

**COVID VACCINATION IN UK**  
People aged over 50 to be offered 3rd jab in autumn  
**SEE PAGE 6**

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**"We will take the money back when we will finally come to know that no vaccine will be supplied. We will definitely get back the money."**  
FINANCE MINISTER AHM MUSTAFA KAMAL ON GETTING MONEY BACK FROM SERUM



**"I spoke to Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi. What he needs most is the material... that can make the vaccine work. We're sending him that."**  
US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN



**"The reality is, the way we get through this pandemic is to get vaccinated with whatever vaccine is offered to us."**  
PM JUSTIN TRUDEAU TELLS CANADIANS NOT TO CHOOSE VACCINES



## CURBS ON HOMEGOING

# Directives hard to enforce

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government has imposed several restrictions including an embargo on leaving work stations during the upcoming Eid holidays to check the mad rush of holidaymakers, but it lacks a clear outline on how to enforce these restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of Covid-19.

For example, the Ministry of Public Administration has a full grip on all government officials. The case, however, is not the same with those working at non-government and autonomous organisations.

There are chances that a huge number of these employees, along with their family members, will leave the capital to spend the festival with their loved ones.

The apprehension stems from a few factors.

As per a new government circular, public transport, including buses and minibuses, will be allowed to operate only inside the territory of each district. Bus operators, however, have pointed out that it will be difficult to enforce since most of the vehicles ply from one stop to another, not based on the territory of the districts.

People will be able to travel beyond

- Public transport would be allowed inside districts
- People are leaving Dhaka by microbuses, small vehicles
- Ferry services remain normal
- No political, social and religious gathering allowed

the boundary of a district and take a new vehicle to go further, advancing towards their destinations -- their village homes.

Also, a huge number of cars and microbuses continue to carry passengers to and from Dhaka on rent, charging almost double the usual bus fare. The number of such vehicles is expected to go up during the Eid.

The rush at the ferry terminals is increasing every day.

In such a situation, officials said they fear the government will not be able to prevent the mad rush during the festival and it will ultimately help the virus spread further.

The Cabinet Division yesterday issued a circular with a six-point directive, extending some restrictions on the movement of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



There is barely any room left due to congestion on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Sanarpur area amid what officials say is a "lockdown" aimed at containing the second wave of the pandemic. It has been proven across the world that travel restrictions and social distancing yield lower number of new infections and deaths.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## India's Covid surge spreads to Nepal

Says Red Cross as top scientific advisor warns further waves 'inevitable' in India

AGENCIES

Nepal is being overwhelmed by a Covid-19 surge as India's outbreak spreads across South Asia, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said yesterday.

"We need to act now and we need to act fast to have any hope of containing this human catastrophe. This virus has no respect for borders and these variants are running rampant across Asia," said Alexander Matheou, Asia Pacific director for the Geneva-based agency representing the global humanitarian network.

Nepal is now recording 57 times as many cases as a month ago, with 44% of tests now coming back positive, the statement said.

Nepalese towns near the Indian border could not cope with the growing number of people needing treatment, while only

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

## FOR TREATMENT ABROAD Khaleda's family seeks govt's nod

Her breathing problem persists

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's family has sought permission from the government to take her abroad for better treatment.

Khaleda's sister Selima Islam told The Daily Star last night that their brother Shamim Iskandar submitted an application to the home ministry in this regard yesterday.

Contacted, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said they have received the application and are considering it positively.

"We will send the application to the law ministry for its opinion. Upon getting its view, we will make the decision," he told this newspaper last night.

He further said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is very considerate on such issues, and this request is being considered positively.

Asked, Law Minister Anisul Huq said the secretary at his ministry received the files regarding Khaleda's treatment abroad from the home ministry at about 11:00pm.

"I'm yet to get the files. I'll go through those and then give my opinion..." he told The Daily Star around 12:30am today.

Earlier around 8:30pm yesterday, Shamim went to the home minister's residence and handed him the application, said Selima.

"We will decide on the next course of action after getting the government decision."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



## Lowest number of daily deaths since April 2

1,742 new cases detected in 24hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

This is the lowest number of deaths recorded in the span of a day since April 2.

With this, the total number of Covid-19 deaths in the country reached 11,755.

The death rate stands at 1.53 percent, said the release.

In the same 24 hours, 1,742 new coronavirus cases were recorded, taking the total number of people infected to 767,338, it said.

Against 20,284 tests conducted in the period, the positivity rate was 8.59 percent.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## VACCINES FROM OTHER SOURCES Stock depleting, but no deal yet

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The stock of Oxford-AstraZeneca doses is running out fast but the government, despite frantic efforts to keep the inoculation campaign on track, is yet to secure a contract for bulk supply of alternative Covid-19 vaccines.

The government suspended administration of the first dose on April 26, immediately after the Indian government barred export of Covishield -- the AstraZeneca vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday said the stock of the Covid-19 vaccine is running out as there are only 14 lakh jabs in stock with no sign of fresh shipment from India.

There will be a vaccine crisis if a fresh consignment does not arrive in the country before the existing stock is exhausted, DGHS spokesperson Dr Robed Amin said.

Since the suspension of the first dose, the government has been communicating through diplomatic channels to procure Russia's Sputnik V, China's Sinopharm as well as vaccines from other sources.

China has offered five lakh doses of Sinopharm vaccine as gift, which Bangladesh is expected to bring from Beijing at its own expense.

The government is also working on signing an agreement with the Russian government for procuring the Sputnik V vaccine.

Bangladesh, however, is yet to get any response from China regarding its proposal made last week to purchase

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## THE BUSINESS

### Jobs restored, incomes not: CPD-Oxfam survey

Although almost all the people who had lost jobs in April to May last year because of the coronavirus pandemic found jobs by February, 86 per cent said they are not earning enough to meet their daily necessities, according to a survey of the Centre for Policy Dialogue and Oxfam Bangladesh.

STORY ON B1



## Mamata sworn in as West Bengal CM

Opposition parties boycott oath-taking ceremony

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Amidst opposition boycott, Mamata Banerjee, who powered Trinamool Congress to a landslide victory in West Bengal assembly elections, was sworn in as Chief Minister of the state for the third consecutive term under the shadow of violence in several parts of the state post-poll results in which 14 people were reportedly killed.

Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar yesterday administered the oath of office and secrecy to 66-year-old Mamata at a low-key ceremony in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Monsur Ali, an elderly man with severe breathing difficulties due to Covid-19, arrives at Dhaka Medical College Hospital from Lakshimpur. Confirmed cases of Covid-19 have fallen in recent days after peaking a month ago.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## MAMATA'S WIN: FOR DHAKA Not much hope for Teesta deal

Say international relations analysts; 'relief that secularism triumphed'

PORIMOL PALMA

Over the last decade, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been widely known in Bangladesh for her last-minute opposition to the Teesta water-sharing deal that could not be signed during the then Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka in 2011.

Now, upon any Indian dignitary's visit to Dhaka, the most prominent question is when the Teesta deal will be signed.

The response is always that it depends on West Bengal, as "the Indian constitution guarantees the state's right to say on international agreements on transboundary rivers."

As India's ruling party BJP conducted a major campaign spree in West Bengal before the polls, it had indicated the signing of the deal if BJP won the polls.

Even though the BJP bagged 77 seats in the assembly polls -- a significant advancement from the three seats it won in 2016 -- it is the Trinamool Congress, led by Mamata Banerjee, which has secured 213 of the state's 294 constituencies and is forming government for the third consecutive term.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen congratulated her for her victory.

"We believe, with your cooperation and commitment, the relations between the two countries will strengthen further and help resolve any outstanding issue," he said in a message sent to Mamata yesterday.

However, is the much-talked about Teesta issue really going to be resolved?

Former foreign secretary Touhid Hossain says the Teesta deal is not dependent on who's in power in West Bengal. It has been hanging for long and is likely to remain the same for a while longer.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

**BANGLADESH UPDATE**



**1,742**  
New cases in 24hrs



**7,67,338**  
Total cases



**11,755**  
Deaths



**6,98,465**  
Recoveries



**GLOBAL UPDATE**



**3,250,140**  
Deaths



**155,644,529**  
Total cases

## FBCCI's office building had no design approval

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's apex trade body FBCCI has constructed a multi-storey building in Old Dhaka's Hatkhola without an approved design and that's why it could not use the high-rise for a long time.

"The Hatkhola building remains empty for three years. Because the design of the building was not approved. We recently had the design approved," said FBCCI President Sheikh Fazle Fahim.

He was addressing a virtual programme marking the inauguration of the trade body's new logo and renovated federation building, FBCCI Icon, in Motijheel.

Fahim said the ownership of the Motijheel building is not yet in the name of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). The process is underway to take over the ownership and it is expected to be completed soon, he added.

According to the trade organisation, former finance minister AMA Muhiud Din had laid the foundation stone of the 13-storey FBCCI building on 14.43 katha land in Hatkhola on May 7, 2012. The construction cost of the building with a three-storey basement was Tk 36 crore. The National Development Engineering Limited (NDE) built the building.

Yesterday, Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to the prime minister, virtually inaugurated the FBCCI Icon building. Former presidents of the organisation Mahbubur Rahman, Mir Nasir Hossain, AK Azad, Abdul Matlub Ahmad and Shafiqul Islam Mohiuddin joined the programme.

Speaking at the event, Mohiuddin said, "Being in power, there is a tendency to ignore the law. Constructing the building without having its design approved is negligence on our part."

He said they lost the BCMEA building in Hatijheel even after buying a piece of land for Tk 4.15 crore. "While

registering the land after buying it from Export Promotion Bureau, it was found that they were not the owners. The original owner Bangladesh Railway did not give the ownership of the land to EPB."

AK Azad said there are two main problems of FBCCI -- it has no income and businessmen cannot sit in a place to hold meetings. He observed that they should have a big piece of land allotted in Purbachal.

Salman said, "We are harming ourselves with our whims. We build a building without an approved design."

He said the size of the country's economy is growing and the FBCCI is also getting bigger. And that's why it needs structural reforms.

Fahim said the lobby, meeting room and auditorium of the FBCCI Icon building have been named after the former presidents of the organisation.

He said the FBCCI will have some profit and non-profit organisations.

Clearance for setting up a university has already been received. The FBCCI board in a meeting last month approved setting up a number of institutions, including bank, insurance company, hospital and medical college. These institutions will be run under a foundation which will be led by former leaders of the trade body, Fahim added.

The FBCCI chief said he was not in favor of bringing money from the government for the development of the organisation. "If necessary, we will give money to the government."

Admitting the construction of the FBCCI building without an approved design, its former president Abdul Matlub Ahmad told The Daily Star that there was no need to do anything without following rules and laws. This might harm the office bearers of the trade body, he said.

"Everybody wanted to say to follow the rules and regulations to avoid unnecessary hassles," he said.



All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) party leader Mamata Banerjee takes formal oath as Chief Minister of West Bengal state at the Raj Bhavan in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Mamata sworn in

FROM PAGE 1

the "Throne" room of the British colonial-era building Raj Bhavan, with Covid-19 protocols in place.

Apart from senior TMC leaders like its Secretary General Partha Chatterjee and Subrata Mukherjee, Mamata's poll strategist Prashant Kishor and her lawmaker-nephew Abhishek Banerjee were present at the swearing-in ceremony.

Leaders of opposition parties including BJP state President Dilip Ghosh, state Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and the Left and the Congress did not attend the ceremony.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to Twitter to congratulate Mamata on her oath-taking as Chief Minister. Mamata took the oath in Bangla to become the 21st Chief Minister of WB.

Mamata alone took oath yesterday and her cabinet will be expanded with the induction of other ministers on May 9, the birth anniversary of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, TMC sources said.

Referring to the post-election results violence, Mamata told journalists at the Raj Bhavan, "I will tackle law and order from today and deal with these sternly. This is my second priority."

## India's Covid

FROM PAGE 1

1% of the country's population was fully vaccinated.

"What is happening in India right now is a horrifying preview of Nepal's future if we cannot contain this latest Covid surge that is claiming more lives by the minute," said Netra Prasad Timsina, chair of the Nepal Red Cross.

"It is beyond distressing to see that people cannot say goodbye to their loved ones as cremations are taking place at record levels due to these new Covid variants, which are striking down people of all ages in Nepal."

India accounted for nearly half the cases reported worldwide last week, the World Health Organization said yesterday, as Covid-19 deaths in the south Asian nation rose by a record 3,780 during the past 24 hours.

In a weekly report, the WHO said India accounted for 46% of global cases and a quarter of global deaths reported in the past week.

Daily infections rose by 382,315 yesterday, health ministry data showed. The number has been in excess of 300,000 every day for the past two weeks.

Hospitals are scrambling for beds and oxygen as they desperately battle a second deadly surge in infections, while morgues and crematoriums struggle to deal with a seemingly unstoppable flow of bodies.

Many people have died in ambulances and car parks waiting for a bed or oxygen.

In a scathing take-down, the Allahabad High Court has observed that the death of Covid-19 patients just for non-supply of oxygen to hospitals is a criminal act "not less than a genocide" by authorities entrusted with the task of ensuring that the oxygen supply chain is maintained.

A top scientific advisor to the government said a third wave was "inevitable" and the authorities should be prepared for it, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

"A phase three is inevitable given the higher levels of circulating virus but it is not clear on what time scale this phase three will occur. We should prepare for new waves," K Vijay Raghavan, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Indian government, Centre told the media in New Delhi yesterday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has been widely criticised for not acting sooner to suppress the second wave, as religious festivals and political rallies drew tens of thousands of people to "super spreader" events.

"We need a government. Desperately. And we don't have one. We are running out of air. We are dying," the Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy wrote in an opinion piece that called for Modi to step down.

India's delegation to the Group of Seven foreign ministers' meeting in London is self-isolating after two of its members tested positive for Covid-19, Britain said yesterday.

Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar, who is in London, said in a Twitter message that he would attend virtually. Broadcaster Sky News said Jaishankar did not test positive for the virus, however.

The eastern state of West Bengal, which dealt Modi's party a defeat in an election last week, suspended local train services and limited working hours for banks and jewellery shops, among its steps to limit infections.

**FALL IN VACCINATIONS, TESTING** Medical experts say India's actual figures could be five to 10 times the official tallies. The country has added 10 million cases in just over four months, after taking more than 10 months to reach its first 10 million.

Two "oxygen express" trains carrying liquid oxygen arrived in the capital, New Delhi, yesterday, railways minister Piyush Goyal said on Twitter. More than 25 trains have distributed oxygen supplies nationwide.

The government says supplies are sufficient but transport woes have hindered distribution.

India's surge in infections has coincided with a dramatic drop in vaccinations because of supply and delivery problems.

At least three states, including Maharashtra, home to the commercial capital of Mumbai, have reported a scarcity of vaccines, shutting down some inoculation centres.

## Directives hard to enforce

FROM PAGE 1

people and public transport from May 6 to May 16.

The government has been enforcing such restrictions since April 5 to check the sharp rise in Covid-19 cases and deaths in the country, which is battling the second wave of the pandemic.

During the last one month, the government, however, has relaxed many of the restrictions. It reopened shopping malls ahead of Eid and thousands of shoppers are thronging them every day, ignoring health safety rules.

It has alarmed health experts. The experts said the Covid situation in Bangladesh could worsen due to the increased public movement centring the Eid. They warned that the situation can turn dangerous if a new variant found in India made its way here.

Eid will be celebrated in around a week. Passengers welfare organisations estimate that around 80 lakh to 1.2 crore people leave Dhaka, Narayanganj, and Gazipur before Eid every year.

This time, a huge number of people have already left the cities, defying the government embargo. During the two Eids last year, thousands did the same and experts said the coronavirus situation worsened because of it.

**'DON'T LEAVE WORK STATIONS'** As per the new circular, officials and other employees of all government, non-government, autonomous offices, banks, and other financial institutions will not be allowed to leave their area during the Eid holidays.

Copy of the circular was sent to, among others, the Inspector General of Police, all divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners and upazila nirbarhi officers "for information and implementation".

Contacted, Shaikh Yusuf Harun, senior secretary of the public administration ministry, said, "All government employees are bound to obey the government order.

"Each and every employee has to take prior permission before leaving their workstations. If anyone leaves workstation without permission, action will be taken as per the service rules," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about those working at non-government and autonomous offices, he said, "I can comment only about government employees."

Contacted, Haider Ali Khan,

deputy inspector general of the police headquarters, said, "We will work to enforce the government decision."

However, another high-placed official of the police headquarters said it was the duty of the authorities of the office concerned to ensure that the government directive is followed.

"Nothing is clear about the police role in this regard," the official said, wishing not to be named.

**RUSH INCREASING** Thousands of people are leaving Dhaka every day by cars, microbuses and small vehicles amid this so-called lockdown, paying extra money.

Ferry services at the Shimulia-Kathalbari and the Paturia-Dauladia routes are experiencing huge pressure of passengers and it is likely to increase even more in the coming week.

A staffer of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Mawa Ferry Terminal, said they have been operating 12 to 13 ferries every day for the last few days as the number of cars and microbuses waiting to cross the Padma is going up.

"We're not stopping any private vehicles. I have not seen any step from the police side in this regard in the last few days," he said, wishing not to be named.

Zillur Rahman, deputy general manager of the BIWTC's Aricha office, said they operate four to five small ferries and two to three large ferries, if necessary, in the daytime and 14-16 at night.

Replying to a question, he said, "We are supposed to carry ambulance, goods-laden and emergency vehicles, but a huge number of cars and microbuses gather at the terminal every day. How can we send them back?"

A top official at the shipping ministry said cars, microbuses and passengers of other small vehicles are allowed to cross the river using the ferries considering the "ground reality". Because, in absence of ferries, desperate people will board trawlers and speedboats and it may lead to accidents, like the one on Monday.

A speedboat carrying 30 passengers crashed into a sand-laden bulk carrier in the Padma in Madaripur's Shibchar upazila, leaving 26 dead.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, however, said they would operate ferry services on a limited scale and only goods-laden and emergency vehicles would be

allowed to board the ferries.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT INSIDE DISTRICTS

As per yesterday's circular, all inter-district public transport would remain grounded. However, operation of public transport would be allowed inside district territories.

Train and launch services will also remain suspended.

Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, said they would operate buses inside districts following the government's directives.

A leader of transport owner association, however, said they were confused and that they did not know whether they could resume their operation ahead of Eid.

He said top operators, who operate long-haul buses, will not resume their services, but small operators may do it, even on the inter-district routes.

"It would be difficult to ensure that buses operate inside the territory of a particular district. Many buses may cross the district boundaries and claim that the bus belongs to another district," he said, wishing anonymity.

### WORKERS DEMAND LAUNCH SERVICES

Water transport workers yesterday demonstrated in Dhaka demanding immediate resumption of launch services on all routes across the country.

They said all the health rules will be followed. They also demanded payment of their salaries and arrears by tomorrow.

As per a scheduled programme announced by Bangladesh Noutan Sramik Federation, the workers started a protest procession in front of the central office of the federation in Dhaka and later marched towards the head office of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Speaking at the programme, their leaders said workers of launch and other public transport were affected the most by the "lockdown" as the government did not take any alternative measure to protect their livelihoods.

At the same time, people, including workers, are spending more than twice to travel to their home violating health rules.

Later, a five-member representative team handed a memorandum to the BIWTA chairman, says a press release.

## Stock depleting

FROM PAGE 1

Sinopharm vaccines.

The country's drug administration has already given emergency use authorisation to both Sputnik V and Sinopharm to expedite the process of procuring alternative vaccines.

Contacted, Health Minister Zahid Maleque told The Daily Star that they are expecting a response from China soon.

"I assume that due to holidays they [China] could not respond," said the health minister.

He said that the foreign ministry is working closely with the Chinese embassy to expedite the process.

"Once we get the proposal, we will go through the necessary scrutiny process and if everything goes smoothly, we will try to complete the agreement quickly," he said.

The health minister said a flight of Bangladesh Air Force is likely to go to Beijing on May 10 and bring the 5 lakh doses of Sinopharm vaccine.

