান্য কোটার ক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদের সত্যায়িত কপি জমাদান করতে হবে। কোটা সম্পর্কিত প্রচলিত সরকারী নীতিমালা অনুসরণ করা হবে।

৫। বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়ঃসীমা সর্বোচ্চ সীমার মধ্যে থাকতে হবে। সরকারী চাকুরীর প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে উচ্চতর পদে আবেদনের জন্য বয়ঃসীমা শিথিলযোগ্য।

৬। চাকুরীর প্রার্থীদের তাদের নিজ নিজ নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে নির্ধারিত সময়সীমার মধ্যে আবেদন করতে হবে।

৭। অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধ্যক্ষের মাধ্যমে ইংরেজি বিষয় প্রার্থীগণকে ইংরেজিতে পারদর্শী হতে হবে।

৮। লিখিত / মৌখিক পরীক্ষার তারিখ অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট [www.bsmraau.edu.bd](http://www.bsmraau.edu.bd) এর মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে।

৯। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ, ত্রুটিপূর্ণ, ভুল তথ্য সহলিপি অথবা বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনসমূহ বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। আবেদনপত্রের উপর কোনো ধরনের সুপারিশ প্রার্থীর অযোগ্যতা হিসাবে গণ্য হবে। আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

রেজিস্ট্রার

বিএসএমআরএইউ

GD-383



## KHASHOGGI MURDER 'US report may single out Saudi crown prince'

REUTERS, Washington

A declassified version of a US intelligence report expected to be released soon finds that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, four US officials familiar with the matter said.

The officials said the report, for which the CIA was the main contributor, assessed that the crown prince approved and likely ordered the murder of Khashoggi, whose Washington Post column had criticized the crown prince's policies.

President Joe Biden, a Democrat who succeeded the Republican Donald Trump five weeks ago, told reporters on Wednesday he had read the report and expected to speak soon by phone with Saudi Arabian King Salman, 85, father of the crown prince, the country's 35-year-old de facto ruler.

The report's release is part of Biden's policy to realign ties with Riyadh after years of giving the Arab ally and major oil producer a pass on its human rights record and its intervention in Yemen's civil war.

The 59-year old Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and Washington Post columnist, was lured to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2, 2018, and killed by a team of operatives linked to the crown prince. They then dismembered his body. His remains have never been found.

Riyadh eventually admitted that Khashoggi was killed in a "rogue" extradition operation gone wrong, but it denied any involvement by the crown prince. Five men given the death penalty for the murder had their sentences commuted to 20 years in jail after being forgiven by Khashoggi's family.

## INDO-PAK TIES Military agree to stop LoC firing

REUTERS, New Delhi

The militaries of India and Pakistan yesterday said in a rare joint statement that they had agreed to observe a ceasefire along the disputed border in Kashmir, having exchanged fire hundreds of times in recent months.

The nuclear-armed neighbours signed a ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region in 2003, but the truce has frayed in recent years, and there have been mounting casualties among villagers living close to the de facto border.

"Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control and all other sectors with effect from midnight 24/25 Feb 2021," the joint statement said.

The return to a truce was settled by the two armies director-generals of military operations who "agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence," the statement said.

There has been a significant increase in ceasefire violations since 2014, leading to nearly 300 civilian fatalities, a source in the Pakistan army said.

Pakistan reported 253 ceasefire violations in first two months of 2021 while reported 591 violations by Pakistan.



A military supporter points a sharp object as he confronts anti-coup protesters during a military support rally in Yangon, Myanmar, yesterday. A protester is seen injured on the ground.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## WHO warns of long-term Covid

Urges nations to understand health risks posed by post-infection complications on priority basis; Pfizer vaccine 94pc effective on mass trial

AGENCIES

A senior World Health Organization official yesterday urged national authorities to make a priority of understanding the long-term consequences of coronavirus infections as some people show worrying symptoms months later.

"The burden is real and it is significant. About one in 10 Covid-19 sufferers remain unwell after 12 weeks, and many for much longer," Hans Kluge, regional director for WHO Europe, told a press conference.

"It's a clear priority for WHO, and of the utmost importance. It should be for every health authority".

While some studies are beginning to shed light on the illness, it is still unclear why some patients with Covid-19 continue to show symptoms for months, including tiredness, brain fog, and cardiac and neurological disorders.

Kluge stressed that those patients "need to be heard if we are to understand the long-term consequences and recovery from Covid-19."

WHO Europe called on European countries and institutions to "come together as part of an integrated research agenda," harmonising data collection tools and study protocols. In boost for Covid-19 battle, the

Pfizer vaccine has proven 94 percent effective in a study involving 1.2 million people in Israel, the first peer-reviewed real world research confirming the power of mass immunization campaigns to bring the pandemic to a close.

Moderna Inc said on Wednesday it is working with US government scientists to study an experimental booster shot that targets a concerning new variant of the coronavirus. The US biotech company has produced raw material for a booster shot aimed at addressing the virus variant first found in South Africa that may be more resistant to existing vaccines, it said.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Biden's CIA pick says China will be his main focus

Veteran US diplomat William Burns, nominated to lead the CIA, pledged Wednesday to keep the agency free of politics and said China would be his main focus if confirmed. Burns also told the panel that China was the main challenge the country faces, echoing views stated by Biden and other top officials of his administration. Burns called Xi Jinping's approach an "aggressive, undisguised ambition and assertiveness" that must be faced down in a long-term effort, in conjunction with allies that Beijing lacks. If approved as expected by the Senate, Burns will be the first career diplomat to lead the CIA.

### Xi boasts of 'miracle' in tackling poverty in China

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday declared his country had achieved the "human miracle" of eliminating extreme poverty, though questions continue to surround the Communist Party's criteria for making the claim. "No other country can lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in such a short time," Xi said. "A human miracle has been created that will go down in history." China last year claimed it had achieved its long-trumpeted goal of lifting all of its people above a poverty line of \$2.30 in daily income. The World Bank says China has lifted more than 800 million people out of extreme poverty since turning to market reforms in the 1970s, after decades of state planning and ill-advised Maoist campaigns that had stifled the economy.

### US ban on many green card applicants lifted

US President Joe Biden on Wednesday revoked a proclamation from his predecessor that blocked many green card applicants from entering the United States. Former President Donald Trump issued the ban last year, saying it was needed to protect US workers amid high unemployment due to the coronavirus pandemic. Biden said it had prevented families from reuniting in the United States and harmed US businesses. Immigrant advocates had pressed in recent weeks for him to lift the visa ban, which was set to expire on March 31. Biden left in place another ban on most foreign temporary workers.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Rescue teams conduct a search for miners buried by a landslide at an illegal gold mining operation in the village of Buranga in Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, yesterday. Five women and one man killed in the landslide while some 16 survivors were pulled from the debris.

PHOTO: AFP

## Death sets Mushtaq free from DSA, jail

FROM PAGE 1  
him dead around 8:20pm," Gias Uddin, acting superintendent of Kashimpur High Security Jail, told The Daily Star.

Mushtaq was 53. Asked if the writer had any previous health issues, he said Mushtaq used to take pills for gastric problems but never complained about anything.

Quoting doctors, Brig Gen Md Mominur Rahman Mamun, inspector general of prisons, told The Daily Star that Mushtaq was brought in dead at the hospital and that details would be known once the autopsy was done.

Md Sharif, a doctor at the hospital, also said Mushtaq was dead on arrival.

A relative, wishing not to be named, told The Daily Star that they could not believe that Mushtaq was dead. They did not know whether he had any heart disease.

The jail authorities called Mushtaq's brother-in-law after failing to reach anyone at his home number, added the relative.

Mushtaq's parents went to the hospital at night.

According to family sources, the body would be handed over to them this morning.

Mushtaq lived with his wife Lipa Akhter and elderly parents in Lalmatia.

He used to write under the pen name Michael Kumir Thakur. His book "Kumir Chasher Diary" was published in November 2018, and he was working on another book.

He was critical, on social media, of the government's handling of the pandemic.

On May 6 last year, Rapid Action Battalion arrested him at his Dhaka home for "spreading rumours and carrying out anti-government activities".

and he had been in that prison since August 20.

The other arrestees in the case are Ahmed Kabir Kishore, a cartoonist; Didarul Islam, a member of politico-civic organisation called Rashtrachinta; and Minhaj Mannan Emon, managing director of BLE securities and shareholder-director of Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Besides, seven more people, including Swedish-Bangladeshi journalist Tasneem Khalil, who runs Netra News; US-based journalist Shahed Alam; blogger Asif Mohiuddin; and expatriate Zulkarnain Saer Khan were named in the case.

Mushtaq and Kishore were brought into a courtroom before a judge two weeks ago.

Nobody knew they would suddenly be brought to the court, not even their families, who had not seen them in person since their arrests, because of Covid-19 regulations on visitors in prisons.

Their families said this was their first trip out of prison, since they were both produced before a court on May 6 last year.

On February 23, Mushtaq and Kishore were brought to the cyber crimes tribunal for hearing.

Kishore's brother Ahsan Kabir had last seen the duo then.

Upon seeing Mushtaq, Kabir embraced him and Mushtaq requested Kabir to get him some food. "He wanted paratha and beef curry and I gave that to him to eat at the court," he said last night.

Mushtaq was again denied bail that day. The judge directed the investigators to launch a "further probe" into the case and submit a report by March 23.

The week before their appearance at the tribunal, Mushtaq and Kishore

had been officially charged by the police in a case filed under the DSA last year.

In its entirety, the case is a collection of 10 social media posts and links, as per the first information report filed on May 6.

The links submitted as evidence lead to Facebook posts and cartoons made before the pandemic. Those mock the health care system of the country.

There were re-shares of various news articles that commentate on the coronavirus outbreak.

Some of the links were posted by a satirical Facebook page called "I am Bangladeshi", of which Mushtaq and Kishore were admins.

These 10 links were submitted as evidence into a litany of charges, including spreading propaganda against the Liberation War of Bangladesh, Father of the Nation, National Anthem, and National Flag; tarnishing the image of the nation; spreading confusion; creating hostility, hatred among people; destroying communal harmony or creating unrest, disorder; and threatening to deteriorate law and order.

Last night, Kishore's brother Kabir recalled the last time he saw his brother, on February 23.

"Kishore had gone through so much torture that he was walking with a limp ... He told me he was tortured," said Kabir.

Kishore's left ear drum was perforated due to torture and pus was oozing out and his hearing was impaired, he said.

"His eyesight was drastically reduced and he lost at least 10kg in weight," said Kabir.

Kabir now fears for Kishore's life.

