



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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**"This is an epidemic, for God's sake, and it has to stop."**  
BIDEN ATTEMPTS TO TACKLE US GUN VIOLENCE AS HE CALLS IT A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS



**"With the extremely inequitable vaccine distribution I will not attend the COP26 conference..."**  
SWEDISH CLIMATE CAMPAIGNER GRETA THUNBERG



**"With these, let's call them what they are - dictators - with whom one nonetheless has to coordinate..."**  
ITALY PM MARIO DRAGHI BLASTS TURKEY PRESIDENT ERDOGAN FOR HUMILIATION OF EU COMMISSION CHIEF

## Strict lockdown from April 14

To remain in force for a week, announces govt as ongoing restrictions prove ineffective

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country will be put under a strict lockdown for a week from April 14, the government announced yesterday amid a worsening coronavirus situation as the ongoing restrictions have apparently proved to be ineffective in containing the spread of the virus.

Except for emergency services, all government and private offices and factories will remain closed during the lockdown. Public transport services will also stay suspended, State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain told The Daily Star.

"We had no other option but this, given the rapid transmission of Covid-19. During this period, people will be made to stay at home at any cost," he said.

The state minister also said the government has made all-out preparations to enforce the lockdown following the directives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and suggestions from experts.

Army will not be deployed, he said, adding

- ➔ All govt, private offices, factories will remain closed
- ➔ Public transport services will be suspended
- ➔ People will be made to stay at home
- ➔ Only emergency services will remain open

that a gazette notification in this regard will be issued soon.

Earlier in the morning, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said the government was actively considering imposing an "all-out lockdown" for one week from April 14.

The lockdown will come into effect on the first day of Bangla calendar -- Pahela Baishakh -- and three days after the end of the ongoing seven-day restrictions, which began on April 5.

Public health experts have been pitching for strict enforcement of Covid-19 restrictions as they raised questions about the effectiveness of a half-hearted enforcement to tackle the worsening coronavirus situation in the country.

They said relaxed measures like gradual resumption of the operation of public transport and reopening of shopping malls would not yield the desired results, and it would rather push the country towards a greater risk.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Customers throng Noor Mansion Shopping Centre in the capital's New Market area yesterday, the first day of reopening of malls after a brief four-day closure during the ongoing "lockdown". Many shoppers and salesmen showed blatant disregard for health safety rules.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## COVID-19 VACCINES WHO chief slams 'shocking' imbalance

Backs AstraZeneca shots

AFP, Geneva

The World Health Organization yesterday condemned the chasm between rich and poor nations in accessing coronavirus vaccines, saying more than a dozen countries were still completely unprotected.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus -- a fierce critic of wealthy countries buying up vaccine supply for themselves -- blasted the scarcity of doses available for poorer nations.

His target of seeing vaccination under way in every country by Saturday -- the 100th day of 2021 -- is set to be missed.

"There remains a shocking imbalance in the global distribution of vaccines," Tedros told a press conference.

He said that out of 220 territories, 194 had started vaccination, while of the remaining 26, seven have received doses and are preparing to start, while a further

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Young adults get infected more

Rate of infection among them over 60pc in recent weeks

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

More young adults getting infected with coronavirus has been a worrying sign in recent weeks, experts said.

While most of the people dying are old, health officials believe it is the young people who are giving the virus to older and more vulnerable people.

According to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), 68.8 percent of the people who tested positive for coronavirus on April 5 were aged between 19 and 48 years.

Twenty-seven percent infected were aged over 49, it said.

IEDCR does not compile age-based data regularly, but its officials said the rate of infection among young adults has been over 60 percent in recent weeks.

On the other hand, yesterday's bulletin from the Directorate General of Health Services showed 80.73 percent of those who died with Covid-19 were over 50.

Young people getting out and about are contracting the disease and putting their vulnerable family members at risk, IEDCR officials said, adding that the elderly people do not often leave their homes frequently.

"Homes are a perfect place for transmission because we don't follow the health rules there. The young adults violating the health rules get infected and then they spread the virus to the older family members," IEDCR director Tahmina Shirin told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Daily Covid cases still over 7,000

63 more die

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday recorded more than 7,000 Covid-19 cases for the fifth time in six days even as the country undergoes a weeklong lockdown to contain the virus transmission.

In a 24-hour period ending at 8:00am, 7,462 new cases were registered with the infection rate jumping to 23.57 percent.

The number of cases was 6,854 on Thursday. On April 4, the country recorded 7,087 Covid-19 cases and 7,075 the next day. On April 6, the number was 7,213, followed by 7,626 the next day.

Sixty-three more people died from Covid-19, said the Directorate General of Health Services yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

ACHIEVING GLOBAL CLIMATE GOALS

## Dhaka, Washington to forge new partnership

Kerry hands over Biden's invitation to Hasina to join Apr 22-23 Global Leaders' Summit

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Having returned to the Paris Agreement after assuming office in January, US President Joe Biden is eager to work with Bangladesh as part of a new global partnership to fight climate change and protect future generations.

The US is ready to provide funding and leadership in raising climate ambition -- net zero carbon emissions and adaptation mechanisms -- and the "Leaders Summit on Climate" to be hosted by Biden on April 22-23 will prepare the groundwork ahead of the COP26 in Glasgow in November.

"We have experienced the hottest month and year in human history [last year]. We see the damages all across the world -- fires, flood, drought, sea level rise,



food production being hampered... migration is already happening because of climate change," said US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry yesterday.

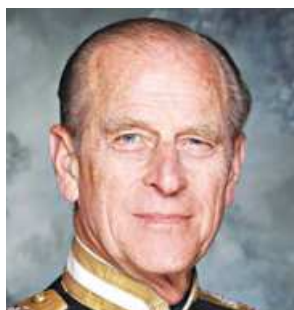
"We know from scientists we all need to take actions."

Kerry, who arrived in Dhaka at 11:30am yesterday, following visits to India and the UAE, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the afternoon and handed over Biden's invitation to attend the "Leaders Summit on Climate" to be hosted by the US president on April 22-23.

The summit will be attended by 40 global leaders of major economies and climate vulnerable countries.

"Returning of the US to the Paris

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



## UK mourns as Prince Philip dies at 99

AFP, London

Prince Philip, the longest serving royal consort in British history who was a constant presence at Queen Elizabeth II's side for decades, died yesterday aged 99, Buckingham Palace announced.

The death of the Duke of Edinburgh is a profound loss for the 94-year-old monarch, who once described him as her "strength and stay all these years".

Queen Elizabeth II announced his passing "with deep sorrow" after he died peacefully in the morning at Windsor Castle, west of London, the palace said in a statement.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1  
READ MORE ON PAGE 5



A shell-shocked Rani catches a last glimpse of the body of her husband Riton in an ambulance at the city's Mugda Medical College Hospital. The 49-year-old Covid patient died at the hospital yesterday after undergoing treatment for five days. Rani said she could not manage an ICU bed for her husband.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## 4 Rab members arrested in city

They abducted a trader, demanded Tk 2cr ransom; three more involved in it, say police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested four Rab members in the capital's Hatirjheel yesterday on charges of abducting, torturing, and demanding ransom from a man.

Police said there are three other suspects, one of whom, a civilian woman, got arrested as well.

The arrested men were handed their force after a case was filed with Hatirjheel Police Station, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shafiqul Islam.

But their names and designations were not mentioned in the case.

"They kidnapped a man and demanded ransom. Police held two of the accused at the scene, after the man's sister informed them. Three more were detained later," he added.

Police sources said seven people were found involved in the incident.

The civilian woman named Ranu Begum was placed on a two-day remand by a Dhaka court.

Subrata Debnath, who is investigating the case, applied to the court, requesting that the accused men be tried under the laws of the forces they belong to.

Police officers with knowledge of the incident said the accused men demanded Tk 2 crore from the victim and eventually settled for Tk 12 lakh. Police held two of them with the money in a CNG-run auto rickshaw.

According to the case filed by victim Tamjid Hossain's sister, the incident took place on Thursday after the 27-year-old left their Mirbagh home for Uttara.

Around 12:00pm, a man called his sister introducing

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



**BANGLADESH UPDATE**



**7,462**  
New cases in 24hrs



**6,73,594**  
Total cases



**9,584**  
Deaths



**5,68,541**  
Recoveries



**GLOBAL UPDATE**



**2,921,424**  
Deaths



**135,004,941**  
Total cases

## UK mourns as Prince Philip

FROM PAGE 1  
"The Royal Family join with people around the world in mourning his loss," the statement said, as Britain suspended political campaigning for May local elections and flags were lowered to half-mast on buildings.

The outspoken former navy commander devoted much of his life as the Queen's husband to charity work -- but was notorious for numerous gaffes, some of them causing offence.

He was admitted to hospital on February 16, and went home after a month during which he was treated for a pre-existing heart condition and an infection.

Announcing his death, BBC television played the national anthem over a picture of Philip in his prime, dressed in military dress uniform.

"We give thanks, as a nation and a kingdom, for the extraordinary life and work of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh," Prime Minister Boris Johnson said outside 10 Downing Street.

Johnson said Philip had "earned the affection of generations" at home, in the Commonwealth and across the world after first serving in the Royal Navy and then over nearly eight decades beside the Queen.

Tributes poured in from political and faith leaders in Britain, and from the United States, Europe and Commonwealth countries including Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and Pakistan.

Condolences were also expressed by leaders in Ireland, where in 2011 the queen and Philip paid the first royal state visit for a century following generations of enmity with Britain.

Philip is expected to be buried at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, according to the royal College of Arms, at a date to be determined.

But restrictions for the coronavirus pandemic mean the public are being urged to stay away, and will complicate the attendance of foreign dignitaries.

Tony Blair, who was prime minister then, lauded Philip "as a man of foresight, determination and courage" who was ahead of his time in the cause of environmental protection.

Chris Green, a 57-year-old local government officer, told AFP outside Buckingham Palace: "I came here when the Queen Mother (in 2002)

and Diana died so I came here for a quiet thought and to pay my respects. "With his age and his recent health problems it hasn't come as a massive shock, but it is one of those moments we will look back on and say it was a significant event," he said.

However, police at the palace and other royal sites discouraged well-wishers from lingering, owing to Britain's Covid restrictions on mass gatherings.

Philip retired from public duties in 2017 at the age of 96 and died just before his 100th birthday in June -- a milestone that for Britons is typically marked with a congratulatory message from the queen, who is Britain's longest-serving monarch.

The couple, who celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary in November, had been living largely in isolation at Windsor Castle, because their age put them at heightened risk from Covid-19.

He was last seen at a staged appearance at a military ceremony at Windsor Castle last July, days after attending the wedding ceremony of his granddaughter Princess Beatrice.

The queen had four children with Philip -- Charles, Anne, Andrew and Edward -- eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Philip was born on the island of Corfu with Danish and Greek royal titles.

He fled the country when he was just 18 months old with his parents and four sisters, after his uncle, king Constantine of Greece, was forced to abdicate.

The family initially settled in France.

Philip was formally introduced to princess Elizabeth, the future queen, in July 1939 and they kept in touch during the war, meeting on several occasions.

The pair married in Westminster Abbey in London in 1947.

A rising star in the British navy, Philip had reached the rank of commander by the time Elizabeth ascended to the throne in 1952. He eventually shelved his personal ambitions to support his wife in the role.

Over the ensuing decades he was involved in numerous charities, including the World Wide Fund For Nature and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme for young people.

## Young adults get infected

FROM PAGE 1  
Since the people aged below 40 have yet to be inoculated, they are at greater risk, she said, adding that this could be another reason behind the surge in infection and deaths.

"If we fail to restrict the movement of young people, the number of deaths of the elderly will not be lowered."

Besides, the UK and South African variants of coronavirus are more contagious and can infect younger people, experts said.

The younger people are more mobile and are engaging in more activities, and that's why more of them are contracting the disease, they added.

According to IEDCR data, 60 percent of the Covid-19 patients have a history of visiting markets and using mass transport.

Over 30 percent of the patients attended rallies, seminars, other public events, and went to a mosque or temple.

IEDCR adviser Mushtaq Hossain

said, "Basically people of this age group have jobs and businesses. They are physically active. They go to offices, use public transport and often do not bother wearing a mask."

Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, pointed out that the number of tests have increased.

"The daily tests dropped to around 5,000. But nowadays about 32,000 people get tested each day. More and more young people are getting tested. Besides, our young people outnumber every other age group," he said.

A complete lockdown that resembles a curfew is needed to cut the rate of transmission, he added. "It will reduce people's mobility and eventually curb transmission."

In early April last year, less than 50 percent of those tested positive were young. But only a month later, the percentage rose to 70. The number of reported deaths also increased at the same time, according to IEDCR data.

## WHO chief slams

FROM PAGE 1  
Five should take delivery of their first batches within days.

Of the remaining 14, some had not requested vaccines through the Covax scheme, some were not yet ready, and some planned to start in the coming weeks and months.

"We're encouraged that almost all countries who want to start have now started," Tedros said.

"However, I emphasise the word start. Most countries do not have anywhere near enough vaccines to cover all health workers, or all at-risk groups -- never mind the rest of their populations."

More than 732 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered in at least 195 territories around the world, according to an AFP count.

Some 49 percent of the doses have been injected in high-income countries accounting for 16 percent of the global population.

Just 0.1 percent have been administered in the 29 lowest-income countries, home to nine percent of the world's population.

Tedros compared some high-income countries where one in four had received a shot to low-income ones, where fewer than one in 500 had done so.

The WHO co-led Covax facility, which aims to ensure that poorer nations can access Covid-19 vaccines with donors covering the cost, had been expecting to distribute its first 100 million doses worldwide by the end of March.

But only 38 million have been distributed so far, to 105 territories.

"We hope to be able to catch up during April and May," said Tedros.

He condemned companies and countries for bypassing Covax for their own political or commercial reasons.

"These bilateral arrangements run the risk of fanning the flames of vaccine inequity. Scarcity of supply is driving vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy."

Europe's medicines regulator said this week that the AstraZeneca vaccine could cause very rare blood clots among some recipients, prompting several countries to scale up restrictions on the jab.

On Wednesday, the WHO's vaccine experts said a link between AstraZeneca's Covid-19 jabs and blood clots was "plausible but not confirmed", stressing that reported occurrences were "very rare".

Tedros yesterday said that the UN health agency continued to back the jab.

"The benefits of the vaccine outweigh the risk of these very rare side effects," he said.

"All vaccines and medicines carry a risk of side effects. In this case, the risks of severe disease and death from Covid-19 are many times higher than the very small risks related to the vaccine."

The novel coronavirus has killed more than 2.9 million people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.



US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Dhaka, Washington to forge new partnership

FROM PAGE 1  
Agreement will create new momentum to the climate diplomacy," the PM said when Kerry called on her at the Gono Bhaban, reports BSS.

Earlier yesterday, Kerry participated in a climate finance roundtable with international partners, hosted by US Ambassador Earl Miller at his official residence.

He then held meetings with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Environment Minister Shahab Uddin, Special Envoy of the Vulnerable Forum Presidency Abul Kalam Azad, Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam at the state guesthouse Padma in the capital.

At the meeting, they discussed accelerating interventions to keep the global temperature increase within 1.5 degrees Celsius, plans and projects being implemented by Bangladesh, including the Climate Change Trust Fund, National Solar Energy Roadmap, Bangladesh National Climate Action Plan, establishing 14,000 cyclone shelters, Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan, planting of 11.5 million saplings, Planetary Emergency Resolution and protecting and preserving the Sundarbans.

Briefing reporters on the meeting, Foreign Minister Momen said Dhaka solicited assistance for renewable energy, US partnership with Global Adaptation Centre's regional office in Dhaka, and Bangladesh's plan to hold a high-level side event during the COP26 in Glasgow.

Momen said thousands of people are displaced every year in Bangladesh due to river erosion, while the problem of salinity due to sea level rise is affecting people's health -- issues that need global support to be addressed.

As chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, Dhaka also sought US support to create an office of the special rapporteur at the UN, and urged for a proactive US role in Rohingya repatriation.

Bangladesh officials also discussed Bangladesh-US climate collaboration in adaptation, renewable energy, waste management, technology transfer and climate finance.

"We both agreed to collaborate to achieve our goals for a better future for the next generation," Momen said.

He raised the issue of losses and damages due to climate events, requested for assistance in afforestation in the southern coastal region and reconstruction and widening of river embankments to stop erosion.

"Kerry is a doer. He has been a success story... now, we would hope John Kerry will help achieve the 100-billion-dollar climate fund from next year. This could be his landmark. Out of that, 50 percent should be

allocated for adaptation and 50 percent for mitigation," he said.

Kerry, former US secretary of state, told journalists that he was delighted that PM Hasina would take part in the summit and that the two countries would be able to work together to conduct research and develop technology.

Referring to his visit to India and the UAE, Kerry said both the countries have pledged to raise climate ambitions and accelerate the transition to clean energy.

"This does not require sacrifice. This does not require a lesser quality of life; it is a better quality of life, with cleaner air, less disease, less cancer. It will create tens of millions of jobs in the deployment of technologies for creation of a new energy future."

Kerry said President Biden had proposed to set aside two trillion dollars to help the US achieve zero carbon emissions in the power sector by 2035.

He said under a multi-year programme, the US may commit \$15-17 billion for Bangladesh's access to affordable clean energy, fostering transparent and efficient energy market and advance innovation.

The US earlier had not paid the money to the fund due to Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. The developed countries have committed to mobilise \$100 billion annually to the fund for mitigation and adaptation.

Biden will make further commitment for taking forward the \$100 billion fund annually.

"That's the beginning," Kerry said.

Asked if the US will provide compensation under the "Loss and Damage" principle according to which major carbon emitters should compensate the climate-affected countries, Kerry said, "First thing's first."

"We need to invest significant amount of money... this is the first step, instead of the loss and damage issue. This will not help produce the new money," he said, adding that for example, the Sundarbans need to be protected and this needs money.

Let that happen first instead of speaking of compensation, he said.

The US Embassy in Dhaka in a statement said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be recognised in the Global Leaders' Summit for Bangladesh's leadership as chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Vulnerable Twenty Group of Finance Ministers.

"Bangladesh plays a vital role in international efforts to combat climate change and adapt and build resilience to climate hazards," it said.

"Secretary Kerry's visit underscores the importance the United States places on our partnership with Bangladesh, a vital leader in international efforts to address climate change," US

Ambassador Earl Miller said in the statement.

During the meeting with Hasina, Kerry said the US president put emphasis on using alternative source of energy like renewable ones, including solar energy and hydroelectricity, to reduce pollution.

Kerry said US companies are keen to invest in the renewable energy sector in partnership with others.

The PM said Bangladesh's contribution to carbon emission is negligible and that the country needs energy for development. She also said Bangladesh is in talks with India, Bhutan and Nepal to set up hydropower plants in a bilateral or trilateral manner on a regional basis, reports BSS.

She thanked President Biden for inviting her to join the "Leaders Summit on Climate".

**COVID-19 AND ROHINGYA CRISIS**  
Kerry told Hasina that US can provide Covid-19 vaccines to Bangladesh if it wants as the US demand for the vaccine will be met by mid-summer.

Earlier, responding to reporters' questions at state guesthouse Padma, Kerry said the pandemic underscores that the world needs to work together as it affects all people across borders.

He said Biden has a commitment of vaccinating 100 million Americans in the first 100 days of his administration. As vaccines continue to be produced, there will be a surplus that the US will make available for other countries, possibly after May.

He said India, Japan and Australia also decided on a distribution effort to make sure that vaccines will be distributed to countries that cannot afford it and don't have the technology.

"President Biden believes deeply that we have a responsibility -- moral and practical -- to bring the whole world back from this outbreak," he said, criticising nationalistic attitude of some countries in terms of vaccine supplies.

Asked how the US can help address the Rohingya crisis, he said it is one of the greatest moral challenges today to address what has happened to the Rohingyas and what is happening to the people in Myanmar.

He said the US is grateful to Bangladesh's generosity for sheltering Rohingya refugees, but added that this is not the sole responsibility of Bangladesh but of the global community, and the US is committed to step up efforts to address the crisis.

Kerry said the US has worked hard to bring democracy to Myanmar but the country has not honoured that.

The US administration is focused on the crisis in Myanmar and will do everything to restore democracy and help release the pressure that Rohingyas have put on Bangladesh.

Kerry left Dhaka at 5:48pm yesterday.

## Day labourer drowns while lifting stones from river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A day labourer drowned while extracting stones from the Dahug river at Mandulpara village in Tentulia upazila of Panchagarh yesterday noon.

The victim is Joydul Haque, 50, of Mandalpara village in the same upazila.

Quoting witnesses, local UP Chairman Tareq Hossain said Joydul fell inside a hole under the river and a chunk of sand collapsed on him.

Failing to rescue the victim, other stone lifters informed fire service officials who later recovered the body after conducting an hour-long operation.

Confirming the incident, Abu Sayem Mia, officer-in-charge of Tentulia Police Station, said an unnatural death case was filed with the police station in this connection.

## 4 Rab members

FROM PAGE 1  
himself as a high official of Rab and claimed that Tamzid was in their custody.