Health officials had earlier said Sinopharm will be used as the first jab.

The Directorate General of Drug Administration had informed journalists that it would inoculate 1,000 people first and review the outcome before launching mass inoculation.

In early 2020, the Beijing Institute of Biological Products developed an inactivated coronavirus vaccine called BBIBP-CoV, also known as Sinopharm. China, the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, Pakistan and some other countries across the world are currently using it.

The World Health Organization has yet to approve it, but the WHO's advisory panel said Sinopharm has presented data on its vaccine indicating the levels of efficacy.

As uncertainty mounts over the second dose of Covishield for people who already got the first dose of Covishield, Bangladesh is hopeful of getting the vaccine from the US, which has 60 million extra AstraZeneca doses, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

US Ambassador Earl R Miller will meet the foreign minister today to update the government about the vaccine, he told reporters at his residence.

"Our ambassador in Washington DC wrote to the [US] state department. I also requested US Ambassador Miller here. Our request is under consideration," Momen said.

He said the US is prioritising Brazil and India, where the Covid-19 situation is worrisome.

The minister said the Indian diaspora community is strongly lobbying the US to give the country all the 60 million AstraZeneca doses.

"I also request our diaspora to lobby the US government to send vaccines to Bangladesh," he said.

Momen said Bangladesh has approached a number of European countries that have AstraZeneca vaccines, but the amount they have is very small.

"The possibility [of getting the vaccine from Europe] is not very high," he said.

### RUSSIAN PROPOSAL WITH LAW MINISTRY

Meanwhile, the health ministry sent to the law ministry the Russian government's proposal to supply the vaccines for final scrutiny of the legal aspects of the agreement.

"We are trying heart and soul to complete the process of the agreement. Once we get opinion from the law

ministry, we will send the proposal back to Russia," Syed Mojibul Huq, additional secretary of the health ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday.

In another development, an inter-ministerial meeting on vaccine procurement and distribution was held yesterday to analyse the overall vaccination situation.

"We have discussed how to make the efforts to buy two Covid-19 vaccines [from China and Russia]. Besides, the national committee on vaccine has been expanded with additional jurisdictions," Prof ABM Khurshid Alam, director general of DGHS, said.

"The committee has been asked to prepare a draft report shortly about the efficacy and safety of these two vaccines and when the vaccines will be available," he added.

Bangladesh's mass inoculation programme stumbled after the Serum Institute of India failed to ship the vaccine.

As per an agreement, Bangladesh was supposed to receive three crore shots in six months. Serum delivered the first 50 lakh doses in January, but shipped only 20 lakh in February. No shipment has been made since.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said yesterday that Bangladesh will get back the money paid for Covishield vaccines if Serum cannot supply any more doses as per the contract.

"We will take the money back when we will finally come to know that no vaccine will be supplied. We will definitely get back the money... Everything was done based on written contracts," he said.

### Lowest number

FROM PAGE 1

The overall positivity rate was 13.80 percent.

After the second wave of the pandemic hit the country in the second week of March, the number of daily cases had started going up. The number of daily cases and deaths had broken all previous records.

The highest -- 7,626 -- cases were recorded on April 7, while the highest number of deaths -- 112 -- were reported on April 19.

The daily positivity rate, however, has kept on declining since April 16, thanks to the "movement restrictions" imposed on April 5.

In the previous two months, the daily positivity rate had remained below five percent.

Meanwhile, 3,433 Covid-19 patients have recovered during the 24-hour period till 8:00am yesterday, raising the total number of recoveries to 698,465.

The recovery rate was 91.02 percent. Among the 50 deceased, 32 were males and 18 females.

Two were aged between 31 and 40 years, five between 41 and 50, 13 between 51 and 60 and 30 were above 60 years, added the release.

With the number of daily coronavirus cases on the decline, most of the general and ICU beds at the Covid-19 dedicated hospitals across the country now remain vacant.

There are 12,542 general beds for coronavirus patients across the country. Of those, 9,622 or more than 75 percent were vacant as of yesterday, according to the DGHS.

Of the total 1,090 ICU beds, 618 or more than half [57 percent] were unoccupied, the data show.

## Khaleda's family seeks govt's nod

FROM PAGE 1

She also said they didn't mention the name of any country in the application as possible destination, but they want to take Khaleda to the UK for better treatment.

Meanwhile, hospital sources said Khaleda was having breathing difficulties since yesterday afternoon and also complained of mild chest pain.

She had been stable without oxygen support till noon. But in the afternoon, she started having breathing problems and was given oxygen support, said the sources at the capital's Evercare Hospital where Khaleda is under treatment.

Earlier around 11:00 am, Professor Shahabuddin Talukdar, chief of the 10-member medical board formed to oversee Khaleda's treatment, examined her and suggested conducting an angiogram on her as she complained of mild chest pain.

Khaleda's family members were yet to decide on it, said sources in the family.

Her blood sugar level kept fluctuating between 14 and 18 millimoles per litre, they mentioned.

"She is suffering from post-Covid complications. Her age is a major cause for concern," said one of her family members, quoting doctors.

Khaleda was admitted to the hospital on April 27 night for diagnosis after being tested positive for Covid-19 for the second time on April 24. She was first tested Covid positive on April 11.

On Monday afternoon, Khaleda was shifted to the hospital's Coronary Care Unit with breathing difficulties. She has also been suffering from arthritis, diabetes and eye problems.

Her family members are thinking of taking her to the UK or Thailand or Singapore for better treatment.

**HURDLES** Taking Khaleda abroad amid the Covid crisis appears to be an option fraught with difficulties. As the second Covid wave continues to hit Asia hard, many countries have banned entry of people from South Asian nations.

The first choice of Khaleda's family is the UK where her elder son Tarique Rahman, along with his family members, has been staying since September 2008.

Khaleda's family members have

already contacted the UK High Commission in Dhaka, which has given assurance of full cooperation in this regard, one of them told this newspaper.

But the biggest hurdle is that if someone is sentenced for a term exceeding two years, the person cannot enter the UK until the country's home office gives him or her special permission.

Khaleda was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. The High Court later doubled her sentence.

"There is a legal bar to that [taking her to the UK]. Besides, she may not be able to make such a long journey because of her health condition, mentioned the family member.

Khaleda's family is considering Singapore as the next option.

But on April 30, Singapore said no visitors, who have been in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for the last two weeks, will be allowed to enter or transit through the country.

Even if the Bangladesh government allows the BNP chief to go to Singapore, there is a question whether that country will let her in.

Another viable option is Thailand as it is still accepting travellers from Bangladesh. And it takes only two and a half hours to fly to Bangkok from Dhaka.

Amid the Covid-19 outbreak, the government on March 25 last year freed Khaleda for six months through an executive order suspending her jail sentences in two corruption cases.

She was released from the prison cell at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University the same day. Since then, she had been staying at her Gulshan residence.

The government on August 27 last year extended the suspension of her sentences for six months. It was extended for another six months on March 15 this year.

On February 8, 2018, the BNP chief landed in Old Dhaka Central Jail after a court sentenced her to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. The High Court later doubled her sentence.

Khaleda was also found guilty in another graft case the same year. Her party, however, claims both the cases are politically motivated.

## 646 tonnes of plastic waste produced in Dhaka every day

Says WB country director; four teams awarded for innovative solutions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka city produces 646 tonnes of plastic waste every single day, which is 468 tonnes more than 15 years back in the capital, World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan Mercy Tembon said at a programme yesterday.

"In Dhaka city alone, plastic waste has gone up from 178 tonnes per day in 2005 to 646 tonnes per day in 2020," she said while addressing a workshop on "Sustainable Management of Plastic to Leverage Circular Economy and Achieve SDG in Bangladesh".

She also said addressing plastic pollution is a critical development agenda for ensuring green and smart growth.

The World Bank in association with the Department of Environment (DoE) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change organised the virtual programme as a part of the series of events. This was the fourth event in the series.

The World Bank yesterday also awarded four winning teams of a competition titled "Plastic Circularity Innovation Challenge", for bringing ideas of innovative solutions to combat plastic pollution in Bangladesh.

The contest was arranged for innovative solutions in two categories - collection or sorting, recycling of low-valued plastics and single-use plastics; and digital technology solutions in coping with plastic pollution

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Masks have become a hygienic necessity due to the pandemic. But this small traders is selling them by hanging them out on the dusty roads, which renders the hygiene aspect useless. This photo was taken yesterday from Barishal city's Girza Moholla area.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Woman dies after fall from rickshaw as muggers snatch her bag in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman died after she fell from a rickshaw as muggers from a private car pulled her bag in Dhaka's Kamalapur area early yesterday morning.

The deceased Sunita Rani Das (50), a resident of Gopibagh area, was a cleaner at the Buddhist temple in the capital's Mugda area.

The incident occurred around 6am when Sunita along with her nephew was heading towards the temple on a rickshaw.

As the rickshaw was passing BRTC bus depot, muggers from a private car pulled her bag so hard that she fell on the road and suffered severe head injury, said the deceased's son Sumon Chandra Das.

She was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead around 11am.

The muggers sped away with her bag.

The body was sent for autopsy. Yasin Arafat Khan, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station, said they are trying to identify the white car and arrest the muggers.

## Transgender volunteers winning hearts at DMCH

NILIMA JAHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Holding a placard inscribed with "I am a volunteer. How can I help you?" Sagarika was waiting at the entrance of Dhaka Medical College Hospital's Covid-19 unit. As soon as an ambulance arrived, she rushed towards it, helping the patient get off from the vehicle.

As the patient got down, she helped the wheelchair-bound patient get to the Covid-19 unit, while providing necessary instructions to family members.

Sagarika is one of 15 members of a group of volunteers serving patients at DMCH, 10 of whom, including Sagarika, are from the transgender community.

Clad in orange jackets, the volunteers have been an ever-present sight at the hospital since April 14, the first day of the current phase of the lockdown.

The group has been working under the platform "Brihonnola", a collective that works towards trans acceptance in Bangladesh.

"I feel very proud to be able to make such a contribution here. I'll admit, it took some time for people to accept us, but gradually their attitude towards us changed," Sagarika told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Their work includes loading and unloading patients from ambulances, sanitising patients and their family members, disinfecting their belongings, providing instructions on navigating the hospital premise, administrative assistance, helping in buying medicines, and a host of other favours.

In addition, they have been transporting discharged patients -- especially destitute pregnant women, children and elderly patients, and Covid survivors -- around the city, with a battery-run auto-rickshaw.

The service is completely free.

Every day, they have been providing around 20 trips for the discharged patients, who often face difficulties in managing and affording transportation services to reach home.

Sagarika, who completed her Bachelor of Social Science from Government Rajendra College in Faridpur, joined Brihonnola in 2018, when the organisation started its journey. She said her life has changed after joining the organisation.

"People will often come to us and praise us for what we do," she said. "It's really inspiring!"

## Rab arrests yaba-peddling 'gypsies' 77,000 pills recovered in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion on Tuesday conducted a drive in the capital's Basila area in Mohammadpur and arrested five youths of a drug racket with 77,000 yaba pills on Tuesday, who they said were taking an innovative disguise to peddle the contraband.

Rab-2 Commanding Officer Lt Col Imran Ullah Sarkar made the disclosure at a press briefing at the elite force's media centre in Karwan Bazar yesterday. He said the arrestees used to pose as members of the floating Bede (gypsy) community and travel from one place to another, carrying portable stoves and cooking utensils.

To avoid suspicions of people, they used to sell small items such as bangles, hair ribbons, children's belts, chains, safety pins, and rings. But behind all this, they were carrying yaba pills inside sealed-off cookers.

To dodge law enforcers, they didn't even use the highways from Cox's Bazar to Dhaka.

The arrestees are - Tarikul Islam (23), Sinbad (23), Mim Mia (22), Emon (19), and Monir (28).

The Rab official said acting on a tip-off, Rab came to know that a group of drug traffickers was coming to the Basila Bridge area of Mohammadpur with a large consignment of yaba through Buriganga river.

"Law enforcement agencies have never seen such a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Ensure budgetary allocation for persons with disabilities

Speakers tell virtual discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inclusive budget allocations for persons with disabilities are required to ensure accessibility for them in the society, said speakers at a virtual discussion yesterday.

Mentioning that persons with disabilities have been hit hard by the pandemic, they said the government needs to give priority to them while undertaking different plans and policies.

Access Bangladesh Foundation (ABF) and The Daily Star in collaboration with five organisations working for persons with disabilities -- Disabled Child Foundation, National Council of Disabled Women, Sitakund Federation, Turning Point Foundation, and Women with Disabilities Development Foundation -- organised the discussion on "Disability Inclusive National Budget 2021-22".

The speakers said there are strong and sufficient laws and policies for people with disabilities, but their implementation remains in poor state till date.

They stressed the importance of developing reliable database for persons with disabilities and determining their true

number through conducting nationwide census.

They said many people with disabilities who hold jobs or are self-employed have lost income opportunities amid the pandemic. The upcoming national budget needs to be prepared to deal with the Covid-19 situation, and providing support for food, cash transfer, skill development initiatives, education, health services and employment generation should be prioritised.

Presenting a concept paper, Vashkar Bhattacharjee, adviser to Sitakund Federation, said to allocate resources appropriately for development centring persons with disabilities, there is a need for reliable data, which is absent at present.

As per Household Income and Expenditure Survey-2016, persons with disabilities constitute 6.94 percent of the total population, whereas 2011-Population and Housing Census says it is 1.4 percent, Vaskar said.

On the other hand, in 2020-21 national budget, allocation for persons with disabilities is only 1.96 percent of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## 'Declaring Amin Uddin SCBA president without election against charter'

Says pro-BNP group of apex court lawyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The pro-BNP faction of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) yesterday protested the declaration of Attorney General AM Amin Uddin, a pro-Awami League lawyer, as the new SCBA president without election.

The announcement from SCBA Vice President Muhammad Shafique Ullah on May 4 is contradictory to its constitution, said its Secretary Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal, also leader of its pro-BNP group.

He was speaking at a press conference organised by the faction under the banner of SCBA in its auditorium.

The post of SCBA president was left vacant after its newly-elected President Abdul Matin Khasru died of Covid-19 on April 14.

The SCBA secretary told the press conference that the vacant post must be filled via election as per article-16 of its constitution.

The article-16 reads, "In the case of a casual vacancy occurring on account of the removal, resignation or death of any office bearer or other member, the vacancy shall be filled within a month by election in a Special General Meeting of the Association to be held for the purpose and the manner of this election shall be decided by the meeting itself."

Ruhul Quddus said the special general meeting, which was scheduled to be held on May 4, has been postponed without any discussion and decision.

Six BNP-backed office bearers of SCBA -- including Ruhul -- attended the press conference.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Cryptocurrency to finance militancy!

CTTC arrests two 'Neo-JMB operatives' from Jatrabari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counterterrorism officials claimed to have arrested two members of banned militant group "Neo-JMB" from Dhaka's Jatrabari area on Tuesday.

One of the arrestees was identified as Sakib Ahmed Chowdhury alias Jaki, while the other is a 17-year-old boy.

A team of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit arrested them when the two met in Matuail area, said Saiful Islam, a deputy commissioner of CTTC.

They are active members of the militant group, he said.

Sakib, after graduating from a private university, started working as a freelancer. He used to help finance the militant group through cryptocurrency, the DC said.

Another arrestee used to communicate with others through a secret messaging app for new recruitment.

Both of them have been carrying out propaganda campaigns inspired by violent extremist ideology through social media and other online platforms, CTTC officials said.



Workers were seen cleaning buses to get the vehicles ready for the roads. Much to commuters' relief, buses are set to ply the streets of Dhaka starting today. The photo was taken yesterday at Gulistan.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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# Sector commander Nooruzzaman's death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Lt Col (ret'd) Quazi Nooruzzaman, Bir Uttam, commander of sector-7 during the 1971 Liberation War.



Nooruzzaman joined the war having retired from the Pakistan Army a few years earlier. The March 25 genocide prompted him to take up arms, said a press release.

He continued leadership in the fight against war criminals and collaborators after the war. As the chairman of Muktiyuddha Sangsad in the early 1980s, he had demanded trial of war criminals and ban on Jamaat-e-Islami.

This movement led to him being jailed by the then dictator Ershad. Later, he became one of the primary founders and organisers of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee and was one of the 24 accused by the state for holding Gono Adalat (people's court) to try the war criminals.

Born to Quazi Sadul Ola and Ratubannesa in Jashore on March 24, 1925, Nooruzzaman studied chemistry at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata before joining British Indian Navy in 1943.

Nooruzzaman was also a noted progressive writer and thinker. He was the editor of the weekly Noya Pododdhoni and was the lead editor of a book "Ekattorer Ghatok o Dalalra Ke Kothaye".

His books include "Muktijudhho or Rajniti", "Bangladesher Samaj o Rajniti", "Swadesh Chinta", and "A Sector Commander Remembers Bangladesh Liberation War".



Transport workers surround a tiny booth at Chattogram city's Strand Road all day long, as they get to book their trucks for carrying consignments coming into Majhir Ghat area. With no spot to stand, some are balancing themselves on ledges, while one precariously dangles above his fellow workers. All of them are at risk of contacting Covid-19, as many can be seen without face-masks, and social distancing is non-existent. This photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

# Cumilla residents demand justice for college girl's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Several thousand citizens gathered to form a human chain at Kandiarpur of Cumilla yesterday noon to protest death of a college girl at her flat in Dhaka's Gulshan area.

The human chain was organised jointly by Muktiyuddha Santan Command Cumilla city unit and Amra Mukti Joddhar Santan's district unit.

The human chain turned into a mass demonstration as local lawmaker, Baha Uddin Bahar and different wings of Awami League along with public joined it spontaneously.

Anwar Hossain, general secretary of Muktiyuddha Santan Command's Cumilla city unit said, "The girl was daughter of a freedom fighter. We demand justice for her. The Bashundhara Group Managing Director cannot deny his role in this death. We want proper investigation."

Lawmaker Baha Uddin Bahar said, "Some media outlets have been trying to divert the attention away from the crime. We do not want to see such a Bangladesh where the media skews the news of a killing."

"The movement started from Cumilla and we will spread it through whole Bangladesh. We can't deny justice for a freedom fighter's daughter," said MP Bahar.

Multiple activists, lawyers, and politicians took part in the demonstration alongside mass people.

Earlier, lawyers of Cumilla Bar Association, freedom fighters and different organisations formed human chain and demanded arrest of Bashundhara Group's MD.

The protesters said the movement is just beginning, and they will go for stronger programmes in the future if any negligence is observed in the investigation into the college student's death.

# DU considering holding final exams online

DU CORRESPONDENT

The deans' committee of Dhaka University yesterday recommended holding final examinations of all academic years via online.

The committee recommended the examinations start from July 1, given that the Covid-19 situation in Bangladesh does not improve by June, confirmed pro vice-chancellor Prof ASM Maksud Kamal.

The recommendation came from a virtual meeting comprising of members of the committee, including deans of all faculties and the pro-VCs. DU VC Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman chaired the afternoon session.

"The deans of faculties concerned have been asked to prepare a strategy paper within two weeks on how the online tests will be conducted," pro-VC Maksud Kamal told The Daily Star.

Speaking to this correspondent, VC Prof M Akhruzzaman said, "As mid-term exams are already being conducted online, faculty members have recommended we also take the bigger exams online. This will be finalised through re-discussion at the university academic council meeting."

According to sources, the meeting of the academic council is scheduled to be held today.

# 'Make local authorities' permission mandatory

Says LGRD minister about unplanned dev in rural areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Permission from the local authorities should be mandatory to stop unplanned development in rural areas, said Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Tazul Islam yesterday.

Like towns, infrastructures of villages also need to be constructed in a planned way for sustainable development, he said while addressing a virtual meeting titled "Mayor Dialogue: Safe, Sustainable and Inclusive City" organised by Save the Children and Bangladesh Institute of Planners.

Adil Mohammad Khan, general secretary of BIP moderated the discussion, participated by mayors of Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Chattogram, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh cities.