"This is a murder in the name of justice," he said about the death of Mushtaq.

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়  
মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা  
বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা  
www.moa.gov.bd



### আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহ্বান বিজ্ঞপ্তি

(Request for Expression of Interest-EOI)

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬ এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ) মোতাবেক গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি প্রকল্প এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি সহ মোট ০৪টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন করার লক্ষ্যে সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থার নিকট হতে সিলমোহরকৃত বামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়
২.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	সচিব, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়
৩.	আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণের বিষয়/কাজের বিবরণ	কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০৪টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন
৪.	আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সূত্র ও তারিখ	ইং-১২.০০.০০০০.০০৮.০১.০০৪.১৯-৭০, তারিখ-২৩/০২/২০২১

মূল তথ্য  
৫. ক্রয়ের পদ্ধতি: পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর 'নিম্নতম ব্যয়ভিত্তিক নির্বাচন পদ্ধতি'

অর্থের সংস্থান সম্পর্কিত তথ্য  
৬. অর্থের সংস্থান: কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের রাজস্ব বাজেট

সুনির্দিষ্ট তথ্য  
৭. প্রকল্প সংশ্লিষ্ট তথ্য:

ক্র. নং	সমাপ্ত প্রকল্পের বিবরণ (২০১৮-১৯)	বাধ্যমানকারী দপ্তর/সংস্থা
১.	খামার যান্ত্রিকরণের মাধ্যমে ফসল উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি- ২য় পর্যায় প্রকল্প	ডিএই
২.	সমন্বিত খামার ব্যবস্থাপনা অঞ্চল, কৃষি উৎপাদন ও কর্মসংস্থান কর্মসূচি	
<b>সমাপ্ত প্রকল্পের বিবরণ (২০১৯-২০)</b>		
১.	বিএডিসির বিদ্যমান বীজ উৎপাদন প্রতিয়াজাতকরণ ও বিতরণ ব্যবস্থাদি আধুনিকিকরণ এবং উন্নয়ন (১ম সংশোধিত)	বিএডিসি
২.	ধান, গম, ভুট্টার উন্নতর বীজ উৎপাদন এবং উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (২য় পর্যায়) (১ম সংশোধিত)	

৮. আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ১৩/০৩/২০২১; দুপুর ২.০০ ঘটিকা

আবেদনকারীর জন্য তথ্য  
৯. নিরীক্ষা/সমীক্ষা কাজের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ: সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থাকে নির্ধারিত TOR অনুযায়ী ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত মোট ০৪ টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন করতে হবে;

১০. আবেদনকারীর যোগ্যতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতা: নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন কাজে আগ্রহী প্রত্যাশীরা আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাবের সাথে আবেদনকারীকে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাগজপত্র সংযুক্তপূর্বক দাখিল করতে হবে:  
১। পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের ইতোপূর্বে সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে ন্যূনতম ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে;  
২। প্রয়োজনীয় জনবল, সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে বিশেষজ্ঞ এবং সহায়ক উপকরণসহি থাকতে হবে;  
৩। প্রস্তাবের সাথে রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ (আইসিএবিএর সার্টিফিকেট প্রজ্ঞাবনার সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে)/আর্থিক স্বাবলখনের প্রমাণস্বরূপ ব্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, টিআইএন সার্টিফিকেট, ট্রেডলাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আয়কর প্রদানের প্রমাণক (পরিশোধিত) করে পরিমাণ উল্লেখপূর্বক এবং কর্মরত জনবলের জীবন বৃত্তান্ত ও অভিজ্ঞতা যথাযথভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে  
৪। আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ দলিলে উল্লিখিত অন্যান্য প্রমাণাদিও দাখিল করতে হবে।

১১. কাজ সম্পাদনের সময়সীমা: চুক্তি সম্পাদনের পর অনতিবিলম্বে কাজটি শুরু করতে হবে এবং সর্বোচ্চ ৩ মাসের মধ্যে সমাপ্ত করতে হবে;

১২. অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী: ১. নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন কাজে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ (সংশোধিতসহ) প্রদত্ত ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা হবে;  
২. সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থার আওতায় নিয়োজিতব্য ফার্মের সদস্যদের শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে এ কাজসম্পাদনের উপযুক্ত হতে হবে; এবং  
৩. সীলমোহরকৃত আবেদনপত্র (EOI) নির্দিষ্ট তারিখ ও সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ে জমা দিতে হবে এবং আবেদনের খামের উপরে স্পষ্টাক্ষরে "কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত মোট ০৪টি সমাপ্ত প্রকল্প নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন সংক্রান্ত "Expression of Interest (EOI)" লিখতে হবে।

ক্রমকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের বিখ্যারিত তথ্য  
১৩. আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণের স্থান: সহকারী সচিব, মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা, কক্ষ নং-৫২৯, ভবন নং-৪, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।

১৪. আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ/দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম: রুনু সাহা

১৫. আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ/দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী: সহকারী সচিব, মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।

১৬. আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা: সহকারী সচিব, মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা, কক্ষ নং-৫২৯, ভবন নং -৪, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।

১৭. আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ আহ্বানকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা: ০২-৯৫৪৪৬০৭, email - monitoring\_reporting@yahoo.com

১৮. কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ছাড়াই যে কোন বা সকল আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ পত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৩/০২/২০২১  
রুনু সাহা  
সহকারী সচিব

ফোন-৯৫৪৪৬০৭  
মোবাইল: ০১৯১৩-৭৮০৩৩০  
ইমেইল: monitoring\_reporting@yahoo.com



The University of Sussex is surrounded by a national park and is located within the south coast city of Brighton and Hove.

# Why the University of Sussex has become a top study destination for Bangladeshi students

LEO CUTTING & MAHMUDUL HOQUE MONI

In recent years, the University of Sussex has become one of the most popular choices for Bangladeshi students planning to study in the UK. Sussex, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, is currently home to approximately 50 Bangladeshi students, who study a range of subjects, from Engineering to Law to Business. The University of Sussex is a leading research-intensive university ranked in the UK top 20 (The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021). It is the only English university surrounded by a national park and is located within the south coast city of Brighton and Hove. As a city, Brighton and Hove is popular with its international student population, thanks to its beach location, rich culture and reputation for safety. The university offers courses in a broad range of fields across Humanities, Social Sci-

ences and Sciences. The University of Sussex's Business School is EQUIS and AMBA accredited, and is ranked among the UK's top business schools. The institution is also world famous for Development Studies and has been ranked by QS as the world's top university for the subject for the past four years. In recognition of Bangladeshi students' contribution to the university, Sussex recently introduced a master's scholarship for students from Bangladesh. The Sussex Bangladesh Scholarship is worth £3000, and is available to applicants for a wide number of courses. Sussex warmly welcomes Bangladeshi students in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Applying to Sussex is simple and can be done through the university's dedicated application portal. The university's Bangladesh Students' Society actively contributes to the diversity and culture of the institution. Since its formation, the society has been successfully organising



International Mother Language Day at The University of Sussex.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX various events. Last year, the society celebrated Bangladesh's Victory Day and International Mother Language Day at the campus with several hundred students participating in these programmes. At these events, international students not only learned the history of Bangladesh, but also enjoyed the country's rich music

and cuisine. The society assists incoming students from Bangladesh with necessary information about accommodation and life at Sussex. It also collaborates with the university's Students Union to organise events, which enhance the capacity of Bangladeshi students in many ways. Bangladeshi students choose to study at Sussex for several reasons. For many, the fact that Sussex is ranked number one in Development Studies in the world is a key factor. Bangladesh is developing very quickly and so, the knowledge and skills offered by Sussex are critical. In addition, top-class faculty members and supportive staff make academic sessions meaningful and enjoyable. The university provides students with excellent facilities and a rich environment for learning. The campus offers numerous amenities, including libraries, on and off campus accommodation, computer labs, open fields, playgrounds for children, gymnasiums, a health centre, shops,

restaurants, a post office, societies, and clubs. Bangladeshi Sussex alumni are serving in key sectors in Bangladesh, including academia, government, business and development organisations. Many former students have gone on to serve with distinction in international agencies. The university strives to provide the bridge between current and former students so they can provide support and advice to each other. Anyone wishing to know more about courses at the University of Sussex can register for the upcoming Masters Online Open Event on March 6, 2021. The authors are respectively: Senior International Officer for Central and South Asia at the University of Sussex, MBA graduate of the University of Sussex Business School; International Student Ambassador of the University of Sussex, and a PhD student at Sussex with Bangladesh Prime Minister Fellowship.

## YOUNG ACHIEVER

### Digitising Bengali

DU graduate wins Incheon National University's Outstanding Corpus Thesis Award

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

Sazia Mehnaz, a former student of the Department of Linguistics at Dhaka University, recently won an international award for her research work on the Bengali language. For her postgraduate research on 'Cognitive Challenges of Anaphora: A Study on Bengali Pronominal Expression', she was recently awarded the Outstanding Corpus Thesis Award from Incheon National University, South Korea. In linguistics, anaphora is the use of an expression whose interpretation depends upon another expression in context, mainly a figure of speech in which words repeat at the beginning of successive clauses, phrases, and sentences. Anaphora resolution, which means resolving what a pronoun or noun phrase refers to, is one of the most important areas in Natural Language Processing. To detect certain ambiguities, machines must learn an algorithm, which is generated by humans. Sazia followed Hobbs' algorithm to detect Bangla anaphora and explored the basics of Bengali pronominal expressions. Previous research on anaphora resolution in Bangladesh was done from a Computer Science-based perspective, whereas Sazia focused on approaching her research from the perspective of Linguistics. Professor Dr Syed Shahrier Rahman was Sazia's supervisor during the research tenure. Often, when using Bengali on certain machines, there are several ambiguities seen in the usage of nouns and pronouns. Sazia's research aimed to overcome such adversities. Her work shows the promise of making the day-to-day usage of language easier in our modern world. For example, in space travels, certain signals could be detected from spacecrafts that could enhance and specify communication techniques. As a result, detecting these ambiguities will open up further opportunities to communicate in different



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAZIA MEHNAZ

languages such as Bengali, opening up more prospects for native Bengali speakers. "I wanted to work on a topic combining natural language processing and linguistics for my thesis. There are many ambiguities when it comes to the use of nouns and pronouns in Bengali. Through my research, we can understand why those ambiguities arise and how we can overcome them," shares Sazia, who is an Associate Linguist at a private software company. "This is just a basic research project. It will be completed after an extensive and more detailed process, with enough data and resources. While other languages are being modernised day by day, Bengali is still lagging when it comes to digitisation. To digitise Bengali, we will need a richer and more developed corpus to further broaden aspects of research in this field." Sazia completed her Master's with first-class second position, on the merit list. She plans to go for higher studies in Computational Linguistics. "I want to thank my family, teacher and my loved ones for supporting me throughout the process," adds Sazia. As research on Bengali linguistics is quite limited, Sazia's work will further inspire others to contribute in this field. More research on Bengali will further help to preserve and protect our mother tongue.