"Don't tell the DB or police. If you do, your brother will be dead," the complaint quoted the man as saying on the phone.

"Around 1:30pm, the man informed me that senior officers were interrogating my brother. He will be accused in arms and narcotics cases..."

Asked at which Rab office did they take my brother, he said that they can't tell that. He [her brother] may also [die] in crossfire. 'If you want to save your brother, be ready with Tk 2 crore', read the complaint.

The man on the phone also let the plaintiff hear her brother's screams as he was being tortured. Tamzid then told her that he was blindfolded right after he was picked up. "My brother begged for his life..."

Later, two-three other men called her from the same number and wanted to know whether she had the cash.

"I told them that we were poor people. How would we have that kind of money? At one point, the man, claiming to be a Rab official, demanded Tk 15 lakh. When I said that we don't have any money, he told me to go to Jamuna Future Park with Tk 12 lakh in cash and warned me not to tell the DB or police. Or else, they will kill my brother," the case statement read.

Around 3:30pm, she received a phone call from her brother's number.

"Crying, he said he was severely beaten up and was asked to give them [the abductors] the ransom. When I wanted to know his location, he said that his hands and legs were tied and he was blindfolded... he could not identify the location."

Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Khandaker Al Moin told The Daily Star that he heard about the incident.

"Hatirjheel police detained them. We also saw the DMP Commissioner's comment on this. We are investigating the incident. After the probe, if any of our members are found guilty, we will take strict action," he said.

## Daily Covid cases

FROM PAGE 1  
a day after the country recorded highest 74 deaths.

The total fatalities stood at 9,584 while the mortality rate dropped to 1.42 percent.

During the 24-hour period, 3,511 patients recovered, taking the number of recoveries to 568,541.

A sharp rise in both infections and deaths prompted the government to issue an 18-point directive before imposing a weeklong lockdown on Monday. But people defied the restrictions and carried on as usual. Shops have been reopened and public transport are being allowed to operate in city corporation areas.

Bangladesh reported its first coronavirus cases on March 8 last year and the first death 10 days later.

The virus claimed 568 lives in January this year in Bangladesh, 281 in February and 638 in March.

The country has so far recorded 673,594 coronavirus cases, according to DGHS.

Daily cases and infection rate had dropped below 5 percent earlier this year, but then rose sharply.

The huge number of patients are putting a severe pressure on hospitals. **HIGHEST DEATHS IN DHAKA** Bangladesh has so far tested 4,947,412 samples, including yesterday's 31,654.

Of yesterday's 63 deceased, 42 died in Dhaka division, 10 in Chattogram, two in Rajshahi, three in Khulna, four in Barisal and one each in Sylhet and Mymensingh.

So far, 5,524 coronavirus patients died in Dhaka division, 1,719 in Chattogram, 607 in Khulna, 522 in Rajshahi, 288 in Barisal, 334 in Sylhet, 381 in Rangpur and 208 in Mymensingh.

Of them, 7,173 were men and 2,411 women.

## Strict lockdown from April 14

FROM PAGE 1  
They also came down hard on the government's response to the resurgence of the disease, saying that it did not make decisions in a planned way.

"The ongoing restriction was unplanned and that's why the government had to backtrack on its decisions repeatedly. The restriction failed to contain the transmission as we are experiencing a surge in cases," said Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

"What we wanted to achieve through the restrictions was not fixed. As goals were not fixed, we achieved nothing. We had time but did not make any preparation for enforcing a lockdown," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

"It was a total mess," he added. The decision of imposing a strict lockdown came a day after the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) for Covid-19 recommended at least a two-week complete lockdown, especially in city corporations and municipality areas, to curb the spread of the virus.

In a meeting on Wednesday night chaired by committee Chairman Prof Mohammad Sahidullah, the body suggested that the decision could be reviewed considering the infection rate before the end of the two weeks, according to a press release.

"As the restriction is not being followed properly, the rate of infection is increasing. Restrictions need to be followed strictly," said the press release.

On Wednesday, the DGHS sent a letter to the Prime Minister's Office, urging it for the enforcement of stricter restrictions like "curfew" as they fear restrictions were simply inadequate to tackle the situation.

After a steady decrease in cases, hospitalisations and deaths for the first two consecutive months this year, the Covid-19 reemerged with mutant strains in the second week of March.

The situation has continued to deteriorate since. The government reported 63 more deaths and 7,462 new infections in 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

Following the alarming increase in cases, the Cabinet Division on April 4 issued a circular with some 11 directives and imposed the seven-day restriction on public movement expiring on April 11.

Three days later, the government relaxed restrictions on the movement of public transport and allowed inter-city buses to ply roads of eleven cities of the country.

Then yesterday, the government allowed shops and malls to open for eight hours every day till April 13.

As a result, shoppers flocked to different markets and shopping centres in the capital yesterday with

many customers and traders defying the health guidelines. No physical distancing was maintained though most of them were wearing masks.

Speaking about the matter, Prof Iqbal Arsalan, a member of the NTAC, said, "We need lockdown immediately to prevent further transmission."

"It should be a complete lockdown and effective for two weeks. Otherwise, it would not give any result," said Arsalan, also president of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad, a pro-Awami League doctors' organisation.

**STRICTER LOCKDOWN**  
News about a strict lockdown first came from Obaidul Quader yesterday morning.

"Coronavirus situation in the country has taken a terrible turn, the infection and death rates are rising rapidly," he said at a briefing at his residence in the capital.

Public negligence and indifference towards the Covid-19 situation have not changed during the weeklong restrictions, Quader added.

Contacted, Senior Secretary Shaikh Yusuf Harun of the public administration ministry said he heard about such a decision, but did not get any official order yet.

The issue of the lockdown will be discussed at tomorrow's meeting of ministers and senior secretaries, he added.



## TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

# Bazas of the World



From left: Black Baza, Kalenga, Bangladesh; Jerdon's Baza, Bandarban, Bangladesh; Pacific Baza, Darwin, Australia.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

In late 2019, while visiting Bandarban with friends, I saw a medium sized brown bird perched on a distant tree. It looked like a bird of prey. After looking through my binoculars for a few seconds, I saw a crest of upright feathers on its head. Instantly I knew it was a Baza, or "Baaj Pakhi" of my childhood.

Bazas are small to medium birds of prey distinguished by their crest. They belong to the group Accipitridae. They can be found in Asia, Africa and Australia. Dwellers of the forest, they are harder to spot than raptors of open spaces.

There are five species of Bazas in the world. In Bangladesh you can find two of them: Jerdon's Baza year-round and Black Baza in winter.

The first Baza I saw was in Madagascar. The Madagascar Baza, a locally endemic bird, can be found in the Spiny Desert, an unusual forest growing in the desert in the island's south. Trekking through this unearthly

landscape, we spotted a stocky bird of prey sitting atop a tall cactus stalk. It had probably started its hunting day and was too focused on finding quarry to take much notice of us, but it took great pains to stretch and exercise its wings in several positions in preparation for action that lay ahead.

During a trip to Australia two years later, in a forest near Darwin, I saw a Pacific Baza. It is a beautiful blue-grey bird with yellow eyes. Brown and orange bars run across its white breast. With a single feather crest on its head, it looked trim and elegant. It sat on its perch for a long while before flying off to a different perch.

But I was yet to see a Baza in Bangladesh. That was about to change.

First I spotted that solitary Jerdon's Baza in Bandarban. Some hours later on that day we saw another circling overhead in a mixed flock. Two months later I saw this magnificent creature again, perched on a tea garden shade tree. As I watched, it dove

to catch a large worm from a lower branch and devoured it at a leisurely pace, allowing me some photographs. I saw another deep inside Satchori's forest the next month. It was a splendid bird to observe, ferocious looking and much larger than the other Bazas I have seen.

For me the Black Baza was the hardest to find. It is a beautiful black bird, with a broad white band across its breast and a white pattern on its upperparts. I saw it in flight several times from the tower at Satchori, but always far. Some weeks ago, with the help of my guide Rahim, I found it perched in a tree in Kalenga forest. They have been known to congregate in large numbers, often by a stream. That is a sight I wait to behold.

The African Baza found in southern Africa remains the only Baza I am yet to see.

facebook.com/ikabirphotographs or follow "ihtishamkabir" on Instagram.

## Bearing witness to atrocities

Genocide-torture museum in Khulna strives to preserve history of 1971 Liberation War

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

"Very often I visit this museum to go back in time, looking at evidence of the Liberation War and reminiscing the days of freedom fighters," said Bidhan Golder, a freedom fighter and native of Khulna's Batiaghata upazila. "I had a good relationship with Madhab Chandra's family. When I come here, I can feel his soul."

Madhab Chandra was a fellow villager of Bidhan. In May 1972, Madhab, Sourav Golder and 23 more from the village were brutally killed in Batiaghata's Badamtala massacre, Bidhan said. Their blood-stained clothes bear witness to that day. Madhav had some money in his pocket, which were stained with blood, becoming a reminder of the moment bullets pierced his body. His family donated all these items to the museum.

The "1971: Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum" in Khulna city has collected and archived evidence of the bloodbath this country witnessed throughout nine months of the Liberation War.

During a visit, a black telephone was seen in a gallery on the museum's second floor. The phone used to be at Kabir Manzil, the house of Humayun Kabir, one of the Liberation War organisers, and the house was the headquarters of Mujib's forces in Khulna. The phone number "4926" was used to communicate news, instructions and tactics needed in the war. Kabir's son Sohail Akter handed the phone over to the museum in 2017.

Three sons of Sekandar Ali Serniabat were martyred in 1971. In 1975, Bangabandhu gave Serniabat a cheque worth Tk 3,000 from the PM's Relief Fund, but the father did not withdraw it, keeping it as the last memory of the martyred children. A certificate of gratitude and cheque worth Tk 2,000 was also sent by Bangabandhu to the son of martyr Jatindral Roy.

All the cheques and certificates are well-preserved and displayed inside glass boxes at the museum.

Rare memorabilia and images of genocide and torture are displayed at the museum, including 9,000 photographs and 30 oil paintings in 10

galleries, as well as some 9,400 books on the war. Over 250 audio-visual CDs are also enriching the collection.

Historian Prof Muntassir Mamoon inaugurated the museum on May 17, 2014 at a rented house at Moilapota. The museum shifted to its own 21-decimal land, on a two-storey house in 2015. The new premises opened to visitors on March 26, 2016. It then shifted to a temporary premise at Sonadanga, while a new six-storey building is being built on their designated land.

The archive has recorded over 11,356 spots where killings took

chairperson of its trustee board. "The museum's aim is to educate people about the genocide committed by the Pakistan army in association with their local collaborators."

Under the museum, two post-graduate certificate courses on the Liberation War and genocide are conducted every year. The museum has organised six "Martyrs Memorial" lectures, and five national and four international seminars. It runs through a trust, and in 2017, a "Research Center on Genocide-Torture and Liberation War" was set up under it.



Visitors at "1971: Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum" in Khulna city. This museum has a rich collection of books, photographs, paintings and artifacts that testify to the genocide of unarmed Bangalees by the Pakistan army during the Liberation War.

PHOTO: STAR

place, 654 mass-killing grounds, 846 mass graves and 958 torture cells in 28 districts, said Rokonzaman Bablu, deputy curator of the museum.

"On average, 20-25 visitors, mostly students, would visit the archive, but now, it has come down to 10-15 due to the pandemic," he added.

The museum is the first of its kind not only in Bangladesh but also in South Asia. It's fitting that it was opened in Khulna, which witnessed some of the worst atrocities in 1971 -- including the Chuknagar mass killings, said Prof Mamoon, also

Shankar Kumar Mallick, one of the trustee board's 11 members, said this is the first genocide museum in South Asia. Genocide is an important aspect of the Liberation War, because the war started with genocide. The issue of that genocide has largely been ignored in discussions. PM Sheikh Hasina and the cultural minister are playing key roles to run the museum, said Mallick.

The museum is open daily from 10am to 6pm, except Mondays. On Fridays, it remains open from 3pm to 7pm. The entrance fee to the museum is Tk 5.

## Whale carcass washes ashore in Cox's Bazar

STAR REPORT

A whale carcass washed ashore at Himchhari beach in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The dead marine mammal is around 30 feet long and is assumed to have weighed five tonnes.

Humayun Kabir, divisional forest officer (DFO) of Cox's Bazar (South), told The Daily Star that tide washed the whale ashore at Himchhari beach in the morning.

"We have asked for veterinary surgeon from wildlife and nature conservation division to determine the cause of death," he added.

The species of the whale is yet to be known, he added.

Md Amin Al Parvez, additional deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar District Administration, told this newspaper from the spot that they were trying to know how it died and take necessary steps to conserve it if experts can determine its conservation value.

## Man killed in landslide near bank of Halda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A youth was killed in a landslide yesterday while razing a part of the Halda river bank in Fatikchhari upazila of Chattogram.

The incident occurred around 9:30am at Akkulia village along the river in Suyabil union.

The deceased -- identified as Md Sakel (20) -- was from Suyabil union, said police.

"Sakel died after a chunk of soil fell on him as he was loading soil on a truck from the Halda river bank," Sheikh Abdullah, officer-in-charge of Bhujpur Police Station, told The Daily Star.

They recovered the body from the spot and sent it to Chattogram Medical College Hospital for autopsy, he said.

A group of unscrupulous people have been razing the bank of Halda river for months which is wreaking havoc on the waterbody, said officials.

## Walls of JU come alive with colours



A visit to JU may transport you to space, or make you feel at one with legendary characters of Bangla literature. Walls around campus have been transformed into pieces of art by students of the university, enhancing the appeal of their naturally beautiful compound.

PHOTO: COURTESY

MD ASADUZZ ZAMAN

Jahangirnagar University (JU) is serene and eye-catching as it is. Surrounded by mother nature, its greenery, open fields, and water bodies are bound to leave one feeling rejuvenated.

But on top of all this, the university now boasts a fresh new attraction: murals.

Always a staple of the campus, JU's murals have been taken to a whole new level by its students in recent years. The art presents a sublime feel that almost makes the images come alive in 3-D. The subject matter is so relevant that the spectator forms an instant connection.

As much as they impress the audience, they communicate tales and emotions through visual semantics, and both students and outsiders lap it up, lining up to take photographs in front of the stunning murals.

JU now has around 40 of these murals drawn across the walls of its Teacher-Student Centre (TSC), Jucus and faculty buildings, dormitories, passenger sheds and transport areas. Some of them are based on movies and cartoons, while others address ongoing sociopolitical issues.

Most of the murals have been painted by a crop of JU's fine arts students, usually Abdullah Mamur and his team that consists of Aporno Adikary Sikto, Abir Arya, Mouning Thing Law and Farzad Dihan. Sometimes, students from other departments also join them.

The students and their works



PHOTO: COURTESY

have not only made JU a treat to the eyes, but are getting sincere praise in the virtual sphere. Just a few days ago, one of their works went viral on social media, gaining plaudits even from outside the country.

The students' take on the famous animated film "Song of the Sea", painted on the walls of TSC, suddenly was all the rage on Facebook a couple of days ago. It was even shared by Tom Moore, the Irish film-maker who directed the movie.

"It's one of the greatest experiences of my life," Abdullah Mamur told this correspondent recently. It was beyond his expectation that his team's work would reach Tom Moore himself.

Another artwork at TSC, based on the fan-favourite Japanese animated movie "My Neighbor Totoro" also got appreciated across the board on social media.

"When I first came to the

university [in early 2013], I was saddened to see how almost every wall of the campus was taken over by posters by political organisations, coaching centres, or some other kind of advertisement," Mamur recalled. "It was especially striking because of the natural beauty surrounding JU. The walls seemed to stick out like sore thumbs."

This pushed Mamur to take action. "Soon, I was talking with Sikto, trying to figure out what to do," he said.

Their first mural was self-funded, painted on the walls of the passenger shed at Chourangi. However, due to a shortage of funds, they were forced to halt their work after the first few.

"Luckily, we got some donors, especially ex-JU students and well-wishers of the university, who came forward to pay for the paint," Mamur said. "Soon, more artists started joining us. I feel great to have lived through it all."

## A hairy business!

Women in Mymensingh villages find income making wigs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

In the villages of Mymensingh's Muktagachha upazila, a rather unusual profession has bloomed in the last few years: making wigs. What started out as some women trying to create an extra source of income, spread across the community, bringing many into the work.

Although cut human hair was once thought to be useless or even hazardous, it is now being used to make wigs, and around 400 young to elderly women in the upazila are involved in this practice.

The wigs made in Muktagachha are sold in different supermarkets in the city and exported to a number of countries, sources said.

However, all is not good. The money they get from this work does not match the women's efforts, according to them. But despite that, many who are financially strained are choosing this work.

Sharifa Begum, who took the initiative to make this a bona fide profession in Joyda village, said she first took lessons on making wigs from her sister-in-law Yasmin Akter of adjacent Nimuria village four years ago.

Primarily, it was quite hard to weave strands of hair on the special type of cloth, but it has become easy after practising for the last four years, said 30-year-old Sharifa.

Now she takes orders from another sister-in-law Rokeya Begum of Mondolsen village.

Sharifa, a mother of two children, said they get Tk 350-600 for every wig, depending on size and quality. The price is not satisfactory, and a good sized product needs three to four days to complete, she said.

Noorjahan Akter, a first-year Alim student at a local madrasa, said she has been involved in the profession as part-time work for the last two years to support her poor family.

Earlier, she used to get Tk 1,000 on average per month, but now it's Tk 3,000. Still the income does not sync up with the amount of hard work it takes to make wigs, said Noorjahan.

"My father Nurul Islam is an auto-

rickshaw driver, and it's difficult for him to run the four-member family. I've been supporting them by making wigs."

Sumi Akter, a Secondary School Certificate examinee, said she has been working for the last two years to support her father, a vegetable vendor.

Eighth-grader Nurun Nahar said she started making wigs since last month to support her four-member family, as her father died recently.

Rina Akter, a 22-year-old mother of one, said her husband is a day labourer, and to support her family, she has been making wigs for the last three years.

The workers said they can make them at home, while also doing household chores. It is a welcome income source for them, as they have no opportunity to work outside their homes.

The work is not popular yet, but many women are coming to learn the job and tackle poverty, they said.

Workers said the hair and other essentials for making wigs comes from one Mizanur Rahman Sujon, a middleman.

Talking to this correspondent, Sujon said he has engaged some 250 women in this work in Muktagachha and Trishal of Mymensingh, and Manikganj.

Sujon said the wigs are sold at different shopping malls of Dhaka. They are also exported to different countries including India, Pakistan, Australia and Indonesia.

Asked about the price of wigs in national and international markets and whether it is matching the workers' payment, Sujon avoided the questions.

The demand for wigs is increasing in and outside the country, and it could be a profession for hundreds of women, if reasonable remuneration is given to the workers, said Sarwar Islam Ripon, a local journalist.

Abdullah Al Mansur, upazila nirbahi officer of Muktagachha, said making wigs could be made into a cottage industry, if departments concerned provide necessary support to the poor workers.

This business also has significant export potential, the UNO said.



Around 400 women in Muktagachha upazila are involved in making wigs, for which they get Tk 350-600 each. The wigs are sold in different supermarkets in the city and exported to different countries.

PHOTO: STAR



# BJP, TMC poised for tough

FROM PAGE 12  
West Bengal witnessed high-octane campaigning and an ultimate showdown between the TMC and BJP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP President JP Nadda and movie stars Mithun Chakraborty campaigned for "Lotus", the electoral symbol of BJP.

Mamata, sitting on a wheelchair, single-handedly led the TMC campaign that got a boost when Samajwadi Party MP Jaya Bachchan joined it.

During the campaign, Mamata repeatedly branded BJP central leaders as "outsiders" and claimed "Bengal wants its own daughter". She went tough on the BJP-led central government over recent price hikes of gas, petrol and diesel.

Referring to the two top BJP leaders Modi and Amit Shah, TMC leaders also said Bengal would not let "goons from Gujarat" take over Bengal.

BJP top leaders on the other hand accused Mamata and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee of corruption and nepotism.

They promised voters that the BJP would implement Ayushman Bharat scheme, PM Kisan Samman Nidhi and the 7th pay commission scale for the state government employees if voted to power in West Bengal.

In this phase, polling will be held in nine assembly constituencies in Howrah, 11 in South 24 Parganas, five in Alipurduar, nine in Cooch Behar and 10 in Hooghly.

About 373 candidates are in the fray and around 1.15 crore voters are eligible to exercise their franchise across 15,940 polling stations.

CONTESTANTS  
In the fourth phase, a good number of veteran politicians and celebrities are contesting the WB polls.

Among the candidates are TMC Secretary General and Education Minister Partha Chatterjee (Behala Purba), Sports and Youth Affairs

Minister Aroop Biswas (Tollygunj), North Bengal Development Minister Rabindranath Ghosh (Natabari in Cooch Behar) and Agriculture Minister Arup Roy (Howrah Madhya).

Three BJP MPs are taking part in the Assembly polls in this phase. They are: Babul Supriyo (MP from Asansol, contesting from Tollygunj), Locket Chatterjee, (MP from Hooghly, contesting from Chunchura), and Nisith Pramanik (Cooch Behar MP, contesting from Dinhatra).