# Ensure budgetary

FROM PAGE 3 social safety-net budget and 0.33 percent of the total budget, he said.

It is important to pinpoint area-based needs of persons with disabilities for an inclusive budget, said Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam.

National Human Rights Commission Chairperson Nasima Begum stressed transparency and accountability in government activities for persons with disabilities.

Welcoming discussants, The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam said his newspaper will stand by persons with disabilities and continue to publish reports, op-eds, and features upholding their needs and causes.

Considering the pandemic situation, there should be additional budget allocation for persons with disabilities, he said, adding the pandemic left them in a dire situation.

Addressing as chief guest, Planning Minister MA Mannan said he will raise the issue of sufficient budget allocation for persons with disabilities at the government's upcoming pre-budget meeting, scheduled to be held in the next few days.

Reserved seat lawmaker Aroma Dutta stressed coordination among government organisations while addressing needs of persons with disabilities.

Shibani Bhattacharjee, additional secretary of social welfare ministry, and Albert Mollah, co-founder and executive director of ABE, also spoke at the discussion.

# Rab arrests

FROM PAGE 3

tactic. The route they were using is also new. They didn't use the highway to bring yaba from Cox's Bazar to Dhaka," the Rab CO said, describing the drug trafficking route.

For coming from Cox's Bazar to Chattogram, they used to take village roads using various small vehicles like autorickshaws as an alternative instead of using the highway.

From Chattogram, they used to come to Dhaka in two phases, the Rab official said.

At first, they come to Feni from Chattogram's Anwara via Hathazari-Manikchhari-Guimara-Ramgarh to avoid law enforcers' check-posts at different places. Then from there, they come to Matlab Launch Ghat via Noakhali-Chaumuhani-Sonaimuri and Hajiganj of Chandpur. They would enter Dhaka via Munshiganj through the Buriganga river in engine-driven boats.

The Rab official said that this would take four to five days to come to the capital. All this time they used to live the life of Bede.

The elite force recovered cooking pots, buckets, display racks, and various imitation jewelry from their possession.

# Declaring

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, AM Amin Uddin told this correspondent on Tuesday night that there is no legal bar for him to discharge the responsibility of SCBA president as the executive committee (led by Muhammad Shafique Ullah) has issued a resolution declaring him elected.

"I will start discharging responsibility as the SCBA president later on because the regular court functions are now suspended due to

the Covid-19 pandemic. I will take necessary decisions after talking to relevant persons concerned of the SCBA," he added.

A special general meeting of the SCBA ended on Tuesday amid chaos and scuffle among lawyers and ignorance of health guidelines.

The incident occurred after ruling Awami League lawyers led by SCBA Vice President Muhammad Shafique Ullah proposed the name of outgoing president AM Amin Uddin as its new

president.

Shafique Ullah also declared AM Amin Uddin elected president of the prime bar association for rest of the period of 2021-2022 amid the chaos and scuffle.

Later in the day, the SCBA faction led by Shafique issued a resolution saying that all the members of the bar orally supported Amin Uddin as the new president as name of any other lawyers was not proposed in the meeting for the post of SCBA president.

# 646 tonnes

FROM PAGE 3

such as smartphone apps.

The three-member panel of judges included Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, chairman and CEO of Pran-RFL; Cyril Gutsch, CEO, Parley for the Oceans; and Marina Tabassum, founder and principal architect of Marina Tabassum Architects. The short-listed teams made presentations virtually in presence of the judges.

Ziaul Hasan, secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, said the Bangladesh government is committed to reduce pollution and ensure sustainable green growth.

The contest was launched in November 2020 and funded by PROBLUE, is an umbrella multi-donor trust fund, administered by the World Bank. The winners received Tk 80,000.

THE WINNERS AND WINNING PROPOSALS

Team Amity -- formed by Buet students Farhana Haque and Sadman Fakid, came up with the idea of integrated management of plastic wastes where they present a micro-credit business model addressing unemployment and involving a multi-modal approach to plastic waste collection, sorting and recycling.

Team Blues -- comprising Mahedy Hasan, Sakib Asrar, and Tanvirul Azim from North South University -- built a budget-friendly floating-aquatic-waste-cleaning robot made of readily available cheap materials and with minimal labor. This bot is made of floatable material that will hover on the water to collect the waste materials resulting in cleaning our water bodies.

Team Garbagegan -- founded by Fahim Uddin Shuvo -- presented a 'Recycling Platform', a free incentive-based digital way for environmentally

conscious individuals, households, restaurants, and organisations who will donate recyclable waste for recycling and upcycling purpose. The platform, Garbagegan Ltd, will formalise the supply chain of recyclables and create opportunities for green jobs, and conduct research and development to create scope to recycle and upcycle waste.

Team Green Beans -- comprising Mohammad Rayed and Asma Arisham, students of North South University; and Mahdi Ahmed from Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP), came up with the model 'Bottle Economy', a platform using USSD, a decade-old mobile communication protocol to connect poor people and scavengers with local recyclers, allowing them to sell plastic wastes directly while limiting the role of intermediaries. It encourages them to recycle plastics by providing monetary incentives.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)  
Office of the Project Director  
**Feasibility Study on Dhaka Outer Ring Road**  
Nagar Bhaban (Level-12), Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000

Memo No. 35.02.0000.010.14.004.2020-23 Date: 05/05/2021

**Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) Corrigendum Notice for**  
**Feasibility Study on Dhaka Outer Ring Road: Eastern, Western and Northern Part Project**

The following amendment has been carried out in the respect of the Date of Submission of the Request for EOI for "Feasibility Study on Dhaka Outer Ring Road: Eastern, Western and Northern Part" project due to continuous lockdown situation for COVID-19 spread out.

Reference	DTCA's Memo No. 35.02.0000.010.14.004.2020-21, dated 13/04/2021.
Present Information published earlier (Submission Deadline)	11 May, 2021
Revised Information (Submission Deadline)	27 May, 2021

**Md. Rokibul Hasan**  
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**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Magura PWD Division, Magura  
☎ 0488-62505, ☎ 0488-63005  
E-mail: ee\_magur@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No. 25.36.5500.270.35.024.21/828 Date: 21-01-1428 Bang 04-05-2021 Eng.

**e-Tender (OTM)**

Following e-Tender are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Magura PWD Division, Magura for the Procurement of:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Tender last selling date & time	Tender closing/opening date & time
01.	575307	Electric repair work of Burnt Underground Electric Line of Academic Building at NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:00
02.	575308	Electric repair work Due to worn out Condition of Academic Building, Hostel Building & Renovation of Computer Lab at NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:05
03.	575309	Removing of Old & Unserviceable 13 H.P. Submersible Pump & Supplying, Fitting & Fixing New Pump for Supplying water at Girls Hostel in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:10
04.	575316	Construction of New Toilet, Renovation with Repair work of Old Bathroom & Toilet at Girls Hostel in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:45
05.	575317	Renovation & Modernization works at Library & Computer Lab in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:50
06.	575318	Having No Boundary Wall Construction of New Boundary wall due to Safety issue at Girls Hostel in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 10:55
07.	575319	Supply, Fitting & Fixing Centrifugal Pump & a Tube-well for safe water at Girls Hostel in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:00
08.	575320	Repair work with supply, Fitting & Fixing Thai Glass, Tiles works at Instructors Office Room in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:05
09.	575321	Repair work with Renovation & Modernization works at worn out Office Room of Nursing Instructor in Charge in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:10
10.	575322	Repair & Renovation works of worn out Dining & Kitchen in NTC, Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:15
11.	575332	Construction of New Gate having no gate at NTC in Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:55
12.	575325	Construction of Beautiful Gate at Circuit House in Magura (FY-2020-2021).	12-May-2021 17:00	16-May-2021 11:30

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and offline & hard copies will not be accepted. e-Tender may be details obtained from e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

**Mohammad Moniruzzaman**  
Executive Engineer  
Magura PWD Division, Magura

# Transgender

FROM PAGE 3

But this praise is only the result of the indebtedness the patients feel for them. Old Dhaka's Monir Hossain contracted the virus along with her entire family.

The private service holder told this newspaper that Brihonnola's volunteers helped his family a lot during their seven-day stay at DMCH's Covid unit.

"They helped us buy whatever we needed. They were there whenever we called. Sometimes, it was an urgent pill, other times it was a bottle of water or food," he said.

"Since every one of my family was affected, we literally got no support from our relatives and close friends. But these volunteers were by our side for the whole week," the gratitude could be heard from his tone.

Praise also flowed in from the hospital authority. DMCH Director Brig Gen Nazmul Haque said, "Brihonnola's volunteers have become a great asset for us, especially since we have limitations regarding support staff."

"Patients who come from outside Dhaka and are new to our hospital have greatly benefitted by them," he added.

But all this work comes with a risk, and the volunteers try their best to offset it. Munmun, another transgender volunteer, said, "Since we work for Covid patients, we need to maintain maximum hygiene and social distancing."

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ  
কমান্ড্যান্ট (পুলিশ সুপার) এর কার্যালয়  
ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, দামপাড়া, চট্টগ্রাম

**উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

তারিখঃ ০৫/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০১/২০২০-২১, ৩৫৩

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন, ২০০৬ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী-২০১৯ অনুযায়ী চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ ইউনিটের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, চট্টগ্রাম কার্যালয়ে আগামী ২০২১-২২ অর্থ সনে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশ প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে নিজস্ব প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাডে সীলমোহরকৃত মুদ্রাবদ্ধ বামে প্রতিযোগীতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়, জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
০২	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
০৩	সংগ্রহকারী সত্তা	ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।
০৪	দরপত্র আহ্বান/সম্পাদনকারীর পদবী ও ঠিকানা	কমান্ড্যান্ট (পুলিশ সুপার), ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইন্স, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।
০৫	সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
০৬	বাজেট বা তহবিলের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, ঢাকা হতে বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি।
০৭	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	০৬/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ
০৮	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশ হতে ২৪/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।
০৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইন্স, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।
১০	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	কমান্ড্যান্ট (পুলিশ সুপার), ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইন্স, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম (নির্দিষ্ট বক্সে) ২৫/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ (বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকায়)।
১১	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৫/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ (বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায়) দরদাতা বা মনোনীত প্রতিনিধির উপস্থিতিতে যদি থাকে।
১২	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস	ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।
১৩	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের স্থান	ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।
১৪	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	২৮/০৫/২০২১খ্রিঃ (বেলা ১০.৩০ ঘটিকায়)।
১৫	দরপত্রের সাথে যে সকল কাগজপত্রাদি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে	ক) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স খ) টিন নম্বর উল্লেখসহ আয়কর পরিশোধের হালনাগাদ সনাদ গ) ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনাদপত্র ঘ) সর্বশেষ ০৩ মাসের বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংকের সহিত লেনদেনের স্টেটমেন্ট ও আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতার সনাদপত্র ঙ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি চ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতার সনাদপত্র ছ) দরপত্র দাখিলকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান কোন সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানে কোনো তালিকাভুক্ত নয় মর্মে হলফনামা জ) প্রতিষ্ঠানের মালিকানার সনাদপত্র ১ম শ্রেণীর কর্মকর্তার নামমুক্ত সীলসহ সত্যায়িত কপি (তফসিলে বিস্তারিত)
১৬	দরপত্রের বিষয়	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য
১৬(ক)	স্বাস্থ্যবিধান সামগ্রী এবং অন্যান্য মনিহারি মালামাল ক্রয়	৫০০/-
১৬(খ)	ব্যবহার্য দ্রব্যাদি ও প্রশিক্ষণ সামগ্রী ক্রয়	৫০০/-
১৬(গ)	কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী ক্রয়	৫০০/-
১৬(ঘ)	যন্ত্রপাতি ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জাম ক্রয়	৫০০/-
১৬(ঙ)	বিিন্ন কতৃপক্ষ সর্বনিম্ন দর গ্রহণে বাধ্য নহবে, কোনো কারণ দর্শনো ব্যতিক্রমে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিলা করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

অনিদিষ্টা বড়ুয়া  
বিপি-৭৫০৫১১৯১৮৫  
কমান্ড্যান্ট (পুলিশ সুপার)  
ইন-সার্ভিস ট্রেনিং সেন্টার  
সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম

জিডি-৯০৮



Workers tending saplings in a watermelon field in Katianagla village of Khulna's Batiaghata upazila. The scrumptious summer fruit is being cultivated on about 3,407 hectares of land in the district this year.

PHOTO: STAR

# Watermelon turning fallow land lively in Khulna

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Only about ten to twelve years ago, thousands of acres of land in Khulna would remain uncultivated after the harvesting of Aman rice, but growing of watermelon there did not cross the farmers' minds.

In course of time, the scenario has changed and a growing number of farmers in the district are cultivating watermelon on the unused land in the hope of making a quick buck.

Cultivation of watermelon is being encouraged in the district -- especially along the coast where land is sandy and relatively high in salinity -- as the popular summer fruit is more profitable than traditional crops such as rice or sesame.

This year 7,461 hectares of land in nine upazilas of the district have been brought under watermelon cultivation, up from 3,085 hectares last year, according to Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Khulna.

Last month, while visiting at least 20 villages -- including Khejuria, North Banishanta, Kalikabati, Harintana, Laudob, Kailashganj, Dhopadi, Dacope, West Bajua and East Bajua in Dacope upazila; Baranpara, Gangarampur, Bayarbhangra and Debitala in Batiaghata upazila; and Sharafpur and Bahir Akra in Dumuria upazila, this correspondent found farmers, their family members and hired workers in their hundreds tending watermelon saplings in swathes of crop fields.

Bimal Krishna Roy, from Pankhali

village under Chalna municipality, said he cultivated watermelon for the first time; otherwise the land would lie fallow during this time of the year. In Jhaltala beel area under Sharafpur union of Dumuria upazila, only one crop used to be cultivated each year. But when five farmers cultivated watermelon on five bighas of land there last year, the fruit is being grown on 150 acres this year.

Pankaj Kumar Gain, a farmer from the area, said the few people who planted watermelon there last year made a good profit. Encouraged by their success, more than 100 farmers are growing watermelon in the area this year. Higher returns from a minimal investment and labour are drawing more farmers into watermelon farming, he also said.

Seasonal worker Rehena Begum, from Katianagla village of Batiaghata, said she used to be jobless around this time of the year, but thanks to watermelon farming, she has been making between Tk 350 and Tk 400 every day, at an hourly wage rate of Tk 45 to Tk 50.

Meanwhile, many farmers said they have been facing shortage in water for irrigation around this time of the year. All water bodies in the area dried up, while tube wells were not functioning due to a fall in groundwater level, said Aroni Mondal, a farmer in Katianagla village.

According to the DAE, in Khulna division, the highest amount of

watermelon is produced in Khulna district, where 1,20,000 tonnes of the fruit, worth Tk 250 crore, was produced on 2,000 hectares of land last year. This year, watermelon is being cultivated on about 3,407 hectares of land in Khulna, with 65 to 70 percent of the total production being expected in Dacope upazila alone. More than 12,000 people are currently involved in the cultivation of the crop.

Mehedi Hasan, agriculture officer in Dacope upazila, said they encourage locals to cultivate watermelon, as it is more profitable than rice. Dumuria Upazila Agriculture Officer Mosaddek Hossain said watermelon fields can be seen in many villages in the upazila, where the fruit has been cultivated on 450 acres of land.

A number of farmers said the government should set up cold storages in the area so excess production of watermelon can be preserved and exported overseas for more attractive returns. DAE Deputy Director Hafizur Rahman said farmers in Khulna made good profits from watermelon last year.

Consequently, a wider area where only one crop used to be grown is now being brought under watermelon cultivation for the first time. However, irrigation facilities in the area need to be improved for an increased production, he added.

# Bridge that turned a death trap finally collapses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A worn-out bridge on a canal on Nagarpur-Dargam via Chhanka Bazar in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila has collapsed disrupting communication to the upazila health complex and adjacent Doulatpur and Sauria upazilas of Manikganj district and also Dhaka from the upazila headquarter.

The bridge, which remained at dilapidated condition for a long time, finally collapsed after a sand-laden truck crossed it at 9:00pm on Friday. However, no casualty was reported in the incident.

The bridge was a lurking danger for hundreds of people as well as vehicles, including heavy ones, moving through it.

However, the authorities concerned did not take any measures in this regard until it finally collapsed. Moreover, they at least did not hang any signboard at the ends of the risky bridge warning the people and transport workers, locals said.

The bridge near the Nagarpur Government Primary School and Upazila Health Complex was constructed before the Independence of Bangladesh but no repairing or reforms except for painting its railings was done in the past years, told Abdus Salam, 70, owner of a grocery shop near the bridge.

"As there is no alternative way nearby, people were also moving through the damaged bridge taking risk," he said.

Ramkrishna Saha Rama, a local rights activist, said the ancient and worn out bridge remained in a vulnerable condition for long and eventually could cause casualties.



The worn-out bridge on a canal in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila collapses when a sand-laden truck was crossing it on Friday night.

PHOTO: STAR

"The authorities should have taken immediate steps to resolve the problem," he said.

Contacted, Mahbubur Rahman, upazila engineer (Local Government and Engineering Department) in Nagarpur, said they have already discussed the matter with the upazila administration and concerned others to resolve the problem.

"As the canal has silted up and died, we have taken plan to link up the gap with a road in place of the bridge filling earth and Haring Bone Bond (HBB) works. The works will start very soon," he said.

"We have also employed a watchman on there for cautioning the commuters. The commuters are also being requested to use alternative ways to go to their destination until completion of the works," he added.

# College girl found dead in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A college girl was found dead at her bedroom in Singra upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased, Nusrat Jahan Tripti, 21, an HSC second-year student at Singra Gol-e-Afroz Government College, was daughter of Abdul Awal of Chhotochaugram village in the upazila.

Quoting the victim's family members and neighbours, police said after being scolded by her father allegedly over a family issue on Tuesday night Tripti went to sleep at her room.

The following morning, neighbours saw her body lying on the bed and informed the police, who recovered the body and sent it to Natore Sadar Hospital for autopsy, Officer in Charge (OC) of Singra Police Station Nur-E-Alam said.

Primarily they suspect that it is a murder as marks of injuries were found on a victim's body, the OC said, adding that they detained victim's parents from the spot and later released them after quizzing.

The reason behind the death will be clear after the autopsy, the OC added.



Four hundred and nineteen 419 bus staffers, who have been sitting idle due to the ongoing countrywide lockdown, received 15 kilograms of rice each from Tangail's Gopalpur upazila administration on Tuesday. Tangail district administration allocated 63 tonnes of rice for a total of 4223 bus staffers in all the 12 upazilas of the district.