## YOUTH IN ACTION

### ENCOURAGING AN ETHICAL APPROACH TO PET ADOPTION

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

In 2017, Orni Hasan found a disheveled kitten around Dhanmondi Lake, deciding to keep him. Before the decision, she looked for safe adoption options, but could not find any. That was when the unfortunate reality of a dearth of safe, formal, and ethical adoption options caught her attention. Stumbling across unbearable stories of cruelty inflicted on adopted and street animals, she started Paws And Tails (PAT) in September 2019. Her driving principle was getting vulnerable cats and dogs off the streets, and ensuring safe homes for them.



Members of PAT have adopted pets, and also look after stray animals around their neighbourhoods.

PAT is an online adoption platform that helps animals find homes and facilitates safe and easy adoptions. If a person finds a helpless cat or dog, they inform the page and fill out a form. Then, PAT posts about the animal all over their social media platforms, and reaches out to interested clients. A thorough interview follows, which helps to confirm a client's eligibility. After a client is approved, they are required to sign a contract that renders it



PHOTOS: SHANTO LAWRENCE COSTA

Team members of PAT.

tough for people to badly treat or abandon the animals they adopt. "The main purpose of PAT is to eliminate the need for buying or selling animals, which supports the very unethical breeding industry, and puts them in risk of neglect often times," Orni says. Once PAT was up and running, the initial response seemed positively overwhelming, which encouraged her to accelerate the process of solidifying the details as to how the organisation would function and what procedures it would follow to ensure safe homes for animals. However, despite the encouraging feedback, PAT has been facing challenges since their inception. One persistent obstacle is that some people do not react very well to the rigorous questioning that PAT employs for fully confirming the animals' safety. "Sometimes, people question why we are going to this length for stray local cats and dogs," Orni says. Abolishing the pervasive discrimination between local and foreign-bred cats is also one of PAT's principles. In the past, certain clients' weakening commitments also posed challenges to PAT

because when they returned the animals, having failed to take care of them, it took a mental toll on the animals to be shifted to another home. "At times, people don't take the legitimacy of PAT seriously. They think they can do whatever they want with the adopted animals even though the contract they sign with us is legally enforceable," Orni says about clients whose commitments fall flat. "Moreover, we have a policy of sterilising and annually vaccinating the animals from the client's end, since this process has been scientifically proven to be risk-free and well-suited for domestic cats and dogs. But at times, individuals did not keep their word, and we had to take the pets back. Some even refuse to pay a service charge of BDT 250, which we use to sustain ourselves." Orni adds that PAT is undergoing 'Societies Registration' at the moment, and soon, they plan to branch out throughout Bangladesh. They have already started their process of expansion in Chattogram. "In the near future, I want PAT to expand into a comprehensive space that deals with not only safe and effective adoptions but also things like having vets, pet supplies, and foster care," Orni says. Until now, PAT has facilitated more than 260 adoptions. "Without PAT's directors, Mahin Inan, Tanvirul Islam, Nikita Rahman, and Oittri Hasan and our hard-working team members, it would not be possible to come this far," concludes Orni. The author is an undergraduate student of International Relations at Bangladesh University of Professionals. Write to him at tazri-an1234@gmail.com.

## Students' concerns should be addressed

*Why do demonstrations have to spill over into the roads every time?*

WE sympathise with the students of the seven DU-affiliated colleges who have been victims of a number of uncertainties, first due to the chaos caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and now due to the unplanned and unwise decision making of the authorities. The pandemic has thrown a wrench into the workings of all academic activities and students have already suffered enough for an entire year. The fact that the authorities have continued to make decisions that the students are in disagreement with after such a difficult year is greatly disappointing.

The pandemic has caused huge delays and session jams, which in turn have created major and varying types of problems for students. On top of that, the authorities prematurely announced that university activities would resume on May 24 and student dormitories at those universities would reopen on May 17—meaning that pre-scheduled and ongoing exams at these colleges would get postponed. Following the announcement, students of the colleges under Dhaka University staged demonstrations for two days demanding the authorities hold their ongoing and previously announced exams and reopen their educational institutions and dormitories.

While we support the students' right to protest against such ill-advised decision making, we cannot approve the blocking of roads by some protesters, which led to huge sufferings for commuters at different locations of Dhaka. But at the same time, we must also condemn this rigid habit on the part of the authorities to make decisions willy-nilly and force students to occupy roads before finally paying attention to their concerns and giving them a fair hearing. This trend can also be linked to other ongoing protests over decisions affecting the students of other universities and colleges.

We call on the authorities to immediately reassure students that whatever final decision is taken will be based on better understanding of the situation and the concerns of students, so that the demonstrations do not continue to spill over into the roads causing traffic jams throughout the capital—and so that the demonstrations end without any violence. Having done that, the authorities must remain sincere to that pledge and whatever decisions are taken must take into consideration the best interests of students and their future.

## Over 2.5 million vaccinated

*While we celebrate this milestone, we must still be careful as we go forward*

AS the nationwide vaccination campaign progresses, the latest numbers suggest that over 2.5 million people have been vaccinated against Covid-19 in Bangladesh over the course of 15 days. This is no small feat for our country, and the government and all involved authorities must be congratulated for the speedy and efficient procurement and rollout of vaccines. This is even more impressive when you compare the data to our neighbouring countries—while Pakistan has distributed only 0.03 doses of the vaccine per 100 of the population and India is at 0.87 doses per 100 people, Bangladesh has the highest rate of inoculation in the region, with 1.53 doses per 100 of the population.

However, we must also remember that given our large population, there is still a long way to go. So far, only around 1.95 percent of the targeted 130 million have been vaccinated. As we go forward, we must ensure that the vaccines are reaching the people who need it the most—the elderly, frontline workers, and people with underlying conditions that make them more vulnerable to Covid-19.

There are already worries that online registration has made it harder for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to sign up for the vaccines. While provisions have been made for community health clinics to help with this registration, are people in rural and remote areas being able to access this? Is there enough awareness surrounding the importance of getting vaccinated, especially in underprivileged and difficult-to-reach areas? A report in this daily from last week showed how the majority of vaccine uptake was still concentrated in urban areas, and that only a third of those vaccinated were women. Are there similar disparities in terms of economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds, and are there any plans in place to tackle these disparities and make access to vaccines more equitable?

While we applaud the authorities on the success of the vaccination drive in Bangladesh, we also hope that they will seriously take these issues into consideration and ensure that no one who needs a vaccine is excluded from the process. At the same time, although positivity rates are dropping, we must remember that the pandemic is not yet over, and around 400 people are still being infected every day in Bangladesh. Despite the success of our vaccination programme, we must ensure that safety protocols continue to be in place and people continue to take precautions such as wearing masks, especially in public spaces.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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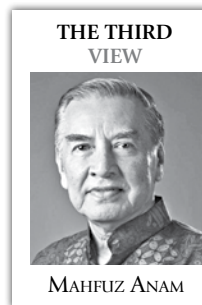
### Fate of low-value coins?

In Bangladesh, the one- and two-taka coins are hardly considered to be of any value. At a time when goods and services costing Tk 5 or below are getting rare, it makes us wonder why coins of these values exist. The only scenario where they might be useful is on ferry terminals and for small donations. Otherwise, recipients of these coins struggle to come up with any use for them. I think the authorities should think of a way to either use these coins or simply eliminate them.

Farhana Yasmin, Barishal University

# Restoring Jatiya Sangsad's moral high ground

*Time for a code of conduct for the lawmakers*



THE THIRD VIEW

MAHFUZ ANAM

IN the recent past, our honourable members of parliament have been known more for their legal actions against journalists—first under the ICT Act, then the Digital Security Act (DSA)—than for any consequential legislation in any of the vital fields of economic, social or democratic advancement. The “crimes” of the journalists were that they allegedly hurt the image, sentiment, reputation and feelings of the venerable public representatives. So heightened is the sense of “self-image” that not only the MPs but their supporters also feel free—and we dare say, encouraged—to take journalists to court if the latter feel that their leaders' image or reputation has been “hurt”.

When such is the degree of their sensitivity, it is important to know what actions the same MPs take to “protect their image” at a time when it is being so devastatingly shattered by the likes of Mohammad Shahid Islam, an MP from Laxmipur-2 constituency, popularly known as Kazi Papul. He has been convicted in Kuwait for human trafficking and bribing local officials. There are two other charges pending, including one related to prostitution. Our own Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)—described as a “toothless tiger” by one of its own former chiefs—is investigating a case of amassing wealth over Tk 1,400 crore through human trafficking. Papul's wife, who is also an MP from the reserved seats for women, has been fined Kuwaiti dinar 1.7 million (Tk 55 crore) in the same case. We have heard of no action taken against her yet, except her being questioned by the ACC.

How did Papul get his MP nomination in the first place? Media reports repeatedly brought out the fact that he paid crores of taka to procure his nomination and also paid off potential opponents to clear the way for him to contest. His wife is accused of having done the same to become an MP from the reserved seats for women and is being investigated by the ACC.

How many others are there who may have gotten their nomination in the same process? How big is the so-called “nomination business” that we hear about every time an election comes our way? How much does the party involved makes in this process, and what is the share of those who help out?

Hasn't the image of our parliament, of our MPs, and of the whole legislative process been “maligned” a thousand times more by these actions by one of their own? According to a report of bdnews24.com published on October

30, 2020, the ACC is investigating the affairs of 21 MPs in connection with various cases of corruption and scandals. Of them, 11 are being investigated for syphoning off government funds, grabbing government land, taking bribes and illegal commissions and indulging in extortion, etc.—and another 10 for having income far above their legal source of income. Then there's the case of MP Moazzem Hossain (Ratan) of Sunamganj-1 who, according to a Prothom Alo report on February 20, occupied some neighbours' land to build his palatial house—an accusation that he denies. This is but the latest of similar reports that many newspapers regularly carry. The same MP is being investigated by the ACC also.

Where is that angry, outraged and concerted reaction of our MPs when the institution that gives them everything, including legitimacy, is being so



MP Mohammad Shahid Islam from Laxmipur-2 was recently sentenced to four years of rigorous imprisonment by a Kuwait court. PHOTO: COLLECTED

shamefully denigrated by one of their own?