Another key BJP candidate Rajib Banerjee, minister of Mamata's previous cabinet, is contesting the polls from Domjur in Howrah.

In Behala Purba, TMC fielded Ratna Chatterjee, estranged wife of sitting MLA and former Kolkata mayor Sovan Chatterjee. She will contest against BJP candidate actor Payel Sarkar.

In Hooghly's Singur, former Trinamool MLA Rabindranath Bhattacharya, popularly known as "Master Moshai", is contesting the polls on BJP ticket.

For Samyukt Morcha, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Abdul Mannan is contesting the polls from Champdani in Hooghly. Leader of Left Legislature Party Sujay Chakraborty is running in the election from Jadavpur and CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Mohammed Salim from Chanditala in Hooghly. Selim will compete against popular actor Yash Dasgupta from BJP.

Naushad Siddique, brother of Indian Secular Front founder and Furfura peer Abbas Siddique, is contesting the polls from Bhangar in South 24 Parganas.

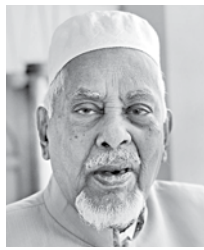
Popular comedian of Bengali films Kanchan Mullick is taking part in the election from Uttarpara in Hooghly and cricketer Manoj Tiwary from Shibpur in Howrah on TMC's ticket.

The fifth phase of the eight-phase Assembly elections is scheduled for April 10 when voters will elect their representatives for 45 assembly seats in six districts.

# Abul Hashem passes away

CITY DESK

Md Abul Hashem, a freedom fighter and an organiser of the Liberation War, passed away yesterday.



He was 99 years old.

Hashem left behind two sons, 10 daughters, relatives and many admirers to mourn his death.

Born in 1922, Hashem was elected MNA in 1970. He was also a close associate of Bangabandhu, said a press release.

During his lifetime, Hashem was involved in various charitable works and has founded numerous educational institutions and orphanages.

For his humanitarian efforts, Hashem was awarded the Ekushey Padak, the country's second highest civilian award, in 2011.

# Offer apology

FROM PAGE 12

a claim is "nothing but a mere lie". He alleged Hefazat leaders have been trying to create confusion among devout people by telling lies from the start of the incident.

Photographs and footage of the mayhem between March 26 and March 28 were published in media, he said.

Blaming Hefajat for the mayhem, the district unit of BCL President Robiul Hossain Rubel demanded a judicial probe into the incident.

He also demanded immediate arrest and trial of the perpetrators involved in the mayhem.

# 9 staffers

FROM PAGE 12

members arrested them from Munshiganj while the cargo vessel was anchored in the Meghna after it was repainted to dodge law enforcers.

Law enforcers said the cargo vessel did not have a survey certificate. Though the vessel was not allowed to ply the river without the certificate, the arrestees were taking the vessel to Munshiganj's Gazaria when the accident happened, said Mina Mahmud, superintendent of Narayanganj naval police.

Asked about the name of the cargo vessel's owing company and its owner, Mina avoided the answer, saying that he did not receive any related papers in this regard.

"The Coast Guard members handed the seized vessel and 14 arrestees to us. We will take legal action against them," he told The Daily Star.

Mina said in primary interrogation, the arrestees admitted that they were in the cargo vessel when the accident happened.

Quoting the arrestees, he said the cargo vessel was heading towards Gazaria after being repaired from a dockyard in Narsingdi. On its way, the vessel hit the passenger launch, causing it to sink.

Lieutenant Commander Amirul Haque, media officer of Coast Guard, said when their members were in regular patrols in the Meghna in Gazaria on Thursday, fishermen informed them that a cargo vessel had been repainted recently and was anchored near Nayanagar village.

Shahidul Alam, officer-in-charge of Narayanganj naval police, said Coast Guard members confirmed that it is a cargo vessel named "SKL-3".

Ziaul Islam Chowdhury, upazila nirbahi officer of Gazaria, said the vessel was repainted inside a dockyard in a nearby area.

[Our Narayanganj correspondent and a Munshiganj correspondent contributed to this report.]

# Stop export

FROM PAGE 12

Rahul shot off a letter to Modi listing seven demands including an immediate moratorium on vaccine export and open vaccination to everyone who needs it.

# Independence proclaimed

FROM PAGE 12

tortures, amongst others on the civilian and unarmed people of Bangladesh,

AND  
Whereas the Pakistan Government by levying an unjust war and committing genocide and by other repressive measures made it impossible for the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh to meet and frame a Constitution, and give to themselves a Government,

AND  
Whereas the people of Bangladesh by their heroism, bravery and revolutionary fervour have established effective control over the territories of Bangladesh, We the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh, as honour bound by the mandate given to us by the people of Bangladesh whose will is supreme duly constituted ourselves into a Constituent Assembly, and having held mutual consultations, and in order to ensure for the people of Bangladesh equality, human dignity and social justice, declare and constitute Bangladesh to be sovereign Peoples' Republic and thereby confirm

the declaration of independence already made by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

The Proclamation of Independence declared that the independence of Bangladesh be deemed to have come into effect from 26 March 1971. It legalised the Mujibnagar government and gave direction to all involved in the War of Liberation for establishing the chain of command. It also affirmed that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be the president of the Republic and that Syed Nazrul Islam should be the vice president of the Republic.

LAWS CONTINUANCE ENFORCEMENT ORDER  
Syed Nazrul Islam, the vice president and acting president of Bangladesh, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by the Proclamation of Independence ordered today that all laws that were in force in Bangladesh on 25th March, 1971, should subject to the Proclamation aforesaid and continue to be so in force with such consequential changes as may be necessary on account of the creation

of the sovereign independent State of Bangladesh.

All government officials -- civil, military, judicial and diplomatic -- who took the oath of allegiance to Bangladesh should continue in their offices on terms and conditions of service so long enjoyed by them and that all district judges and district magistrates, in the territory of Bangladesh and all diplomatic representatives elsewhere should arrange to administer the oath of allegiance to all government officials within their jurisdiction. The order should be deemed to have come into effect from the 26th day of March, 1971, it added.

ARMY DRIVE REPORTED  
Pakistani army troops were reported to have launched a major offensive throughout embattled East Pakistan today, attacking the resistance fighters with tanks, air strikes, artillery and foot soldiers. [New York Times, April 11, 1971]

The defensive hold of Pabna and Sylhet collapsed today.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

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# Junta promises election in 2 yrs

FROM PAGE 12

He said the military had recorded 248 deaths and he denied that automatic weapons had been used. Sixteen policemen had also been killed, he said.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) activist group has said 614 people, including 48 children, had been killed by security forces since the coup, as of Thursday evening. More than 2,800 were in detention, it said.

"We are humbled by their courage and dignity," a group of 18 ambassadors in the country said of the protesters in a joint statement.

"We stand together to support the hopes and aspirations of all those who believe in a free, just, peaceful and democratic Myanmar. Violence has to stop, all political detainees must be released and democracy must be restored."

The statement was signed by the ambassadors of the United States, Britain, the EU, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Switzerland

and several other European nations. "The suggestions from neighbouring countries and big countries and powerful people in politics, we respect them," Zaw Min Tun said. He also accused members of deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy of arson and said the protest campaign was being financed by foreign money, but gave no details.

Suu Kyi and many of her party colleagues have been in custody since the coup.

# Huge plumes of methane

FROM PAGE 12

highest methane emissions in the world that can be detected by satellites."

Stephane Germain, president of GHGSat Inc, which also picked up the plumes, said: "It has the strongest sustained emissions we have seen to date where we can't clearly identify the source."

The report, however, hinted at a combination of sources, including paddy fields, landfills, leaky natural gas pipelines and coal stockpiles.

Bangladeshi scientists said there is no scientific proof that plume of methane originated from Bangladesh as methane is lighter than carbon dioxide and it may go up to 30km up in the atmosphere.

So, the plumes could have come from anywhere, he said.

"Carbon isotope analysis of the methane is necessary to know its origin," said Dr Ahsan Uddin, a Bangladeshi climate scientist.

He said detection of plumes of methane in Bangladesh sky does not necessarily mean that it is emitted from Bangladesh.

More or less, all the countries in this region are conducting similar activities like growing rice, filling wetland, and they might have leaky natural gas pipelines and stockpiles of coals which release methane gas, Ahsan added.

"Regional countries, including China and India, are growing much more rice than us. We have only one coal mine in Barapukuria, but India has more than 1,000 such stockpiles while China has more than 2,500."

The scientist said Bangladesh's only big city is Dhaka and the per capita waste generation here is lower than its neighbours.

"Being the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, developed countries always try to blame developing nations for climate change," he said.

Among the four factors mentioned in the Bloomberg report, leaky gas pipelines could be a major source of methane emissions which is

completely a management issue, Ahsan said.

"If it happens, the authorities need to increase the efficiency of gas pipe management and it can be resolved," he observed.

A researcher on effects of water management on greenhouse gas, Dr SM Mofizul Islam of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRI) said rice cultivation is not a big source of methane or greenhouse gas emission.

Globally, rice cultivation contributes 1.5 percent of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emission, according to world data. info.

Mofizul said rice cultivation produces a small volume of methane which automatically turns into carbon dioxide and rice plants also reduce carbon dioxide through photosynthesis.

Dr Syed Hafizur Rahman of Jahangirnagar University also said the Bloomberg report was prepared based on an assumption and it was not based on any scientific research findings.

Bangladesh does not produce that much methane which could be detected by a satellite. Also, the overall greenhouse gas emission from Bangladesh is very negligible, he said.

As per the latest Ranking of Countries by Greenhouse Gas Emissions prepared by World Data Atlas, Bangladesh's position is 95th among 111 countries.

The country emits 105.14 tonnes of methane and 84.25 tonnes of carbon dioxide, making its per capita annual greenhouse gas emission only 1.16 tonnes, says World Data Atlas.

Asked about methane gas, Mirza Shaokat, director (planning) at the Department of Environment, said though Bangladesh does not produce much greenhouse gas, the country has taken initiatives to reduce it further.

"We have taken up some projects approved by the clean development mechanism [executive board]. Once implemented, the projects would help reduce emission of methane gas," he added.

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## বাংলাদেশ প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা

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#### ২০২০-২০২১ শিক্ষাবর্ষ

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কোভিড-১৯ সংক্রান্ত বৈশ্বিক মহামারীর কারণে বাংলাদেশ প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি পরীক্ষা স্বাভাবিক বিধি মেনে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী ও মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষার মাধ্যমে দুই ধাপে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। এ প্রেক্ষিতে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষা চারটি শিফটে গ্রহণ করা হবে। প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় মেধার ভিত্তিতে নির্বাচিত আবেদনকারীদের মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ প্রদান করা হবে।

বাংলাদেশ প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রকৌশল, পুরকৌশল, যন্ত্রকৌশল, তড়িৎ ও ইলেকট্রনিক কৌশল এবং স্থাপত্য ও পরিকল্পনা অনুষদসমূহের বিভিন্ন বিভাগে স্নাতক শ্রেণিতে ২০২০-২০২১ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ভর্তিগ্রহণ বাংলাদেশের নাগরিকদের ব্যতীকে নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। যে সকল ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ২০১৭ বা ২০১৮ সালে মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় এবং ২০২০ সালে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন, অথবা ২০১৭ সালে মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় এবং ২০১৯ সালে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন কিন্তু উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় সনোশিত ফলাফল ১০ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০১৯ তারিখের পরে শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে প্রকাশিত হয়েছেন, অথবা ২০১৬ সালের নভেম্বর বা তার পরে GCE "O" সেলেজ এবং ২০১৯ সালের নভেম্বর থেকে ২০২০ সালের অক্টোবর পর্যন্ত যারা GCE "A" সেলেজ পরীক্ষায় ফলাফল প্রাপ্ত হয়েছেন, অন্যান্য শর্তপূর্ণ সাপেক্ষে শুধুমাত্র ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবেন। যে সকল ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ইতোপূর্বে এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করেছেন অথবা অংশগ্রহণের যোগ্যতা অর্জন করেছেন তারা এই ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন না।

**১। ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের যোগ্যতা**

[ক] প্রার্থীকে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড/মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা বোর্ড/কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে প্রাপ্ত পদ্ধতিতে বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে (গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান ও রসায়নসহ) ৫.০০ এর ক্রেসে কমপক্ষে জিপিএ ৪.০০ পেয়ে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট/দাখিল/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় পাশ করতে হবে অথবা বিদেশী শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে সমমানের পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে সমতুল্য গ্রেড পেয়ে পাশ করতে হবে।

প্রার্থীকে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড/মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা বোর্ড/কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/আলীম/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন এই তিনটি বিষয়ে রেজিস্ট্রেশনসহ গ্রেড পদ্ধতিতে ৫.০০ এর ক্রেসে কমপক্ষে জিপিএ ৫.০০ এবং মাধ্যমিক/দাখিল/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন এই তিনটি বিষয়ে ৩০০ নম্বরের মধ্যে ন্যূনতম ২৭০ নম্বর পেয়ে মাধ্যমিক/দাখিল/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় পাশ করতে হবে অথবা বিদেশী শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে সমমানের পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে সমতুল্য গ্রেড/নম্বর পেয়ে পাশ করতে হবে।

যে সব প্রার্থী ২০১৭ সালে মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় এবং ২০১৯ সালে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন কিন্তু উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা তার সমমানের পরীক্ষায় তাদের সনোশিত ফলাফল ১০ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০১৯ তারিখের পরে শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে প্রকাশিত হয়েছেন, সে ক্ষেত্রে তাদেরকে মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড/মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা বোর্ড/কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন এই তিনটি বিষয়ে ৩০০ নম্বরের মধ্যে ন্যূনতম ৪৮০ নম্বর পেয়ে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/আলীম/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় পাশ করতে হবে অথবা বিদেশী শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে সমমানের পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে সমতুল্য গ্রেড/নম্বর পেয়ে পাশ করতে হবে।

সকল সঠিক আবেদনকারীর মধ্য হতে উপরে উল্লিখিত নির্বাচিত নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে বাছাই করে ১ম থেকে ২৪,০০০তম পর্যন্ত সকল আবেদনকারীকে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে দেয়া হবে। এই বাছাইয়ের জন্য যথাক্রমে আবেদনকারীর মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন বিষয় তিনটিতে প্রাপ্ত মোট নম্বর, গণিতে প্রাপ্ত নম্বর এবং পদার্থ বিজ্ঞানে প্রাপ্ত নম্বরের আধিকারের ক্রম হিসাবে বিবেচনা করা হবে।

[খ] GCE "O" সেলেজ এবং GCE "A" সেলেজ পাশ করা প্রার্থীদের প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য GCE "O" সেলেজ পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে পাঁচটি বিষয় (গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন এবং ইংরেজি) এর প্রতিটিতে কমপক্ষে B গ্রেড এবং GCE "A" সেলেজ পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন এই তিন বিষয়ের প্রতিটিতে কমপক্ষে A গ্রেড পেয়ে পাশ করতে হবে।

ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা পূর্ণ সাপেক্ষে GCE "O" সেলেজ এবং GCE "A" সেলেজ পরীক্ষার ফলাফল প্রাপ্ত সকল সঠিক আবেদনকারীকে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ দেয়া হবে।

[গ] ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা পূর্ণ সাপেক্ষে ক্ষুদ্র নৃ-গোষ্ঠীভুক্ত সকল সঠিক আবেদনকারীকে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ দেয়া হবে।

[ঘ] উপরোক্ত শর্তাবলী পূরণ সাপেক্ষে প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের চারটি শিফটে বিভক্ত করে পরীক্ষা দেয়া হবে। পরিসংখ্যানভিত্তিক পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করে প্রতিটি শিফটে প্রার্থীদের মেধার বিন্যাসের সমতুল্যতা নিশ্চিত করা হবে।

প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য বিবেচিত আবেদনকারীদের তালিকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নোটিশ বোর্ডে এবং ওয়েবসাইটে ([www.buet.ac.bd](http://www.buet.ac.bd))-এ প্রকাশ করা হবে।

[ঙ] প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষার ফলাফলের মোজাকম অনুসারে ১ম থেকে ৬০০০তম (প্রতি শিফটের ১ম থেকে ১৫০০তম) শিক্ষার্থীকে (মডিউল A এবং মডিউল B সহ) মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য নির্বাচিত করা হবে। মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য বিবেচিত আবেদনকারীদের তালিকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নোটিশ বোর্ডে এবং ওয়েবসাইটে ([www.buet.ac.bd](http://www.buet.ac.bd))-এ প্রকাশ করা হবে।

**২। আসন সংখ্যা**

পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম ও অন্যান্য এলাকার ক্ষুদ্র জাতি গোষ্ঠীভুক্ত প্রার্থীদের জন্য বিভাগসমূহ ও নগর ও অঞ্চল পরিকল্পনা বিভাগের জন্য মোট ৩টি এবং স্থাপত্য বিভাগে ১টি সংরক্ষিত আসনসহ সর্বমোট আসন সংখ্যা ১২১৫টি।

**৩। আবেদন করার নিয়ম**

আবেদন করার নিয়ম ভর্তির নির্দেশিকা (Guideline) বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে ([www.buet.ac.bd](http://www.buet.ac.bd))-এ পাওয়া যাবে। ওয়েবসাইটে প্রদত্ত নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক আবেদন ফরম যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করে তা অনলাইনে Submit করতে হবে। Submit করা শেষে একটি Application Serial No. প্রদান করা হবে এবং পরবর্তীতে এই নম্বরের বিপরীতে 'সোনালী ব্যাংক অনলাইন পোর্টাল', 'সোনালী ব্যাংক Sonali eSheba মোবাইল অ্যাপ', নগদ, রকেট, NexusPay, বা বিকাশ মোবাইল/অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে আবেদন ও ভর্তি পরীক্ষা বাদ দেয়া ফি জমা দিতে হবে। অতঃপর আবেদনটি চূড়ান্তভাবে দাখিল (Final Submit) করতে হবে। প্রতিটি ফরমের জন্য প্রদেয় ফি-এর পরিমাণ নীচের ছকে উল্লেখ করা হল:

| ক্রম | বিভাগ   | আবেদন, প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষা ও মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষা বাদ দেয়া ফি |
|------|---|---|
| "ক"  | প্রকৌশল বিভাগসমূহ এবং নগর ও অঞ্চল পরিকল্পনা বিভাগ                 | ৳ ১,০০০/-<br>(এক হাজার টাকা মাত্র)                              |
| "খ"  | প্রকৌশল বিভাগসমূহ, নগর ও অঞ্চল পরিকল্পনা বিভাগ এবং স্থাপত্য বিভাগ | ৳ ১,২০০/-<br>(এক হাজার দুইশত টাকা মাত্র)                        |

ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আবেদনের ফরম কেবলমাত্র অনলাইনে পূরণ করা যাবে এং আবেদন ফি 'সোনালী ব্যাংক অনলাইন পোর্টাল', 'সোনালী ব্যাংক Sonali eSheba মোবাইল অ্যাপ', নগদ, রকেট, NexusPay, বা বিকাশ মোবাইল/অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে প্রদানযোগ্য হবে। আবেদনের ফরম অনলাইনে পূরণ সক্রান্ত যে কোন সহযোগিতার জন্য এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের রেজিস্ট্রার অফিসের ভর্তি শাখায় জরুরি ব্যতীত যে কোন দিন যোগাযোগ করা যাবে।

**৪। আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ, ভর্তি পরীক্ষা ইত্যাদির তারিখ ও সময়সূচি**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| ১। অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও Submission শুরু   | ১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২১, বুধস্পতিবার, সকাল ১০:০০টা।   |
| ২। অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও Submission শেষ  | ২৪ এপ্রিল ২০২১, শনিবার, বিকাল ৩:০০টা।        |
| ৩। মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে আবেদন ফি প্রদান শেষ   | ২৪ এপ্রিল ২০২১, শনিবার, বিকাল ৩:০০টা।        |
| ৪। প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য আবেদনকারীদের নামের তালিকা প্রকাশের সর্বশেষ তারিখ | ৫ মে ২০২১, বুধবার।                           |
| ৫। প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষা  | ৩১ মে ২০২১, সোমবার এবং ১ জুন ২০২১, মঙ্গলবার। |
| ৩১ মে ২০২১, সোমবার  | সকাল ১০:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ১১:০০টা।             |
|   | বিকাল ৩:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ৪:০০টা।              |
| ১ জুন ২০২১, মঙ্গলবার  | সকাল ১০:০০টা থেকে সকাল ১১:০০টা।              |
|   | বিকাল ৩:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ৪:০০টা।              |

৬। মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য আবেদনকারীদের নামের তালিকা প্রকাশের সর্বশেষ তারিখ

৭। মূল ভর্তি পরীক্ষা

|         |                         |   |   |
|---------|-------------------------|---|---|
| মডিউল A | "ক" গ্রুপ এবং "খ" গ্রুপ | গণিত, পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান এবং রসায়ন   | ১০ জুন ২০২১, বুধস্পতিবার  |
| মডিউল B | "খ" গ্রুপ               | মুক্তহস্ত অঙ্কন (Freehand Drawing) এবং দৃষ্টিগত ও স্থানিক বীজ্ঞান (Visual-Spatial Intelligence) | সকাল ১০:০০টা থেকে দুপুর ১২:০০টা।<br>বিকাল ২:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ৩:৩০ মিনিট। |

৮। ভর্তির জন্য নির্বাচিত ও অপেক্ষমান প্রার্থীদের নামের তালিকা প্রকাশের সর্বশেষ তারিখ

ভর্তি-সক্রান্ত পরবর্তী কার্যক্রমের সময়সূচি BUET-এর নোটিশ বোর্ডে ও ওয়েবসাইটে যথাসময়ে জানানো হবে।

**বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্য**

- ২৪ এপ্রিল ২০২১, শনিবার, বিকাল ৩:০০ মিনিটের পর অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ আর শুরু করা যাবে না এবং এপ্রিলই বিকাল ৫:৩০ মিনিটে অনলাইনে আবেদনের সার্ভার বন্ধ হয়ে যাবে; এরপর অনলাইনে আর কোন আবেদনপত্র Submit করা যাবে না।
- প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় "ক" ও "খ" গ্রুপের জন্য মোট ১০০ নম্বরের MCQ Type পরীক্ষা অন্তর্ভুক্ত হবে।
- প্রাক-নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় নেগেটিভ মার্কিং করা হবে এবং প্রতিটি ভুল উত্তরের জন্য প্রাপ্ত নম্বর থেকে প্রশ্নের মানের ২% কেটে নেয়া হবে।
- OMR Sheet এ গু



# THE PRINCE BEHIND THE QUEEN

**REUTERS**  
A blunt-speaking naval officer who as Queen Elizabeth's dutiful consort helped modernise the British monarchy, Prince Philip might be best remembered for his gruff public persona.