PHOTO: STAR

জীবনের জন্য বিজ্ঞান

“বিসিএসআইআর ঢাকা ও চট্টগ্রাম কেন্দ্রে নিরাপদ ও স্বাস্থ্যকর শটকী মাছ প্রক্রিয়াকরণ এবং ইনডোর ফার্মিং গবেষণা সংক্রান্ত সুবিধাদি স্থাপন” শীর্ষক প্রকল্প, বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি মন্ত্রণালয়

নং: ৩৯.০২.০০০০.০৩০.০৫.০০৩.২৩/০৩৬-৩৭ তারিখ: ০৫.০১.২০২১

### Tender Notice (Local)

Tender ID	Name of work	Tender closing & opening date and time
576510	Supply of Book, Fish feed, leaflet and materials, fire-extinguisher system, electro-mechanical service, raw materials and minor items	24-May-2021 15:00
576529	Supply of Raw material and spare parts, research material and minor items	24-May-2021 15:00

GD-901 মোঃ রেজাউল করিম প্রকল্প পরিচালক

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ

বেলগোয়ে পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স

কমলাপুর, ঢাকা।

www.police.gov.bd

### দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (ওটিএম)

আরক নং- ২৫২০ তারিখ-০৫/০৫/২০২১ইং।

"The Public Procurement Regulations-2008" সংশোধনী এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ এর অধিকতর সংশোধনী আইন মোতাবেক চলতি ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসরে বেলেগে পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, কমলাপুর, ঢাকা কার্যালয়ের নিম্নবর্ণিত জন্ম, সরবরাহ/সেবা কাজের টিকাদার নিয়োগের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত টিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র.সং	বিস্তারিত বিবরণ	দরপত্র দাখিলের মূল্য	টেন্ডার সিদ্ধির তারিখ	কাজের সময় সীমা
১.	মহাপত্র/বিভাগ	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
২.	এজেন্ট	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৩.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৪.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৫.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৬.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৭.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৮.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
৯.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১০.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১১.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১২.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১৩.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১৪.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১৫.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর
১৬.	সহকারী সফটওয়্যার	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা)	১০.০৫.২০২১	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসর

সকল কার্যবিবরণীতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র শিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে।  
উল্লেখ্য যে, যাদের ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।  
দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।

মহাপত্রস্বাক্ষরক  
প্রকিউরমেন্ট  
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক

GD-906

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা  
ঢাকা- ১২০৮

### দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেম সমূহের প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করছেঃ-

ক্রঃ নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/২০২১/১৯২ তারিখঃ ০৫/০৫/২০২১ইং	প্রিন্টেড এ্যালুমিনিয়াম ফয়েল ফর ওআরএস ১/২ লিটার (lccdr'b) উইথডঃ (৮৬০ এবং ১৬০) এমএম {Printed Alu.Foil for ORS ½ Litre Width: (860 & 160) mm} (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	১,০০০.০০ কেজি

সিকিউরিটি/আর্নেস্ট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ৭৫০.০০ (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) মাত্র	২৭/০৫/২০২১ইং বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা	২৭/০৫/২০২১ইং বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকা

## MAJOR TALIBAN OFFENSIVE US warplanes help Afghan forces

AFP, Kandahar

American warplanes were backing Afghan forces against a major Taliban offensive in the south of the country even as the US military pressed on with a troop withdrawal, officials said yesterday.

Fierce fighting has erupted in Helmand province since the weekend, when the US military formally began withdrawing its remaining troops.

They were supposed to have been pulled out by May 1 under a deal struck with the Taliban last year, but Washington pushed back the date to September 11 -- a move that has angered the insurgents.

"The heavy US air strikes against the Taliban positions stopped them from advancing towards Lashkar Gah," said Atiqullah, a local government official, referring to the provincial capital.

"The bombing was intense. I have never seen such bombardment in several years."

Attullah Afghan, head of the Helmand provincial council, told AFP Taliban forces had made advances, but government forces had "retaken some of these areas".

A US defence official confirmed air support was backing government forces.

Thousands of Afghans have fled their homes and taken refuge in Lashkar Gah in the face of the new fighting, officials and residents say.

Afghan government officials said dozens of Taliban fighters were killed in fighting on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah as they attempted to overrun checkpoints. The Taliban, meanwhile, said scores of Afghan security personnel had died.

Fighting was also reported in other provinces.



Farmers shout slogans as they make their way to Delhi to join farmers who are continuing the protest against the central government's recent agricultural reforms, in Beas some 55 km from Amritsar, India yesterday. While India battles soaring Covid-19 infections, on the outskirts of New Delhi thousands of farmers still occupy camps where they are keeping up a months-long sit-in protest against government legislation that they say harms them. Farmers began marching towards New Delhi in November to protest against three laws that give the private sector a greater role in buying, pricing and storing agricultural goods and reduce state protection enjoyed by growers for decades.

PHOTO: AFP

## UK eyes third Covid jab for people over 50

REUTERS

Everyone aged over 50 in Britain will be offered a third Covid-19 vaccination jab in the autumn in an attempt to eradicate the threat from the infection entirely by Christmas, The Times newspaper reported.

Trials of two options are under way, supervised by Chris Whitty, the chief medical officer for England, the newspaper said.

The first involves vaccines specifically modified to tackle new variants. The second is for a third shot of one of the three versions already in use: Pfizer-BioNTech, Oxford-AstraZeneca or Moderna, the newspaper reported.

A total of more than 34.6 million people in Britain have been given a first dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

Britain, which has a population of 67 million, has deals for over 510 million doses of eight different COVID-19 vaccines, some of which remain under development.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Germany eyes to become carbon neutral by 2045

The German government yesterday said it would set more ambitious targets to reduce CO2 emissions after a landmark ruling by the country's top court declared a flagship climate protection law "insufficient". The government now expects to slash emissions by 65 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and by 88 percent by 2040, with the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2045, five years earlier than previously expected, Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said at a press conference in Berlin.

#### New Zealand PM Ardern plans summer wedding

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern plans to get married during summer but did not disclose the date, local media reported yesterday. Ardern told Coast Radio that she and her partner television host Clarke Gayford have "finally got a date" for the wedding. New Zealand Herald said in a report. Ardern, 40, got engaged to Gayford, 44, in 2019 and they have a two-year-old daughter. The wedding being planned in summer, which runs from December to February in the southern hemisphere, might not be celebrated in the traditional way as Ardern admitted she "feels a bit too old to have a bridal party", media reports quoted her as saying.

#### US ex-cop convicted of Floyd murder seeks new trial

Derek Chauvin, the white ex-policeman convicted of murdering African-American man George Floyd, asked Tuesday for a new trial on claims of jury and prosecution misconduct. The 45-year-old -- who knelt on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes in Minneapolis -- faces up to 40 years in prison after being found guilty last month in a case that prompted a national reckoning on racial injustice and police brutality. Chauvin's attorney Eric Nelson argued that his client did not get a fair trial due to publicity around the case, court and prosecution errors, as well as "race-based pressure" on the jury.

#### Saudi Arabia may bar hajj pilgrims for second year

Saudi Arabia is considering barring overseas pilgrims from the annual hajj for the second year running as Covid-19 cases rise globally and worries grow about the emergence of new variants, two sources familiar with the matter said yesterday. Such a move would restrict the pilgrimage to Makkah, a once in a lifetime duty for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it, to Saudi nationals and residents of the kingdom who were vaccinated or have recovered from Covid-19 at least months prior to attending.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

## Myanmar crisis deepens

Ousted gov't to form 'defence force' uniting rebels to protect people

AFP, Bangkok

A shadow government of ousted Myanmar lawmakers yesterday said it has set up a "people's defence force" to protect civilians, as the police and military deploy deadly arms against anti-coup protesters.

The country has been in turmoil since the military deposed civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi, triggering a mass uprising of daily protesters and a nationwide boycott from civil servants.

So far, nearly 770 people have been killed in deadly crackdowns, according to a local monitoring group -- though the junta has a far lower death toll which it blames on "rioters".

A group of ousted lawmakers who call themselves the "National Unity Government" (NUG) and are working underground to oppose the junta announced their own "people's defence force" to "stop the use of violence against people".



It is intended as a precursor to a "Federal Union Army", the NUG said in a statement -- referring to a long-touted idea of bringing anti-coup dissidents together with Myanmar's ethnic rebel fighters into an army.

Some in the anti-coup movement have called for unity among Myanmar's myriad rebel armed groups to defeat the military's well-trained soldiers.

A few of the groups have condemned the military coup and the use of violence against unarmed civilians. Some are also providing shelter and even training to dissidents

who flee into their territories.

But the more than 20 groups -- made up of disparate ethnic minorities agitating for more autonomy -- have long distrusted the ethnic Bamar majority, including lawmakers affiliated with Suu Kyi's government.

An official of the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) -- which has said it is sheltering anti-coup dissidents -- expressed scepticism at the NUG announcement.

"As far as I know, it is the people themselves who walk into the jungle and receive the training from the (ethnic armed organisations)... it is not decided by the NUG," said KNPP vice-chair Khu Oo Reh.

He added that while the NUG has spoken with many rebel groups about a militia made up of civilians, "I have no idea what their intentions are."

Another group along Myanmar's eastern border, which declined to be named, said the statement was "confusing".

### UP PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS

## Warning signs for BJP

AGENCIES

The results of the recently-held panchayat polls in Uttar Pradesh do not look good for the ruling BJP led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ahead of state assembly election to be held next year.

The results which came after the party suffered a defeat in West Bengal state assembly polls.

Should the BJP begin to panic now on account of the panchayat election results? Has the Covid bug finally bitten the voters in India's most-populous state, a state that accounts for 80 Lok Sabha seats and will vote for its next government 10 months from now?

The BJP has managed only eight of a possible 40 seats in Ayodhya, the temple town where Yogi lavishes much attention. Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party (SP) managed 24 seats, Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) landed four, and independents six.

In Mathura, the BJP won only eight of the 33 district panchayat seats, while the BSP emerged as the biggest gainer with 13 seats. In Varanasi, which has twice elected PM Modi to the Lok Sabha, the Samajwadi Party has won 15 seats, the BSP plus independents 17 and the BJP just 8.

In the Panchayat polls, candidates are supported by political parties but do not contest as their representatives.

But, as the results show, there are enough warning signs for BJP in UP, a core state for saffron party. Out of 3050 seats in the polls, BJP managed to get 599 seats. SP got 790 seats while BSP secured 354 seats. The Congress also won 60 seats. And the rest- 1247 seats- went to independents.

That is a lot in a state where the BJP swept the last assembly election in 2017 with 40% of the vote and 321 of a possible 403 seats.



Lilaben Gautambhai Modi, 80, wearing an oxygen mask, sits inside an ambulance as she waits to enter a Covid-19 hospital for treatment in Ahmedabad, India, yesterday. A top scientific adviser to the Indian government yesterday warned the country would inevitably face further waves of the coronavirus pandemic, as almost 4,000 people died in the space of a day.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Facebook oversight board upholds Trump ban

AFP, Washington

Facebook's independent oversight board yesterday upheld the platform's ban on former US president Donald Trump while ordering further review of the case, in a decision with a potentially far-reaching impact on the regulation of online speech.

The board, whose decisions are binding on the leading social network, said Trump "created an environment where a serious risk of violence was possible" with his comments regarding the January 6 rampage by his supporters at the US Capitol.

"Given the seriousness of the violations and the ongoing risk of violence, Facebook was justified in suspending Mr Trump's accounts on January 6 and extending that suspension on January 7," the board said after its review.

But the panel also ruled that "it was not appropriate for Facebook to impose the indeterminate and standardless penalty of indefinite suspension."



"Within six months of this decision, Facebook must reexamine the arbitrary penalty it imposed on January 7 and decide the appropriate penalty," the review board said in its written opinion.

The case had been intensely followed for its repercussions for social networks seeking to curb misinformation and abusive content while remaining open to political discourse.

Trump was suspended from Facebook and Instagram after he posted a video during the deadly January 6 storming of the Capitol in which he told his supporters: "We love you, you're very special."

The US leader was banned permanently by Facebook the following day, and he was taken off other platforms including Twitter and YouTube.

Trump's former chief of staff Mark Meadows, responding to the decision, said it would have a chilling effect on free speech and that Facebook needed to be regulated or broken up.

## Space aged Wine matured aboard ISS expected to sell for \$1m

AFP, New York

If a bottle of Petrus 2000 that Christie's is selling tastes out of this world it might be because it aged for 14 months aboard the International Space Station.

Christie's hopes the bottle, now up for grabs in a private sale, will fetch \$1 million, which would make it the most expensive wine ever sold.

The bottle is one of a batch of 12 that European startup Space Cargo Unlimited sent into orbit as part of research into how food and drink matures in space.

The wine spent almost 440 days in space, or the equivalent of 300 trips to the Moon, Space Cargo Unlimited Nicolas Gaume said in a press release. It left for the ISS on November 2, 2019 in a spacecraft known as a Cygnus capsule and returned on January 14, 2021 aboard a Dragon capsule manufactured by Elon Musk's SpaceX.

At the end of a blind tasting, the researchers noted "remarkable differences in the colour, aroma and taste components," between the celestial bottles and equivalents which had remained on earth.

The sale is expected to smash the record price for a standard 750 ml bottle of wine. The most expensive was a 1945 Romanee-Conti Burgundy which sold at Sotheby's in New York for \$558,000 in 2018.



পিসিআইবি-এটুআই  
গণমাধ্যম পুরস্কার  
২০২১  
গণমাধ্যম : উন্নয়নে, প্রযুক্তিতে



প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিসিআইবি) ও এটুআই-এর যৌথ উদ্যোগে পিসিআইবি-এটুআই গণমাধ্যম পুরস্কার প্রবর্তন করা হয়েছে। তথ্যপ্রযুক্তিনির্ভর বাংলাদেশ গড়ার ক্ষেত্রে গণমাধ্যমকর্মীদের ভূমিকার স্বীকৃতি হিসেবে এ পুরস্কার চালু করা হয়। এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য গণমাধ্যমকর্মীদের কাছ থেকে ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ এবং তথ্যপ্রযুক্তিবান্ধব নাগরিক সেবা সম্পর্কিত যেকোনো বিষয়ে প্রকাশিত অথবা প্রচারিত প্রতিবেদন, ফিচার এবং আলোকচিত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে। প্রতিযোগিতায় নিম্নোক্ত ৮টি ক্যাটাগরিতে একজন করে মোট ৮ জন গণমাধ্যমকর্মীকে পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে।

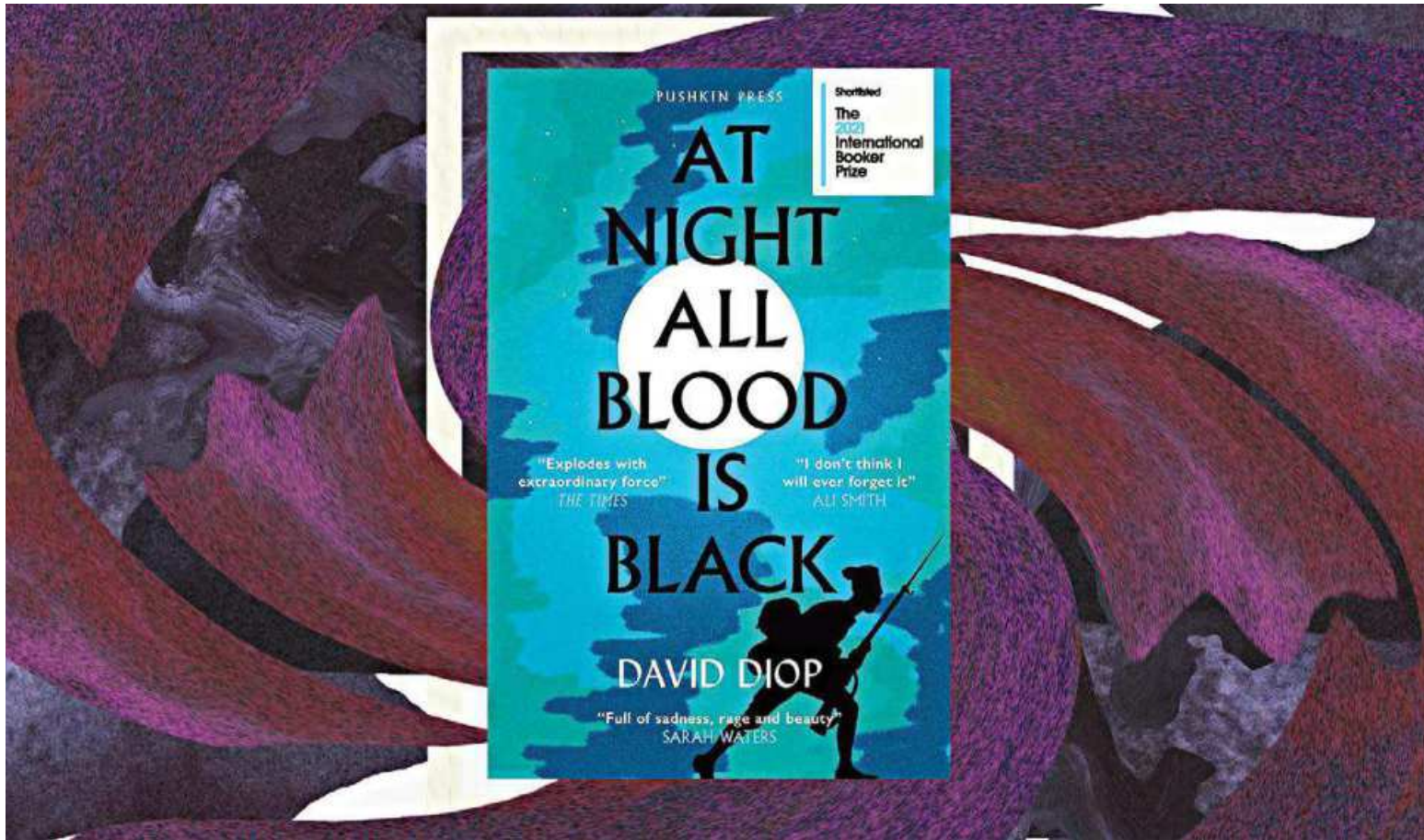
- জাতীয় দৈনিক সংবাদপত্র (বাংলা) ক্যাটাগরি : রাজধানী ঢাকা থেকে যেকোনো বাংলা জাতীয় দৈনিক সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার।
- জাতীয় দৈনিক সংবাদপত্র (ইংরেজি) ক্যাটাগরি : রাজধানী ঢাকা থেকে যেকোনো ইংরেজি জাতীয় দৈনিক সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার।
- আঞ্চলিক সংবাদপত্র ক্যাটাগরি : রাজধানী ঢাকা ব্যতীত দেশের যেকোনো অঞ্চলের বাংলা ও ইংরেজি দৈনিক সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার।
- টেলিভিশন ক্যাটাগরি : সরকার অনুমোদিত টেলিভিশন চ্যানেলে সম্প্রচারিত প্রতিবেদন।
- বেতার ক্যাটাগরি : বাংলাদেশ বেতার, এফএম রেডিও এবং কমিউনিটি রেডিওতে সম্প্রচারিত প্রতিবেদন।
- অনলাইন সংবাদপত্র ক্যাটাগরি : অনলাইন সংবাদপত্র/পোর্টালে (বাংলা ও ইংরেজি) প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার।
- নারী সাংবাদিক ক্যাটাগরি : বাংলা, ইংরেজি পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার ও সরকার অনুমোদিত টেলিভিশন চ্যানেলে সম্প্রচারিত প্রতিবেদন।
- আলোকচিত্র ক্যাটাগরি : ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ এবং তথ্যপ্রযুক্তিবান্ধব নাগরিক সেবা সম্পর্কিত যেকোনো বিষয়ের আলোকচিত্র।

বিজয়ীরা পাবেন নগদ ৭৫,০০০/(পঁচাত্তর হাজার) টাকা  
(ট্যাক্স অন্তর্ভুক্ত), ক্রেস্ট ও সনদপত্র

প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার/আলোকচিত্র প্রেরণ ও অংশগ্রহণ প্রক্রিয়া:

- প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার/ ০১ জানুয়ারি ২০২০ থেকে ১৫ মে ২০২১ এর মধ্যে প্রকাশিত-সম্প্রচারিত হতে হবে।
- একজন গণমাধ্যমকর্মী মোট ২টি ক্যাটাগরিতে আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
- দৈনিক সংবাদপত্র/অনলাইন পত্রিকার ক্ষেত্রে প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচারের কপি জমা দিতে হবে।
- টেলিভিশন ক্যাটাগরির ক্ষেত্রে সরকার অনুমোদিত টিভি চ্যানেলে প্রচারিত প্রতিবেদন সিডিতে রূপান্তর করে পূর্ণাঙ্গ ফ্লিপিড জমা দিতে হবে।
- প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য সংবাদপত্র/অনলাইন পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত প্রতিবেদন/ফিচারের কপি সম্পাদক/বার্তা সম্পাদক ও টিভি চ্যানেলের ক্ষেত্রে সিইও/বার্তা বিভাগের প্রধানের প্রত্যয়নসহ জমা দিতে হবে।
- আলোকচিত্র বা ফটোগ্রাফির ক্ষেত্রে প্রকাশিত কিংবা অপ্রকাশিত আলোকচিত্র জমা দিতে পারবেন। এক্ষেত্রে স্থান, আলোকচিত্রের সময় এবং কাপশনসহ পূর্ণাঙ্গ বিবরণ উল্লেখ করতে হবে। ছবির রেজুলেশন ১৯২০/১০৮০ পিক্সেলের নিচে গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়। আলোকচিত্রসমূহ পিসিআইবি এবং এটুআই চিত্রগ্রাহকের ক্রেডিট সফলিত যেকোনো প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহারের অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করবে।
- প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার/আলোকচিত্র ও লেখা (৬ কপি) ৩১ মে ২০২১ তারিখ অফিস সময়ের মধ্যে মহাপরিচালক, প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিসিআইবি), ৩ সার্কিট হাউস রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০ বরাবর জীবনবৃত্তান্ত, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি, পাসপোর্ট সাইজের চার কপি ছবিসহ পাঠাতে হবে। একই সঙ্গে প্রতিবেদন/ ফিচার/ আলোকচিত্রের কপি ই-মেইলে (piba21mediaaward2021@gmail.com) সংযুক্তি আকারে পাঠাতে হবে। ই-মেইলের সাবজেক্ট লাইনে আবেদনের ক্যাটাগরি ও বিবরণীতে নাম-ঠিকানা, ফোন/মোবাইল নম্বর উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে।
- খামের ওপর পুরস্কারের নাম, আবেদনের ক্যাটাগরি ও বিষয় উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে।
- জুরিবোর্ডের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।
- যেকোনো প্রয়োজনে যোগাযোগ করুন ০১৯৮৪৩০২৬৮৯ ও ০১৯১৩৩৯৪৯৪ নম্বরে।

প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার/আলোকচিত্র প্রেরণের শেষ তারিখ ৩১ মে ২০২১  
প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিসিআইবি)  
৩ সার্কিট হাউস রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০  
ওয়েবসাইট : www.pib.gov.bd



DESIGN: MEHRUL BARI

FICTION REVIEW: INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE 2021 SHORTLIST

## All that war leaves behind

MEHRUL BARI

*At Night All Blood Is Black* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020; transl. Anna Moschovakis), shortlisted for the 2021 International Booker Prize, is a slender, vivid, wildly-imagined novella on the lives fractured by colonisation and war, the second novel by the France-based Senegalese author David Diop. Less novella and more continuous prose-poem, the book loops and curls, with several refrains that delight and, in time, frighten. "... I know, I understand, I shouldn't have done it. I, Alfa Ndiaye, son of the old, old man, I understand, I shouldn't have. God's truth, now I know", the story begins. Its narrator—and you will hear his name often—is a World War I-era Senegalese soldier, forced into a battle several times removed from his own reality. What occurs before the very first page of the story is the death of his childhood friend, Mademba Diop, who dies slowly in his hands, pleading, ultimately in vain, for Alfa to take his life for him. Regrets pile up over the pages and, coupled with the traumas of war, coalesce into a broken state of being for the young man—who thinks only of the "more-than-brother" he has lost.