In its report of October 14, 2012 (though nine years old, but nothing appears to have changed), the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) did an overview study of the major newspapers' reports on lawmakers of the 9th parliament covering the period from 2009 to 2012. To further substantiate the study, TIB conducted 44 group discussions in 42 districts involving 600 prominent and credible citizens known for their objective stance. The analysis showed that 181 MPs had been subjects of negative press reports and none gave any rejoinder or protested against those reports.

There were a number of positive feedbacks about the work of the MPs in this study. For example, 35 percent of MPs were praised for their contribution in the health and education sectors, 31.3 percent praised for their work connected

to local infrastructure development, 10 percent for personal initiatives in helping the poor and getting relief assistance for the locals, 6.3 percent for ensuring rule of law and helping the farmers, 5 percent for empowering women and 17.5 percent for various other positive contributions.

But there was also a contrary picture. Eighty-one percent of MPs were criticised for abusing their power and influencing the administrative work in favour of their chosen ones, 76.6 percent for taking over control of local schools, 75.5 percent for misuse of development funds, 70.6 percent for being involved in criminal activities, 69.2 percent for abusing the official procurement process, and 8.4 percent for procuring government plots by giving false information.

Perhaps the most alarming of the above findings was the involvement of MPs in criminal activities, including alleged involvement with murder, land grabbing (including khas land, river banks, ponds, water bodies), extortion, tender manipulation, ransom, etc. MPs were seen to be involved with all the big crimes of their respective areas by their voters.

The above study does not include the benefits our MPs enjoy as a favour from rich and unscrupulous businessmen. In fact, we do not have the institutional capacity to discover such irregularities as they require sophisticated financial tools.

It is not our intention to show how corrupt our legislators are. In fact, a recent revelation of the British MPs' financial corruption showed a huge number of them having massively misused their various allowances and taken illegal benefits as MPs. There are plenty of such stories from many countries, both Western and Asian, where lawmakers regularly indulge in corruption. Our intention is to help improve, mend, become better and regain the credibility and respect that is a precondition for the parliament to be effective.

Perhaps what's different in our case is that we do not do anything about the corruption of our MPs even when facts hit ourselves in the face. When something is revealed accidentally, we see a sudden spurt of activity and cries of “nobody is above the law”. And then when nothing happens, we are told that “the law will take its natural course”, followed by “it takes time—nothing can be done overnight”. This goes on until some other revelation grabs our attention and the same process starts all over again.

We want this to change. We want to see that when some serious research findings are made public, instead of the usual cacophony of “this is a conspiracy to malign us”, we will take some note of the findings and try to correct ourselves and make our parliament live up to the expectations of the public.

In this regard, we want to recall a valiant effort made by a ruling party

MP, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, who submitted a Private Members Bill to the Speaker in 2010, suggesting a “code of conduct for MPs” and the formation of a House Ethics Committee to oversee the implementation of the code and related matters of integrity and honesty. The Bill stipulates seven general principles—namely selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership—as fundamental qualities that an MP must possess to serve the electorate effectively, efficiently and fairly.

In this Bill, Saber Hossain made a vital point about how to deal with “conflict of interest”—a concept that we do not think much about, if at all—between the personal world of an MP and the public world of his electorate, the world from which he comes and which he is elected to serve. The Bill goes on to provide clear provisions for disclosure of an MP's personal and family businesses and other proprietary interests including receiving gifts, using public resources, interacting with ministries and public bodies.

As stated earlier, this remarkable Bill provides for the formation of an Ethics Committee headed by the Speaker and nine members from the treasury and opposition benches to which anyone could file a complaint about a sitting MP and with whose proceedings every MP would be obliged to cooperate. The proposed Bill required the Ethics Committee to submit an annual report to the House.

What do you think happened to this Bill? Not only did it never come anywhere near being adopted, but it was also never even seriously discussed. We think privately Saber Hossain might have been even laughed at.

Need we stress that the nature and effectiveness of parliament depend on the type of parliamentarians we elect? That depends on the ways that nominations are given from different parties. Now, if the process starts on a corrupt premise—in which electability does not depend on the honesty or public service orientation of a candidate but on how much one can afford to spend in an election—then, obviously, “electability” acquires a whole new definition which cannot bring good to the electorate, the country and democracy.

If laws are to be just and pro-people, then we must necessarily have an elected parliament constituted by individuals of character, integrity, vision and love for the people who elect them. In other words, members of parliament must be persons of impeccable reputation.

The case of Papul must act as a wake-up call if we are serious about institutionalising democracy in whose centre stands the Jatiya Sangsad.

Mahfuz Anam is Editor and Publisher, The Daily Star.

## PROJECT ■ SYNDICATE

# How India could win its Covid vaccination race

SEMA SGAIER and PRASHANT YADAV

AS the world enters the second year of the coronavirus pandemic, vaccination has moved front and centre in policymakers' responses. But while vaccines offer the surest way out of the crisis, countries are approaching them in different ways. Some are racing to vaccinate their populations, while others await longer-term efficacy data before beginning. Still other countries find themselves in a long line to receive or purchase desperately needed doses.

Many have noted the rapid rate of Israel's vaccination drive, the ambition of the United Kingdom, which was the first country to approve a Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use, and the stumbles to get supplies distributed in the United States and the European Union. But for those seeking lessons on how to protect a population through vaccination, there's another country to watch: India.

With 1.3 billion people, and an estimated 11 million cases of Covid-19 to date, India faces a seemingly mammoth vaccination challenge. But the government recently announced a plan to vaccinate around 300 million people by early August. And, judging by the country's preparations and actions so far, it may be well-equipped to handle the task.

That's because India can meet the challenges of scale with massive manufacturing capacity, a strong public-health infrastructure with experience in vaccine delivery, an army of frontline workers, and meticulous planning. Add to that some innovative digital tracking, and the results could put the country in an enviable position by later this year.

Frontline health workers are central players in India's vaccination rollout, and the first in line to receive the shots. The drive to vaccinate around 30 million frontline and other health workers began on January 16, and in the first 34 days, India achieved ten million vaccinations.

The US took 31 days to vaccinate the same number after it authorised vaccines (the rate of China's vaccine rollout is unclear).

After India's health workers are vaccinated, frontline workers and people aged over 50—and younger people with serious health conditions—will be next in line. That's a further 260 million people that the government plans to vaccinate in under seven months.

India has the capacity to manufacture all its Covid-19 vaccines domestically. The Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine producer, has boosted its capacity in order to manufacture one billion doses of the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine (known locally as Covishield), while Bharat Biotech will produce the government-backed Covaxin shot. This should be enough to vaccinate the country's priority groups this year. And, because the vaccines produced domestically are priced to be the cheapest in the world, India has already supplied vaccines worth USD 47 million to 13 countries.

India will rely heavily on its public-health infrastructure to scale up its vaccination drive. Three thousand Covid-19 vaccination centres have been established across the country, along with 27,000 cold chain points to keep supplies cool en route to and at their destinations. About 150,000 staff people in 700 districts have been specially trained to administer the vaccines.

India already runs the world's largest public-health immunisation programmes, targeting 27 million infants and 29 million pregnant women each year. Since a national campaign to vaccinate children against measles and rubella began four years ago, several states have achieved coverage rates of over 90 percent. The Covid-19 vaccination push is certainly ambitious, but its scale is not fundamentally different.

As some countries—including the US—have found out, multi-level government systems can hamper speedy vaccine rollout if there is inadequate information

flow, lack of clarity on decision-making authority between the various levels, and diffuse accountability. India proactively addressed this issue when planning the deployment of Covid-19 vaccines by establishing a well-defined governance structure between the central government, state government, district government, and local administrative blocks. Roles and responsibilities for each level are clearly defined, allowing a nationally coordinated response.

In addition, India is using technology to streamline tracking and accountability. In record time, the authorities have created

*India recently announced a plan to vaccinate around 300 million people by early August. And it may be well-equipped to handle the task.*

the dedicated Co-WIN system to track procurement and distribution of vaccine supplies, and allow people to pre-register for vaccinations. Co-WIN builds on Aadhaar, the country's nationwide digital ID system. On the supply side, it uses e-VIN, the national vaccine information system. Bringing them together has been the key to making the system work, and initial glitches have been quickly fixed. Citizens can receive a text message informing them when and where to get the vaccine, and will receive a unique QR code certificate after they've received the second dose.

Although the prospects look good, India must still overcome significant hurdles. Building a comprehensive and accurate database of individuals with comorbidities, in order to prioritise them for vaccination,

remains a huge challenge.

And, as in other countries, there are worrying levels of vaccine hesitancy. India's impressive Covid-19 immunization figures in the first weeks could have been even higher, but some medical staff have been reluctant to get the shot, especially because the locally developed Covaxin received emergency authorisation before all the trial data on its efficacy had been reviewed. The government will need good communication campaigns to persuade older people and those with medical conditions that the vaccines are safe.

India's experience holds at least three lessons for other countries. First, they should make the most of their strengths. Not every country can develop or manufacture its own vaccines. But almost all can draw upon committed frontline workers, public-health infrastructure, or prior experience confronting epidemics or holding immunisation drives.

Second, prioritising vaccine access and tracking rollout should be built into the vaccination drive from the start. Digging deep into the data to allocate vaccines most effectively may require building upon existing data systems, or using new tools, such as the Covid-19 Vaccine Allocation Planner for the US, and the Vaccine Coverage Index, which highlights which geographies are likely to have problems achieving high levels of Covid-19 vaccine coverage and why.

Finally, vaccine hesitancy will require a tailored response in each country. Policymakers and public-health experts must devise effective strategies to reassure people that vaccination is safe—and the only road out of the pandemic and toward recovery.

Sema Sgaier is an adjunct assistant professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Prashant Yadav is an affiliate professor at INSEAD and a lecturer at Harvard Medical School.

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# Celebrating the legacy of a chronicler



KAMAL AHMED

*His distinct attire, with two pieces of unstitched white cloth, too was a symbol of his activism which he carried out both through his pen and by taking to the streets.*

**C**AN journalists be activists? This is perhaps the most troubling question every journalist has to confront while dealing with issues of public interest. Journalism is about assembling and verifying facts, and conveying fair and accurate accounts. But it is also about speaking for the people who do not have a voice. And many of our predecessors, in both pre- and post-independence Bangladesh, came to journalism to do just that. It was something like a mission of their life. Their publications too had socio-political agenda. Sadly, such activism has increasingly become partisan and now it's driven mostly by narrow self-interests rather than the greater good.