Outspoken and irascible, Philip lived in the shadow of the woman he married at Westminster Abbey in 1947 and always walked a step behind the queen at the thousands of ceremonial events they attended during her reign, the longest in British history.

Though he had no official role, Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, was one of the most influential figures in the royal family for more than 70 years. He died aged 99 on Friday.

While Philip was often criticised for his demeanour and sometimes brusque remarks, friends said that as Queen Elizabeth II's closest confidant he brought wit, impatient intelligence and unflagging energy to the monarchy.

"He has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years," Elizabeth said in a rare personal tribute to Philip during a speech to mark their 50th wedding anniversary in 1997.

"I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim, or we shall ever know."

If Philip harboured frustration at his life as consort, he never publicly showed it.

Born in an age of deference to

monarchy, Philip helped Elizabeth navigate the political and social upheaval of the 20th century to craft a monarchy fit for a different time.

Often facing a deeply traditional court, he reformed the palace and tried to harness the growing power of television to project royal influence.

However, later in life Philip was criticised for impeding the monarchy's ability to adapt to the times, and detractors partly blamed his overbearing manner for his children's failure to produce happy families.



PRINCE PHILIP (1921-2021)

The couple had four children: Charles, Prince of Wales (born in 1948), Princess Anne (1950), Prince Andrew (1960) and Prince Edward (1964), three of whose marriages ended in divorce.

For Elizabeth, Philip was a supportive husband who courtiers



said was the only person to treat the monarch as a human being.

Despite rumours about his infidelity, the couple stayed together and in old age they clearly enjoyed an affection and regard for each other. They celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in November 2017.

However Philip, the son of the exiled Prince Andrew of Greece, a descendant of Elizabeth's great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria and his wife's third cousin, never quite won the hearts of all Britons.

Elizabeth was the sovereign, but in family matters it was Philip who was viewed as the head of the family.

Philippus Schleswig-Holstein Sonderburg-Glücksburg was born on a dining room table on the Greek island of Corfu on June 10, 1921, the fifth child and only son of Prince Andrew of Greece.

His parents went into exile when

he was 18 months old. They sailed from Corfu with the little boy sleeping in a cot made hurriedly from orange boxes.

Philip had British and German blood through his mother, a great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria. She was born Princess Alice of Battenberg and became a nun after drifting apart from her husband, who died virtually penniless in 1944.

Philip lived his early life on the move around Europe. It was a troubled childhood.

He was educated at Gordonstoun, where his son Prince Charles was later an unwilling pupil, and became a naturalised British citizen, looking and sounding every bit the English gentleman.

But to his detractors he remained "Phil the Greek".

Philip joined the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth as a cadet in

1939. He served in warships during World War Two, was mentioned in dispatches, took part in the Allied landings in Sicily and was in Tokyo Bay when Japan surrendered in 1945.

He and Elizabeth first met at the wedding of Philip's cousin in 1934. Five years later the dashing young sailor attracted the attention of his future wife when the then-princess was 13 and visited Dartmouth with her parents.

"The colour drained from her face and then she blushed. She stared at him and for the rest of the day followed him everywhere. She was in love from the beginning," the late Earl Mountbatten, Philip's uncle, recalled later.

They were married at Westminster Abbey on Nov. 20, 1947, in a ceremony attended by statesmen and royalty from around the world.

He continued his naval career until 1951, then took leave and devoted himself full-time to public duties when Elizabeth became queen a year later.

There was one place where he outshone his wife - on the Pacific island of Tanna in the Vanuatu group, where people believed he was a god with magical powers and the fount of all goodness.

Asked whether he felt he had been a success in his role, he gave a typically plegmatic response.

"I couldn't care less," he said. "Who cares what I think about it, I mean it's ridiculous."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Erdogan a 'dictator'

Turkey has condemned Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi for accusing Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of humiliating European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and calling him a "dictator". Von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel met Erdogan in Ankara on Tuesday. The Commission chief was clearly taken aback when the two men sat on the only two chairs prepared. Official images later showed her seated on a sofa opposite Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. "With these dictators, let's call them what they are - who however are needed - one must be honest in expressing one's diverging ideas and views about society," Draghi said. Turkey's Foreign Ministry on Thursday summoned the Italian ambassador to Ankara to condemn the remarks.

### Is Dubai princess alive?

The UN yesterday said it was "very concerned" for Dubai's Sheikhah Latifa, two months after having asked the United Arab Emirates for proof that the royal was still alive. In February, the United Nations Human Rights Office asked for evidence about the daughter of Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum after the BBC broadcast a video shot by Latifa saying she was being held captive and feared for her life. His 35-year-old daughter has not been seen in public since a foiled attempt to escape from the emirate in March 2018. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights spoke to the UAE's diplomatic mission in Geneva in a bid to obtain proof of life. "We are very concerned," spokeswoman Marta Hurtado told reporters in Geneva. "We haven't got any proof of life and we would like one, and one that is clear, compelling evidence that she is alive." Our first concern, of course, is to be sure of that: that she is still alive.

### US warships in Black Sea

The United States will send two warships through the Bosphorus to the Black Sea, the Turkish foreign ministry said yesterday, as tensions simmer between Russia and Ukraine. The ships will stay in the region until May 4, the foreign ministry said in a statement. Turkish media said the warships will enter the Black Sea next week. The latest warship deployment comes after Russia sent military reinforcements to both the eastern Ukrainian border and Crimea. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Thursday that the number of Russian troops at the border with Ukraine was now greater "than at any time since 2014".

### Thunberg to skip COP26

Swedish climate campaigner Greta Thunberg yesterday said she plans to skip the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow this November, saying the uneven rollout of Covid-19 vaccine campaigns would mean countries could not participate on even terms. The 18-year-old activist deplored that by November richer countries would be vaccinating young healthy people "very often at the expense of people in risk groups in other parts of the world." "With the extremely inequitable vaccine distribution I will not attend the COP26 conference if the development continues as it is now," Thunberg told AFP in an interview. Thunberg, confirming a BBC report, said the conference should be postponed "if everyone could not attend in the same terms."

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

## PRINCE PHILIP

### 3 FORGOTTEN FACTS

#### SACRIFICES FOR A PRINCESS

Philip, born in 1921 on the Greek island of Corfu where he lived until he was 18 months old, made major sacrifices to marry Princess Elizabeth in 1947. He had to renounce his title of Prince of Greece and Denmark to take up British nationality, in return becoming Duke of Edinburgh just before his marriage, and Prince of the United Kingdom in 1957. Philip also had to give up active duty as a naval commander after his wife was brought to the throne on the death of her father, King George VI, in 1952. He was obliged to convert from Greek Orthodoxy to Anglicanism to marry, and reportedly stopped smoking just before the wedding to please his bride.

#### 'ROUGH, ILL-MANNERED'

Queen Elizabeth II described the Duke of Edinburgh as her "strength and stay". But when she fell for him, the Royal Family was reportedly less than convinced. One insider told journalists the royals felt that the young navy officer was "rough, ill-mannered, uneducated and would probably not be faithful". The elite in the post-World War II era were in particular uncomfortable with his German relations. His sisters - married to German aristocrats - were not invited to the wedding.

#### PAINTER

Philip was well-known for his love of horses and the equestrian activities of polo and carriage driving, a sport in which he competed for Britain. He is also a writer and a pilot. However, the prince's passion for painting was more private. Perhaps his most famous work is a 1965 image showing his wife at breakfast reading the morning papers and titled: "The Queen at Breakfast, Windsor Castle".



A mourner holds flowers and pictures of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Prince Philip outside Buckingham Palace, after Prince Philip died at the age of 99, in London, Britain, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# No data yet on changing jabs between doses: WHO

AFP, Geneva

The WHO reiterated yesterday there was "no adequate data" on switching Covid-19 vaccines between doses, after France said under-55s who received an AstraZeneca first jab should get their second from a different vaccine.

The World Health Organization has called for studies on so-called mixing and matching between vaccines, but said there was no comprehensive data so far on which it could make any recommendations.

The UN health agency therefore recommends that the same product should be used for both doses.

In February, the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) issued its recommendations on how the

AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine should be used. WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris told reporters.

"There is not adequate data to be able to say whether this is something that could be done," she said.

Several clinical trials are looking at the efficacy of combining two types of vaccine. Europe's medicines regulator said this week that the AstraZeneca vaccine could cause very rare blood clots among some recipients, prompting several countries to scale up restrictions on the jab.

France yesterday said under-55s who received a first injection of the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine should be given a jab from a different producer for their second dose, in a ruling affecting 533,000 people.

## GLOBAL WARMING

# 300 biodiversity 'hot spots' set to be ravaged

AFP, Paris

Unless nations dramatically improve on carbon cutting pledges made under the 2015 Paris climate treaty, the planet's richest concentrations of animal and plant life will be irreversibly ravaged by global warming, scientists warned yesterday.

An analysis of 8,000 published risk assessments for species showed a high danger for extinction in nearly 300 biodiversity "hot spots", on land and in the sea, if temperatures rise three degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, they reported in the journal Biological Conservation.

Earth's surface has heated up 1C so far, and the Paris Agreement enjoins nations to cap warming at "well below" 2C, and 1.5C if possible.

National commitments to slash greenhouse gas emissions -- assuming they are honoured -- would still see temperatures soar well above 3C by century's end, if not sooner.

So-called endemic species -- plants and animals found exclusively in a specific area -- will be hit hardest in a warming world.

From snow leopards in the Himalayas and the vaquita porpoise in the Gulf of California to lemurs in Madagascar and forest elephants in central Africa, many of the planet's most cherished creatures will wind up on a path to extinction unless humanity stops loading the atmosphere with CO2 and methane, the study found.

Endemic land species in biodiverse hot spots are nearly three times as likely to suffer losses due to climate change than more widespread flora and fauna, and 10 times more likely than invasive species.

"Climate change threatens areas overflowing with species that cannot be found anywhere else in the world," said lead author Stella Manes, a researcher at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

"The risk for such species to be lost forever increases more than 10-fold if we miss the goals of the Paris Agreement."

More and more scientists concede that capping global warming at 1.5C target is probably out of reach. But every tenth of a degree matters when it comes to avoiding impacts, they say. Some concentrations of wildlife are more vulnerable than others.

| Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  |  |   |                                      |                              |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| College Education Development Project (CEDP)   |  |   |                                      |                              |
| Nilphamari Govt. College Nilphamari  |  |   |                                      |                              |
| Sadar, Nilphamari  |  |   |                                      |                              |
| Invitation for Tenders   |  |   |                                      |                              |
| 1  | Ministry/Division  | Ministry of Education   |                                      |                              |
| 2  | Agency   | University Grants Commission/National University  |                                      |                              |
| 3  | Procuring Entity Name  | Principal, Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari   |                                      |                              |
| 4  | Procuring Entity Code  | N/A   |                                      |                              |
| 5  | Procuring Entity District  | Nilphamari  |                                      |                              |
| 6  | Invitation for   | Procurement of Books and Journals for Library & Class   |                                      |                              |
| 7  | Invitation Ref No  | NGC/CEDP/OTM/02/2020-21   |                                      |                              |
| 8  | Date   | 08-04-2021  |                                      |                              |
| <b>KEY INFORMATION</b>   |  |   |                                      |                              |
| 9  | Procurement Method   | Open Tendering Method (National)  |                                      |                              |
| <b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>   |  |   |                                      |                              |
| 10   | Budget and Source of Funds   | Development Budget (Government & IDA Credit)  |                                      |                              |
| 11   | Development Partners   | International Development Association (IDA), World Bank   |                                      |                              |
| <b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>  |  |   |                                      |                              |
| 12   | Project Code   | 224017200   |                                      |                              |
| 13   | Project Name   | College Education Development Project (CEDP)  |                                      |                              |
| 14   | Tender Package No.   | G-7   |                                      |                              |
| 15   | Tender Package Name  | Procurement of Books and Journals for Library & Class   |                                      |                              |
| 16   | Tender Publication Date  | 10-04-2021  |                                      |                              |
| 17   | Tender Last Selling Date   | 25-04-2021 at 02:00pm   |                                      |                              |
| 18   | Tender Closing Date and Time   | 28-04-2021 at 02:00pm   |                                      |                              |
| 19   | Tender Opening Date and Time   | 28-04-2021 at 02:30pm   |                                      |                              |
| 20   | Name & Address of the Office   | Office of the Principal, Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari   |                                      |                              |
| 21   | Selling Tender Document  |   |                                      |                              |
| 22   | Receiving Tender Document  |   |                                      |                              |
| 23   | Opening Tender Document  |   |                                      |                              |
| 24   | Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting  | Will not be held  |                                      |                              |
| <b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>  |  |   |                                      |                              |
| 25   | Eligibility of Tenderer  | 1. The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 03 Years overall experience in the Supply of Books and Journals.<br>2. The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of Books and Journals of at least 01 (one) contract successfully completed within the last 5 years with a value of at least Tk. 8,00 Lac.<br>3. The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of the tenderer shall be Tk. 8,00 Lac.<br>4. Other criteria mentioned in the tender document. |                                      |                              |
| 23   | Brief Description of Goods or Works  | Procurement of Books and Journals for Library & Class   |                                      |                              |
| 24   | Brief Description of Related Services  | Mentioned in tender document.   |                                      |                              |
| 25   | Tender Document Price  | Tk. 1,000.00  |                                      |                              |
| 26   | Package No.  | Identification of Lot   | Location                             | Tender Security Amount (Tk.) |
| 26   | G-7  | Procurement of Books and Journals for Library & Class   | Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari | 20,000.00                    |
| 27   | Name of Official Inviting Tender   | Professor Md. Didarul Islam   |                                      |                              |
| 28   | Designation of Official Inviting Tender  | Principal, Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari   |                                      |                              |
| 29   | Address of Official Inviting Tender  | Principal, Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari   |                                      |                              |
| 30   | Contact Details of Official Inviting Tender  | Telephone No: 055161510. Mobile: 01733390703<br>E-mail: principalmigo@yahoo.com   |                                      |                              |
| 31   | The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. |   |                                      |                              |
| <b>Professor Md. Didarul Islam</b><br>(ID No-5296)<br>Principal & IDG Manager<br>Nilphamari Govt. College, Nilphamari. |  |   |                                      |                              |

## Seven killed in J&K separatist clashes

AFP, Srinagar

Indian security forces killed seven suspected rebels in two clashes as disputed Kashmir saw some of its worst fighting in over seven months, police said yesterday.

Five militants were killed in the southern town of Shopian during one shootout that started Thursday, triggering anti-India protests in the area.

Officers sent the brother of one of the two into the mosque in a bid to persuade them to "surrender" but they refused, police said.

"The five militants killed in the encounter include the chief of Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind," a police officer told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Police had previously said that Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, one of a host of militant groups fighting Indian rule, was wiped out last year.

Two other suspected rebels were killed in a separate gun battle in the Tral area of southern Kashmir, police said.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**

**কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট**

কে.এস.আর টাওয়ার, বোরহান উদ্দিন রোড, মেদিনিবাগ পয়েন্ট, সিলেট  
Website: [www.sylhetcustoms-vat.gov.bd](http://www.sylhetcustoms-vat.gov.bd)

**“চুক্তিভিত্তিক ০৪ (চার)টি মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়া গ্রহণের দরপত্র পুনঃবিজ্ঞপ্তি”**

এ দপ্তরের মূল্য সংযোজন কর ও সম্পূর্ণক শুদ্ধ আদায়, চোরালান প্রতিরোধ, অডিট ও প্রিজেক্টিভ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার মাধ্যমে রাজস্ব আহরণ বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে চুক্তিভিত্তিক ০৪ (চার)টি মাইক্রোবাস মাসিক ভাড়ার ভিত্তিতে ভাড়া গ্রহণের নিমিত্ত সীলগালাকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| ১  | মঞ্জুরায়/বিভাগ                        | অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ।   |
| ২  | দপ্তর/সংস্থা                           | কাস্টমস এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট।   |
| ৩  | দরপত্র সংগ্রহকারী সংস্থার নাম ও ঠিকানা | কাস্টমস এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট।<br>কে.এস.আর. টাওয়ার, মেদিনিবাগ পয়েন্ট, উপশাখা, সিলেট।   |
| ৪  | দরপত্রের পত্র নম্বর                    | ০৮.০১.০০০০.২০৫.০১.০২৮.২০/২৯০ তাং ৪-২১/০১/২০২১।  |
| ৫  | দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ                  | ১০/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ   |
| ৬  | দরপত্র সংগ্রহকারী দপ্তর/সংস্থার কোড    | ১-১১০২০৪-১০২০২৪   |
| ৭  | দরপত্র আহ্বানের কারণ                   | মূল্য সংযোজন কর ও সম্পূর্ণক শুদ্ধ আহরণ, চোরালান প্রতিরোধ, অডিট ও প্রিজেক্টিভ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার মাধ্যমে রাজস্ব আহরণ বৃদ্ধি।  |
| ৮  | দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি                        | উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)।   |
| ৯  | অর্থের উৎস                             | অর্থনৈতিক কোড- “৩২১১০৭-যানবাহন ব্যবহার (চুক্তিভিত্তিক)” উপধাতে প্রাপ্ত বরাদ্দ।  |
| ১০ | ভাড়া পরিশোধ পদ্ধতি                    | মাসিক ভিত্তিতে উপস্থাপিত বিলের অনুমোদন সাপেক্ষে ট্রেজারী অফিস কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত চেকের মাধ্যমে।   |
| ১১ | সিডিউলের মূল্য                         | প্রতিটি ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য), যা ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে অর্থনৈতিক কোড নং-১-১১০৩-০০১৮-২৬৮১ তে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, প্রতিটি লটারি জন্য পৃথক পৃথক সিডিউল (দরপত্র দলিলা) ক্রয় করতে হবে। |
| ১২ | সিডিউল বিক্রির স্থান ও সময়            | প্রধান হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা (৪র্থ তলা), কাস্টমস এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট। বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের দিন হতে প্রতিদিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়।   |
| ১৩ | সিডিউল বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়        | ১৮/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ০৫:০০ ঘটিকা।  |
| ১৪ | দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান, তারিখ ও শেষ সময় | কাস্টমস এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট এর ৪র্থ তলায় রক্ষিত বক্স।<br>২১/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখ সকাল ১১:০০ ঘটিকা।  |
| ১৫ | দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়              | ২১/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১১:৩০ ঘটিকা।  |
| ১৬ | দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন পদ্ধতি                | দরপত্র সিডিউলে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন, ২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ এর বিধান অনুযায়ী।  |
| ১৭ | গাড়ির সংখ্যা, ধরন ও মডেল              | ০৪ (চার)টি মাইক্রোবাস; ন্যূনতম ০৮ (আট) আসন/সিট ও ০৪ (চার) দরজা বিশিষ্ট সিএনজি/ফুয়েলসালিত লো-ফ্লোর টিপটপ কন্ডিশনের ডুয়েল এসি (২০১১ সালের পূর্বে নয় এবং ইঞ্জিন ক্যাপাসিটি ১৮০০ সিসির নিম্নে নয়)।              |

| কাস্টমস এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট |   |   |                                   |   |   |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| লট নং                                    | মাইক্রোবাসের সংখ্যা                                       | দরপত্রজামানত (কেফেরতযোগ্য)  | মাইক্রোবাস ব্যবহারের স্থান        | বায় বহনকারী                            | মন্তব্য   |
| ১  | ১ (একটি)  | ১২,৫০০/- টাকা   | সদর দপ্তর, সিলেট।                 | চালকের মজুরী, জ্বালানী                  | প্রতিটি লটারি জন্য আলাদাভাবে দরপত্র দাখিল এবং মূল্যায়ন কার্যক্রম সম্পাদন করা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ এই কমিশনারেটের অধিক্ষেত্রে যেকোন স্থানে প্রয়োজন মতো গাড়ি ব্যবহার করতে পারবেন এবং এজন্য আলাদা কোন বরাদ্দ প্রদান করা হবে না। |
| ২  | ১ (একটি)  | ১২,৫০০/- টাকা   | আবপারী ও ভ্যাট বিভাগ, হরিণগঞ্জ।   | সংশ্লিষ্ট                               |   |
| ৩  | ১ (একটি)  | ১২,৫০০/- টাকা   | আবপারী ও ভ্যাট বিভাগ, মৌলভীবাজার। | অন্যান্য                                |   |
| ৪  | ১ (একটি)  | ১২,৫০০/- টাকা   | আবপারী ও ভ্যাট বিভাগ, সুনামগঞ্জ।  | প্রদানকারী/গাড়ির মালিক পক্ষ বহন করবেন। |   |
| ১৯                                       | দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা, ফোন নম্বর ও ই-মেইল | জনাব মোহাম্মদ আহসানুল হক, কমিশনার, কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট।<br>টেলিফোনঃ ০৮২১-৭২৭৩৯৭, ই-মেইল- <a href="mailto:sylhetcustoms@yahoo.com">sylhetcustoms@yahoo.com</a> |                                   |   |   |
| ২০                                       | শর্তাবলী  | দরপত্র দাখিলের যোগ্যতা, প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র ও দরপত্র সংশ্লিষ্ট বিস্তারিত বিবরণ ও শর্তাবলী সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে।  |                                   |   |   |
| ২১                                       | মন্তব্য   | কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।   |                                   |   |   |

**মোহাম্মদ সফিউর রহমান**  
অতিরিক্ত কমিশনার  
কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, সিলেট  
(কমিশনারের পক্ষে)

জিডি-৭১৪



# SHOOTING DURING LOCKDOWN

## The directors' perspective

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Since the lockdown started from April 5, the woes of the entertainment industry have become more apparent, especially with Eid Ul Fitr just around the corner. We spoke to noted directors and leaders of Directors' Guild and Actors' Equity Bangladesh to learn about their views on fighting this crisis.