In the book's epigraph, a quote reads "I am two simultaneous voices, one long, the other short". The line is taken from Cheikh Hamidou Kane's seminal *Ambiguous Adventure* (Melville House, 1961), a novel hailed by luminaries like Chinua Achebe as one of the greats of African literature. Two things are indeed often one much throughout *At Night All Blood Is Black*, and not only is this present in Alfa and Mademba's relationship, but in the book itself; entwined intrinsically with the past, tropes of canonical African literature manifest itself in

this modern French novel. One can find here the classic idiosyncrasies of African stories—the charms, the wisdoms—most noticeably in the characterisation of Alfa, who resembles heroic, boastful narrators like *The Palm-Wine Drinkard's* (Faber, 1952), who are casually able to perform fantastical feats without a second thought.

The matter-of-fact nature of the narration lends the book an overarching element of naivety and simplicity. It is, after all, a basic necessity that is robbed from our central

The wonder of this novel is not that it sticks to its general conceits, but that it fleshes out for us its characters and their world. When the story shifts further from the present and deeper into the past, the momentum never stalls.

characters, at a most impressionable age, too. But it is the same childlike directness that makes descriptions of entrails, disfigurements, and the war's gore all the more real, and all the more unbearable. The narration hiccups more and more as the chapters roll on, repeating, rhythmically almost, its refrains of "God's truth" and "I know, I understand", and a myriad of phrases that are repeated in full.

The wonder of this novel is not that it sticks to its general conceits, but that it fleshes out for us its characters and their world. When the story shifts further from the present and deeper

into the past, the momentum never stalls. New plotlines, new mysteries, and new themes keep this other half well in motion, and we meet the families and friends left behind in a world the two characters couldn't wait to escape. We learn of the one girl both boys loved, we hear of Alfa's mother, missing for years, we learn of the lives that were ahead of Alfa and Mademba. While the subject of war is the pivot in the middle, there is much more to unpack than just the blood and viscera strewn on the earth in its opening chapters. The novel was, in fact, titled *Frère d'âme* ("Soul brother"), in the French original—a more fitting title, though thank heavens it didn't carry over.

In the background of the story, left usually as incidental happenings, are the sharp, protruding edges of colonisation, racism, societal conceptions of masculinity, and so much more. The narrator couldn't care less for most of the above, as he grieves in all the wrong ways, busying himself with recollections, recantations, and amputations—since his friend's death, Alfa sneaks out every night and returns to the trenches with the severed hand of a German soldier. "If I had been then what I've become today, I would have killed him the first time he asked, his head turned toward me, his left hand in my right. God's truth, if I'd already become then what I am now, I would have slaughtered him like a sacrificial sheep, out of friendship".

Mehrul Bari S Chowdhury is a writer, poet, and artist. His work has appeared in *Kitaab*, *Sortes Magazine*, and *Marias* at *Sampaguitas*, among others. He is currently the intern at *Daily Star Books*.

FROM PAGES TO PIXELS

## 'Shadow and Bone': Fantasy adaptation done right

YAAMEEN AL-MUTTAQI

With the demise of *Game of Thrones*, Netflix seems best poised to offer a replacement—with *The Witcher* gearing for a second season and now *Shadow and Bone* taking the internet by storm after premiering on April 23, 2021. Announced in 2019, the series was to combine into one seamless story, the Grisha Trilogy novels with those of the *Six of Crows* series. Fantasy is notoriously hard to adapt well, especially ones with complex world-building like the Grishaverse, but author Leigh Bardugo's inclusion in the creative process as executive producer meant that the changes in the show were, in a way, rewrites of the original stories while remaining true to their essence—a rarity in adaptations.

*Shadow and Bone* is set in Ravka, a fantasy version of Russia, which is split in two by the Shadow Fold—a large strip of darkness inhabited by nightmare creatures, all created by a "Shadow Summoner" of long ago. The only hope to destroy the Shadow Fold is the legendary Sun Summoner. Being a classic "chosen one" hero's tale, we find our protagonist Alina Starkov discovering that she is the Sun Summoner of legend, and being recruited into the Grisha—this world's mage—army, and trained to destroy the Fold. As word gets out of her existence, the gang from the *Six of Crows* books are hired to kidnap her, thus bridging the two originally distinct series.

Changes like Alina now being mixed race help flesh out the politics of the world, and explore the racism within the world without being too blunt.

The entire cast of the adaptation is excellent, and their on-screen chemistry is downright combustible. This is especially true of Alina and her best friend/love interest Mal, whose on-screen chemistry forms the emotional core of the story, and the Crows, whose scenes have a momentum to them that is reminiscent of heist classics like *Ocean's Eleven* (2001). Characters like Jesper, Inej, and even the side characters Zoya, Mikhal, Dubrov, and Ivan are all portrayed with a depth and nuance that truly bring life to the show.

But *Shadow and Bone* would not be an adaptation if it did not have some very prominent changes from its source material. In most cases, these changes serve it very well—and most were made by Bardugo herself, or with her permission. Changes like Alina now being mixed race help flesh out the politics of the world, and explore the racism within the world without being

too blunt. Her relationship with Mal, too, who is no longer the womaniser he is in the books, finds room to breathe and grow, helped by the changing viewpoints of the screenplay. And the years added to each character's age allows the series to explore darker themes, like abuse, corruption, propaganda, manipulation, and human trafficking without breaking audience immersion or pulling punches, as is the case with too many YA adaptations.

The changes that disappoint are the alterations made to the world building to make the story flow better on TV, a lot of which could potentially weaken



the plot in later seasons. While Alina's story sticks to the books for most major plot points, the *Six of Crows* group are given a new prequel story, set before the events of their first book. Sadly—and this might come across as a spoiler—tying the two stories together via Alina means the Crows' heist was doomed to fail from page one, thus robbing it of any tension or gravitas, especially for the book's readers. A fair number of things are also left unexplained or unexplored in the series, which may leave viewers who have not read the books, confused.

That said, *Shadow and Bone* is an ambitious adaptation of Leigh Bardugo's beloved series, and for the most part, it hits all the notes it needs to be a success. Brilliant production, animation, costume design, and set direction, combined with a stellar cast with electrifying on-screen chemistry, serve to compensate for any lacking that comes with merging two non-connected series into one. It is a rambunctious ride from start to finish, and a great binge for any lover of fantasy.

Yaameen Al-Muttaqi works with robots and writes stories of dragons, magic, friendship, and hope. Send him a raven at yaameen3112@gmail.com.

THE BIRTH OF BANGLADESH IN BOOKS

## The books that went to war

After half a century from where we began, *Daily Star Books* will spend all of this year—the 50th year of Bangladesh—revisiting and analysing some of the books that played crucial roles in documenting the Liberation War of 1971 and the birth of this nation.

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

The books authored and published during a war always have an archival quality; they capture the time in its crudest form. They are a seamless blend of all the possibilities of the time and the event. Hope and despair. Confidence and confusion. Spontaneity and determinism. During the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, several books were published of which two deserve special mention: Syed Ali Ahsan's *Roktakto Bangla* and Abdul Gaffar Choudhury's *Bangladesh Kotha Koy*. They were published by Swadhin Bangla Sahitya Parishad Muktaadhara, founded under the leadership of Chittaranjan Saha.

Read this article on *The Daily Star* website and on *Daily Star Books'* Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages.



COMIC REVIEW: INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY 2021

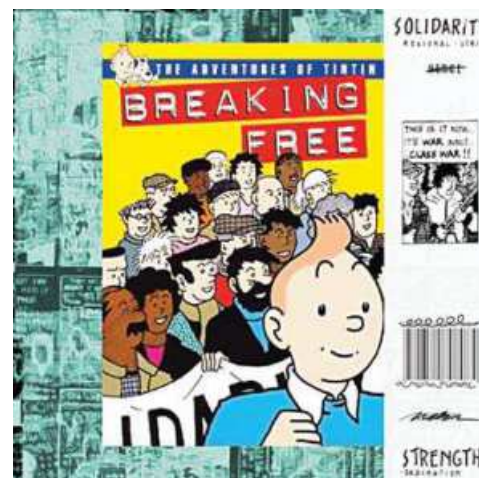
## An anarchist retelling of Tintin

ZOEHEB MASHIUR

The globetrotting hero-reporter, he of the blonde quiff and the plus four trousers, had many an adventure throughout a 46-year-long run under the iconic *ligne claire* penmanship of his creator Hergé (the Belgian cartoonist Georges Remi). We've seen him canoing down the Amazon, driving Atomic era tanks through the Eastern Bloc, and beating Neil Armstrong to the moon. Yet none of these settings feel as exotic to the character as the picket line of a worker's strike.

*Tintin: Breaking Free* (Attack International, 1988) was published in the UK at the tail end of the Thatcher years. Written by the pseudonymous J Daniels, it is a repudiation of the rapacious capitalist regime of the Tories in the wake of union-busting, industrial collapse, and the privatisation of the welfare state. The comic is an example of the leftist practice of "détournement", hijacking media to critique the very capitalism it was intended to support.

Every character, every pose in the comic is a recreation of an original Hergé drawing, completely recontextualised. Tintin here is no Belgian reporter: he's a working class lad (quite workshy and with little class) who begins the tale at the end of his tether, out of work and in trouble for shoplifting. With the help of his uncle the Captain (Haddock, though that name is never used and his colourful language and alcoholism are set aside) he finds work at a construction site. Rumbblings of working class alienation, lack of social support, gentrification, the corruption of union bosses and the disunifying evils of homophobia and racism lead to a full-scale



DESIGN: MEHRUL BARI

social upheaval when a worker at Tintin's construction site dies as a result of nonexistent safety measures.

What follows is an incredibly earnest exploration of building working class solidarity and of how to organise properly: picket lines, meals for the elderly, cooperative printing presses and strike coordination centres. There are violent clashes with the police, unlawful arrests and beatings, death threats and arson, but nothing that crushes what is implied by the final pages: an international revolution, and the coming of a new, better world. For the cynical reader unconvinced by socialism, it can be dry and maudlin. It was not written for the cynical reader.

In the best traditions of the Tintin stories, J Daniels took the character and placed him at the heart of contemporary issues; the ever-malleable, everyman reporter becomes a vehicle for the author's intent. Unlike Hergé, whose inauspicious beginnings saw Tintin spout anti-Bolshevik propaganda and justify the Belgian colonisation of the Congo before switching to more well-meaning racism in the service of critiquing the Japanese atrocities in pre-WWII China, Daniels' Tintin is no cipher or audience surrogate character. He's not fighting for the perpetuation of a status quo, or inserting himself into the business of hapless foreigners; Daniels' Tintin is protecting his own people at home and trying to carve out a better world for them.

Hergé may have tried to distance himself from his roots in right-wing, fascist media, but the later Tintin comics never truly rose out of that ideological pit. The popularity and staid worldview of the comics invite subversion. *Tintin: Breaking Free* is the most famous—and extensive—of a series of reworkings from the left. Interested readers should look up the raw, powerful one-pager *The Adventures of Tintin in Patriarchy Is Our Prison*, or *The Adventures of Shrimpton* on social media, whose admins have dedicated themselves to undermining Hergé's legacy through bizarre, barely comprehensible memes.

Zoheb Mashiur is a doctoral researcher on race and the British Empire. He is based at the University of Kent's Brussels School of International Studies.

## Informal workers left to fend for themselves

*Immediate cash support and long-term protection policies needed in this sector*

THAT the Covid-19 pandemic and resultant lockdowns have been difficult for the poor, especially the urban poor, should not come as a surprise to anyone. According to an estimate from the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), the countrywide shutdown last year caused an 80 percent drop in income of the labouring class in urban areas. A survey conducted by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and the Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) suggested that the economic shock induced by the pandemic has pushed a whopping 14.75 percent of the population into poverty in one year, with the urban poor (a large proportion of whom are informal workers) being hit the hardest.

Despite these grim circumstances and the fact that 85.1 percent of the 6.08 crore labourers in Bangladesh work in the informal sector (according to BBS data from 2017), it is disappointing to see how little government support is being given to them during the current lockdown. According to a report in this daily, an estimated 1.35 crore informal workers lost their jobs during last year's lockdowns. Of them, 50 lakh belong to the transport sector, 16 lakh are in construction, and another 12 lakh work in hotels, restaurants and bakeries. Yet, workers in these same informal industries are, once again, facing the dire consequences of having no social/legal protections and job benefits during the lockdowns.

It is baffling why, despite having faced almost the exact scenario last year, no plans were made to ensure that informal workers are not left in the lurch again this year. Although the government announced 23 stimulus packages involving Tk 1,24,053 crore for those affected by the pandemic, the majority of these schemes serve the formal sector. While some informal workers will receive the cash support being given to the poorest, the recipients are too few to have an impact on a sector large enough to contribute around 50 percent of the economy.

One of the major reasons for informal workers being left out of government support schemes is the lack of a government database or official figures on the informal sector. The authorities must step up to plug this data gap. Additionally, immediate steps must be taken to include them in ongoing relief programmes and further cash support must be extended. In yesterday's report in *The Daily Star*, a number of trade union representatives spoke of their demands continuously being ignored by those in charge. Experts have also spoken about how little legal protection and health support informal workers are given in their workplaces. While immediate cash support can help ease their woes, the government must focus on providing workers' rights and security in the informal sector in the long run. These workers are the backbone of the urban economy, and so far, the treatment they have received during the pandemic is nothing short of unjust.

## Buet researchers develop cost-effective portable ventilator

*Such innovations must be acknowledged and supported*

AMIDST the ongoing countrywide strain on the supply of medical oxygen, researchers at Buet's Department of Biomedical Engineering have developed a portable ventilator that gives us hope for the near future. The device, named OxyJet CPAP, is a non-invasive one that can be used without electricity by simply being connected to an oxygen cylinder or medical oxygen supply. The researchers have developed it keeping in mind the plight of severe Covid-19 patients with low oxygen levels. This ventilator will also be cost-effective, as it can be produced at Tk 25,000 now, and will require an even lower cost once it goes into commercial production. It has already been field-tested and approved for clinical trials and is currently in its third-phase trial.

The second wave of the pandemic has brought to light many deficiencies in our healthcare system, one of the major ones being the lack of resources. Be it ICU beds or an even and consistent supply of oxygen for every patient, people have had to suffer immensely for these deficiencies. Though not a long-lasting solution, the OxyJet CPAP would be a great device to have during emergencies for critical Covid-19 patients as it "can provide up to 60 litres/min of 100 percent oxygen" before admission into the ICU. The device would also eliminate the potential risks of using invasive ventilators and it is also much cheaper than the usual high-flow nasal oxygen (HFNO) support devices. Plus, it can be used by any physician with ease after only an hour of training, unlike a HFNO cannula for which there are not enough expert operators in the country.

We highly commend the researchers' initiative to produce this necessary device and the three organisations funding the project (Ankur International Foundation, the ICT Division of the government, and Manusher Jonno Foundation). Though it is still being tested and will not be widely available for another few months, the OxyJet CPAP can be a life-saving device that can help us reduce the fatalities of Covid-19 in our country. But it can only be properly realised with consistent support and funding from authorities.

# Victim blaming is a crime. Who are its abettors?



AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

IT would have gone unnoticed as another suicide of a heart-broken young woman, a forgettable statistic among the thousands of desperate individuals taking their own lives to escape some harsh reality or the other. But no, the death of a 21-year-old college-going woman is still in the conversation. It could be because a case has been filed by the deceased woman's sister against a businessman who she accuses of being involved in this death. The forensic evidence and the court will decide whether it is a case of murder or whether the accused drove her to commit suicide, or whether the evidence is inconclusive to prove either crime.

But truth be told, it's not just that a case has been filed that has excited the imagination of so many. It is because the accused is the managing director of one of the biggest business conglomerates in the country, the son of a big business tycoon, and the deceased is a pretty young woman from a small town, a nobody in most people's eyes who has suddenly become (in)famous because of her death. And suddenly, it's everyone's business to engage in vociferous character assassination of the young woman who cannot defend herself against the vile accusations inflicted on her.

A search with her name on YouTube will bring forth a barrage of videos—her childish TikTok posts, apparent CCTV footage of her alone in her flat, pictures of her dead body, commentary on every aspect of her life, and even messages exchanged with her alleged paramour who is now the accused. The newsfeeds in social media, too, are bursting at the seams with the young woman's Facebook photos and videos accompanied by many members of the moral police who consider themselves entitled to pass judgement on her and her family, gleefully explaining how the victim's and her family's lack of morals and greed for money led to her death. The comments sections under these mini talk shows are filled with vitriol and obscenities aimed at this dead woman and her family members.

Victim blaming has always been the predictable consequence whenever the crime is against a woman. Even death does not save a woman/girl from the onslaught of misogynous comments from strangers. But more dangerous is the role of some mainstream media outlets that have been just as vicious and judgmental as the rabid haters on social media. So is it social media influencing mainstream media or the other way round? Or is it the overall culture of shifting the focus and blame on the female victim rather than the accused? This was the case for the 17-year-old O level student who was raped and died of her injuries in January

this year, even after the accused, her boyfriend, confessed to the crime. Even in death she became the victim of social condemnation and slander. It happened with the victims of the sensational Banani rape case of 2017. It happened in the case of Sohagi Jahan Tonu, the second-year college student who was raped and killed by "unknown assailants". Tonu's character was put on trial by social media and some newspapers too. Her body had to be exhumed for a second autopsy at her family's insistence, before it could

been leaked out into the public domain? When the power dynamics are tilted on the side of the accused, these anomalies are not surprising, and there is always the disconcerting possibility that influence and money will impact the outcome of the case.