Syed Abul Maksud, who died on February 23, 2021, was an exception—a true activist-journalist. Perhaps, with his demise we may see an end of activist journalism.

His distinct attire, with two pieces of unstitched white cloth, too was a symbol of his activism which he carried out both through his pen and by taking to the streets. A video clip posted on Facebook by journalist Sharifuzzaman after Abul Maksud's death shows his body, draped in white sheets on a trolley, being taken out from Square Hospital—an apt reminder of the life of an activist without any stain. He ditched his regular outfits in 2004 in protest of the US invasion of Iraq. Many people then wondered whether anyone in the United States would even notice his protest, but his resolve remained unshaken. His newspaper

columns had a large following, making his voice a powerful one, but his physical participation in protests was no less powerful.

He was always on the side of the oppressed and victims of injustice. He joined them in all corners of the country. Sometimes he was the lone voice, the initiator. In 2011, he staged a solo sit-in on the Shaheed Minar premises on Eid day demanding safer roads, after the tragic deaths of noted director Tareque Masud and media personality Mishuk Munier in a road accident in Manikganj.

Since his death was announced on Tuesday, a picture of him holding a large padlock inscribed with the message—“Do not close down Adamjee Jute Mills”—has been circulating on social media. But it was a partial depiction of his commitment and support to protecting the nationalised jute and textile mills and their workers. He walked with marchers for the cause of saving the Sundarbans. He rushed to stand by the victims of communal riots in Ramu, Cox's Bazar. Now that he is no more, his absence will be felt by activists in each and every social movement in the country.

He also landed in trouble with the higher judiciary for his activism. His statement on preserving religious sites at Mahasthangarh was suspected as a conspiracy against the government, and the then registrar was asked to lodge a criminal case against him. He was a pacifist and follower of Gandhi's tradition of non-violent activism. Many people mistook him as a Gandhian for his two-piece white cloth which was somewhat similar to Gandhi's. But he was a Gandhian not in attire but in philosophical following. He was also a director of the Gandhi Ashram Trust.

My personal interactions with Maksud Bhai date back only a decade,



Syed Abul Maksud (October 23, 1946 – February 23, 2021)

since my association with Prothom Alo, where he had been a contributor since its inception. It was a column he wrote for Prothom Alo that irked the then BNP government, leading him to quit his job at the state-owned news agency, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS). Since then, he continued to write for Prothom Alo, and his last published column was one in which he argued why revoking BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's Bir Uttam title would be a mistake. It was indeed a testimony to his ability to rise above political bias and personal grievances.

Maksud Bhai used to write in the traditional mode of pen and paper. So, he would frequent the Prothom Alo office to help compose and proofread his manuscripts. It was next to my office room at the second floor of CA Bhaban, the previous address of the newspaper. Most of the time I was a keen listener and he spoke about current affairs of the state. Occasionally, he would call me in the morning when I was still in bed. Those

calls were mostly about expressing his frustration over what was not in the day's papers and what they didn't report due to either self-censorship or partisanship of the owners of mainstream media.

I was one of his millions of avid readers. His style of writing was quite different from others on at least two counts. First, it had humour that hit hard the establishment. Secondly, his writings were full of historical accounts of the subcontinent. It was very enlightening. But when he was writing books, he was no longer a journalist, but a researcher. His books on Maulana Bhashani, Dhaka University, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Syed Waliullah, Buddhadeb Basu, Nawab Salimullah and poet Govinda Das are results of painstaking research which is an essential trait of any academic. Noted economist Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud wrote on Facebook that Abul Maksud was his classmate. But Maksud seemed to have chosen different avenues of research

than his subject. Political history, philosophy and literature dominated his world.

His biographical publications on Maulana Bhashani are undoubtedly his most valuable contribution to our national history. His book on Kagmari Conference, published in October 2017, narrates some fascinating and hitherto-unknown stories. It quotes novelist Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay, who attended the Kagmari Conference in 1957, as saying that one day while walking through a village, Maulana told him that the eastern wing would secede from West Pakistan within 12 years. Tarashankar conveyed this assessment of Maulana to Annadashankar Roy and Prime Minister Nehru in a personal letter. Maksud wrote that Annadashankar had warned Tarashankar not to disclose it to anyone else, saying it would cost Maulana his life. Kagmari was the place where Maulana first publicly issued his famous warning that East Pakistan would be forced to say Assalamu Alaikum (meaning goodbye) to West Pakistan if discrimination and exploitation weren't ended. Maksud wrote that Maulana's prophecy of Bangladesh becoming an independent nation came true within 14 years.

The year 2021 is a time when we are celebrating the golden jubilee of our independence and the centenary of the country's premiere educational institution, Dhaka University. It is an irony that one of the most revered researchers of our country, who chronicled with diligence the history of both our independence war and the University of Dhaka, will not be with us in person in those celebrations. But his work and legacy will.

Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist based in London, UK.

## Amid global warming, why are we in a deep freeze?



QUAMRUL HAIDER

**D**URING winter, more often than not, a large part of northern United States is pummeled by an Arctic blast, sometimes severe,

sometimes less severe, that lasts for a week or two. But this winter's blast plunged not only the Midwest and the Northeast into a deep freeze with bone-chilling temperatures as low as negative 45 degrees Celsius, it also tested the mettle of millions of people living in the Deep South, particularly Texas, a state that seldom experience sub-freezing temperature.

An onslaught of wicked wintry weather—a cocktail of heavy snow, sleet and damaging ice storm—with sub-zero temperatures knocked millions of Texans off the power grid and plunged them into deep freeze, the lowest being negative 12 degrees in Houston. Frozen and burst water pipes in homes and businesses were widespread. Unlike northern states, Texas is not equipped to handle ice, sleet or snow. As a consequence, hundreds of vehicles, including dozens of 18-wheeler, were involved in horrific and sometimes fatal pileups on untreated icy roads.

The recent extreme weather is not limited to the United States. That is because when the winter is extreme in one part of the hemisphere, it is often extreme all across the hemisphere. Thus, the “beast” from the Arctic hit Europe too. In January, Spain experienced a deadly snow storm with dangerously low



PHOTO: QUAMRUL HAIDER

including New York City, in December 2017, former US President Donald Trump tweeted, “Perhaps we could use a little bit of that good old Global Warming to protect against” harsh winters. Only someone who is “ignorant of his own ignorance” could make such a stupid statement!

It may be counterintuitive, but paradoxically, among the many factors, anthropogenic climate change is mainly responsible for the short-lived bursts of extreme winter weather that we have been witnessing in recent years. Indeed, there is strong scientific evidence that rapid heating of the Arctic caused by global warming is pushing frigid air from the North Pole further down south due to distortion of the polar vortex.

Under normal conditions, cold air is concentrated in a huge low-pressure gyre around the North Pole in an area called the polar vortex—about 15 to 50 kilometres above the Earth's surface in the layer of the atmosphere known as the stratosphere. When the vortex is strong, the jet stream—a narrow band of strong, fast-flowing wind in the upper atmosphere that generally blows from west to east all across the globe—acts as a barrier between the spinning cold air in the north and the warmer air to the south. As a result, cold air remains trapped in the Arctic, making winters in the northern mid-latitudes milder.

How does global warming distort the polar vortex? It is well-known that the rise in global temperature is not evenly spread around the world. Because of the loss of Arctic ice which otherwise would have reflected a substantial amount of solar radiation back into outer space, average temperature in and around the North Pole is increasing about twice as fast as in the mid-

latitudes. This is known as Arctic Amplification. Several studies show that the amplification is particularly strong in winter. Consequently, a rapidly warming Arctic weakens the jet stream, which in turn weakens the polar vortex to the extent that it becomes distorted, thereby spilling its cold air southward.

According to meteorologists, in a span of two weeks from December to January, Arctic Amplification gave rise to a phenomenon called Sudden Stratospheric Warming, in which temperatures in the atmosphere 15 to 30 kilometres above the Arctic jumped by nearly 55 degrees, from negative 80 to negative 25 degrees. This accelerated warming weakened the jet stream considerably and subsequently distorted the vortex so severely that it got knocked off the pole, resulting in a sudden plunge in temperature south of the Arctic Circle all the way to the US-Mexico border. Hence, the once-in-a-lifetime cold winter in Texas and other southern states.

Continued rise in global temperature will not necessarily mean an end to bitter cold waves during winter any sooner. One group of researchers believe that Arctic blasts will still occur, but their intensity will depend on how much greenhouse gases we vent into the atmosphere. It is very probable that they will become rarer over time, but

the ones we are experiencing now will more likely persist and last longer. Another group says that warming in the Arctic will increase the chances of frigid polar air spilling further south, leading to more periods of extreme cold days in the future, much colder than the ones we are experiencing now.

Nevertheless, the recent weather pattern clearly demonstrates that

both extreme heat and extreme cold can happen side by side. Besides, two to four weeks of cold snaps do not make a winter. They are short-term weather events, while climate is about long-term trends. Arctic blasts are, therefore, not enough to compensate for the overall warming of the climate across the planet. In fact, last year was one of the hottest years on record, with the average temperature

surpassing a number of all-time highs. And it occurred without the warming influence of El Niño.

Finally, we are in a deep freeze amid global warming because our “senseless and suicidal” romance with fossil fuels has fundamentally changed the global weather systems for worse.

Quamrul Haider is a Professor of Physics at Fordham University, New York.

*Paradoxically, among the many factors, anthropogenic climate change is mainly responsible for the short-lived bursts of extreme winter weather that we have been witnessing in recent years.*

temperatures. Even a tropical country like Bangladesh, especially the northern region, could not escape the wrath of the cold wave.