Directors' Guild Bangladesh is allowing shoots from 6 am to 6 pm during this lockdown.

"Around 5,000 individuals work behind the camera during a shoot. Stopping shoots would mean putting them out of work," says noted actor and director Salauddin Lavlu, President of the guild. "Last time, we all had to work together to ensure that these workers are financially supported, but all of us were quite inactive in the past year. As a result, we are struggling to meet even our own needs."

Directors' Guild Bangladesh has sent out messages to their members, asking them to follow the government's rules for safety, if they decide to shoot. Nevertheless, this decision can change at any minute, and



ILLUSTRATION: OISHIK JAWAD

shoots will be stopped if the condition worsens.

"Artists who stay in front of the camera have to take off their masks, as per the demands of a scene. For them, physical distancing is not possible. We should not

take these things lightly, if we want to stop the spread of Covid-19. A complete lockdown is the best solution right now," shared Shahiduzzaman Selim, President, Actors' Equity Bangladesh.

While many shows are currently in

production and need to complete shooting, director Amitabh Reza Chowdhury has stopped his shoots entirely until further notice. "I have been working with many senior artistes, and I did not want to take any risks," he shares. Chowdhury will

resume shooting only when the situation improves, and he can return to work in full swing. "Munshigiri, my project for Chorki, is already in post-production and I hope that we will be able to complete the work in due time," he adds.

It appears that the world of television has turned upside down, much like last year.

"I had started shooting for my four Eid projects. However, we have cancelled all the schedules until next week," says noted director Sanjoy Somadder. "I was hoping to resume shooting from April 20, but I have two children, both of whom are aged below three. I am worried about putting them in danger if I chose to step outside for long hours."

Nevertheless, he plans to have three new releases for Eid Ul-Fitr, including the web film "Omanush", and the tele-fictions "Namkaran" and "Anti-Hero".

"We have to compromise a lot if we have to shoot from 6 am to 6 pm," assets director Mizanur Rahman Aryan. His upcoming projects include two tele-fictions and two short films for Eid, and one commercial. "What worries me is being able to deliver quality work, while adjusting to the precautions," he adds.

Noted director Ashfaque Nipun shared a similar take. "We only get the funds about a couple of months before Eid for our productions. We have to organise night shoots for nearly every project, depending on the demands of the scripts. It is very difficult to work in such fixed hours," he says. "There has not been any proper directives from the government for our industry. As our way of working is different, we need our leaders to work together, and come up with instructions that will solve our problems and help us overcome the odds."

## Art world adjusts to lockdown cautiously

SADIA TAHSIN &amp; JAHANARA TARIQ

With spiralling Covid-19 cases, the government of Bangladesh announced a seven-day countrywide lockdown, starting from April 5. Art galleries and event spaces are monitoring the situation strictly. While most of them have postponed their public programmes, others have chosen to operate cautiously.

"Flowing & Static", a group exhibition featuring the works of twelve artists, is underway at Galleri Kaya, Uttara. Initially, the exhibition was supposed to take place from April 2 to 16. Owing to the current circumstances, the event's timeline has been extended to May 7, and its amended visiting hours are now from 11 am to 4 pm. "We have strict policies in place for crowd management, following safety protocols. We are not allowing more than ten visitors inside the venue at a time," said Goutam Chakraborty, Director, Galleri Kaya. "The exhibition catalogue is available online, and we are using social media to communicate with interested clients."

Artworks presented in "Flowing & Static" are mainly still-life, capturing the alluring beauty of floral depiction through the use of watercolor, pastel, charcoal, acrylic and mixed media, contained through canvas and paper. The participating artists are: Samarjit Roy Choudhury, Hashem Khan, Hamiduzzaman Khan, Abdus Shakoor Shah, Iffat Ara Dewan, Ranjit Das, Sheikh Afzal Hossain, Aloptogin Tushar, Anisuzzaman, Monidipa Dasgupta, Shohag Parvez and Shahanoor Mamun.

The group exhibition, "Dui" took place simultaneously at Dwp Gallery and Studio 6/6 from March 20 to April 3. As a part of the exhibition, an "art bazar" was held from April 1 to 3. Taiara Farhana Tareque, Co-Founder of Studio 6/6, shared that they were planning to continue the "art bazar" for longer, but for now, they have postponed all public events. However, they

will be arranging individual appointments with art buyers upon special requests, maintaining all safety guidelines. People can also reach out to them online.

Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, in partnership with Kala Kendra, began the exhibition, "Futures beyond the Self", featuring eleven multidisciplinary artists, from March 10 at Kala Kendra, Mohammadpur. The exhibition, which was supposed to continue till April 8, was shut down. Goethe-Institut Bangladesh's Programme Coordinator Khandaker Md Mahmud Hassan said that they will move forward with their virtual film events, if the lockdown is extended.

"Colors of Tradition", a duet exhibition by artists Abdus Shakoor and Shambhu Acharya, started on April 3 at Edge Gallery, Gulshan 2. Though originally recognised as a modern artist, Shakoor takes a shift from this vein to explore a distinctly Bangla folk imagery for this exhibition. His pieces, alongside the traditional Potchitras done by Acharya, complement each other marvelously.

Edge Gallery's Manager Md Abu Soyeb mentioned that they have been taking precautions in regards to the pandemic, such as measuring temperatures of visitors before they enter the building, providing hand sanitisers in both liquid and gel forms, and distributing face masks upon requests. Furthermore, only ten guests are allowed inside the gallery at a time, and as the space itself is over 3,000 sqft, people can maintain physical distance easily. Yet, as Covid-19 cases are on the rise again, visitors are quite low in number. "Colors of Tradition" is also available for viewers on Edge Gallery's website. It will conclude on April 23.

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'Futures beyond the Self', which was supposed to continue till April 8, was shut down due to the ongoing lockdown.

PHOTOS: STAR &amp; COLLECTED

## Is the lockdown another death sentence for cinema halls?



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Cinema Hall owners have always talked about how the heydays are long gone, and how they now struggle to operate amidst a dwindling number of cinemagoers. However, the Covid-19 pandemic brought upon a new low in the already struggling industry.

The scenario today would have been unthinkable at the time when going to cinema halls was a special occasion for families, groups of friends and individuals – excited for the next release by Nayak Raj Razzak, Farooque, Babita and Salman Shah. At one time, "Beder Meye Jochona" ran in cinema halls for years, so did "Noyon Moni".

Even a decade ago, "Monpura" brought hope that things would get better. Another Chanchal Chowdhury gem, "Aynabaji" was also indicative of change a few years ago.

Unfortunately, the pandemic and the renewed lockdown has left things looking dire.

"No one will understand the pain that we are going through", says Mia Alauddin, the Vice President of Bangladesh Film Distributors' Association. Mia is also the owner of Narayanganj's Sathi Cinema Hall. "We

are struggling to merely survive."

The association had a meeting with government officials last July, and had received some monetary help. "Thanks to our honourable Prime Minister, we were able to give BDT 2500 to 5 staff members of each halls during that time. However, this lockdown means we will face tough times again", says Alauddin, who says that not even 50 percent of the pre-pandemic audience show up to theatres now.

"We have kept the halls closed for now, even though we did not receive a formal notice to close down. We simply cannot keep up with the losses. However, the 11 workers in my Hall are still getting their pay."

Some cinema halls, which were supposed to open after the first wave of Covid, did not see the light of opening at all – among which renowned theatres like Jonaki, Madhumita and Balaka also make the list.

One of Dhaka's oldest theatres is Azad Cinema Hall, which has stood its ground for 91 years. However, it is like a light that is about to extinguish. "I do not really know how much longer we will survive," says Paritosh Roy, the accountant of Azad Cinema Hall. He has spent the majority of his life in

this establishment. "We have tried to display old films to curb our losses, but it did not help much".

Madhumita Hall has been a landmark establishment in Bangladeshi Cinema, with many in the industry having fond memories of going to see films there. However, it is also on life support. "For how long will I have to pay the staff out of my own pocket?", says Iftekhar Uddin Nowshad, the owner of Madhumita. "We will note the situation until Eid, after which we might have to take a tough decision," he says.

Mesbah Uddin, the manager of Star Cineplex, says that actions have to be taken quickly to save Bangladeshi halls. "The experience of going to a hall and watching a movie is incomparable. However, if we cannot save our halls during these dire times, there might not be any cinema halls left to visit."

Like all sectors, arguably even more troubled is the state of Bangladeshi cinema halls during the pandemic. An intervention from the government is surely needed to save them from extinction.

Translated by Sadi Mohammad Shahnewaz





## Country to go for Mockdowns, not lockdowns

MAHBUB ALAM MUNNA

Is it the third wave of the pandemic or the second? While that question is up for debate, there's no question that Chapasthan, popularly known as Singapore and the America of the east, has been witnessing its second country-wide lockdown.

This time people are in a huge confusion regarding the word 'lockdown' as things seem to be open from morning till dusk.

A group of conscious people has checked the word in the Oxford dictionary and tried to match the meaning with the current circumstances of Chapasthan.

Under the current lockdown, the

people of Chapasthan are bound to go to their workplace where they produce wheat and milk to earn their bread and butter. Of course, that's a great strategy, undertaken by the emperors of Chapasthan, to keep pace with the American economy.

Furthermore, the country, which sees high emissions of methane, are gearing their new safety measures to benefit people's health. "Our government is saving non-renewable energy by keeping public transports static. Maybe we are moving on foot, but it's also a great move for our health," Shukkur Ali, a daily public bus commuter, said while asked about this 'Mockdown'.

The country recently also challenged

its people to go to their workplace without using any vehicles. One of the emperors of Chapasthan gave this scientific explanation. "We try to make people more creative and innovative. When they do not get any vehicle to reach their destinations, they will think about alternatives. This will bring innovation and they may invent a new way of safe transport just like how the airplane was invented," he said.

But the country has also been cautious so its citizens aren't bored during the mockdown, with many entertainment options kept open.

The bookfair seems to be a corona-free place where you may go without mask or any antiseptic. Insiders say

that Chapasthan and Covid-90 have agreed a term that Covid-90 will not affect any human being who comes to the fair to buy books without taking any selfies or making romanticised posts about our love for books and the permanence of those.

Elsewhere, some shops are open and some aren't. "My shop took the vaccine! I registered it as 41-years-old. How could a vaccinated shop spread Coronavirus among its customers?" a shop-keeper asked.

People are gathering here and there. Some come on the road to see how it looks during lockdown. The mask lost its previous place and seems to be in a long-distance relationship with

the nose. Social distancing seems to be a socially awkward activity. People give a surprised look to anybody who suggests to maintain social distancing in public. One of the country's Facebook celebrities posted, "This is a unique style of lockdown. The developed countries should learn from us. We restrict people's movement and keep places open. That's how we balance two sides. Especially, I believe in lockdown of the mind. The lockdown of mind is the biggest lockdown. Every day I go to market, park, shopping malls, tea stalls but believe that everything, including me, is in lockdown. I love this doctrine. Do you?"

## Covid vaccine linked with risk of Mark-cysts

AHMED ADIB

Conspiracy theorists in our country have long known that the SARS CoV-2 virus which causes COVID-19, was lab-manufactured.

Now their research shows that the new mutation causing our recent surge in infection, was also lab-manufactured. They posit that this new variant is of foreign-origin, and was scattered here recently by some foreign heads of state and government, who during their respiratory cycles, were 'exhaling with an agenda'.

The current vaccine - which (and here conspiracy theorists are in concord with the scientific community) is also lab-manufactured (but which this renders it suspect) - is still thought by manufacturers to provide some protection against new mutations.

The global concern, however, is that some reports hint that this vaccine may raise the odds of developing a type of cyst in the body's nervous system, called mark-cyst.

Mark-cysts are nothing new and have caused tribulation and trepidation abroad in the past. But scientists here are not too worried, and say that in our local context, these are mostly benign. Past clinical observational studies in the country have shown mark-cysts to be quite inert. Some environmental factors are thought to be the reason. A simplified explanation



of some technical terms and processes is given by the scientific community, for which we need a brief detour. A cyst is a cluster of cells. Cells of the nervous system are called nerve cells or neurons, which carry electrochemical signals. Signals are transmitted between nerve cells via chemical messengers, called neurotransmitters. For the neurotransmitter to successfully transmit the message, it must activate a 'receptor' at the border

of the next cell.

Some chemical structures (such as that of nicotine), mimic other essential neurotransmitters, hence are able to successfully activate those receptors, and transmit the message throughout the nervous system.

Now returning to mark-cysts in the local context: the chemicals in their cells, seen primarily as of foreign-origin, cannot successfully mimic other necessary chemicals recognised

by the receptors. Hence, the message is not transmitted.

Unlike that, however, a new substance provisionally called mist, is thought by some to have potential for successfully mimicking essential neurotransmitters, for reasons outside the scope of this peer-reviewed newspaper article. The matter is explored in DoYourResearch (2015) and Don'tFeedYourConfirmationBias (2017).

## Morally upstanding preacher loves wife so much, he wants two of them

OSAMA RAHMAN

A morally upstanding preacher, who made a name for himself by spewing violent vitriol against more liberal members of his community on a daily basis, yesterday disclosed to the media that he had a side-wife as well.

"You all talk about side-chicks, but if you were imbued with the spirituality of the other worlds, you would only talk about side-wives," The Great Wizard Master Arjeesh Shakil said at a press conference.

"But of course not all of you can do it. See, I love my first wife so much, I kept my second wife a secret from her. But of course, the Sol knows everything so nothing is really a secret if you think about it," he said while engaging in some of the most well-articulated mental gymnastics ever seen.

The Great Wizard took the time to guide his followers on how to have two wives and also the why. "Women need to be protected. They are like rose petals and we are the plant. Which rose has only one petal? I say, which rose only has one petal? Repeat after me, *women are such beautiful petals, only a man with the right mettle, can mould her into what he seeks, you can say women are like hot metal,*" he said and sang at the same time.

Among those present, a lot of them repeated the Great Wizard's words in a peaceful hum, with just an undercurrent of violence.

"We must protect our women. And for



that we must shield their eyes from what they see. Don't let your eye fall upon evil, lest it becomes a part of you, it was said. WE MUST SHIELD THEIR EYES!" he exclaimed.

"And how can you do that without marrying them? If you don't marry them, they belong to everyone else. Eyes will be more tempted than ever!"

"Let's all stop talking about polygamy. Polygyny is the only way forward. Keep your enemies close, but your secret and non-secret wives closer," he said.

"Let us all conduct ourselves with peace. For peace is the best course of options. And those that don't adhere to peace? OFF WITH THEIR HEADS!" he said to loud murmurs of appreciation and support.



# The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR  
LATE S. M. ALI

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## Poor people ravaged by pandemic fallout

*Govt must prioritise marginalised groups in recovery plans*

THERE has never been any doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic would reinforce economic inequalities in the country as the poor, marginalised groups would be disproportionately affected. Now a new study, released on Thursday, shows that not only has that been the case, but also government aid packages, meant to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, didn't reach most of their intended beneficiaries either. The study corroborates the findings of earlier case studies in this regard. Importantly, it offers disaggregated data on different indicators of financial hardship based on the surveys of 10 marginalised groups—including people from chars, haors, coastal and slum areas; Dalits; indigenous people; people with disabilities; micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs; and returned migrant workers. The results show how these people had to endure income loss, reduce food consumption, reach for their savings and take out loans to cope with the pandemic fallout, despite the government's promise of help.

For example, the study says, only 37 percent of the surveyed marginalised households received government support. It also says that about 79 percent of the households experienced financial hardship during the Covid-19 pandemic. Of them, only 21.5 percent—or a little over one in five households—managed to recover, taking an average of five months to do so; the remaining 78.5 percent are expected to take an average of 13 months to recover. Four out of five households cut down expenses on food, while 64.5 percent of households cut down non-food expenses. The study further said that 20.8 percent of households had to use their savings and 47.9 percent had to take out loans, mostly between April and May last year. Also, at least one member of 70 percent of the households lost their jobs or had to shut down businesses.

These figures are quite alarming, if not shocking, given the government's persistently poor response to this pandemic since its beginning. The poor and marginalised have not only suffered massive financial hardship and saw what little savings they had used up, they are also staring down the barrel of what can be a very painful and protracted debt trap. The ill-planned lockdown imposed recently will only add to their woes. The situation calls for a critical rethinking of the government's strategy for the poor during the pandemic. The government must roll out new financial incentives and food aid programmes for the marginalised groups, ensuring they reach their beneficiaries this time. With the budget season nearing, it should also chalk out specific and expanded allocations under the Social Safety Net programmes. Experts have also suggested forming a mid-term national plan connecting local administrations and NGOs to remedy the situation. What the authorities need to understand is that their business-as-usual approach didn't help before. Neither will it help this time around.

## Frontline health workers should be paid urgently

*Govt must keep its promise*

RIGHT after the coronavirus pandemic started, many healthcare professionals, mostly from public hospitals, started to live at different hotels to protect their families from possible Covid-19 infections. Later, the government turned some of its training centres into accommodation facilities for Covid-19 healthcare providers and also, declared that those who will not be able to avail these facilities will start receiving daily allowances to cover their additional living costs from July 1, 2020. Unfortunately, a report published by The Daily Star on April 8, 2021 shows that the majority of the public healthcare workers, who have been battling the deadly virus from the frontlines, are yet to receive their due incentives.

According to the Covid-19 guidelines, healthcare providers will have to treat their patients for 15 days a month and then remain in quarantine for the next 15 days. Keeping this in mind, the government issued a circular stating that doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff in the capital's public hospitals will receive Tk 2,000, Tk 1,200 and Tk 800, respectively, as daily allowances for the period during which they will stay in quarantine, while the doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff working outside of Dhaka will receive Tk 1,800, Tk 1,000 and Tk 650, respectively. While the total number of healthcare professionals providing Covid-19 treatment at public hospitals across the country is at 23,285 (according to a DS report on November 29, 2020), the aforementioned report mentions that only 1,800 of them from 14 hospitals are receiving the monetary assistance at this moment.

We urge the government to uphold its promise to the frontline medical practitioners in the battle against Covid-19 and to make sure that the incentives reach all of them as soon as possible. With the ongoing surge in both infection and death rates, keeping up the morale of the healthcare professionals is essential, and these incentives will definitely help in doing that.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### We must contain the virus

The negligence being displayed by people when it comes to maintaining social distancing in public places is disappointing. Despite the new wave of the virus hitting the country hard, most people seem not to be taking it seriously.