Ultimately, it is about responsibility. Law enforcers are responsible for investigating the case sincerely and diligently, while protecting the victim's privacy (whether she is dead or alive), protecting the victim's family and

is not relevant whether a victim lived in a costly flat or whether she wore expensive clothes and how many relationships she had. What is important is what really happened to her. Did she take her own life? And if so, was she compelled to do so because of someone else's actions? Or was this in fact a well-orchestrated murder made to look like a suicide? That's what the mainstream media should be trying to unravel, not fuel the cruel, crass gossip generated in social media.

As for the netizens and others who



STAR FILE PHOTO

be officially established that she had been raped and murdered. Her rapist-murderers are yet to be identified.

So what is the role of the police in all this? In the case of the 21-year-old woman who was found hanging in her bedroom, the police did take the case filed by her sister, and high-ups have assured that it will be properly investigated. But can they explain how pages of her personal diary—which are in the custody of the police and considered "evidence"—end up making the rounds on social media giving those self-appointed defenders of morality some juicy material to work on? How do alleged mobile phone conversations between the victim and the accused get leaked out to social media and then even picked up by the mainstream media? One cannot help but remember the video leaked out on social media by OC Moazzem Hossain of a degrading interrogation of Nusrat Jahan Rafi, the madrasa student who was later gruesomely murdered by a group of students and teachers at the behest of the madrasa's principal against whom Nusrat had filed a sexual harassment case. Moazzem Hossain was later sent to jail by the court. Will there be any probe to find out how evidence in the latest case has

witnesses, safeguarding everything considered as evidence and being immune to pressures from influential people connected to the accused to go against the victim's interests. Departmental action and even legal steps must be taken against law enforcers who leak out evidence that may discredit or defame the victim, which can go against the victim in court. The judiciary must also ensure that victims of rape or murdered or abetted suicide are not vilified by defence lawyers by questioning their character. The archaic Section 155 of the Evidence Act 1872 allows just that—introduce character evidence against rape complainants during trial—and human rights lawyers and activists have long been calling for this provision to be scrapped.

What about the responsibility of the mainstream media? The media has the responsibility to establish the truth of a crime, without sensationalising the reporting with speculative comments regarding the victim's lifestyle or past relationships, as has been done in the case of the 21-year-old woman. The media's job is to establish the facts and avoid unnecessary, irrelevant information that ends up portraying the victim as someone who "deserved what she got". It

avidly take part in these discussions: do they not have a responsibility too? Yes, they do. They have a moral duty to refrain from rumour-mongering, from shaming the victim and casting aspersions on her character and her family's character. These actions may attract many shares and encourage others to give their two-pence worth of misogyny and tastelessly expressed self-righteousness, but what they do is hurt the victim and may even hamper her chances of ever getting justice.

Fortunately, there are voices of reason and sanity among journalists, activists, academics and other members of the public, and discussions are taking place in online platforms that condemn the vindictive shaming of victims on social media and raise questions regarding the abandonment of journalistic ethics and integrity when the mainstream media joins this bandwagon of slander of the victim, sometimes mainly to protect the accused. Such voices must be louder and stronger, and deserve the support of the state and its machinery and the society. Victim blaming must be treated as a crime that has to be shamed and shunned.

Aasha Mehreen Amin is Head of Editorial and Opinion, Senior Deputy Editor, *The Daily Star*.

## Time to place Bangladesh on a war footing to vaccinate all

GOLAM NEWAZ

BANGLADESH is in a precarious position given how Covid-19 has engulfed the entirety of its neighbour, India, causing unimaginable havoc on ordinary people whose helplessness we are witnessing on a daily basis. Dr Farah Husain, head of the Covid ICU unit at the Lok Nayak Hospital in Delhi, a public Covid-designated hospital that has served more than twelve thousand patients, in a CNN interview declared that what is happening in India is "nothing short of an apocalypse". She also mentioned that "every family in India is attacked by Covid". The aggressive double-mutant variant of the virus has been the key culprit in India. It is deadly in terms of virulence and is much more transmissible than others. Its official name is B.1.617, and the "double mutant" is a bit of a misnomer, as it actually carries 13 mutations. More importantly, it contains the E484Q mutation, considered an "escape mutation" because it enables the coronavirus to evade immune protection with monoclonal antibodies, which may decrease the effectiveness of vaccines.

B.1.617 has been spreading fast in India. It is now the dominant strain in Maharashtra in southwestern India. Maharashtra is India's second-most populous state and home to its financial centre, Mumbai. No matter how difficult it is, vaccines are still the best shot to protect people from this curse. But India has a long way to go in vaccinating its entire population. As of May 1, only about 2 percent of the 1.4 billion people of India has been vaccinated.

While we are witnessing this horror from a neighbouring country, we must remember that we are going through a crisis of our own and should take all measures necessary to avoid a repeat of the Indian scenario in Bangladesh. Closing the border is an important step that the government has already taken.

But even if the border is reopened, Bangladesh must ensure that there is no movement of people but only of goods between the two countries until the current surge there has ended and a plateau in infections is reached. Until then, air, train and bus travels between the two countries should remain suspended as passengers can carry the virus without their knowledge and testing has its limits. This may prove to be difficult going forward but it is the most reasonable

the former has halted export of the Oxford-AstraZeneca shot in response to a record surge in their domestic infections. Bangladesh, with its 170 million people, had been relying on the AstraZeneca vaccine so far, and around 6 million of its citizens have been inoculated. But now that vaccines from the Serum Institute of India will be more difficult to procure, the government's decision to source vaccines from Russia and China are laudable. It was supposed to receive three

anytime soon. Besides, we should take charge of our own destiny.

Last week, the government approved in principle local co-production of Sputnik V and Sinopharm vaccines. There should be no stone left unturned to produce these vaccines in Bangladesh as soon as possible to adequately respond to the most important national emergency of our time. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already announced that the government would procure vaccines at any cost. "We're bringing more vaccines, no matter how much money is required," she said. So, money should not be a problem. It is time to declare a national goal to vaccinate 80 percent of our population within the next twelve months, and putting resources and manpower together to accomplish this goal on a war footing is the best way for Bangladesh to come out of the clear and present danger that we face as one of the most densely populated nations on Earth.

Covid may not leave us for good and we may have to take vaccines every year. We must ensure that we have a steady supply of vaccines in the future. Eradication of this disease may be questionable. Through a combination of lockdowns, physical distancing, travel restrictions, mask wearing, and urgent vaccination efforts, Bangladesh has embarked on the initial stages of a Covid-19 elimination campaign but how far we can go will depend on what we can do as a nation. We should be self-reliant and take charge of the Covid situation in our country through sheer determination, and we can demonstrate to the world how a country like Bangladesh can beat the virus with a collective will to safeguard our population, particularly the vulnerable groups and the poor. We call for renewed commitment from the government to reinvigorate our national programme on vaccination to end this crisis in our land as soon as possible.

Golam Newaz teaches at the Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, USA.



Bangladesh has approved both the Russian Sputnik V and China's Sinopharm vaccines for emergency use against Covid-19.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

way to ensure our country is safe. It does not take much to realise that vaccinating a high percentage of the population in Bangladesh is the only way for us to beat the coronavirus and restore normalcy.

Bangladesh has now approved both the Russian Sputnik V and China's Sinopharm vaccines for emergency use against Covid-19. Like India, it is also facing a second wave of the pandemic and needs to secure more vaccines after

crore shots in six months from Serum Institute. Serum delivered the first 50 lakh doses in January but shipped only 20 lakhs in February. No shipment has been made since. The Sinopharm shipment to Bangladesh is apparently on its way and 5 lakh shots will likely arrive soon. This is definitely a great start. While mRNA vaccines in the West show great efficacy and promise, we must not wait for this biotechnology to arrive in Bangladesh



# 'We still have a lot more to do for equality'

Noted human rights activist and academic Dr Hameeda Hossain, one of the founders of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) and currently convener of the Sramik Nirapotta Forum (Workers' Safety Forum), has recently been honoured with the 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award from Bangladesh Development Initiative, a non-partisan research and advocacy group of independent scholars based in the US. In this interview with Shuprova Tasneem of The Daily Star, she reflects on her long and illustrious career and the evolution of the rights movements in Bangladesh.

What inspired you to follow this path, and what achievements are you most proud of in terms of the women's movement and the labour movement?

To be honest, I was not that conscious from a young age of the inequalities that exist in our society, or even of the unequal treatment that women receive within their families. My family was fairly progressive; in fact, my father encouraged our education. I think it really hit me after 1971, when I started working in shelters with women who had suffered violence. After that, I worked with artisans in general but particularly women. As I spent more time with them, I started to understand how they had to face the burden of survival, both economically and socially. And then within my own profession, I began to see how different it was for working women. There were few opportunities in the media world. So I think it came upon me gradually, and slowly I engaged with the women's movement. In the early 70s, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, the largest women's organisation in the country, along with a few other organisations were pressing for women's political participation in policy forums, and for equal wages at work—they were raising the issue of equal rights.

Rather than achievements, I would say it was how we did things that was very important, and I think the collective actions we took and the collective thinking/analysis that we engaged in have been a big marker in my life. For instance, in 1995, when the young domestic worker Yasmin Akhter was picked up by policemen while on her way home to Dinajpur, who then raped her and left her for dead on the streets, it wasn't just a few women or organisations that took up that cause. It became a big national movement, which ultimately led to convictions for the guilty police officials.

The struggle to free women from being

subjected to *fatwa* penalties was another landmark. We achieved this through the legal process, with the Mahila Parishad filing cases such as in 1993, when Noorjahan of Moulvibazar was forced to commit suicide due to a *fatwa*—she was buried in the ground up to her waist and stoned 101 times as "punishment" for a second marriage. However, it took around 20 years for us to get a final judgment from the Supreme Court making *fatwas* that penalised women illegal. And even after that, you still hear of village elders holding forth against women for being "corrupt", so there is still a long way to go.

Looking back, what changes have you seen in the women's movement?

Before 1972, we were talking about economic opportunities—we thought that if women's work was visible, we would have equality. Then women's work did become visible, in garment factories, mills, construction, etc., but equality still evaded us. Later on, Mahila Parishad also took a stand on political participation, with a quota system for more women in parliament because numbers do count to some extent, but we then found that the means of selection greatly weakened the women's positions. If you are selected by the leaders of political parties, the women who get into parliament only raise the leaders' issues, not women's issues. It didn't bring about the change we anticipated. I think the real change has been in using the legal process to establish rights. The courts move very slowly but at least you have laws that allow you to claim your rights and give you some level of bargaining power. That has made a difference.

The second factor that is very important is the emergence of women workers, particularly in the export industries. They still have a rough deal—their wages are not equal to that of men, they work very long hours, and there are not enough safety provisions at



Hameeda Hossain

work—and there are too many examples of factory fires like Tazreen where workers paid such a heavy price. Even so, you can see the changes to some extent. I remember a case in the 90s, where after a death in a garment factory, the only compensation given was a job offer for the sister of the deceased. In the aftermath of the Rana Plaza tragedy, we were able to get brands, employers and other contributors to set up a fund through which they could support workers who had been affected. Of course, it's important to remember that the fight is far from over—we still haven't established the right to a meaningful compensation, which is still under consideration by the High Court.

What other industries are there where women workers are particularly vulnerable? A large number of women are working in

the agricultural sector, in tea production, as well as in small and medium workshops/enterprises. In most of these places, there are no laws that determine their work. We need to think of, first of all, how to create the awareness amongst them that they do have rights, and then how to build up this agenda of rights, with them and for them. The women who are working as paid labour in the agricultural sector are paid very low wages. On top of that, they work long hours, which can impact their health. But overall, the system of hiring labour at hourly/daily wage rates needs to be looked at.

And across the board, we need to look at health provisions. Is it enough to have a few government hospitals where women/workers can go? Shouldn't workers be given some guarantee, by way of a card or something, which would entitle them to free treatment wherever they go? There have been suggestions by trade unions that the government should set up a hospital in Dhaka for workers. But one hospital in Dhaka doesn't answer the needs of women working in Rangpur or Dinajpur, for example. However, if they have something like an ID card that they can present, the local hospitals should be obligated to take them on.

We should also focus on domestic labour and the role of women within their families, where women are continuously working without pay/support. There should be a system of accounting or sharing for women's work at home.

When you were only 15, you won an essay competition sponsored by the New York Herald Tribune on the subject of "The World We Want". Looking back, is the world now what you imagined it would be as a young girl?

At the time, I was studying in Hyderabad, in a conservative college in a conservative place! That essay won me a three-month trip

to the US, which led to my being admitted to Wellesley College on a scholarship, and my whole life pattern changed. If I hadn't taken this opportunity that came to me quite by chance, I would have been stuck in Hyderabad instead of being able to pursue a career at a time when not too many of us could; the only option then was to marry and look after your family.

I find that the younger generations of women are marching far ahead of where we were at that age—their concerns have broadened out and they are taking up very difficult issues to work on, particularly in terms of sexual violence and workers' rights. When Ain o Salish Kendra was first founded in the mid-80s, there were only a few organisations that took up such cases. Today, you can see many similar kinds of organisations all over Bangladesh. There is a great deal of awareness now of the fact that women have rights and we will fight to defend those rights. In a way, there was more of a class divide earlier and a divide between different communities, but now we do see people from different backgrounds working together, although we still need to do much more to include indigenous women into these conversations.

It's very difficult to change culture, though. It's such an age-old thing where women are supposed to fit certain roles and they are, from the beginning, subjected to their parents' wishes, particularly the father's who is the traditional head of the household, and the ideal you are meant to aim for is to get married, as if there is nothing beyond marriage in life. Now that women are taking on so many professional responsibilities and sharing the demands of work outside their family, it's high time we shared the responsibilities at home too, as equal partners. We still have a lot more to do for equality, beginning at the family level and how we raise our children.

## A case for integrated nutrition messaging for schoolchildren

SAIRA PARVEEN JOLLY

"MY daughter is counting the different types of food she has during meals. Now she can say 'I eat so-and-so groups of food daily'. My husband also learned the functions of food and tried buying varieties of vegetables for us. But not all food is always available in our area," said Sharifa, a resident of Parbatipur, Dinajpur.

Rabeya from Badarganj, Rangpur shared how her son had started wearing shoes: "He always loved to be barefoot. But now, he has learnt to wear shoes, even when he plays."

These are just a few of the stories that came up during a study on the importance of developing integrated nutrition messages for schoolchildren. The study was conducted by a research team of BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH) between August 2020 and February 2021 under the supervision of the Ministry of Food, supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and funded by the European Union. Many other parents also told us how their children had started recalling food groups, washing hands before meals and brushing their teeth after meals.

The study found out that diet and nutrition related knowledge and behaviour change messages, such as having at least five out of 10 food groups daily and the functions of these food items, and motivated parents to add a variety of food groups to their regular diets—an example of healthy practices that help improve one's nutritional status. There are many other important solutions we may adopt in our daily life, such as having a diverse variety of food items, drinking adequate water, washing hands with soap after defecation and before having meals, etc. These simple practices begin in the family, but due to a lack of knowledge, school-aged children may become vulnerable at a time that is most critical for their development.

When schoolchildren suffer from undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, it can have an immediate bearing on their health and development. Physical growth and development of children require not only food and nutrition, but also good immunity, safe water and sanitation, a healthy lifestyle and safe environment. Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies expose children to poor school performance, which may lead to them dropping out, hindering their future productivity and compromising the country's socioeconomic development.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2011, over one-fourth of our population are

children aged five to 16 years. Among them, one in five school-aged children is anaemic. Moreover, 20 to 40 percent of these age cohorts suffer from Vitamin A, Vitamin D, calcium and iodine deficiencies. Conversely, overweight and obesity are an emerging issue among school-aged children. We also observe an increasing trend of overweight and obesity among children ranging from one percent to 17 percent, with children in urban areas being more at risk. This is a huge challenge as obesity in an early age increases the risks of disease and death.

How do we develop interventions for these population cohorts to improve their knowledge and practices related to nutrition, healthy habits and lifestyle? There is ample evidence of good practices in countries like China, Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Lao PDR. It is reported that several forms of nutrition education—school-based education programmes, web-based education, lectures and supplement

*When schoolchildren suffer from undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, it can have an immediate bearing on their health and development. Physical growth and development of children require not only food and nutrition, but also good immunity, safe water and sanitation, a healthy lifestyle and safe environment.*

provisions—could improve dietary patterns and lifestyles of schoolchildren. In the context of Bangladesh, schools could be the best platform to reach out to a large population for influencing healthy food behaviour and practices.

Providing succinct, integrated messages covering food, nutrition, immunity, sanitation and hygiene, physical exercise, lifestyle and environment is critical for the physical and cognitive development of schoolchildren, and the best way to amplify their reach and coverage is to target the children via school textbooks. In the aforementioned study, BRAC JPGSPH reviewed school textbooks and curricula and found that although there were plenty of texts on food, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, environment, and physical exercise, they were not adequately reaching school children because they are scattered in different chapters across different textbooks.

The idea was to construct simple and culturally-appropriate integrated nutrition messages that schoolchildren could easily access—being visible on one or two pages of text, in both pictorial and narrative

forms. Also included were the FAO-recommended ten food groups in a plate, with narratives such as, "I eat at least five food groups daily", "I do not take junk food", etc. Similarly, pictures were displayed of hand washing with soap and running water, wearing sandals, physical activity and tree plantation and many such simple practices.

However, it must be noted that while integrated nutrition messages among schoolchildren can create practices and habits that can improve child nutrition through simple means, that alone is not enough. The study also found that practicing intake of food with the minimum dietary diversity among children is difficult due to several reasons, including lack of purchasing capacity of their parents, challenge of shifting existing food habits within short time periods, unavailability of food items in local markets, etc. However, regardless of the obstacles, many school students were still seen to adopt various good practices,

showing that such integrated messages are likely to bring quick and easy changes.

The strength of integrated nutrition messaging is that the same messages are developed for all age groups of children and are simple and feasible to practice. Furthermore, it is crucial that the messages are sensitive to the context and purchasing capacity of families. We must also remember that although presenting integrated nutrition messages in school textbooks leads to easy accessibility for students, parents and teachers, this has been hampered by Covid-19 and extended school closures. So we need to focus on making these messages accessible to students beyond textbooks, through web-based platforms or alternate media.

It is urgent now for the policymakers to translate existing knowledge into actions by incorporating integrated nutrition messages into school textbooks and other easily accessible platforms. The Ministry of Food has already been in discussion with the Ministry of Education, and BRAC JPGSPH along with the FAO have drawn the attention of the National

Curriculum and Textbook Board to this issue. The country must act to reinforce healthy behaviour and practices of schoolchildren and invest in communicating integrated

nutrition messages quickly and creatively for the health of the future generations.

Saira Parveen Jolly is a Senior Research Fellow at BRAC James P Grant School of

Public Health, BRAC University. The Principal Investigator of the project mentioned is Professor Dr Kaosar Afsana. The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Ministry of Food, FAO and EU.



Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Chief Chemical Examiner  
Institute of Public Health (IPH) Bhaban (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.



### Invitation for Tender

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs
02	Agency	Bangladesh Police, CID, Dhaka.
03	Procuring entity name	Chief Chemical Examiner, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka.
04	Procuring entity District	Dhaka.
05	Invitation for	Chemicals (LC-MSMS, HPLC & AR Grade), Narcotics Analysis Ready kits, Chemical Related Gas & Gas Cylinder, Chemical Related Glass Apparatus & Chemical Related Analysis Device.
06	Invitation Ref. No	Memo No- CE/01/2020-21/279(3) Dated 02/05/2021.