Snow fell hard in Greece and Turkey, where it is far less normal. Snow also fell in Jerusalem and parts of Jordan and Syria, while snow-covered camels in Saudi Arabia made for a rare sight. We also had more than our fair share of snow. In the lower Hudson Valley of New York, where I live, Mother Nature already dumped around 36 inches of snow

### গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ

সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা

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স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.২৬০০.৩৭০.০২.০১৩.১৮-২৫০

তারিখঃ ২৪/০২/২০২১খ্রিঃ

### নিলাম বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি (২য় আহ্বান)

১.	নিলাম বিক্রয় নং	ঃ	১২/নিঃপ্রঃ/সঃনিঃবিঃ, ঢাকা/২০২০-২১খ্রিঃ।
২.	কাজের নাম	ঃ	সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের অধীন সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ-নড়াইল এবং ফেরি বিভাগ-খুলনা এর বিভিন্ন সার্ভে রিপোর্টে উল্লেখিত খোলা আকাশের নিচে সম্পূর্ণ ব্যবহার অনুযোগী পুরাতন, অকেজো, মরিচামুক্ত, ক্ষয়প্রাপ্ত, পরিত্যক্ত, জরাজীর্ণ অবস্থায় টায়ার রোলার এবং পল্টন মেরামতের পর প্রাপ্ত গ্রেট, এ্যাংগেল, জয়েন্ট, পুলি, বোলার্ড এবং ফেরির ইঞ্জিন, প্রপেলার শ্যাফট ও গিয়ার বক্স মেরামতের পর প্রাপ্ত লাইনার, পিষ্টন, বিয়ারিং, গ্যাসকেট ও অন্যান্য ক্র্যাপ যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে এই ভিত্তিতে সওজ, সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, ঢাকার তত্ত্বাবধানে নিলামে বিক্রয় (গ্রুপ অনুযায়ী)।
৩.	বায়নার টাকা	ঃ	উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ)।
৪.	মোট গ্রুপ	ঃ	০৬ (ছয়) গ্রুপ।
৫.	কার্য সম্পাদনের সময়	ঃ	কার্যাদেশ জারির তারিখ হইতে ৩০ (ত্রিশ) কর্ম দিবস।
৬.	টিকাদারের যোগ্যতা	ঃ	বাংলাদেশী ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি/ফার্মসমূহ (ব্যক্তির বেলায় এনআইডি/ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/ওয়ার্ড কমিশনারের সনদ প্রয়োজ্য) এবং তাহা ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত হতে হবে।
৭.	নিলাম দরপত্র প্রাপ্তির স্থান	ঃ	নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, ঢাকা/সড়ক বিভাগ-নড়াইল ও ফেরি বিভাগ-খুলনা। নিলাম দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে প্রতি সেট নিলাম দরপত্র ৫২০/- (পাঁচশত বিশ) টাকা নগদ মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য) বাংলাদেশ ফরম নং-২৯০৮ সহ ক্রয় করা যাইবে।
৮.	নিলাম দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিসসমূহ	ঃ	নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ-ঢাকা/সড়ক বিভাগ-নড়াইল ও ফেরি বিভাগ-খুলনা।
৯.	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	ঃ	নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, সড়ক ভবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা।
১০.	নিলাম দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ	১৪/০৩/২০২১খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)।
১১.	নিলাম দরপত্র গ্রহণের তারিখ	ঃ	১৫/০৩/২০২১খ্রিঃ (দুপুর ১২.৩০মিঃ)।
১২.	নিলাম দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	২১/০৩/২০২১খ্রিঃ (দুপুর ২.৩০মিঃ)। দরপত্র খোলার সময় আত্মহী দরদাতা অথবা তাহাদের প্রতিনিধি উপস্থিত থাকিতে পারিবেন।
১৩.	লটারীর তারিখ ও সময় (প্রয়োজনে)	ঃ	২১/০৩/২০২১খ্রিঃ (দুপুর ৩.৩০ ঘটিকা)।
১৪.	অকেজো মালামালগুলি পরিদর্শনের স্থান ও সময়	ঃ	অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিভাগের অনুমতি সাপেক্ষে নির্দিষ্ট স্থানে।

মোঃ রুহুল আমিন

উপ-সহকারী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ  
সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা

জিডি-৩৭৯

মোঃ মমিনুল ইসলাম

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ (চঃপঃঃ)  
সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রণ বিভাগ, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা

# Probe, arrest, try killers of journo Muzakkir

*Demands family in press conference*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Family members of a journalist who was killed during a clash in Noakhali's Companyganj upazila on February 19 have demanded trial of the killers.

They came up with the demand at a press conference at the district Press Club auditorium yesterday.

"We demand impartial investigation into the incident, immediate arrest of the killers, and their trials," said the victim's elder brother Mawlana Nooruddin.

While reading a written statement, he also said, "Apart from journalism, my brother was involved with different social activities, but was never involved with any political party."

He achieved first class in graduation level and was continuing his post-graduation studies at Noakhali Government College, said Nooruddin.

The victim's parents and other family members were present at the press conference.

The clash on February 19 was between two factions of the ruling Awami League over establishing supremacy in Companyganj upazila.

One group was led by Abdul Quader Mirza, younger brother of AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, while the other was led by Mizanur Rahman Badal, organising secretary of the upazila unit AL.

Both the groups used firearms in the clash and police also fired around 10 to 12

bullets to bring the situation under control.

A day later, journalist Borhan Uddin Muzakkir, 30, of online news portal Barta Bazar, who was hit by bullets while covering the incident, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Later on February 23, the victim's father Nurul Huda Master filed a murder case accusing unnamed persons with Companyganj Police Station.

But none could be arrested in connection with the killing till filing the report around 6:00pm yesterday.

Amid such a situation, the case was handed over to Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) on Wednesday.

Contacted, PBI Inspector Mustafizur Rahman, who is also investigation officer (IO) of the case, yesterday said, "We have continued investigation and hope to arrest those who were involved with the killing."

The killing sparked outrage among journalist communities across the country. Journalists staged demonstration and held human chain demanding trial of the killers in different areas.

In Rajshahi, journalists yesterday formed a protest rally and human chain demanding exemplary punishment of the killers of the journalist.

Rajshahi Union of Journalists (RUJ) organised the human chain at Saheb Bazar Zero Point in the city around 11:00am that lasted for around one hour.

Our Rajshahi University correspondent contributed to this report

# Sadness all the way

FROM PAGE 12

Family members alleged that two youths, who are known to them, entered their flat on the sixth floor of a seven-storey building in Wari's Narinda and killed Hasan by slitting his throat. They looted eight tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 85,000.

Police detained one of them, aged around 24, but did not disclose his identity.

"The killers are known to the family members. We are trying to arrest the other involved in the incident and also recover the valuables," Shah Ifekhar Ahmed, deputy commissioner (Wari division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Victim's uncle Abdus Sobhan said Hasan was the youngest of three siblings.

On Wednesday evening, Hasan's uncle-in-law Zaman Bhuiyan and his son Azizul Haque were outside. At that time, two youths named Sohail and Zahid, who are acquaintances of Hasan's another aunt, went to the flat. Hasan and his aunt Ayesha Begum were there, said Sobhan.

"The duo had snacks at the house. Ayesha told them that she had to go outside for shopping for the next day's trip to Cox's Bazar. Ayesha and the youths then left together."

"After 20 minutes, one of them called Ayesha and wanted to know when she would return," Sobhan told The Daily Star.

Ayesha's son Azizul returned home and found the door locked from the outside. He waited until his mother came back home around 9:30pm.

After breaking open the door, Ayesha found Hasan's body and the flat ransacked. The family then found that around eight to nine tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 85,000 were missing.

Police said they suspected that the two youths were involved in the incident. After raiding a house in Maniknagar, they held one of the suspects.

Hasan's body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy yesterday.

## ROBBERY, BURGLARY RISE IN CITY

Recently, the number of robberies and burglaries rose in the capital, say police.

According to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, at least 70 cases of robberies, attempted robberies, and burglaries have been filed with different police stations in the capital between December and January.

The DMP also conducted special operations as theft and robberies have increased. Police arrested 52 people in connection with the cases.

On February 7, burglars made away with around 500 tolas of gold ornaments of a jewellery shop and took around Tk 5 lakh from the shop and three others at Rapa Plaza in the capital's Dhanmondi area.

"Till now, there is no update in the case," Ekram Ali, officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station, told The Daily Star yesterday when asked about the progress of investigation.

On December 30, robbers looted Tk 34 lakh and 45 tolas of gold ornaments from a house in Panthapath area.

But in the two incidents, police could not arrest anyone or recover the goods.

Wishing not to be named, a high official of DMP said the incidents of robbery and burglary rose after October last year.

He added that they did not trace criminals as they could not find any clue in many cases.

# Confiscate PK Halder's land

FROM PAGE 12

ACC Deputy Director Mohammad Salahuddin, also the investigation officer of the case, had submitted an application to it.

On December 29 last year, the same court had ordered the graft watchdog to confiscate two flats and six acres of land of PK Halder, former managing director of NRB Global Bank and Reliance Finance, in a money laundering case.

The flats are in the capital's Dhanmondi area and the properties are in Ruppaganj of Narayanganj.

On January 8 last year, the ACC filed a case against Halder on charges of illegally amassing wealth worth Tk 275 crore and laundering money.

According to Canadian media reports, Halder is now staying in Toronto. He is director of P&L Hal Holding Inc, a Canadian corporation.

In an investigation, Bangladesh Bank found that Tk 1,596 crore was transferred from International Leasing and Financial Services (ILFS) in violation of the rules through 48 accounts of various organisations related to the directors and shareholders of the firm.

Halder came to the limelight during the anti-casino drives in the country in 2019.

The ACC opened investigation into the alleged involvement of 43 people, including Halder, in the illegal casino business.

The government imposed a travel ban on him on October 3, 2019. But he managed to flee the country.

## TWO BROTHERS

A court yesterday ordered Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police to confiscate the land and vehicles of Sajjad Hossain Barkat, former general secretary of Faridpur town unit Awami League and his brother Imtiaz Hasan Rubel, former president of Faridpur Press Club.

They are accused of laundering Tk 2,000 crore.

The court also ordered their 188 bank accounts to be frozen.

The properties are in Faridpur and the accounts are with banks in Dhaka and Faridpur, court sources said.

The CID has so far arrested 14 accused, including Barkat and Rubel.

According to a case filed by the CID on June 26, the brothers amassed wealth by manipulating tender processes for government work since 2010. They were allegedly involved in drug smuggling and land grabbing.

# AL man beaten to death in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An Awami League (AL) leader was beaten to death at his in-law's place at Tayarpur village in Satkania upazila of Chattogram early yesterday.

The dead is Belal Uddin, 48, general secretary of Khagaria ward-4 unit AL, said police and local sources.

There was a longstanding feud between two groups of locals of two villages over establishing supremacy in the area, said Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Satkania

Police Station.

Belal went to his in-law's village at Tayarpur on Tuesday when the rival group found him alone and started beating him with sticks around 10.00pm, he added.

Critically injured, Belal was rescued by the locals and rushed to Chattogram Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries around 1.00am, said the OC.

Police were investigating the incident. No case was filed as of 2.00pm yesterday, said the OC, adding, police detained one -- Jahid, 30 -- in connection with this incident.

# CREC should talk

FROM PAGE 12

Ltd, also known as CREC, issued a press statement alleging that it had not been paid for work done in the last seven months and this was slowing down project implementation.

The minister said the project director had informed him that the contractor had not issued any such press release. "We don't know whether anyone is doing something from behind," Sujon told reporters after a programme at the Rail Bhaban.