We must contain the spread of the virus as soon as possible, before things take a turn for the worse. In that regard, the authorities must strictly enforce the health guidelines and people must be made aware of the dangers of not complying with them.

Shanto Islam, Rupnagar, Mirpur

# The Colours of Life

BLOWN' IN THE WIND



SHAMSAD MORTUZA

THE cargo vessel involved in a hit and run incident in Narayanganj on Sunday, leading to the capsizing of a passenger launch that killed at least 34 people, was seized at a dock in Gazaria, Munshiganj. Three days after the incident, the Coast Guard there found the vessel anchored near its station and handed it over to the River Police. The vessel, however, by that time had changed its colour—MV SKL-3 was no longer wearing the colour in which it appeared in the video footage ploughing through a small launch. It received a fresh coat of paint as if to hide the stains of killing 34 people earlier. The harrowing tales of the survivors and the horrid sight of dead bodies will evoke our sympathies and haunt our memories for some time. Our newspapers will cry havoc, pointing fingers at the lack of rules and safety, supervision and surveillance, or moral and judicial responsibilities. Then again, when there will be a similar incident in the future (not unlikely during this stormy season), the media will belch in satisfaction, crying another round of havoc, "told ya"! The mundane routine of such tragedy stops me from being sentimental. What intrigues me in this tragedy is neither the villainous vessel nor the hapless mass, but the grand scheme of changing colours.

The errant cargo vessel showed up in a new colour and anchored itself by the dock of a law enforcing agency. It tried to camouflage itself by hiding in plain sight like in a pirate movie. Given the owner's political colour, such positioning is not only daring, but outright stupid and irresponsible. Maybe the vessel thought it would be able to shift the light from itself with the passing of time and the changing of colour will give it some necessary breathing space. In the animal kingdom, chameleons are reputed for such changing of colour as they try to blend into their surroundings. These reptiles are known for releasing and retracting pigments in their skin cells to express their emotions. Recent studies, however, show that underneath the superficial layer of chameleon skin, there are some cells with guanine crystals. Chameleons have the ability to vary the space between these crystals. The crystals can both create and reduce space. The change of colours in a chameleon happens when different wavelengths of light reflect off these moving crystals.

In other words, this change of colour is but an optical illusion. We humans too can play with the way we allow the external lights to play with us. But there are moments, when the illusion, rather the make-up, wears off and our true colours are revealed and exposed.

For instance, the vessel belonging to a people's representative in the national parliament did not bother to act responsibly after the accident. Had the cargo not tried to flee the spot in a

whiff of the secret meeting is anybody's guess; neither he nor his partner were prepared for the whirlwind that followed. By his own admission, the woman he accompanied was his second wife whom he had married after his friend had divorced her. The devil is in the details—the more they try to paint the truth, the shadier the facts appear! The maulana muscled through the mob by conjuring his stick-wielding supporters and rescued himself from immediate humiliation.

colourless life in lockdown. Some of us responded, yelling, "it's a honey trap"; many others muttered, chuckling, "honey, you're trapped!" Our actions and reactions during any extraordinary time show our true colours.

The other incident that coloured our imagination last week involved a man who reportedly killed his wife in his Gulshan residence and tried to hide the murder as a car accident. He rammed his car into the walls in the Hatirjhil area,



Sabit Al Hasan, the launch which sank in the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj.

PHOTO: SANAD SAHA

hurry, most of the lives could have been saved! They could have helped rescue the accident victims. Of course, the owner was not navigating the vessel. The ones doing so perhaps acted impulsively, but the instruction to change the colour of the vessel is a post facto decision that must have had top level administrative instruction. The painted ship anchored idly by the coast guard shows that life isn't a digital palette of colours that can be changed with an airbrush, particularly when there is a surveillance system in place.

The other incident involving human colours is that of primal lust. A religio-political leader was caught red-handed by some local moral policemen when he went on a tryst. How the mob got a

But his reputation was smeared as his personal life got portrayed in full colour.

The Internet became viral with leaked phone conversations involving the man and the woman. The crystals under the skins started shifting places. Different wavelengths of light are being thrown over the incident as the bioscope turns into a kaleidoscope. Fifty shades of fact and fiction appear and disappear and the superficial veil is removed. The "second" wife disappears and appears as a mother defending her outing to her angry sons. The man with a "second" wife keeps his composure and poses as a defiant husband instructing his "first" wife on how to handle the nosey newsmen. The story gets painted over and over again, adding colour to our Covid-19 induced

claiming that his sick wife who was in the backseat died from the impact. Police now knows, thanks to CCTV footage, that he actually put the body of his dead wife in his blue car before heading off. The colour of the car matches the pain that it ensued. We don't know the colour of the domestic violence that led to the killing of a mother of an eighteen-month child. We don't know at what heated moment the man tried to act on his impulses to paint his murder as an accident. All we know is that the colour of the car is blue, and that it has witnessed the colours of life in all its shades. How dare we paint it in black and white!

Shamsad Mortuza is Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), and a professor of English at Dhaka University (on leave).

# Air quality in Bangladesh: A matter of great concern



ABDUL MATIN

HOPEFULLY, we learned many lessons from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. One of them is the importance of oxygen for our survival. Normally it is available free of cost. As a matter of fact, we take the supply of oxygen for granted. Recently, however, we heard stories of Covid-19 patients with breathing difficulties moving from one hospital to another in search of oxygen. At one stage, oxygen became so scarce that many patients had to pay tens of thousands of taka as hospital bills only for the supply of oxygen. Yet we are alarmed to find how we have been polluting the air that is our main source of oxygen supply.

Air quality in Bangladesh was the worst in the world, while its capital Dhaka, was the second most polluted city in 2020, in terms of air pollution, said a global report (DS, March 18, 2021). "South Asia remained the most polluted region of the world with Bangladesh, India and Pakistan sharing 42 of the 50 most polluted cities worldwide," according to IQAir's global air quality data platform in its World Air Quality Report 2020. The three countries just mentioned, are also at the top of the list of countries with the worst air quality.

The report published recently said that the average annual PM 2.5 concentrations in Bangladesh was 77.1 microgrammes per cubic metre (mcg/m<sup>3</sup>) of air, which is seven times above WHO's exposure recommendation. PM refers to particulate matter in air. It consists of a mixture of solid and liquid particles suspended in the air. While particles with a diameter of 10 microns (micrometres) or less, denoted as PM 10, can penetrate and lodge deep inside the lungs, the smaller particles with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less, denoted as PM 2.5, are the more damaging to health as they can penetrate the lung barrier and enter the blood system.

Researchers from IQAir, a global air quality information and Swiss-based tech company, analysed pollution data from 106 countries, specifically measuring PM 2.5 that can cause serious health risks. "An estimated 13-22 percent of deaths in this region are linked to the health effects of air pollution exposure, with associated estimated costs equating to 7.4 percent of the region's GDP," the report said. Obviously, the cost due to air pollution is huge.

Chronic exposure to particulate matter (PM 10 and PM 2.5) can cause cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as lung cancer. There is a close correlation between exposure to high concentrations of small particulates (PM 10 and PM 2.5) and increased mortality or morbidity. Conversely, when concentrations of small and fine particulates are reduced, related mortality will also go down. This correlation helps policymakers to plan the population's health improvements if air pollution is reduced.

Small particulate pollution has health impacts even at very low concentrations.

industries and less construction works. Obviously, these are the major sources of air pollution in most countries. Taking lessons from the pandemic, we can plan to reduce the air pollution in Bangladesh, if we take the following steps:

i) Introduce mass transport facilities in the major cities as early as possible. This will reduce the number of automobiles on the streets, ease traffic jam, increase the average speed of vehicles and thus reduce emission of exhaust gases. ii) Ensure that all automobiles which run on petrol or diesel use catalytic converters to reduce pollutants from the exhaust gases. iii) Drastically reduce import duties on electric



A child walks along a dusty road in Dhaka.

PHOTO: AFP

Therefore, the WHO 2005 guideline limits aim to achieve the lowest achievable concentrations of PM. The air quality guideline values for PM 2.5 are 10 mcg/m<sup>3</sup> for annual mean and 25 mcg/m<sup>3</sup> for 24-hour mean. The corresponding values for PM 10 are 20 mcg/m<sup>3</sup> and 50 mcg/m<sup>3</sup>.

According to the report, only 24 out of 106 monitored countries met the WHO's annual guidelines for PM 2.5 in 2020, even though air quality improved globally due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "The year 2020 brought an unexpected dip in air pollution. In 2021, we will likely see an increase in air pollution due to human activity again," said Frank Hammes, CEO of IQAir. Here we find a correlation between air quality and the Covid-19 pandemic. Human activities were curtailed significantly in many countries due to the lockdowns. This means that there were less discharge of exhaust from automobiles and fossil fuel based power plants, fewer pollutants from

cars which produce no exhaust gases so that they gradually replace most petrol and diesel fuel based automobiles. iv) Encourage people to walk or ride bicycles to go to work. For this we need to clear all footpaths of shops and stored construction materials. In addition, bicycle lanes should be provided along all the busy roads in cities. v) Keep streets clean and dust free so that no dust can be blown in the air by strong winds or by speedy vehicles. vi) Reduce dependence on coal, oil and gas while planning the electric power system and increase use of renewable energy and nuclear energy for power generation. Retire all old and inefficient fossil fuel based power plants and, if necessary, replace them with modern and more efficient combined cycle power plants. vii) Strictly enforce compliance of environmental protection laws by all industries. viii) Cover all major construction sites with canopies so that no dust can escape to the atmosphere. ix) Reduce use of burned

bricks in construction of buildings and use concrete hollow blocks instead in order to reduce burning of bricks around localities. Concrete hollow blocks provide better insulation against heat or cold than burned solid bricks. x) For all outdoor activities, encourage people to wear masks for protection against PM 10 and PM 2.5.

It may be noted that air quality of major cities around the world is constantly monitored by IQAir and the information is available online around the clock. It is worth noting that the air quality of Dhaka improved significantly on March 26, 2021. Dhaka moved from being the second most polluted city to 12th position on that day because it was a national holiday in Bangladesh. Even with reduced air pollution, it was classified as "unhealthy". On the following day, it again jumped to the second position, next only to Beijing, and was classified as "very unhealthy". This means we have to go a long way to clean our air.

It should be remembered that when the outside air is polluted, the indoor air is also almost equally as polluted. To reduce indoor pollution, commercial air purifiers are available in the market. Air purifiers provide good relief to patients suffering from respiratory ailments. Uses of air purifiers should be made compulsory in closed environments like shopping malls, community centres, cinema and theatre halls and other closed places where large gatherings of people take place.

These steps, if undertaken seriously, will hopefully reduce air pollution significantly and help to decrease both mortality and morbidity rates due to respiratory diseases. Lastly, we must remember that the air quality of Bangladesh has reached a stage that it will be suicidal for us not to take the necessary steps seriously and urgently, to reduce air pollution to an acceptable level, as recommended by WHO.

Dr Abdul Matin is a retired nuclear engineer and a former Professor of Dr Rashid Chair at BUET.



# Pitfalls of vaccine nationalism

IMTIAZ AHMED

IN 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic brought the world literally to a standstill, with infections in the millions and deaths of more than 1.8 million people. But then, another one million died in the next three months. The number of Covid-19 deaths now stands at 2,887,039 as of April 7, 2021, and the number keeps increasing every day.

This, of course, may not be a very high figure compared to some other pandemics, like the Black Death or the Spanish Flu. The former killed as many as 225 million people in four years in 1347-1351, while the latter killed 50 million people in 2 years in 1918-1919. In recent times, the Swine Flu killed between 151,700-575,400 people in 2009-2010, while the Ebola virus killed only 11,300 people in 2014-2016. The Asian Flu (H2N2) killed 1.1 million people in 1957-1958, and the Hongkong Flu (H3N2) killed 1 million people in 1968-1970. Such virus-related deaths otherwise suggest the irregular regularity of pandemics, and since some of the viruses become deadly through mutation, there is no escape from them. They co-evolve and live with other living beings.

But then, with the development of science, humans now have far better knowledge to fight the virus. One cannot help point out that humans did not have the technology to see the virus during the Spanish flu. In fact, scientists began to see the virus for the first time in the 1930s. This is the time when the electron microscope was invented. Earlier in 1915, just a few years before the Spanish Flu hit the world, Frederick Twort, the English



Workers unload a pickup van that carries Oxford-Astrazeneca Covid-19 vaccines which arrived from India as a gift to Bangladesh, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 21, 2021.

PHOTO: MOHAMMAD PONIR HOSSAIN/REUTERS

an outcome of an imperial ascendancy, which is now not only out of place in the twenty-first century but also self-defeating to the cause of vaccination and development of the country. Any country pursuing "vaccine nationalism", particularly in production and distribution, is bound to face three things: i) The alienated country would start looking for other options, thereby minimising the goodwill the vaccine-nationalist country had with the affected country's people; ii) The global community would start working on an urgent basis to break the monopoly in producing the vaccine, indeed, to the point of having the vaccine produced in as many countries as possible. In the long run, or more precisely in the post-pandemic period, this would impact the production and distribution of other vaccines that are now a monopoly of the vaccine-nationalist country; and iii) Since no country is fully self-sufficient, there will always remain the fear of facing a tit-for-tat policy, which itself would drain out the vaccine-nationalist country, and that again, even without the policy ever being carried out!

What should Bangladesh do? Before we take this up, it is important to point out that the Covid-19 pandemic is not yet over! Mutation of the virus has made it deadlier, particularly in infecting people. Moreover, there have been reported cases of "double mutation" of the virus both in India and the US, which has made one commentator say that, "It sounds like something from a 'Ninja Turtles' movie, but the 'Double Mutant' strain of the coronavirus is no laughing matter." Put differently, Covid-19 is deadlier than ever! Those who are trying to ignore the second wave, even not trying to get vaccinated wilfully, are fooling themselves and bringing danger to the rest of the people in the community, including their near and dear ones.

Two things Bangladesh must do urgently, both of which are critical and pressing in the midst of "vaccine nationalism": i) Political mobilisation is required to restrict, if not to contain, the possible high mortality during the second wave. Policing alone will not do. This is because "trust" in the police is very low in South Asia, including Bangladesh, partly because of the colonial legacy and partly because of the state of misgovernance in this part of the world. ii) Bangladesh must keep all the doors open to get vaccines. This is precisely what our time-tested foreign policy principle mandates us to do: "Friendship towards all; malice towards none." Bangladesh indeed has good relations with some countries more than others, but that should not in any way preclude it from getting vaccines from different sources. This is a matter of saving human lives and not the time to be engaged in politicking with vaccine nationalism!

Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor of International Relations and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies, University of Dhaka.

*The bulk of the world's population, including Bangladeshis, never made the practice of wearing a mask a habit or part of their daily life. Indeed, with a lack of enforcement and lack of public health measures, human morbidity and mortality from the Covid-19 pandemic could only rise.*

bacteriologist, discovered "bacteriophage", the viruses that attack bacteria. Since he noticed tiny spots within bacterial colonies, Twort hypothesised that "something" must be killing the bacteria. But Twort did not have the instruments to see the virus, which could have been one of the big reasons for so many Spanish flu deaths. Humans are so much accustomed to the idea of "seeing is believing" that not too many believed that the virus, which humans could not see during the Spanish Flu, was responsible for all the deaths! Science certainly has progressed in leaps and bounds, and that is why having the Covid-19 vaccines, and so many of them, in such a short space of time is not surprising.

One thing, however, remained unchanged from the time of the Spanish Flu. This refers to the dissemination of public health knowledge of how to keep the flu away. In fact, before vaccination, and the knowledge was prevalent during the Spanish Flu, three things needed to be pursued diligently: one, wearing a mask; two, washing hands; and three, maintaining physical distance, particularly in ill-ventilated public places. This is hardly rocket science, yet few would

follow the prescription even today for reasons related to both enforcement and social practices or, rather, the lack of it. Too much of "enforcement" would make the state "draconian" or "authoritarian", the terms the western critics used against China and Vietnam for strictly enforcing the lockdowns. But both of them, I believe, succeeded in containing the Covid-19 pandemic relatively well largely because the practice of wearing a mask was prevalent among its citizens even before the Covid-19 pandemic hit them. Humans, after all, are homo habitus; they go by "practices", if we were to follow Pierre Bourdieu on this. The bulk of the world's population, including Bangladeshis, never made the practice of wearing a mask a habit or part of their daily life. Indeed, with a lack of enforcement and lack of public health measures, human morbidity and mortality from the Covid-19 pandemic could only rise. Bangladesh did relatively better, at least, during the first wave, but then, not because of "enforcement" and "practices" but more because of the weather or different strain of the virus or, maybe, natural immunity amongst the population resulting from too

many viruses flowing around!

Vaccination is supposed to make a difference, but since it is a pandemic, only global cooperation in the development, production and distribution of the vaccine can guarantee its success. Unfortunately, some of the countries that are engaged in developing, producing and distributing the vaccine have opted for the politics of singularity or "vaccine nationalism", and are now engaged, quite sadly, in "vaccine diplomacy", without realising, however, that the virus, which has attained the status of a pandemic, can never be contained territorially or nationally. Such "vaccine diplomacy" is also engaged in maligning the "other", indeed, keeping true to the profession of diplomacy, as Henry Wotten, the English diplomat, remarked while travelling through Augsburg in 1604, "An ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country." Nothing can be sadder than this, particularly when the vaccine is required to save human lives and not for getting a supersonic plane or travelling to outer space!

Are we then still residing in the seventeenth century? Or, is Wotten's remark

## 'Truth wars' on social media and the ethicality of sharing

MAHMUDUL H SUMON

SHARING news on social media is the newest and perhaps one of the fastest-growing "rituals" of the world. When introduced to the internet nearly two decades ago, an academic relative of mine in the US, whom we would otherwise consider progressive, surprised me once by telling me that the Internet for him was "full of junk". In the late 1990s, there was a remarkable thrill and anticipation all around with the coming of the "information superhighway" and its immense possibilities. But lately, in the wake of the "truth wars" that we all have witnessed at the beginning of the pandemic (there is no end in sight though), I wonder if I am also getting weary of social media. As an avid Internet user (there was a time we would say avid reader), I cannot deny that during the early months of Covid-19 last year, I often felt that the decision to share information became enormously difficult because of the frequency in which they were refuted or discarded by other theories or approaches or sciences. Sharing often involved other worries too.

Let us take the example of predictions of death toll made by different research institutes around the world (my google search on predictions of deaths toll due to corona produced 26,400,000 results in 0.46 seconds. Search date 05.04.2021). In one such modelling, a very high death toll was predicted for Bangladesh. The news broke at a time when Bangladesh was at an early stage of the pandemic. Many in my social media list shared the projection. It became a topic of interest, especially when a news portal hosting the news was eventually made unavailable in Bangladesh. Contrary to that, a seasoned senior academician in a TV chat show in Dhaka declined to disclose the predicted high death toll. The situation was interesting because the figure was already out and well known by that time amongst the Internet users.

Occasions such as this and many others (which I don't discuss here) often gave me a pause to think about sharing. As a long-term social media user, and a member of the virtual society, I thought I do have mechanisms to deal with

these decisions. I have developed mechanisms to understand what news to share and if the source is credible or not, and most of the time I am on the right side (there are occasional mistakes of course). But I couldn't share that news. What was stopping me? Is it my disciplinary background? Did this have anything to do with my "personality type" (I am of course critical of any static typology although I understand that such typologies may make sense to some)?

While I don't claim to provide a comprehensive answer to this, here are some initial thoughts I think are worth sharing: my initial concern perhaps was that my sharing may create a panic and my general understanding is that panic is not good. Common sense led me to take that decision. As an academic albeit in the social sciences, I have a fair idea of what models are and how they are built. Are they good for sharing on social media for the consumption of the common population? I was not sure. Models are not fool-proof and there is often controversy. Perhaps by not sharing the model, I was trying to avoid a possible situation of unfounded fear. The daily contraction and death numbers announced every day on TV I thought were enough to inform us.

However, as is the case with social media, my individual decision did not matter because many people shared that information (friends, colleagues) and surely with the good intention to alert people and more importantly, the government of the imminent danger of not doing enough. After all, in Bangladesh, if we recall correctly, we were dealing with a government that was somewhat in denial of the gravity of the situation from the very beginning.

In the early months of the pandemic last year, I remember two contradictory sets of reactions on social media when it comes to Covid-19 and the government's response. On the one hand, panicked middle-class netizens were all for complete lockdown and other stringent measures and enforcement. This position at least at the initial stages did not foresee the consequences of the sudden stoppage of everything and the sentiment that had no understanding of the context we were in. And then,

of course, there was another group, usually coming from an activist and research background (this assertion is of course based on my social media feed and the algorithm it involved and have limitations; as an academic, I am likely to have a disproportionate number of researcher/activist friends on my list) who foresaw the immediate consequences of a stringent lockdown. The latter group was keen to argue that such measures will bring havoc to the majority of the people, who constituted the bulk of our labour sector (i.e. people who make a living from agriculture, the small business holders, the construction and transport workers, and the rickshaw-pullers, hawkers and female labourers working as house help in middle-class and upper-class households). The contending views of the netizens, among other things, spoke a lot about who the users were and how they made sense of the world.