#### KEY INFORMATION

07	Procurement Method	OTM with Frame Work Tenders will be selected in accordance with the procedures set in the guidelines of public Procurement Regulation Rules – 2008 of the Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
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#### FUNDING

08	Budget & Source of fund	Revenue Budget (GOB)
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#### PARTICULARS

09	Tender Package No	CE-12
10	Tender Package Name	Chemicals (LC-MSMS, HPLC & AR Grade), Narcotics Analysis Ready kits, Chemical Related Gas & Gas Cylinder, Chemical Related Glass Apparatus & Chemical Related Analysis Device.
11	Tender Publication date	Before 04/05/2021
12	Tender Last Selling date	17/05/2021
13	Tender Closing date & time	18/05/2021 time 12.00 hrs
14	Tender Opening date & time	18/05/2021 time 12.30 hrs
15	Name & Address of the office	Office of the Chief Chemical Examiner, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka.
16	Place/date/time of Pre-tender Meeting	Chemical Examiner's Room, Office of the Chief Chemical Examiner, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka. 12/05/2021 11.00 am

#### INFORMATION

17	Eligibility Tenders	Up to date copies of valid Trade License, Bank Solvency Certificate with current balance in BDT, Income Tax Certificate (last fiscal year), VAT Registration Certificate, Minimum 03 years experience in similar natures of works etc.		
18	Brief Description of Chemicals	Mentioned in Tender document.		
19	Brief Description of related services	As per Tender document.		
20	Price of Tender Documents	A complete set of tender document may be purchased by interested bidders on submission written application upon payment of non-refundable fee of taka 1000/- (Only One Thousand) in cash at Office of the Chief Chemical Examiner, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka.		
21	Name of chemicals	Location	Tender Security (TK)	Completion time
	Chemicals (LCMSMS, HPLC & AR Grade), Chemical Related Gas & Gas Cylinder, Narcotics Analysis Ready kits, Laboratory apparatus & analysis Device	Chief Chemical Examiner's Office, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka	Tk. = 75,000/-	14 days

#### PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

22	Name of official inviting tender	Dr. Dilip Kumar Saha
23	Designation of official inviting tender	Chief Chemical Examiner
24	Address of official inviting tender	Chief Chemical Examiner's Office, Bangladesh Police, CID, Mohakhali, Dhaka.
25	Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone-9898676, Fax-9892870
26	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	
27	An application should be submitted to our office during purchasing the schedule	

*(Signature)*  
Dr. Dilip Kumar Saha  
Chief Chemical Examiner  
Bangladesh Police, CID,  
Mahakhali, Dhaka.

Phone-9898676, Fax: 9892870  
Mobile No-01320010570, 01913-055011  
E-mail: ccecid@police.gov.bd

## Not much hope for Teesta

FROM PAGE 1

"Teesta is not anymore an issue of water but of politics. Even if the BJP won the West Bengal election, it would not go for signing the treaty to share water with Bangladesh and give Mamata Banerjee an issue for politics," he told The Daily Star on Monday.

He said the argument that Mamata uses with regard to the water-sharing treaty is that "there is no water [enough to share] in the Teesta", which is just not right.

Teesta is a relatively small river and it is obvious that it will have less water during the dry season. If there was a good will, that water could be shared as the international law says the lower riparian country will have a share of water from the upper riparian country.

Amena Mohsin, professor of Dhaka University's International Relations Department, echoed the same.

"I don't think the Teesta deal would be signed even if BJP would come to power in West Bengal because it is not actually a state issue, but a central government issue," she said, adding that any international deal is signed by the central government, not the state government.

She said Mamata Banerjee has been saying that there is little water in the Teesta during dry seasons.

But that too is because the central government built a dam over the Teesta in Sikkim, blocking the water flow downstream and diverting it somewhere else, Amena said.

She further said if there was no dam, there would be more water in

the Teesta and Mamata could not have given this argument then.

So, Teesta deal does not depend on the party in power in West Bengal. Any party in power there would use the Teesta issue for political gains, she thinks.

"If we are to address the river water issue, we need to go for a regional approach. We should go for basin wide management of rivers. We should also engage China here as an upper riparian country," she said.

Both the foreign policy analysts also agree that the Trinamool coming to power in West Bengal is positive because it has a secular ideology against BJP's religious and nationalistic one, with their top leader even making indecent remarks on Bangladesh.

"West Bengal is an Indian state bordering Bangladesh. It's positive that there's a secular party in West Bengal," he said.

Amena Mohsin observed that the BJP has been practising politics of deep polarisation.

"Wherever it is, we must get out of politics that creates divisions among people, politics that nourishes hatred against any particular sect of the society," she said.

Foreign Minister Momen, in his congratulatory message, said he is thankful to Mamata as she spiritedly upheld the long-cherished values of Bengal -- the principles of religious harmony and brotherhood that Bangabandhu spearheaded throughout his life.

## Charges pressed against 5 cops

FROM PAGE 12

The 1,962-page charge sheet listed 69 witnesses, among them, seven police personnel and three others already testified before the court as witnesses under section-164 of the Penal Code, said PBI Special Superintendent Mohammad Khaled-uz-Zaman at a press conference yesterday.

He said, "As per the investigation, the detention of Rayhan and torture in the outpost was not pre-planned. That night, two locals named Saidul Sheikh and Ratan Sheikh went to Kasthoghar area to buy yaba pills; there they locked into an altercation with the sellers and Rayhan was there with the yaba sellers too."

"Later Saidul informed police about a mugging and police, on information, detained Rayhan from Kasthoghar area in the city.

Investigating Rayhan's involvement with the drug sellers, we've found he was previously accused in a drug case in 2018," the PBI official said.

He also said that Rayhan was tortured in the police outpost and PBI accuses SI Akbar, ASI Ashek, constables Titu, and Harunur of torturing Rayhan in police custody.

SI Akbar, ASI Ashek, and constable Titu are also accused of detaining Rayhan and bringing him to the police outpost while SI Hasan and local youth Noman are accused of hiding valuable evidence, the SP said.

The accused are charged under section 302, 201, 34 of the Penal Code and also section 15, 2, and 3 of the Torture and Custodial Death Prevention Act, the SP added that all points were considered to ensure a fair probe.

## 160 migrants return

FROM PAGE 12

however, could not immediately confirm the identity of the deceased.

According to a Facebook post of the Buraq Air flight left Libya's Benina International Airport around 7:00pm (local time) on Tuesday.

The migrant workers had been stranded due to the pandemic and also the protracted political situation in Libya. They were repatriated from Benghazi.

In a statement, IOM Bangladesh said prior to their departure, the returnees underwent health checks, were offered pre-departure transportation assistance, counselling services and screened for underlying protection vulnerabilities.

Given the current pandemic situation, all returnees were also provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) and they took Covid-19 testing prior to departure, reads the statement.

Upon return, the migrants each received cash for transportation from IOM. Each of them will receive reintegration grant from the organisation in future, the statement

adds. Reintegration support is particularly important for migrants who, in some cases, have experienced physical and psychological trauma while being stranded in Libya, IOM said.

Stranded Bangladeshi migrants find themselves in precarious conditions in Libya, and Covid-19 has exacerbated their vulnerabilities, said IOM Bangladesh Chief of Mission Giorgi Gigauri.

"It is our number one priority to provide these returnees with a safe and dignified way to get home, and to support their reintegration into their communities," he said.

There are about 25,000 Bangladeshis in Libya, according to officials at the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli.

Libya was plunged into chaos when a NATO-backed uprising in 2011 toppled longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi, who was later killed, according to media reports.

The country has since split between rival east and west-based administrations, each backed by armed groups and foreign governments.

## US Senate unit asks Pakistan

FROM PAGE 12

the state department conceded that United States arms had been used. A similar resolution would be introduced soon in the House of Representatives.

Defense department sources said that the effect of the Senate panel's action would be mainly symbolic. There had been no deliveries of United States arms or ammunition to Pakistan since March 25, when the fighting began, they said.

### INDIA APPEALS ON REFUGEES

The Indian government, growing increasingly concerned about its ability to cope with the mounting flow of Bangladeshi refugees fleeing the Pakistan army, issued a new appeal today for outside help and said the refugees were an international responsibility.

At a news conference, RK.Khadilkar, minister of labor and rehabilitation, said the refugees were now pouring in at a rate of 60,000 a day and that the total number had passed 1.5 million.

The official estimated that perhaps as many as five million would eventually cross into India. It would cost the government possibly about \$150 million a year to support them, he said.

### TIKKA KHAN DISPUTES REPORTS OF CASUALTIES

Gen Tikka Khan, the military governor of East Pakistan, said today in Dhaka that his staff had estimated that 150 persons were killed in Dacca on the night of March 25, when the army moved to reassert control over this province, reported the New York Times. The general, speaking at a reception, said that other estimates of the number of people killed, ranging

up to 10,000, were wildly exaggerated. In addition to the correspondent of the New York Times, General Tikka Khan saw five other correspondents. They represented the Associated Press, Reuters, Time inc., The Financial Times of London and Xinhua, the Chinese Communist press agency.

The New York Times further reported that vehicular traffic was fairly heavy although most shops remained shuttered. It had been estimated that half the city population fled to villages when the fighting began. Even Dhaka's Intercontinental Hotel was operating with only 20 percent of its normal staff, he added.

Some Bangalee slum dwellers complained to newsmen that the outside world had not been told of the "massacre" here.

Tikka Khan said armed resistance to government forces in East Pakistan had practically disappeared and he was thinking soon of ending the curfew in Dhaka. He conceded, however, that the vital railroad from the port of Chittagong on the Bay of Bengal to the interior was still not running because many bridges had been dynamited and because of other obstructions.

The military governor saw no possibility of the emergency of a guerrilla war here of the type fought in Vietnam, although Indian infiltrators could continue to foment trouble, he said.

The governor said food was in adequate supply although distribution remained a problem.

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



A number of workers wearing personal protective equipment at a crematorium in Kathmandu, Nepal, yesterday. The crematorium is undergoing an extension to cope with the surge of Covid-19 deaths, as India's outbreak spreads across South Asia.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Padma bridge deadline now June next year

FROM PAGE 12

rail link project by June next year.

The long-cherished Padma bridge is being constructed with the country's own funds after the World Bank and other international lenders cancelled financing over allegations of irregularities.

The construction started in November, 2014. The 6.15km bridge on the Padma will connect the capital with 21 southwestern districts. It is expected to boost the country's gross domestic product by 1.2 percent.

The two-level steel truss composite bridge will feature a four-lane highway over rail lines.

The deadline of the project has been extended several times. The Bridges Division aimed for opening the bridge to traffic in December last

year to mark the golden jubilee of the country's independence.

But the local and global coronavirus restrictions delayed it.

The authorities were able to pick up the pace after the Chinese nationals returned to work in May last year. But strong currents in the Padma started causing problems, said officials involved with the project.

As of November last year, the progress of the main bridge was 91.5 percent, according to finance ministry documents.

The progress of river training was 76 percent in November while construction of the link roads was done, the documents say.

### SCEPTICISM OVER RAIL LINK

The installation of the rail lines on

the bridge is likely to commence by October this year. It might take up to six months to complete, according to officials of the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project.

However, for the work to start, the Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) must hand over the bridge to the railway contractor.

But it may be February or March before the BBA hands over the bridge. And in that case, it would be tough for the BR to finish their work within June, said officials.

Bangladesh Railway is connecting the capital with Jashore by a 169-km railway via the Padma bridge at a cost of Tk 39,246 crore.

The progress of the construction of the rail lines from the capital to Mawa remains slow.

## Took 8yrs to find evidence

FROM PAGE 12

Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Bangladesh.

"Our law enforcement's task is to prosecute perpetrators of sabotage and bring them under the law following investigation. Police are now being able to bring into custody those who were found involved in the incident, after analysing video footages. They are also now conducting further investigation," he said.

Police officials claimed that not a single innocent person has been arrested so far. They are looking for those who are definitely guilty of the crimes committed during the incident.

According to sources, even this year, 17 people were killed in violent clashes carried out by Hefajat in different parts of the country from March 26 to 28.

Following that, the investigation into 62 pending cases filed since the 2013 mayhem has seen updates and central Hefajat leaders are now being shown arrested in those cases.

Around 83 cases were filed in 2013, but police have pressed charges only

in 18, and gave final reports in two. Investigations of the remaining 62 have been stalled for past eight years.

Police Headquarters sources said around 143 cases were filed after the violence on March 26 to March 28. Over 900 people, mostly Hefajat supporters and 29 top central leaders, were arrested in the old and new cases.

In the wake of the arrests, Hefajat yesterday demanded the release of "Ulemas and general religious people" who were arrested over the violence by the Islamist organisation in March during demonstrations against the Indian PM's visit.

A 10-member Hefajat delegation, led by its secretary general of the convening committee Nurul Islam Jihadi, placed a four-point demand before Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan during a meeting with him at his city residence.

Meanwhile, the DB of Chattogram district police arrested the former publicity secretary of Hefajat over the mayhem during the anti-Modi protests at Chattogram's Hathazari on

March 26, reported our Chattogram correspondent.

Jakaria Noman Fayeji, the central leader, was held from Chakaria upazila of Cox's Bazar, said Abdullah Al Masum, Additional Superintendent of Police.

On the other hand, three former leaders of Hefajat-e-Islam were placed on different terms of remand yesterday in four separate cases filed with Motijheel, Paltan, Shahbagh and Ramna police stations over the 2013 mayhem in Dhaka.

The leaders are Hefajat's former assistant secretary generals Mufi Shakhawat Hossain Razi and Maulana Monzurul Islam Afendi, and Assistant Organising Secretary Ataulah Ameeni.

Both Shakhawat and Monzurul were placed on a three-day remand each, in a case filed with Paltan police. Shakhawat was also placed on a three-day remand in another case filed with Motijheel police.

Besides, Ataulah was placed on a three-day remand separately in two cases filed with Shahbagh and Ramna Police Stations.

## VCS' panel delays them

FROM PAGE 12

unit will be on May 21, "Kha" unit on May 22, "Ga" unit on May 27 and "Gha" unit on May 28.

Authorities of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) had extended the deadline till May 3 for the application process from April 24, due to the Covid situation.

Admission seekers will be required to sit for preliminary selection exams on May 30 and June 1, from which candidates will be selected for the final exams scheduled to be held on June 10.

Prof Farid Uddin said it was clear that they would also need to defer the admission test of 20 public universities holding cluster admission test.

He said primary application process of 20 general, science and technical universities began on April 1 and was supposed to continue till April 15.

"But we have extended the date for 10 days after the lockdown ends. So, we will need to defer the admission test," Prof Farid Uddin added.

The 20 public universities were set to hold the admission test on June 19, 26 and July 3.

The universities include Jagannath University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Khulna University, Begum Rokeya University,

Islamic University, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Noakhali Science and Technology University, Cumilla University, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Jashore University of Science and Technology, Pabna University of Science and Technology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University, Barishal University, Rangamati Science and Technology University, Rabindra University, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University, Sheikh Hasina University, and Bangamata Sheikh Fojilatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University.

The online application process enrolling for seven agricultural public universities under another cluster is going on. The last date for submitting application is June 10 and exams date is on July 31.

Seven agricultural universities are: Bangladesh Agricultural University, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University, Sylhet Agricultural University, Patuakhali Science and Technology University, Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University and Khulna Agricultural University.

Application process for combined admission test of three engineering universities -- Chattogram University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet), Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) and Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) -- will end on May 8. And admission test date is on June 12.

Rajshahi University authorities have planned to hold the exam on June 14, 15 and 16, while Chattogram University also has a plan to arrange the exams between June 22 and 30.

Tight competition awaits admission seekers of public universities this year.

A record-setting number of students got GPA-5 in the HSC examinations, thanks to the lack of actual exams and the results being reflections of each student's grades in public exams held before. For the first time in history, everyone who registered for the HSC cleared the tests as they were not arranged at all due to the pandemic.

Over 1,53,610 students have been awarded GPA-5 under nine general education boards. The number was 41,807 in 2019.

All boards combined, 13,67,377 students -- 7,06,885 boys and 6,60,492 girls -- who registered for the 2020 HSC exams from 9,063 institutions have already got their certificates.

## Man held for raping minor in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police yesterday arrested a man for raping a minor girl in Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur.

The arrestee Rabiul Islam, 25, is of Jilapipotty village in the upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Hakimpur police, arrested the man from Basudebpur village around 9:00am yesterday.

A court sent the man to jail after he was produced before it in the afternoon.

Police said Rabiul on April 21 took the 10-year-old from his area promising her Tk 10 to buy chocolates. He then raped her at a secluded place in the area.

Later in the day when the girl's parents learnt about the matter, the father filed a complaint with Hakimpur Police Station, said the OC.

## Sundarbans fires

FROM PAGE 12

director at Fire Service and Civil Defence, Bagerhat, said three fire engines started working at the site yesterday morning.

"Twenty-five hose pipes were set up to bring water from the Bhola river. Ten additional pipes were set up later. The forest department and the firefighters have taken measures to keep the fire from spreading any further.... Our equipment is still in the forest," he added.

Yesterday's fire was much worse than Monday's. A thick layer of fallen leaves is making it harder to completely douse the fire with water.

Twenty-six fires have been reported in the Sundarbans in the last two decades.

## 100m-yr old

FROM PAGE 12

enormous sizes attained by some species, and the group includes the largest animals to have ever lived on land.

The finding makes Meghalaya the fifth state in India after Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu and the only state in the North-East to report Sauropod bones having titanosaurian affinity, they said.

Titanosaurs were a diverse group of sauropod dinosaurs, including genera from Africa, Asia, South America, North America, Europe, Australia and Antarctica.

"Dinosaur bones from Meghalaya were reported by GSI in 2001 but they were too fragmentary and ill-preserved to understand its taxonomic identification," said Arindam Roy, senior geologist, Palaeontology Division, GSI.

"The present find of bones is during fieldwork in 2019-2020 and 2020-21. The last visit of the team was in February 2021. The fossils are presumably of Late Cretaceous, about 100 million years ago," Roy told PTI.

He noted that the best-preserved fossils are limb bones, adding the type of curvature, development of lateral and proximal margins of the partially preserved bone are indicative of it being a humerus bone.

He, however, noted that the conclusions are drawn from preliminary studies and detailed work is going on.

The bone fragments were collected from poorly sorted, purplish to greenish very coarse-grained arkosic sandstone interlaid with pebbly beds.

More than twenty-five disarticulated, mostly fragmentary bone specimens were recovered, which are of different sizes and occur as isolated specimens but some of them were found in close proximity to each other, the researchers said.

## US climate envoy Kerry says islands face 'beyond existential' threat

AFP, Manila

US climate envoy John Kerry said Tuesday island nations faced a situation "beyond existential" due to climate change, as he called for an end to fossil fuel subsidies and coal plant financing.

The 20 countries responsible for most of the world's emissions had a "special responsibility" to take action, Kerry said -- but warned they were not "moving in the same direction" or fast enough.

"When I talk to some of the island state leaders they are not just considering adaptation and resilience, they are considering where they are going to move to," Kerry told a virtual seminar during the Manila-based Asian Development Bank's annual meeting.

"It's beyond existential." Kerry, the former secretary of state who has become President Joe Biden's globe-trotting climate envoy, said "adequate finance" was critical for achieving the goal of checking warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times -- the aspiration set in the Paris Agreement to avoid the most severe effects of climate change.

## 'Alarming' malnutrition in Ethiopia's war-hit Tigray: MSF

AFP, Addis Ababa

Doctors Without Borders yesterday described "alarming" malnutrition in parts of Ethiopia's war-hit Tigray region and said the situation was likely to worsen with the coming rainy season.

The medical charity, known by its French initials MSF, said residents were

struggling to access food distribution points and lamented that the aid response "hardly ever extends beyond larger towns" to Tigray's rural areas.

"MSF teams are observing alarming levels of malnutrition among children and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers screened at mobile clinics across several locations throughout the Northwest region of

Tigray," Karline Kleijer, head of MSF's emergency support department, said in a statement.