The PR agency of CREC told The Daily Star on Wednesday that they had received the statement, on CREC official pad, from their client and forwarded it to different news outlets.

The CREC, the contractor for the biggest project of Bangladesh Railway (BR), said the government owes it \$400 million and the payment delay rendered it unable to buy sufficient construction materials and pay subcontractors and suppliers timely.

"Project execution is naturally slowing down, and project costs are increasing day by day," CREC, said in the press release circulated through its PR agency.

"The government of Bangladesh has set a target of opening both rail and road on the Padma Bridge on the same day. However, the fund crisis seems to have emerged as an impediment to completing the construction process," read the release.

A contractor issuing such a press release is rare but the CREC had issued another

press release via the same PR agency on June 9 last year.

The first track project is being implemented to connect the capital with Jashore with a 169km rail line over the under-construction Padma bridge at a cost of Tk 39,246 crore.

When reporters sought his comments over the press statement, the railways minister said the PD told him that the CREC did not issue the statement.

He, however, said a contractor usually gets payment time to time on the basis of progress made. "If they submit bill, they will get payment. This is a continuous process."

"This is not a matter to tell the media. We, the authority, are there. They should first inform us if they found any deviation or faced any difficulties," he said.

Asked whether they would investigate the matter, the minister did not give a direct answer but claimed that the contractor had denied issuing such press release.

The CREC in the statement had alleged that it was concerned that BR had not asked it to start building 100 carriages to be used on the rail line. It said the carriages would take two years to build and the deadline passed in July 2020.

The minister said the project would end in 2024. There is no problem if the order is given even after six months. He questioned how the carriages would be used before the line is built.

# France to extend lifetime of old nuclear power plants

AFP, Paris

French safety officials yesterday gave the green light to extend the lifetime of the country's oldest nuclear power plants as it seeks to boost the share of renewables in its power mix.

Nuclear energy currently provides nearly 70 percent of French electricity, more than in any other country.

France, hoping to reduce that share to 50 percent by 2035 -- a target pushed back from an earlier 2025 date -- with the help

of renewables, has been holding off from building new reactors.

The French nuclear safety authority (ASN) said the country's 32 plants with 900 Megawatt capacity, built mostly in the 1980s, would be allowed to operate for another decade, taking their potential lifespan to 50 years from the initially planned 40.

They will therefore not be decommissioned before the late 2020s or even late 2030s, depending on their initial launch date.

## বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর  
ঢাকা পওর বিভাগ-২  
ওয়াপদা ভবন (৪র্থ তলা)  
মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০  
☎ ০২-৪৭১১৩৮৫২  
Email: eedhaka2@gmail.com  
xen.dhaka2@bwdb.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-পি-১৮/১৮৬৪ তারিখঃ ২৪/০২/২০২১খ্রিঃ

### Invitation for Tender

Invitation Reference No.	T-26/1863 Dated: 24/02/2021
e-Tender ID (from e-GP Portal) 546419	Name of the work Construction of connecting road to temporary structures of training institute & dormitory area at Mastul Mouza under Dhaka O&M Division-2 BWDB Dhaka during the FY 2020-21.
পানি-৬০১/২০২০-২০২১ ৫"×৩	<b>Dewan Ainul Haque</b> Executive Engineer Dhaka O&M Division-2 BWDB, Dhaka

GD-381

# Pay back loan or go

FROM PAGE 1

have remained silent for two years. One the other hand, the depositors are moving on the street without having meals," said the bench.

The HC bench briefly heard statements of 45 of the loan defaulters who appeared before the court yesterday in line with its January 21 order.

The borrowers who have not appeared will be given another chance to provide explanation to the court by March 9. If they fail to do so, a directive will be passed to arrest them, Justice Khurshid Alam warned.

The total number of borrowers who defaulted on loans from PLFSL is 280.

Yesterday, some of the defaulters sought time from the court to return the money. A few of them said the loans were taken by their family members, who have either died or are too sick now. Besides, some said their businesses have shut down.

"You first start paying the due instalments and then discuss or bargain with the liquidator on how you will pay the remaining non-performing loans. Those failing to do so will be sent to jail," the court told the defaulters.

"You will pay back the money in the lawful way. No influence from any powerful person, even any minister, will act here, as the issue is now with this court," the HC bench told Arafin Shamsul Alamin, finance director of Shamsul Alamin Real Estate, which allegedly defaulted on loans of Tk 384 crore from PLFSL.

Arafin told the court that they have long been running businesses in a fair manner, without using any influence.

He said he had earlier been paying Tk 20 lakh in instalment every month to PLFSL, but for the last two years, the lender's office has not been in operation. That is why, he could not pay the instalments, he said.

Around Tk 160 crore was sanctioned as loan for him but the PLFSL is now claiming Tk 394 crore along with the interests from his organisation, he told the court.

The HC bench commented that many borrowers like Arafin run business in a fair manner and that they are not errant like Shami Huda, a former managing director of PLFSL.

The HC asked the defaulters to place their statements through swearing affidavits to it by March 9.

Justice Khurshid Alam said the court would send the affidavits to the liquidator of PLFSL to deal with the matter.

There are more than one lakh depositors of PLFSL, which is a listed company with the capital market, and more than 80 percent of them are common people. While around 1,000 borrowers, including the defaulters, have taken money from the NBFIL, the HC judge said.

He said the PLFSL is still alive in the eye of the law as the institution is now under the authority of a liquidator.

There are different directorates, departments and agencies in the state which are responsible for checking irregularities in institutions like PLFSL, the judge said.

Recovering NPLs is not the duty of this court. It has many other important and urgent issues to deal with, he said.

The HC bench made the observations during the hearing on the petition filed by Bangladesh Bank in 2019 seeking permission to liquidate PLFSL.

The liquidation process began after the board of PLFSL informed the central bank in April 2019 about its inability to pay back the depositors' money despite the maturity of the deposits.

On February 23, 51 defaulters had appeared before the bench in connection with the same issue.

The court yesterday fixed March 9 for further hearing on the matter.

Justice Khurshid Alam said he would discuss virtually with the Bangladesh Bank governor, the chairmen of the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Security Exchange Commission on exploring ways to recover NPLs to save PLFSL.

## Bangladesh Bank

Common Services Department-1  
(Equipment Section)  
Head Office  
Dhaka-1000  
Website: www.bb.org.bd

### Invitation for Tenders

Bangladesh Bank Head Office, Dhaka		
1 Ministry/Division	Not applicable.	
2 Agency	Not applicable.	
3 Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Bank.	
4 Procuring entity code	Not used at present.	
5 Procuring entity district	Dhaka.	
6 Invitation for	Procurement of 58 Nos. Tablet PC for Bangladesh Bank, Head Office.	
7 Invitation Ref. No.	CSD(EQUIPMENT)69(6)/2021-12	
8 Date	24/02/2021	
KEY INFORMATION		
9 Procurement method	Open Tendering Method.	
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10 Budget and source of funds	Own source.	
11 Development partners (if applicable)	Not applicable.	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12 Project/program code (if applicable)		
13 Project/program name (if applicable)		
14 Tender package No.		
15 Tender package name		
16 Tender publication date	28/02/2021	
17 Tender last selling date	Not applicable.	
18 Tender closing date and time	14/03/2021 03:15pm	
19 Tender opening date and time	14/03/2021 03:30pm	
20 Name & address of the office(s)	<b>Address</b>	
-Receiving tender document	BB website and Hard Copy Document.	
-Opening tender document	Common Services Department-1, 6th Floor, Annex-2 Building, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.	
21 Pre-tender meeting		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
22 Brief eligibility of tenderer	Tenderers having 5 years overall business experience and minimum specific experience as supplier in supply of similar goods of at least two (2) contract(s) of similar nature successfully completed within the last three (3) years.	
23 Brief description of goods or works	Supply & Activation of 58 Nos. Tablet PC for Bangladesh Bank, Head Office.	
24 Brief description of related services	N/A.	
25 Lot Identification	Tender security amount (Tk)	Completion time in weeks/months from the date of contract signing
1 1 Tablet PC	CSD-1 Tk. 40,000.00	8 weeks
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
26 Name of official inviting tender	Md. Abul Kalam Azad.	
27 Designation of official inviting tender	General Manager.	
28 Address of official inviting tender	Common Services Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.	
29 Contract details of official inviting tender	Tel: 9530148 Fax: 9530120 E-mail: ma.azad@bb.org.bd	
30 The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings.		

ব্যাবহিক ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অতিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে কোন করুন।

DCP: 48/2021-742  
Date: 25/02/2021  
GD-391

**Md. Abul Kalam Azad**  
General Manager  
Phone: 9530148  
E-mail: ma.azad@bb.org.bd

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Chief Controller of Stores  
Bangladesh Railway  
Pahartali, Chittagong-4202  
Telephone: 031-659604 E-mail: ccsph@railway.gov.bd  
No. CCS/eGP Notice/2021 Date: 25/02/2021

### e-Tender Notice

Notice No. 07/2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram for the Procurement of Goods as stated below:

Sl No.	Tender/Proposal ID	Tender/Proposal Package No. and description	Procurement nature, type & method	Tender/Proposal closing date & time
1.	547421	EGP/P5/EB4/GAS/2021-2022 Procurement of different types of gases and related service under framework Contract Agreement-6 items	Goods NCT OTM	22-Mar-2021 15:00

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 for the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online branches of any registered bank branches.

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

**Mohammad Maruf**  
District Controller of Stores (P-1)  
Phone: 01711692926  
On the behalf of CCS/PH

GD-389

### HIGHLIGHTS

England suffered a Test defeat inside two days for the first time in the last hundred years (28 May 1921, against Australia).

The visitors were bowled out for only 81 runs in their second innings, which is their lowest Test score against India.

Ravichandran Ashwin became the second-fastest bowler in the history of cricket to claim 400 Test wickets. He is the fourth Indian to enter the 400 club.

Axar Patel (11/70) now has the best match figures for any bowler in day-night Tests.

Left-arm spinner Patel is the first bowler to take successive 5-wicket hauls in a day-night Test.



India captain Virat Kohli was all smiles as the English batsmen fell like ninepins in their second innings during the second day of the third Test in Ahmedabad yesterday. (Below) Spinner Axar Patel celebrates one of his five wickets on the day.

PHOTO: BCCI

## Sk Jamal snap draw streak with emphatic win

SPORTS REPORTER



After four successive draws in the Bangladesh Premier League, title contenders Sheikh Jamal DC returned to winning ways by handing an emphatic 3-1 defeat to struggling Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Gambian striking duo of Sulayman Sillah and Omar Jobe, and Uzbekistan's Jonov Otobek struck a goal apiece to help the three-time champions climb to second position in the 13-team table with 22 points from 10 outings, 10 points fewer than leaders Bashundhara Kings, who have played a match more than Sheikh Jamal DC.