On questions of what to share and what not to share, ethics take up an important role and there is no one theory or singular answer. And one cannot deny that ethics has never been a forte in our education system. Sharing on social media (a public space) comes with responsibility but that responsibility need not be taken away by the government. That only complicates things and has the pretence of many other unforeseen situations. One needs to think very hard before sharing a piece of information. Our education system needs to invest some time and energy in these questions. Mainstream TV journalism has an important role to play in such situations. But more often than not, due to a political economy we do not have the scope to discuss here, they are invested in Bangladesh's world-famous toxic politics which keeps them busy; and so much so, that from time to time one may mistake a TV anchor to be a party strongman and propagandist from the ruling party. Finally, and more importantly, the level of conversation on ethics needs to be raised.

While we cannot get out of this "wired reality" of social media, I think Covid-19 has given us one more reason to rethink our relationship with it.

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**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষকের কার্যালয়  
সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল  
মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা-১২২১।

মোনো নং সইআনেকহা/১৩(এএমসি)/ ২০২০-২১/OTM/ ২০১৬ তারিখ: ০৮.৪.২০২১

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (এএমসি)-২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছর**

সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল, মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা এর ২০২০-২০২১ই অর্থ বছরের জন্য স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকার অন্তর্গত মেডিকেল কলেজ এএমসি এর ১২৭-১২৭০২-২২৪০২১০১১ অর্থনৈতিক কোডের আওতাধীন (জিওবি) বাতে (প্যাকেজ নং-১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ (কোড নং- ৩৫৫৫-৩২৫২১০১) (প্যাকেজ নং-২) আসবাবপত্র (কোড নং-৪১১২৩১৪) এর মালামাল ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীর বিধিবিধান মোতাবেক (১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক প্রকৃত ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী ও (২) এর জন্য প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে সীল সংরক্ষিত বামে ("বামের উপরে এএমসি দরপত্র" উল্লেখ পূর্বক) দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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|----|--|---|
| ০১ | মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ                                  | স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগ, স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়।  |
| ০২ | এজেন্সী/প্রতিষ্ঠান                                 | সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল, মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা।   |
| ০৩ | সম্প্রদায়িক/প্রকল্পের নাম                         | অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক   |
| ০৪ | প্রকল্প/প্রোগ্রাম কোড                              | ১২৭-১২৭০২-২২৪০২১০১১   |
| ০৫ | প্রকল্প/প্রোগ্রামের নাম                            | ৪র্থ, এইচপিএনএসপি   |
| ০৬ | টেন্ডার প্যাকেজ নাম                                | জিডি/এএমসি/৪টিএম-০১   |
| ০৭ | দরপত্র ক্রয় বাবদ চালানের কোড নং                   | ১ ২ ৭ ১ ১ ০ ০ ০ ০ ২ ৩ ৬ ৬   |
| ০৮ | কাজের নাম  | (১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ, (২) আসবাবপত্র।  |
| ০৯ | দরপত্র ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া/পদ্ধতি                     | উন্মুক্ত (OTM)  |
| ১০ | বাজেট ও তহবিলের প্রকৃতি                            | উন্মুক্ত  |
| ১১ | দরপত্রের কাজের বিবরণ                               | (প্যাকেজ নং-১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ (কোড নং- ৩৫৫৫-৩২৫২১০১) (প্যাকেজ নং-২) আসবাবপত্র (কোড নং-৪১১২৩১৪)  |
| ১২ | দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা                               | (প্যাকেজ নং-১) এর ক্ষেত্রে প্রকৃত ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী লাইসেন্সধারী কোম্পানী হইতে হইবে ও (প্যাকেজ নং-২) সহ সকল প্যাকেজের ক্ষেত্রে সরকার কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীর ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, মূল্য সংযোজন কর, নিবন্ধীকরণ, আয়কর সনদপত্র, আর্থিক স্বচ্ছতার সম্পর্কে ০১ বৎসরের ব্যাংক স্ট্যাটমেন্ট, নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র, মালিকানা সনদপত্র/প্রতিনিধির ক্ষেত্রে ক্ষমতাপত্র, ছবি-০২ কপি, নমুনা স্বাক্ষর, কাগজে তালিকাভুক্ত নয় এর অসীকারনামা গেজেটেড কর্মচারী কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের ফটোকপি, সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের বিগত ২ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতার স্বপক্ষে কাগজের ফটোকপি ও ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সনদপত্র দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিল দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা হিসাবে বিবেচিত হইবে। |
| ১৩ | দরপত্র তফসিলের মূল্য (অফেরত যোগ্য) ও প্রাপ্তিস্থান | (প্যাকেজ নং-১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধের জন্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা হারে, এবং (প্যাকেজ নং-২) আসবাবপত্রের জন্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা হারে টেন্ডারী চালানোর মাধ্যমে অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক, সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল এর অনুকূলে যে কোন তফসিলি ব্যাংকে অনলাইনের মাধ্যমে জমা দিয়ে, অনলাইন ডিপোজিট ট্রিপের মূল কপি জমা পূর্বক দরপত্র তফসিল সরাসরি নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দপ্তর এবং পরিচালক, হোমিও ও দেশজ চিকিৎসা, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা এর অফিস হইতে, অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সগ্রহ করা যাইবে।   |
| ১৪ | দরপত্র তফসিল সম্বন্ধে তারিখ ও সময়                 | ০৮/০৪/২০২১ই বৃহস্পতিবার হইতে ২৮/০৪/২০২১ই বুধবার পর্যন্ত মোট=২১(একুশ) দিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।   |
| ১৫ | দরপত্র তফসিল দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়                  | ২৮/০৪/২০২১ই বুধবার সকাল ৯-০০ ঘটিকা হইতে দুপুর ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দরপত্র সম্বন্ধে অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক এবং পরিচালক, হোমিও ও দেশজ চিকিৎসা, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা এর অফিস কক্ষে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাগ্জে বামে উপরে এএমসি দরপত্র উল্লেখ পূর্বক দাখিল করিতে হইবে।   |
| ১৬ | দরপত্র তফসিল খোলার তারিখ ও সময়                    | ২৮/০৪/২০২১ই বুধবার মধ্যাহ্ন ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।  |
| ১৭ | দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী                            | অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক   |
| ১৮ | দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন নং             | সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা-১২২১ ও ফোন নং- ৪৮০৪০০৩৯/মোবাইল-০১৮১৯২৯৯৩৩১  |
| ১৯ | অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী                                  | ক. দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার দিন সরকার কর্তৃক ছুটি ঘোষণা করা হইবে, সেই ক্ষেত্রে পরবর্তী কর্মদিবস দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার তারিখ হিসাবে গণ্য করা হইবে।<br>খ. দরপত্রের সকল শর্তাবলী দরপত্র তফসিলের অনুচ্ছেদ সমূহে সন্নিবেশিত আছে।  |
| ২০ | বিশেষ নির্দেশনা                                    | ক. কর্তৃপক্ষ সকল দরপত্র/ক্রটিপূর্ণ দরপত্র/অসম্পূর্ণ দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও বাতিলের সর্বময় ক্ষমতা রাখেন।<br>খ. সর্বক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীর বিধিবিধান অনুসরণ করা হইবে।   |

(স্বাক্ষর) ০৮.০৪.২০২১  
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GD-725



# A Tribute to Allen Ginsberg on his 24th Death Anniversary Ginsberg's Visit

JOHN DREW

Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, as much at home on the Kali Ghat as in Greenwich Village, is best remembered in Bangladesh on account of his poem, *September on the Jessore Road*. Year One.

I have a happier, earlier, memory of him standing outside his hotel in the Canadian city of Saint John on the day he was due to read to my students.

Saint John and other ports on the east-coast Maritime provinces had once been the gateway to Canada. Then ice-breakers opened up the Saint Lawrence River to year-round shipping. Saint John became a backwater.

We had asked Allen to come and read

long, bloody, bitter poem, was how Allen described it.

Alden Nowlan could have told him that, as an uneducated country boy who had been taken out of grade school to cut timber, he believed he had been sent by God to add books to that same Bible. Instead, he simply asked Allen if he'd like to compose a verse about the Loyalist Graveyard in which we were standing.

The hill-top centre-point of Saint John from which the rest of the city falls away is a graveyard. It is dedicated to those counter-revolutionaries who, preferring a mad king to a sane republic, fled north

he had finished high school. In fact, he had educated himself only by sneaking into a local library secretly and reading the biggest books he could find.

Arriving in Saint John, I inquired of Alden's whereabouts. As a student I had read and liked a slim volume of his poems about the rural poor. He is dying of cancer in hospital, they told me. When I went to see him, Alden had been advised that if he lived for two more days, he could expect to live for four, four more, eight and so on. Double or quits. Eighteen months later, here he was writing a full-page story on Ginsberg, using one of Allen's quips as a headline: LOVE IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD.

As a poet, Alden was not altogether happy with the fuss about Ginsberg's visit. His verse is flaccid, he objected, he's as sentimental as Longfellow. I reminded him I had repeatedly urged him to read his own poetry to our students. The trouble was, unschooled, he was shy of entering a university.

Alden did soon escape journalism to write poetry. A one-finger typist, he asked me, a two-finger typist, to type up his application for a Guggenheim grant. Three fingers must have been lucky: he got the grant. Among the many other poems he was to write was a very fine one about a journalist registering the death of Martin Luther King, "The Night Editor's Poem."

This poem catches perfectly the disjunct between the high-pressure professionalism required to set up a news story in print and the subject of the story itself. It is only at the end, the paper gone to press, that the exhausted night editor, grabbing a quick bite in an all-night diner, has time to understand "that Martin Luther King is dead and that I care."

Allen Ginsberg I had first encountered in another port city, Liverpool. As a journalist on the *Evening Standard's* "Londoner's Diary," I had been sent on an extramural trip to Liverpool to cover Ginsberg's visit to the home of the Beatles.

Allen's visit provided the occasion for a group of local poets to emerge from their dingy cavern on Canning Street, where they ran a smudgy little magazine called *Underdog*, and add a Liverpoolian dimension to the Beats. They included artist Adrian Henry, looking very surreal, Brian Patten, the clerical Roger McGough and Heather Holden.

Whatever happened to Heather? Women poets rarely got a look-in in those days, although Carol Ann Duffy, who would become Britain's first woman Poet Laureate, must have been somewhere in the Merseyside offing.

Having proclaimed Liverpool to be the centre of cosmic consciousness - and Liverpool having decided Ginsberg was really gear - Allen went on to Newcastle to say the same thing there, although it was left to a poet of quite a different ilk, Tony Harrison, to declare that Newcastle was Peru.

Ginsberg was in England after being declared King of May in Communist Prague. His happy knack was to create or validate a joyous counter-culture wherever he went. Just the person we needed in slumbering Saint John.

Presiding over the new Saint John branch of the university was a high school principal who, though game, was left rather gobsmacked by our wide-

walked Allen across the old sea-faring town. We went down the hill to the waterfront past the City Market with its Dickensian figure of a flower-seller at the gate. Lamb the butcher. Pipes the organist. A law firm called McKelvey, Macaulay, Makem and, yes, Fairweather. The names required no Dickens to make them up.

Eventually, we reached the New Brunswick Museum. Ginsberg was delighted by a notice advertising an exhibition: *Secrets of the Deep - Upstairs*. He was even more delighted by the reception he received upstairs from the Archivist, Mrs Robinson. Oh, she said on being introduced to him, "Aren't you the son of Louis Ginsberg? He's my favourite poet."

Having walked across the decaying city, Ginsberg claimed that had he been born in it he would never have left. That was true of so many of its natives but when Ginsberg read his

As a poet, Alden was not altogether happy with the fuss about Ginsberg's visit. His verse is flaccid, he objected, he's as sentimental as Longfellow. I reminded him I had repeatedly urged him to read his own poetry to our students. The trouble was, unschooled, he was shy of entering a university.

ranging plans. But, as former principal of the local academic high school, he had excellent contacts throughout the city.

The day before Ginsberg's scheduled arrival, the principal was tipped off that the Immigration authorities at the airport were going to refuse entry to the dissolute American poet. We should cancel hotel and hall bookings without delay.

King's County had a Progressive Conservative M.P. named Gordon Fairweather. A fair weather Tory, but a foul weather progressive.

Without delay I telephoned him. He came off the curling rink and promised to have a telegram in my hands within the hour from the Minister of Immigration. All I had to do was swear - so help me God - that while he was our guest Allen would not do drugs or corrupt the youth in any way.

After the meeting in the graveyard, I

hallmark *Howl* later that evening to a hall full of overflowing it flushed out of the woodwork an assortment of local eccentrics few of us had imagined existed. "I have seen the best minds of my generation destroyed..."

One urbane colleague claimed that Ginsberg should have been a cantor in the Catskills. Possibly also in the Himalayas. Crowded into our cottage after the reading, our students listened wide-eyed as Allen and Chanchi discussed and sung - to the accompaniment of Allen's finger-cymbals - Indian and Tibetan chants.

In his turn, it was Allen who looked wide-eyed when our baby daughter, in her cot in the next room, was awakened by all the sound. Why, he asked, is the child crying?

John Drew's writing appears from time to time in *The Daily Star* and *Bengal Lights*.



his poetic clarion call *Howl* as one way of putting the new, very small, branch of the provincial university, long denied to the city, on the map. We would bring the world into it again.

I have a photograph of Allen standing together with Chanchi Mehta, my old teacher, trouper and Indian playwright, local poet Alden Nowlan, and I. Allen is telling us that the previous night he had picked up the Gideon Bible by his bedside and re-read *The Book of Ecclesiastes*. "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." One

after their defeat in the American War of Independence.

A residual covering of snow packed into ice among the tombstones led Ginsberg to hazard what he thought might be a haiku (or what passes for haiku in a language with a wholly different orthography): "Many drunks have slipped on this snow and bloodied their heads on these stones."

Nowlan, himself struggling to be a poet, was covering Ginsberg's visit as a journalist for the local newspaper, *The Telegraph-Journal*. He had broken into journalism only because it was assumed

## REVIEWS

# A Review of *Mistress of Melodies: Stories of Courtesans and Prostituted Women*

Nabendu Ghosh. ISBN-10 : 8194490863. Speaking Tigers, 2020

BY GRACY SAMJETSABAM

Nabendu Ghosh (1917-2007), an eminent author in Bengali literature pursued many passions. A dancer, an actor, a writer, a screenwriter and a film director, his opus of writing includes thirty novels and fifteen short story collections, that are being translated and continue relevant. In cinema, as a scriptwriter, he captured classics such as *Abhimaan*, *Bandini*, *Devdas*, *Majhli Didi*, *Parineeta*, and *Sujata*. He worked closely with big names in the Indian film industry like Bimal Roy and Hrishikesh Mukherjee. He received numerous literary and film awards, including the Bankim Puraskar, the Bibhuti Bhushan Sahitya Arghya, the Filmfare Best Screenplay Award and the National Film Award for Best First Film in direction for *Trishagni*.

*Mistress of Melodies: Stories of Courtesans and Prostituted Women* is edited by Ratnottama Sengupta, daughter of Nabendu Ghosh, herself a film journalist, an author, a translator and a film festival and art exhibition curator. The book is an anthology of six stories by Nabendu Ghosh, resurrecting the world of courtesans and prostituted women. Here, the first three pieces, "Market price," "Dregs" and "Song of Sarangi" are translated by Ratnottama Sengupta; the fourth "It Happened One Night" by Katha award winning writer, Padmaja Punde; the fifth "Anchor" by writer and editor, Mitali Chakravarty. The last story, "Mistress of Melodies," is the first draft of a screenplay written in English by the author himself.

Ghosh's portrayal of women across generations not only evokes a bygone era but also reflects the plight of women in general, and particularly those caught in the wrap of the flesh trade. In the foreword, filmmaker Muzaffar Ali accurately praises Ghosh as "the pride of cinema of Bengal, the cinema of realism and the romance of culture." Ali ponders on the institution of courtesans, where the rise and fall of human lives and human helplessness make a fine fabric for aesthetics, where amidst the heights of fame and the fading away of lives, 'love' provides the zone of purity, bliss and solace. These values

are strongly reflected in the stories that make up this anthology.

Ratnottama Sengupta notes how the world of literature and cinema have gained much from the narratives of the loves and lives of women who engage in prostitution. Also, there is no denying that the courtesans have long been custodians and conveyors of India's classical arts. Sengupta quotes the iconic film-maker Mrinal Sen's praise for Nabendu Ghosh as a creative individual who "never believed evil is man's natural state. Along with his characters he has confronted, fought and survived on hope." She agrees with Sen as Ghosh's works and the stories in this collection resonate the flaws and the pangs of the reveries of life of the characters, yet hope shines bright amidst the inescapable grimness of their lives and of their worlds.

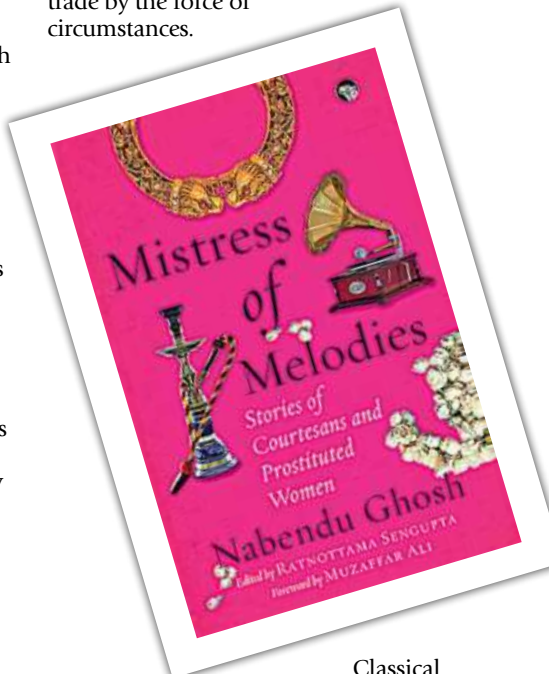
A sprinkle of Bengal's historical conditions of the time and the social impact of famine, riot and Partition add authenticity to the narratives. Additionally, Ghosh's remarkable choice of words in his storytelling leaves undelatable impressions of the characters he sketches, the drama he designs and the stories he tells. Born in Dhaka in pre-independent India and having made Calcutta and Bombay his home most of his life, Ghosh's works reflect the pulse and the spirit of these metropolitan cities.

In "Market Price," Calcutta is romantically sandwiched between the moving of the story back and forth from Gorajapur in Jessore district in pre-partition India and the narrow lanes of Kashi with the mention of the Jatra group, discussions on vegetables and Rohu fish or Santipuri saris. In "Dregs," the characters getting in the tram and alighting in places like Elgin Road, Theatre Road, Purna Cinema, Esplanade, Shyam Bazaar, Tollygunge, Curzon Park, Wellington-Gariahat route, Chowringhee, Kalighat to Dalhousie, and Bhowanipore, takes the reader through the city with a sense of nostalgia and magic, amidst the realism.

The synchrony of song, dance and music particularly in "Song of a Sarangi," the music

circles in Calcutta in "Mistress of Melodies" enlivens one to the complicated world of courtesans that blends thumris, sufi music and devotional songs. More of Calcutta's ambience is brought to life in "It Happened One Night" with a glimpse of nightlife, Maa Kali, baul songs and incessant rains.

The stories portray the complicated lives of courtesans and women compelled into the trade by the force of circumstances.



Classical Hindustani music instruments - sitar, tanpura, sarangi, harmonium, and table - playing soulful music to blend baijis and nautch girls of heavenly beauty, singing and dancing to thumris of love and longing like that of Radha-Krishna evoke emotions ranging from profane to romantic and erotic in a world of seths, babus, alcohol, ornaments, sindoor and flower.

They are perceived as belonging to a community that entertains. The narratives

reveal how though "honour" is forced to a point of compromise, faith, fidelity and respect matter in the lives of these women. Also, it is interesting to note that the stories show the word "sin" is defined differently by the visitors entertained by nautch girls and the residents of the world of courtesans.

Dhaka is melancholically catered in "Anchor" by the mention of River Padma, the ghats, idyllic beauty, jute, ghazals, sweet shop and pice hotels, paan, bidi, and cigarettes, Goalundo, flickering lamp fed by redi oil, call of crickets and the port of Mirpur.

Touching upon gender and social issues, the predicaments of women, men and children, particularly women associated with the flesh trade are closely examined. Widowhood and vulnerability is reflected in the story of Chhaya, a young widow who falls in love, elopes and remarries but ends up being a victim of Balam's double entendre and heartlessness and also in the unrequited love of Rabiya.