Among 309 children screened at remote clinics in recent weeks, 26.6 percent were malnourished and six percent were severely acutely malnourished, Kleijer said, adding the situation "warrants immediate action."

# Improved fitness helped Taskin all around

*Pacer Taskin Ahmed's bowling was indeed a positive takeaway for Bangladesh from a rather frustrating Sri Lanka tour. The right-arm pacer was able to consistently trouble batsmen even on a flat pitch, scalping eight wickets in two Tests in difficult conditions. Bangladesh pace bowling coach Ottis Gibson talked to The Daily Star's Ekush Tapader about Taskin's improvement and the condition of the other fast bowlers in the squad.*

**The Daily Star (DS):** What has worked behind the remarkable improvement of Taskin Ahmed during the tour of Sri Lanka?

**Ottis Gibson (OG):** Definitely it [Taskin's improvement] was because of his new level of fitness. Improving fitness has increased his pace and helped him get into a good rhythm. Due to this, he has also been able to work on technical aspects.

**DS:** Can you please elaborate the technical aspects he has worked on?

**OG:** We worked on his run-up for a long time. Even before the New Zealand series, he had the tendency to bowl no balls. I tried to make his run-up a bit easier. In the 70 overs (68) he bowled in the two Tests against Sri Lanka, Taskin did not overstep once. If you can incorporate a comfortable run-up in your bowling then everything else becomes easier. For this reason, his line and length were very good. Besides, he is now able to swing the ball a bit. All in all, I am very impressed with his improvement.

**DS:** Will he be able to perform well in all three formats? And can he play



all the formats?

**OG:** If he can hold onto this rhythm, he will be able to perform his best in all formats. However, it is difficult to say what will happen to the bowler if he plays in all three formats continuously. We need to manage this carefully.

**DS:** How do you assess the performance of other pacers?

**OG:** The Lankan condition was very difficult for pacers of both sides. We batted for a long time in the first Test and so did they. Especially, in such conditions in

the subcontinent, it is hard to pin the blame on pacers. I think Taskin was the best among pacers of both sides. Only he was able to trouble the batsmen consistently.

**DS:** Ebadot Hossain was seen bowling at a high speed. He even clocked at 147 kmph, but what is the reason he did not have much success?

**OG:** Ebadot is perhaps the fastest bowler in the team. But unlike Taskin, he was unable to pitch the ball at good lengths. Alongside the pace, if he can control the ball better and swing the ball, then he

can be a great bowler.

**DS:** Your assessment of Shoriful Islam?

**OG:** I am very optimistic about Shoriful and also inspired by his performance. He was called into the squad for the first time during the New Zealand tour and has already played a Test. He is a great talent and could be a star in the making. He will improve with time. He has pace, aggression and also has the natural benefit of being a left-hander.

**DS:** Mustafizur Rahman was not considered for the Sri Lanka Tests. What are his chances in Tests?

**OG:** Mustafizur played against West Indies [in Tests]. We worked on his ability to bring the ball into the right-handers. And we were successful too. However, in Tests, there are 90 overs a day. And we need to take that into consideration. We have Taskin, Mustafizur, [Abu Jayed] Rahi, Ebadot and Hasan Mahmud. So we have 4/5 bowlers for Tests. It will be great when Mustafizur will improve further and be fit to play Test in all respects because he already is an amazing pacer.



(L-R) Bangladesh ODI team's players – Mohammad Saifuddin, Mahedi Hasan and Mohammad Al Amin – leave the field following a training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

## SL to arrive on May 16

SPORTS REPORTER



The Sri Lankan team will arrive in Bangladesh on May 16 to take part in a three-match ODI series, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) revealed as they announced the schedule for the upcoming home series yesterday.

The visitors will quarantine in their rooms for three days before the start of training sessions from May 19 at the BCB Academy ground in Mirpur. The Sri Lankan team will take part in a practice game on May 21 at the BKSP before facing Bangladesh in the first ODI on May 23. The second and third games are scheduled for May 25 and 28 respectively, with all matches being held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Bangladesh's selectors have already announced a 23-members preliminary squad, which has started training at the home of cricket in Mirpur.

The Tigers will be hosting their second international home series since the pandemic after playing hosts to the West Indies earlier this year during two-match Test and three-match ODI series.

Meanwhile, with many foreign players having already left India following the Indian Premier League's suspension on

Tuesday, the question among Bangladesh fans was when Mustafizur Rahman and Shakib Al Hasan would return.

Both cricketers were included in the 23-member preliminary squad and will likely return to the country on the same flight, with their respective franchises Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders expected to share the cost of chartered flights.

While international flights resumed in Bangladesh on May 1, no passengers are

### SRI LANKA TEAM'S BANGLADESH TOUR

Arrival – 16 May  
One-day practice match at BKSP – 21 May  
1st ODI at SBNSC – 23 May (D/N)  
2nd ODI at SBNSC – 25 May (D/N)  
3rd ODI at SBNSC – 28 May (D/N)  
Departure – 29 May

allowed to fly in from India due to the escalation of the Covid-19 situation in the neighbouring country. However, a special charter flight may be arranged for Shakib and Fizz after getting special approval from relevant authorities.

"We're hopeful that Shakib and Mustafizur will be back in the country tomorrow or the day after tomorrow," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

## Mohammedan break Saif SC jinx

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan finally broke Saif SC's resistance after three years as the Black and Whites came out with a 2-1 win in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The struggling giants had failed to overcome the hurdle posed by new sensations Saif SC for nearly three-and-a-half years after defeating them 3-0 on their first meeting in Saif SC's debut season in 2017. Since then, they have met six times in the league and Federation Cup but Mohammedan lost thrice and drew thrice.

The triumph also helped Mohammedan leapfrog Saif SC into fifth position in the 13-team table as well as avenge their 1-2 defeat to Saif SC in the reverse matchday. With a seventh victory, Mohammedan also raised their point tally to 27, two behind archrivals Abahani and 13 less than leaders Bashundhara Kings.

Although Mohammedan have been playing without head coach Sean Lane, the Black and Whites looked rejuvenated under the guidance of assistant coach Alfaz Ahmed. They kept their attacking attitude intact throughout the match against Saif, who launched the first attack before Nigerian Kenneth Ngwoke saw his shot hit the side netting in 20th minute.

Mohammedan also squandered an easy opportunity when Jafar Iqbal whipped a nice cross in to an unmarked Rakib Khan Evan, who was too late too in connecting with the ball with just the keeper to beat in the 25th minute before Ngwoke again drove miles off target 11 minutes later.

After resumption, Mohammedan kept pressing for the lead but were denied by woodwork three minutes into the

second half. Souleymane Diabate headed a Habibur Rahman cross onto the near post before new-singing Cameroonian Yassan Ouatching gave Mohammedan a deserved lead in the 52nd minute. The tall striker made no mistake tapping home after Diabate's header ricocheted off the crossbar.

Diabate then got an opportunity to double the lead but the Malian striker drove straight to goalkeeper Pappu Hossain in the 56th minute before Ngwoke was denied by Mohammedan goalkeeper Hossain Suzan two minutes later.

Saif SC finally hit back to level the margin in the 68th minute when John Okoli ran down the left, entered the box and cut back for substitute Maraz Hossain, who drove past goalkeeper Suzan.

However, Mohammedan restored their lead seven minutes from time and left the field with a seventh triumph after Diabate availed a through-pass from Jafar Iqbal, rounded defender Emanuel Ariwachukwu and fired home from inside the box.

In the day's second match between, a second-half strike from captain Charles Didier steered Ctg Abahani to a 1-0 win over strugglers Arambagh.

Following a barren first half, the game burst into life late in the second half after captain Didier found the back of the net with a brilliant free-kick in the 78th minute. Ctg Abahani were then awarded a penalty after defender Shahad Mia handled a chip from Nasirul Islam, but Didier squandered that chance before Shakhawat Hossain Rony was denied by woodwork two minutes from the final whistle.

The sixth triumph meant Ctg Abahani remain seventh with 22 points from 14 games while Arambagh suffered 13 defeats in 14 matches and have only one point.



Mohammedan players celebrate one of their two goals in a 2-1 win over Saif SC at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



PHOTO: REUTERS

Manchester City midfielder Riyad Mahrez celebrates one of his two goals against Paris Saint-Germain in their Champions League semifinal second leg in Manchester on Tuesday. (Inset) PSG's Marco Verratti remonstrates with the referee while (bottom) Neymar cuts a forlorn figure during the game.

## Guardiola's City finally crack the CL code

REUTERS, Manchester



Manchester City finally cracked the Champions League code with an impressive 2-0 win over Paris Saint Germain on Tuesday, the 4-1 aggregate triumph earning them a first ever spot in the final of Europe's elite club competition.

After stumbling in the latter stages of the Champions League in his four previous campaigns with the club, Guardiola dropped his usual focus on the tasks ahead to reflect on banishing the one major question mark over his stewardship of the club.

"To reach the final of this competition is so difficult," he told reporters.

"It is the toughest one, the quality of the opponent and the composure you have to have to suffer the toughest moments."

Those moments had proved too tough for City in each of the past four seasons.

Last season's 3-1 quarterfinal loss to a very beatable Olympique Lyonnais followed defeats to Tottenham, Liverpool and Monaco in the Champions League knockout stages.

"It remained in my head for weeks and it was painful, I cannot deny," Guardiola said recently.

Many had wondered whether the Spaniard's obsession with the competition had led him to overthink games or transmitted

nerves to his players, but this season was different.

City have not sneaked into the final or battled through against the odds, they have marched to Istanbul by winning every knockout game -- home and away.

Indeed, they are unbeaten throughout their entire Champions League campaign this season, winning 11 games and



drawing just once.

Throughout the Guardiola years, City have produced some glorious attacking football but also, especially in Europe, some shaky defensive displays.

This year, though, they have combined the flair in the final third with a rock solid defence that has conceded just four goals in the Champions League so far.

The addition of Ruben Dias, the Portugal central defender signed from Benfica, has proven to be a masterstroke. The arrival of the 23-year-old has transformed City in the same way that Virgil van Dijk gave Liverpool the solidity

they were lacking before their Champions League triumph two years ago.

Teenager Phil Foden, cautiously introduced into the side by Guardiola, has come of age during this campaign, effectively replacing Raheem Sterling in the attack.

Riyad Mahrez, who scored both goals on Tuesday, has flourished, while Ilkay Gundogan has come out of his shell to become an all-round midfielder.

City's exits in Europe have all featured moments when they have let the game get away from them -- losing their cool, their shape and their focus. But this season there has been a solidity and maturity that is so vital at the highest level and both in Paris and at home, City were firmly in control.

"In big occasions there are going to be nerves. We have to control that. You put the pressure on yourself," said right-back Kyle Walker, reflecting on the earlier exits. "You go back to Anfield and throwing it away in the first leg. The second year we are at Tottenham and lost in the first leg before chasing it here."

"Last year, it was different, over one leg - a proper cup game. To finally get the victory over there and then come here and win is full credit to this squad."

Chelsea or Real Madrid await but whether it is an all-English final or a clash with the 13-times winners, City will start as favourites -- and justifiably so.



## Kuipers swore at PSG players?

REUTERS

Paris St Germain's Leandro Paredes was verbally abused by Dutch referee Bjorn Kuipers during Tuesday's Champions League semifinal second leg loss to Manchester City, his teammate Ander Herrera has claimed.

City reached the final of Europe's elite club competition for the first time thanks to a 2-0 victory at the Etihad Stadium to secure a 4-1 aggregate win.

French champions PSG were left angered by the referee, who sent off PSG's Angel Di Maria in the 69th minute for an off-the-ball stamp on Ferdinandinho.

"We talk about respect towards referees," midfielder Herrera told French multimedia outlet RMC Sport, while revealing that the official had sworn at Paredes. "If we say that, we get a three or four-match ban."

Herrera's teammate Marco Verratti said in his post-match interview that he too was abused by the official.

PSG manager Mauricio Pochettino told reporters he believed his players and that European soccer's governing body UEFA could investigate the incident.

"I didn't hear anything from the touchline, if something is there and is how they explained, maybe UEFA will investigate the situation," Pochettino said.

"But now that's not an excuse I can put in front of you... the most important thing is we're not in the final and that's why we feel really sad."

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# Padma bridge deadline now June next year

Opening delayed by a year due to pandemic

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government approved a proposal to extend the deadline for the much-talked-about Padma bridge project to June 23, 2022.

The planning ministry on Tuesday approved the proposal of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, seeking extension of the deadline because the pandemic slowed down progress.

June 23 is the founding anniversary of the Awami League.

The ministry, however, assured that the project cost will not exceed the current Tk 30,193 crore. The deadline was June this year.

Planning Minister MA Mannan told The Daily Star that he signed the proposal on Tuesday.

The pandemic has delayed the physical work by a year, he said.

"I have seen the video of the work. It [progress] is quite significant. Construction of the railway line up to the bridge is almost done," said the minister, adding that he was hopeful about the timely completion of the project.

"If the pandemic lingers, we will accept it and move on with our work, taking all the precautionary measures."

The ministry officials said the government planned to launch railway communications between Mawa and Bhanga on the day the bridge would be open to traffic.

But, there is scepticism over completing the work of the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



With Eid-ul-Fitr coming up, many factories in and around the city have gone into overdrive to produce the amount of "shemai (vermicelli)" needed during the festival. In almost every household across the country, vermicelli is made as a special dessert. For years, this dish has been a staple for big occasions. The photo was taken in Char Khalpar area of the capital's Kamrangirchar.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Sundarbans fires still burning

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Forest fires are still burning in Sarankhola Range of the Sundarbans.

Firefighters suspended their operation for the night around 5:00pm yesterday before darkness fell.

Unless overnight rains put out the fires, the officials will resume the operation from this morning, firefighters said.

Forest department officials are staying in the Daser Bharani area, where the fires are, to watch over the situation, said Joyal Abedin, assistant conservator of forests at the Sundarbans East Forest Department.

"The fire that started around Monday noon was put out by Tuesday afternoon. But columns of smoke were billowing the next morning from several places a little south of the original site of the fire. Soon, the fires broke out in different places. The fires are still raging in many places," he added.

Golam Sarwar, assistant  
SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# RAYHAN'S DEATH Charges pressed against 5 cops, one youth

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) yesterday submitted a charge sheet against six people, including five police officials, in a case filed over the custodial death of Rayhan Ahmed.

PBI Special Superintendent Mohammad Khaled-uz-Zaman said that the charge-sheet was submitted to the prosecution section of the police, who will place it before a virtual court.

In the charge-sheet, PBI has accused Bandarbaraz police outpost's suspended in-charge and sub-inspector Akbar Hossain, assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Asheke-Elahi, constable Harunur Rashid, constable Titu Chandra Das, sub-inspector Hasan Uddin, and local youth Abdullah Al Noman.

Among the accused, all except Noman are in jail.

Rayhan Ahmed, 33, a youth of Neharipara area in Sylhet city, was tortured at Sylhet's Bandarbaraz Police Outpost on early October 11 and died an hour after he was admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical Hospital by police personnel.

WHAT'S IN THE CHARGE-SHEET

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

# 100m-yr old dinosaur bones found in Meghalaya



INDIA TODAY ONLINE

Researchers have identified fossil bone fragments of sauropod dinosaurs dating back to about 100 million years from an area around West Khasi Hills District in Meghalaya.

The yet-to-be-published findings were made during a recent field trip by researchers from the Geological Survey of India's Palaeontology division in North-East.

The GSI researchers noted that this is the first record of sauropods of probable Titanosaurian origin discovered in the region.

Sauropods had very long necks, long tails, small heads relative to the rest of their body, and four thick, pillar-like legs. They are notable for the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# 160 migrants return from war-torn Libya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One hundred and sixty Bangladeshi migrant workers, including a woman, returned home yesterday from war-torn Libya under a repatriation programme arranged by the Bangladesh mission there.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which facilitated the latest repatriation, says at least 2,942 Bangladeshi migrants have returned home from the North African country under its Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme since 2015.

A special flight of Buraq Air carrying the 160 migrant workers touched down at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka around 10:15am, said Fakhru Alam, assistant director of Probashi Kalyan Desk at the airport.

The chartered flight also carried the body of a migrant worker. Fakhru,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

# ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

## US Senate unit asks Pakistan arms cutoff

MAY 6, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BATTLE OF TELIAPARA

A heavy fight broke out today at Teliapara, Sylhet. Pakistani Army in the guise of Indian BSF breached the defences of Bangladesh force and were in firing position. They formed an inner circle. However, the Bangladesh force, under the command of KM Shafiqullah Bir Uttam, fought the Pakistan army back. The enemy, over two companies strong, made a hasty retreat. The battlefield of Teliapara was left littered with dead bodies of the enemy. The Bangladesh force also lost a number of men.

STOP ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN, SAYS SENATE BODY

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee called unanimously for an immediate suspension of American military aid and arms sales to Pakistan until the conflict there was resolved and the distribution of relief supplies was resumed.

By a voice vote the committee approved a resolution sponsored by Senators Clifford P Case, Republican of New Jersey; Walter F Mondale, Democrat of Minnesota, and 14 other senators. In so doing it overrode state department objections that the language of the resolution was too imprecise to be applicable.

The resolution, which would now go to the Senate, had no force in law. However, if approved, it would reflect growing concern in Congress over the protracted fighting in East Pakistan during which,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



# HEFAJAT'S 2013 MAYHEM Took 8yrs to find evidence as it was 'big incident'

DB official claims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives took around eight years just to analyse footage and collect evidence of the mayhem Hefajat carried in 2013 as it was a "big incident", said AKM Hafiz Akter, additional commissioner of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

He said this while responding to a reporter's query at the media centre in the capital's Minto Road yesterday.

The accused in the cases related to the incident are now being arrested in the wake of the investigation, but it may take some more days to complete the probe, said Hafiz, also the chief of DMP DB.

He said, "We did not want any innocent person to face punishment. Therefore, we are investigating the cases after analysing all confessional statements."

However, investigation of the cases has speeded up and will be complete soon, he said.

Regarding the ongoing drive, he said Hefajat has been carrying out violence in different places, including Dhaka and Brahmanbaria, centring Indian Prime

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Most of the people at this street shop in the capital's Baitul Mukarram Mosque area are seen without face masks. Although a mobile court has fined various shopping malls for not complying with hygiene rules and social distancing, many people, mostly customers, are still not maintaining any of those. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# PUBLIC UNIVERSITY ADMISSION TESTS VCs' panel delays them

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Admission tests of public universities would be delayed due to the country's coronavirus situation.

Earlier, the majority of the public universities had decided to hold honours first-year admission test for 2020-21 academic session in June-July.

Bangladesh Bishwabidyalaya Parishad, an association of vice-chancellors of public universities, yesterday sat in a virtual meeting and discussed delaying of the entrance test. Barisal University VC Prof Sadequul Arefin and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology VC Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed said holding of the test would be deferred.

"We [Bangladesh Bishwabidyalaya Parishad] will sit for another meeting after Eid to fix the admission [test] dates of public universities," said Prof Farid.

Usually, the parishad sits and fixes tentative dates for the tests so that the dates do not conflict with those of other universities.

Public universities usually follow that tentative dates while finalising their admission test procedures. The parishad in February sat and set tentative dates for the entrance test of all public universities.

Most of the universities started their admission form distribution and submission process.

But as the Covid-19 situation worsened in the country, Dhaka University has already deferred their admission test dates.

On April 29, the DU authorities said the admission test for "Ka" unit will be held on August 6, "Kha" unit on August 7, "Ga" unit on August 13, and "Gha" unit on August 14, said a press release.

Earlier, it was decided that the admission test for "Ka" unit

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



## PRAYER TIMING MAY 6

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
3:58	12:45	5:00	6:33	8:00
JAMAAT	4:08	1:15	5:15	6:43
				8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



## SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN MAY SEHRI IFTAR

23	6	6:33
24	7	3:52 6:34
25	8	3:51 6:34