Sheikh Jamal, who came into the match on the back of four successive draws against Abahani, Kings, Uttar Baridhara Club and Bangladesh Police, looked positive and dominated throughout the match against the Gopibagh-based outfit playing without a head coach in the last four matches.

The so-far unbeaten Sheikh Jamal came close to breaking the deadlock in the 18th minute but goalkeeper Titumir Chowdhury denied Sulayman Sillah by thwarting a close-range header before Joseph Nur Rahman saw his powerful shot float over the Brothers Union post in the 23rd minute.

Sulayman then made amends to brilliantly bring down a Monir Hossain right-flank cross inside the box before launching a right-footer into the far post to give Sheikh Jamal a 34th-minute lead.

Sulayman's countryman Omar Jobe then all but doubled the margin after beating advancing goalkeeper Chowdhury but his overhead chip came off the post two minutes before the break.

After resumption, Jobe made it 2-0 in the 59th minute as the Gambian forward, availing a long ball, advanced into the box from the left to place to the right of the Brothers keeper to net his 12th goal of the league and its joint top-scorer along with Robson Da Silva of Bashundhara Kings.

Otobek sealed the result in the 76th minute when he found the back of the net with a 25-yard free-kick before Faisal

Ahmed pulled one back for Brothers Union in the 81st minute with a header off a Furkat Jon free-kick.

At Birsheshta Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj, Bangladesh Police notched their third victory in the last four matches when they beat hosts Arambagh KS 2-1.

Jamir Uddin put Police FC ahead in the 14th minute before Fredrick Pooda doubled the lead in the 29th minute.

Trailing by two goals, betting-scambit Arambagh pressed for goals and the promising Nihat Zaman Uchash pulled one back in the 72nd minute by scoring his third goal in the league. With their third win, ninth-placed Police raised their tally to 12 from 10 outings while Arambagh remained at bottom with one point from 10 matches.



Sheikh Jamal's Gambian striker Omar Jobe celebrates his side's second goal against Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Shortest since World War II

India demolish England inside two days

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

India's Axar Patel claimed an 11-wicket match haul as they beat England by 10 wickets inside two days in the day-night third test on Thursday, dashing the tourists' hopes of making the final of the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) in June.

On a viciously turning track, England were shot out for 81 in the second innings, their lowest ever total against India, at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

Chasing 49 for victory in the spin-dominated, low-scoring contest, India overwhelmed the target without losing a wicket to go 2-1 up in the four-test series.

The hosts need a draw in the final test, also in Ahmedabad from March 4, to reach the WTC final against New Zealand.

England had been on the back foot since being skittled out for 112 in their first innings on a turning track at the world's largest cricket stadium.

Joe Root and Jack Leach shone with the ball to drag the tourists back into the contest by bowling out India for 145.

The tourists, however, suffered a second batting collapse to allow the hosts to take charge again.

Earlier, resuming on 99-3, India looked on course for a handy first-innings lead but Root (5-8) and Leach (4-54) wreaked havoc with the pink ball.

Rohit Sharma top scored for



India with 66 but the hosts lost their last seven wickets for 31 runs.

Patel had claimed six of the 10 English wickets in the first innings and the left-arm spinner returned to haunt them with a two-wicket first over.

Ben Stokes (25) and Root (19)

offered hints of a partnership before they fell in successive overs.

Patel went on to claim 5-32, while Ravichandran Ashwin dismissed four batsmen en route to reaching 400 test wickets.

England lasted 30.4 overs with all 10 batsmen falling to spin.

India captain Kohli said: 'To be honest, I don't think the quality of batting was at all up to standard from both teams, to be honest. The batting was below-par from both sides. It was bizarre that out of 30 wickets, 21 was to straight balls.'

England captain Joe Root said, 'We will take the feelings from this week and harness them. But this shouldn't define us as a team and one defeat will not change us overnight. We have to accept it, move forward, and get better.'



South Asian Games triple gold medallist Ruman Sana is ready to draw his bow for one of the seven recurve team event matches in the BAF National League (Stage-1) at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday. Although Sana -- Bangladesh's first archer to secure direct qualification for the Summer Olympics -- recovered from a poor performance in December's Victory Day Archery tournament, his teammates could not help him finish among the top three teams in the eight-team league, which will have further stages in April, June and November. Bangladesh Ansar finished fourth but will still have a chance to bounce back as the champions will be decided on the basis of performances of all four stages.

PHOTO: STAR

## Messi steals Champions League's thunder

STAR SPORT DESK



On the same night that Manchester City were extending their historic run to 19 consecutive wins with a 2-0 triumph over Borussia Monchengladbach in the Champions League round of 16 and Real Madrid recorded one of the duller 1-0 wins against 10-man Atalanta, Lionel Messi was lighting up the Camp Nou, albeit on a much lesser stage, with a pair of goals as Barcelona stormed to a 3-0 win over Elche in La Liga.

Pep Guardiola's suddenly imperious side had Messi in their sights immediately after he had expressed his desire to leave Barcelona last summer following a humiliating exit from the Champions League and a breakdown in his relationship with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu. Ultimately, the 33-year-old decided to stay -- for the final year of his contract at least. His decision was made in part by



exterior factors, with the pandemic denting club's finances and the legality of his exit clause being questioned. Internally, he was frustrated by the direction of the club and the quality of players that surrounded him.

Yesterday, for much of the first half, Barcelona again lacked that intangible spark. They had just two shots on target, both from Francisco Trincao, their lowest tally in the first 45 minutes of a home game this season in all competitions.

But Koeman's team turned it around in the second half, Messi linking up in sublime fashion with Martin Braithwaite before scoring three minutes into the second half. 15 minutes later, Frenkie de Jong found Messi in the box after a slalom run and the Argentine doubled the lead by easing the ball home following a series of feints that left the Elche defence scrambling.

His 13th goal took Messi go ahead of Bayern Munich's Robert

Lewandowski as the top scorer across Europe's top five leagues in 2021 in all competitions, but the talisman knows there is plenty of work ahead.

Chiefly, the Blaugrana can hope to bridge a five-point gap in the league with leaders Atletico Madrid, but the desire for another remontada against PSG will also be burning. After all, neither Barcelona nor Messi can risk another Champions League humiliation and a 4-1 defeat at home has left them staring down the barrel.

Any encouraging signs will have to come from their captain and in that regard, Messi's timing could not have been better. On a night when the Champions League offered fans nothing, Messi reminded them of his capabilities with a display that was every bit as emphatic as it was brilliant.

Barcelona will be hoping that he can hold on to that form and, if he does, there is every reason to believe that the air at the Parc des Princes will have a very different vibe about it come March 11.

## Guptill answers critics with explosive knock

AGENCIES



Martin Guptill fell short of a third Twenty20 international century but his strong return to form helped New Zealand to a four-run win over Australia in the second match in Dunedin yesterday.

The 34-year-old opener used the occasion of the first T20I to be hosted at Dunedin's University Oval to announce that he's far from a spent force in the most dynamic form of the game.

Guptill scored 97 from just 50 balls in leading his team to 219. In doing so he struck eight sixes, taking him to 132 in T20Is, passing India's Rohit Sharma (127).

After a lean trot that extended to his form for Auckland in the Super Smash, Guptill had seen his stock on the T20 circuit fall. He came into this match with perhaps as much pressure on his white-ball status as there ever has been. What he delivered was a wide-open window to his immense talent. 'Outstanding knock from Martin,' Kane Williamson said. 'The presence he brings at the top of the order

### MOST SIXES IN T20I



Player	Inns	Sixes
Martin Guptill	92	132
Rohit Sharma	100	127
Eoin Morgan	94	113
Colin Munro	62	107
Chris Gayle	54	105

along with that power game that he has, it was great to see that today.' Guptill's knock ended a run of low scores after he was out for a duck in Christchurch and made a total of 46 runs in three T20Is against Pakistan in December.

New Zealand extended their lead to 2-0 in the five-match series.

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A long-snouted dolphin spotted in the Karnaphuli river near Chattogram city's Ichhanagar. Unlike fish with gills, this mammal needs to come to the surface for oxygen. Such dolphin sightings have now become rare and experts blame river pollution and increased traffic on waterbodies for this. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

### Confiscate PK Halder's land, flats

Orders court; properties of Faridpur brothers to be seized

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to confiscate 59 acres of land and three flats of Proshanta Kumar Halder, also known as PK Halder, in a money laundering case.

Meanwhile, another Dhaka court ordered the CID to seize 5,706 bighas of land, 55 vehicles, and freeze the bank accounts of two brothers in a money laundering case.

The pieces of land belonging to PK Halder are in Purbachal, Rupganj in Narayanganj, Bagerhat, Nazirpur and Pirojpur and the flats are in the capital's Uttara, Baridhara and Banani, ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir told The Daily Star.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



#### PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 26

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-15	12-30	4-30	6-05	7-30
JAMAAT 5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

### CREC should talk to the authorities

Says rail minister on contractor's fund crisis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If the contractor for the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project has any issue, it should talk to the authorities concerned, as this is not something to talk about with the media, said Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujon yesterday.

The minister made the comments a day after China Railway Group

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## Sadness all the way to grave

Burglars murder boy, 12, whose life was a series of unfortunate events

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After the separation of his parents 11 years ago, Hasan Bapari used to live with his maternal grandparents in Feni. After their deaths last year, he was admitted to a madrasa in Narayanganj. But there he was sexually abused by a teacher and he left the madrasa.

Since then, he had been residing with his aunt in the capital's Wari.

The family planned to go to Cox's Bazar on holiday last night.

But that did not happen as the 12-year-old boy was killed by suspected burglars inside the house on Wednesday night.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

**CONDOLENCE**

We are deeply saddened by the sudden demise of country's noted economist **Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled** who breathed his last early Wednesday at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMU). He was 80.

Former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, Ibrahim Khaled also served as the managing director of Pubali Bank, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Agrani Bank and Sonali Bank in his illustrious career spanning nearly six decades.

The veteran banker was awarded the Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah Gold Medal in 2009 and the Khan Bahadur Nawab Ali Chowdhury National Award in 2013 for his outstanding contribution to the country's banking sector.

Ibrahim Khalid was an IBA alumnus and served as the president of Bangladesh MBA Association. He was also the president of Kachi-Kanchar Mela.

We pray for eternal peace of the departed soul and convey our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family members.

*Nazmul Hassan*  
**Nazmul Hassan MP**  
 President

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