Adolescence and prostitution is mirrored in the tragic rise to the zenith of beauty and wealth to a low fall of abandonment, disease and death of Basana. The humanness in the muses echoes in the stories of the attractive mother-daughter courtesans, Hasina Baiji and Gulab Banu, that revolves around the "nath-utara ceremony." By this tradition, the mother auctions her adolescent daughter's virginity to the highest bidder but tragedy befalls them as it does in the love, longing and acceptance of Gauhar Jaan.

The sad demise of Radha sends a message on health issues faced in flesh trade and on motherhood and prostitution through the fates of Fatima and Tagar. There is the solace of love that transcends social barriers and religion just as Binno Bai in "Song of a Sarangi" expresses, "In our world, there is no conflict between Hindus and Muslims." However, those born to prostitutes or courtesans, including male children, cannot escape being condemned as the dregs of society.

How in prostitution, women play the hunter and the hunted in the dealings of

match-making and love-making; youth and age; birth and death; loneliness and emptiness; heartbreak and healing; sadness and happiness; union and separation; love and betrayal are sensitively and intricately woven in the stories. Ghosh stunningly yarns time, beauty, memories and transience into a fabric that arouses emotions with the stories that are universal, and long-lasting, and alongside, ironically tells of the ever-changing times of people and places in the timelessness.

The beauty of Ghosh's use of language -- iconic short and crisp opening lines that subtly and perfectly set the tone for the story -- are well captured in the translations. The climaxes are at times happy and at times melancholic but the impact of the narratives is such that the characters and their stories linger on in the mind of the reader even after the story has ended.

What places Ghosh's writings at a higher pedestal and as a resource for further study is that at the centre of the stories are human elements that are delicately raw and real. This is fodder for exploration in a world that tends to regard women as a means of entertainment or commodities. Their tragedy lies in the humaneness and their raw feelings that scream out loud that they are like all of us - except birth and fate forced them to be caught in the world of flesh trade.

The translation of Nabendu Ghosh's stories in this new anthology, *Mistress of Melodies*, is a reminder of the enthralling potential of storytelling made accessible to all of us in lucid, simple English. Touching and haunting at the same time, the narratives are original and gripping. The book brought to us by Speaking Tiger has a beautiful cover illustration by Mistunee Chowdhury that fittingly reflects the stories told.

Gracy Samjetsabam teaches English Literature and Communication Skills at Manipal Institute of Technology, MAHE, Manipal. She is a Research Scholar at Manipal Institute of Communication and also a freelance writer and copy editor.





(L-R) Players of Bangladesh Ansar & VDP go wild following their 15-14 points victory over Bangladesh Police in the final of women's kabaddi event of the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games at the Kabaddi Stadium in Paltan yesterday. Narail team, meanwhile, clinched gold medal in women's hockey, beating Jhenaidah 1-0 at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Ansar and VDP dominate as Games run without incident

SPORTS REPORTER

Curtains will be drawn on the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, with all 378 gold medals, barring men's cricket, already being decided at the close of the penultimate day of the 10-day meet in eight different cities across the country.

The cricket final will be held today in Barishal.

One big source of relief and satisfaction for the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) is that no athlete was infected by Covid-19 over the past nine days although there was a grave threat which led the government to declare a lockdown in the middle of the Games, which are being held for the first time since 2013.

"We brought approximately 1,800 athletes under Covid-19 testing in the last nine days but no one tested positive and it has been a big relief for us that the Games are going to end in a healthy environment," Games steering committee chairman

### HIGHLIGHTS

➤ Bangladesh Ansar clinched the women's kabaddi title with a hard-fought 15-14 win over Bangladesh Police. The men's title went to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), who beat Bangladesh Air Force 24-22.

➤ Narail became champions in women's hockey with a 1-0 win over Jhenaidah while Bangladesh Army won the men's hockey title.

➤ Chunkitia Rowing Club emerged as champions in the women's rowing section while Ali

Nagar Rowing Club won the men's race in Hatirjheel.

➤ Jahangirabad Central Zone and Barendra North Zone will play the men's cricket gold-medal deciding match today in Barisal.

➤ Weightlifting concluded with eight more records, raising the total record tally to 25 in 20 events – 10 for men and 10 for women.

➤ Bangladesh Ansar dominated Judo, winning a total of five of 10 gold medals in the last three days.

and BOA vice president Sheikh Bashir Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday.

"However, we found a few cases where athletes have either caught a cold or had high temperature but they were kept in isolation and participated in their respective

events after getting Covid-19 negative certificates," Ahmed said, adding that they had ensured the closing ceremony would not need any participation from athletes and instead comprise solely of an audio-visual display of the highlights from the 31 disciplines,

concluding speeches from the guests and a laser show.

"There had been anxiety following the increasing number of Covid-19 cases, but the athletes truly performed better this time around. They also followed health guidelines to make it a success. The medal-giving ceremonies were also really well arranged," Ahmed praised.

Bangladesh Ansar and VDP dominated the top of the table, grabbing more than 120 gold medals, followed by Bangladesh Army, who bagged more than 100 golds. Bangladesh Navy were third with more than 60 gold medals so far. The BOA had not completed the final tally when this report was filed.

Ansar participated in 30 out of 31 disciplines of Bangladesh Games while Bangladesh Army participated in 24 disciplines and Bangladesh Navy took part in only 12.

Of 388 districts and divisional sports associations, clubs, universities, educational boards and services teams, 138 organisations won at least a bronze while 25 organisations shared 378 gold medals.

## Shuvagata back as batting all-rounder

SPORTS REPORTER

Thirty four-year-old Shuvagata Hom, who played his last Test against England back in 2016, was re-called to Bangladesh's 21-member preliminary Test squad announced for the upcoming Sri Lanka tour yesterday.

The selectors also included three uncapped pacers – Shoriful Islam, Mukidul Islam and Shohidul Islam – following their impressive performances with the high-performance unit recently.

In absence of star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who has already taken leave for the Indian Premier League, the team management wants to rely on Shuvagata as a batting all-rounder who can bowl off-spin.

Left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman, too, will be unavailable for the two-Test series along with young pacer Hasan Mahmud, who had to return to the country from New Zealand after the ODI series due to an injury. Soumya Sarkar, who was included in

### PRELIMINARY SQUAD

Mominul Haque, Liton Das, Mohammad Mithun, Mushfiqur Rahim, Tamim Iqbal, Shadman Islam, Abu Jayed Rahi, Tajjul Islam, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mehedi Hassan Miraz, Nayeem Hasan, Taskin Ahmed, Ebadot Hossain, Saif Hassan, Yasir Ali Chowdhury, Shoriful Islam, Syed Khaled Ahmed, Mukidul Islam Mugdho, Shuvagata Hom, Shohidul Islam, Nurul Hasan Sohan

management is considering Shuvagata as a batting all-rounder this time.

An experienced campaigner in domestic circuit, Shuvagata scored 5268 runs and picked up 213 wickets in 58 first class matches. He was also in fine form in the Bangabandhu National Cricket League, scoring a century and bagging six wickets in the second round match.

"Shuvagata is coming back after a while but he has been a consistent performer in



Mukidul



Shahidul



Shoriful

the second Test against West Indies earlier this year as a replacement for injured Shakib, was dropped from the Test side. Experienced Mahmudullah Riyad, who was dropped from the Test side last year, was not considered for the tour either.

Mainly a batting all-rounder, Shuvagata made his Test debut against Zimbabwe in 2011. But his role changed in 2014 as management started to consider him as an off-spinner who batted down the order.

Questions started to rise over his role in the playing eleven as the Tigers' former coach Chandika Hathurusingha labelled him as the best off-spinner in the country.

Shuvagata was eventually dropped after he scored just one fifty and picked up eight wickets in eight Tests five years ago. According to chief selector Minhajul Abedin, the team

first class cricket. We have considered him as a batting all-rounder but his off-break is pretty handy and gives us an option in the spin department," said Minhajul.

The Bangladesh team will depart for Sri Lanka on April 12 and then they will travel to Negombo to complete a mandatory room-quarantine for three days.

The team will start training under quarantine protocols on April 15 before taking part in an inter-squad warm-up match on April 17 and 18 at Katunayake. The final squad will be announced following this warm-up match.

The first of the two-match Test series begins on April 21 at the Pallekelle International Cricket Stadium in Kandy, followed by the second Test from April 29 at the same venue.



Marcus Rashford scored in the first half as Manchester United beat Granada 2-0 in the first leg of their Europa League quarterfinal tie in Spain on Thursday, while Arsenal conceded a stoppage-time equaliser in a 1-1 draw at home to Czech champions Slavia Prague. In the other two matches on the night, AS Roma came from behind to beat Ajax 2-1 in Amsterdam while Unai Emery's Villarreal got a 1-0 win away to Dinamo Zagreb.

PHOTO: TWITTER

## Real host Barca as title race hots up

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona travel to Real Madrid on Saturday in what is set to be one of the most pivotal El Clasico meetings in recent memory, with both sides fast closing in on stuttering Atletico Madrid at the top of the La Liga table.

The Catalans, unbeaten in 19 league games, are just one point off the pace while third-placed Real trail by three points after closing the gap from 10 in February.

Zinedine Zidane's side are also flying high after their comprehensive 3-1 victory over Liverpool in their Champions League quarterfinal first leg on Tuesday.

Madrid forward Karim Benzema has warned that they need to keep Lionel Messi, who has scored 12 goals in his last 10 league appearances, out of the game if they are to get the three points.

"It'll be a tough game against a side who like to dominate the ball," Benzema said.

"They've got a great goalkeeper and of course Messi, the player



(L-R) Real Madrid and Barcelona sweated it out in training on Friday ahead of Saturday's El Clasico, the most pivotal one in recent memory, with both sides fast closing in on stuttering Atletico Madrid at the top of the La Liga table.

PHOTO: TWITTER

who does everything for Barcelona. We need to be wary of him because he's so, so dangerous.

"Just like in the first meeting this season we'll go out on the pitch looking for the win, it's a final for us."

The hosts will be without injured captain Sergio Ramos and centre back partner Raphael

Varane, who is isolating following a positive COVID-19 test.

However, Eden Hazard and Dani Carvajal could both be available for Zidane after returning to full training.

Atletico travel to Real Betis having won just three of their last 10 games in all competitions as they struggle to keep their rivals at bay.



## McIlroy hits dad with errant shot

REUTERS, AUGUSTA

Rory's McIlroy endured his worst ever start to a Masters on Thursday and while it may well leave a mark on his psyche, the Northern Irishman's father may have felt the sting even more after being struck by one of his son's errant shots.

McIlroy, who two weeks ago sent a tee shot into a swimming pool at a Match Play event in Austin, hit his father in the left leg with his second shot at the par-four seventh hole en route to one of six bogeys during a four-over-par 76.

The former world number one, who was tucked behind



## South Africa, Pakistan clash in shadow of IPL

AFP, Johannesburg

Many of South Africa's best cricketers will be involved in Twenty20 matches on Saturday -- but only some of them will be playing for their country in the first of four T20 internationals against Pakistan at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg.

The series is being played at the same time as the early stages of the Indian Premier League and the juxtaposition provides a clear illustration of the relative standing of the two international teams.

As the first innings in Johannesburg draws to a close on Saturday, Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals will take the field in the IPL. Former South African captain Faf du Plessis, fast bowler Lungi Ngidi and leg-spinner Imran



Tahir are in the CSK squad, while fast bowlers Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje are contracted to Delhi.

Although they may sit out the first round of IPL games because of quarantine restrictions, all three of South Africa's pace battery in the

first two one-day internationals against Pakistan last weekend -- Rabada, Nortje and Ngidi -- will be in Mumbai instead of playing in Johannesburg.

Also in India after playing in the first two games against Pakistan are batsmen Quinton de Kock and

David Miller, while IPL stars AB de Villiers and Chris Morris appear to have been lost to international cricket.

Pakistan, by contrast, have not lost any players to the IPL.

The non-participation of Pakistan players in cricket's richest league owes more to politics than playing ability because the likes of Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman and Shaheen Shah Afridi would slot comfortably into any IPL side.

South Africa's situation is one of pragmatism.

Cricket South Africa want to stay on the right side of their Indian counterparts by releasing their stars and in any case cannot afford to pay the sort of money that would persuade their leading players to put country ahead of club, especially for a tournament that was arranged less than two months ago.

## Zidane wants Messi to stay at Barca

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane hopes that Saturday's Clasico meeting between his side and Barcelona will not be the last time Lionel Messi plays in the fixture.

The Barca captain's contract expires this summer and he has been linked with a move away ever since his attempts to leave the club last summer were unsuccessful.

"I hope it's not (Messi's last Clasico), I want him to stay at Barcelona, it's good for the Spanish league," Zidane told a news conference. "We know what a player he is, but they're a very good team and we'll have to try and stop them playing to their strengths and be as good as we can be on the ball and play as best as we can."

Real's club captain Sergio Ramos is another player whose contract expires at the end of the season, and Zidane reiterated his hope that the 35-year-old has not faced Barca for the final time, either.

"Hopefully he's not played his last Clasico. He won't be fit tomorrow, which is a shame, but I hope he stays here," the French coach said.

a tree off the fairway and with an awkward angle into the green, yelled "fore" as his approach sailed to the other side of the fairway where he knew his father was standing.

"I knew it was my dad when I was aiming at him," said McIlroy. "Probably 30 seconds before it hit him."

McIlroy's father appeared OK as he walked away and even joked with a nearby reporter that he was going to demand an autographed glove from his son.

"He's seen me sign plenty of stuff over the years, so I think that's the least of his worries," said McIlroy. "I think he just needs to go put some ice on it, maybe I'll autograph a bag of frozen peas for him."

For McIlroy, this week marks his seventh attempt to complete the career Grand Slam of golf's four majors,



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## PHASE-4 WB POLLS BJP, TMC poised for tough fight

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Today's fourth-phase voting for the West Bengal Assembly elections is expected to be balanced on a knife edge between Trinamool Congress and India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, considering the voting ratio of the last Lok Sabha polls.

In the fourth phase, elections will be held in 44 constituencies covering Cooch Behar and Alipurduar districts in north Bengal and parts of South 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hoogly in the southern part of the state.

In the last assembly election in 2016, TMC won 39 seats, Communist Party of India (Marxist) bagged three while National Congress and BJP shared the remaining two seats.

In that election, TMC won 46 percent votes, CPIM got 28.79 percent, Congress 6.71 percent and BJP 12.13 percent.

The scenario changed within three years and in the last Lok Sabha election (national polls) in 2019, the TMC's vote decreased to 44.73 percent while the BJP's vote raised to 40.88 percent.

The success made BJP believe they can overthrow Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the assembly polls this time around.

Mamata is looking to win a third straight term in office. Before the fourth phase, in which a number of senior politicians and celebrity-turned politicians are contesting,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



A large number of customers shopping for health safety equipment in an open-air market in front of Mitford Hospital in the capital yesterday. Not only are health safety guidelines being ignored, but there appeared to be very little supervision of products being sold here.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## SINKING OF LAUNCH 9 staffers of bulk carrier land in jail

5 others remanded

STAR REPORT

Nine staffers of the bulk carrier, which rammed a launch causing it to sink in the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj on Sunday, were sent to jail and five others placed on a two-day remand yesterday.

Thirty-four people of the cargo vessel were shown arrested in the case filed in this connection by Babu Lal Baidya, an official of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority.

Police yesterday produced them before a Narayanganj court, seeking a five-day remand for each of them.

But Senior Judicial Magistrate Ahmed Humayun Kabir sent nine of them to jail and granted a two-day remand for each of the five others.

On Thursday, Bangladesh Coast Guard

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Stop export of Covid vaccine immediately

Rahul writes to Modi as Indian states report vaccine shortages

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian opposition Congress leader Rahul Gandhi yesterday called for an immediate halt to export of Covid-19 vaccine amid a record-setting spike in fresh cases of the virus.

From under 15,000 cases a day at the beginning of March, India yesterday reported its all-time high of 131,968 new Covid-19 cases – a record increase for a third straight day – pushing the country's total infection tally to more than 13 million.

Amid the record surge, many Indian states have reported running out of vaccines even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government continues to insist there is enough stock. India is the largest producer of vaccines and is known as the "pharmacy of the world".

The opposition parties have blamed Modi's government for exporting 64.5 million vaccine doses while itself covering only a fraction of India's 1.35 billion people.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

### Independence proclaimed

APRIL 10, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

#### THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Mujibnagar Government was formed today to conduct the Bangladesh War of Liberation. The official announcement declaring independence of Bangladesh, known as the Proclamation of Independence, was also issued today. The cabinet of the government-in-exile took oath on 17 April, 1971 at Baidyanathala (renamed Mujibnagar after the proclamation), a border area in the present Meherpur district, where Professor M Yusuf Ali, an MNA, formally read out the Proclamation of Independence.

The proclamation was drafted by Barrister M Amir-ul Islam and reviewed by Indian Barrister Subrata Roy Chowdhury. The proclamation was patterned after the American Declaration of Independence.

The Proclamation read: "... Whereas in the facts



and circumstances of such treacherous conduct Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the undisputed leader of the 75 million people of Bangladesh, in due fulfillment of the legitimate right of self-determination of the people of Bangladesh, duly made a declaration of independence at Dacca on March 26, 1971, and urged upon the people of Bangladesh to defend the honour and integrity of Bangladesh,

AND Whereas in the conduct of a ruthless and savage war the Pakistani authorities committed and are still continuously committing numerous acts of genocide and unprecedented

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Huge plumes of methane spotted over Bangladesh

Says Paris-based firm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Analysing satellite images, Paris-based company Kayros SAS has detected huge plumes of methane gas over Bangladesh, reports the Bloomberg.

Citing 12 highest rates of methane emission over Bangladesh this year, the report published on Thursday said, "One of the countries vulnerable to climate change has also been revealed as a major contributor of methane."

The report titled "Mysterious Plumes of Methane Gas Appear Over Bangladesh" came to this conclusion observing satellites images that show large, frequent emissions over Dhaka.

It quoted Yotam Ariel, founder of Bluefield Technologies Inc, saying: "Our analysis shows that Bangladesh has some of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Archaeologists unearth lost Egyptian city



AFP, Cairo

Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of an ancient city in the desert outside Luxor that they say is the "largest" ever found in Egypt and dates back to a golden age of the pharaohs 3,000 years ago.

Famed Egyptologist Zahi Hawass announced the discovery of the "lost golden city", saying the site was uncovered near Luxor, home of the legendary Valley of the Kings.

"The Egyptian mission under Dr. Zahi Hawass found the city that was lost under the sands," the excavation team said in a statement Thursday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## B'BARIA MAYHEM Offer apology or else face sedition cases

BCL tells Hefajat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Brahmanbaria unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday said they would file sedition cases against Hefajat-e-Islam leaders if the latter did not offer an apology for "spreading lies" about the recent mayhem in the district.

They came up with the statement during a press conference at Brahmanbaria Press Club.

Hefajat's Nayeb-e Ameer and Brahmanbaria District unit president Sajedur Rahman, in a recent visit to Brahmanbaria Press Club, claimed none of their members was involved in the vandalism incident.

Protesting the claim, Brahmanbaria district BCL General Secretary Shahadat Hossain Shovon, at the press conference, said such

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Man shot dead in front of his house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

A man was shot dead allegedly by his rivals in front of his house in Chattogram's Rangunia yesterday afternoon.

The dead, Md Mafiz, 45, was accused in six cases over robbery and arms recovery, said police.

Around 3:30pm, assailants shot Mofiz dead at Sharafbata and fled, said Anwar Hossain, assistant superintendent of police (Rangunia circle).

On information, police rushed to the spot and sent the body to Chattogram Medical College morgue for an autopsy, he said.

According to local sources, Mafiz's rival gang

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Nurul Islam pulling a rickshaw van that has the words Motijheel Model High School and College painted on its side. He had been driving school vans for the last 30 years, but has had to switch to carrying regular passengers as educational institutions have been closed for more than a year due to the coronavirus pandemic. The photo was taken yesterday in the capital's Mugdapara.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## COUP IN MYANMAR Junta promises election in 2 yrs

Claims protests dwindling as 10 reported killed by troops

AGENCIES

Myanmar's junta said yesterday that a protest campaign against its rule was dwindling since people wanted peace, and that it would hold elections within two years, the first timeframe it has given for a return to democracy since its February 1 coup.

Troops fired rifle grenades at anti-coup protesters yesterday in the town of Bago, near the main city Yangon, witnesses and news reports said. At least 10 people were killed and their bodies piled up in the corner of a pagoda, they said.

Myanmar Now news and Mawkun, an online news magazine, said at least 20 people were killed and many wounded. It was not possible to get a precise toll because troops had cordoned off the area near the pagoda, they said.

Junta spokesman Brigadier General Zaw Min Tun told a news conference in the capital, Naypyitaw, that the country was returning to normal and government ministries and banks would resume full operations soon.

More than 600 people have been killed by security forces cracking down on protests against the coup, according to an activist group. The country has ground to a standstill because of the protest campaign and widespread strikes against military rule.

"The reason of reducing protests is due to cooperation of people who want peace, which we value," Zaw Min Tun said. "We request people to cooperate with security forces and help them."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

### PRAYER TIMING APRIL 10

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:45 6:24 7:45  
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 5:00 6:28 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION