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An extension of chaotic capital?

Purbachal on same path as unplanned Dhaka after multiple revisions in design, deadline

ASIFUR RAHMAN and HELEMUL ALAM

The "ideal town" planned in Purbachal to ease Dhaka's burden of overgrowing population is likely to become yet another extension of the unplanned capital, thanks to the long delay in implementation and constant changes in project design, according to urban planners.

They said the population within the project area and its surrounding places will nearly triple the initial projection by the time it is likely to be completed.

The Purbachal New Town project was initiated by Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) in 1995 on around 6,227 acres of land in the south of Dhaka.

Located between Gazipur's Kaliganj and Narayanganj's Rupganj, with the Shitalakkhya river to the east and the Balu river to the west, it was designed to accommodate 10 lakh people in around 25,000 plots of various sizes.

However, it took the government 10 years to approve the Purbachal project -- its largest housing scheme -- at an initial cost of Tk 3,312 crore. With the initial deadline having elapsed in 2010, the cost has now more than tripled to a whopping Tk 10,329 crore with various other components added.

The project, which has seen five revisions to its design so far, is now expected to be completed by 2025, after several revisions of the deadline.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A massive development work at 300-foot Purbachal Road is underway. The government is constructing an eight-lane expressway to connect Kuril with Kanchan Bridge via Purbachal. Besides, 100-foot canals are being built on both sides of the road from Kuril to the Balu river. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

PROJECT INITIATED	1995
DEVELOPMENT WORK STARTED	2002-03
INITIAL DEADLINE	2010
CURRENT DEADLINE	2025
INITIAL PROJECT COST	Tk 3,312cr
CURRENT PROJECT COST	Tk 10,329cr
INITIAL POPULATION ESTIMATE	10 lakh
CURRENT POPULATION ESTIMATE	27 lakh

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Uncertain as govt relied on one source

Legal procedure wasn't duly followed, third party benefitted along the way, finds TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh now faces uncertainty over nationwide Covid vaccination as the government depended on a single source for procuring vaccines, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said yesterday.

"There is still no success in securing more vaccines though the government is now trying to get those from different

sources," he said.

Iftekharuzzaman was speaking at a virtual event organised to release the findings of the TIB study titled "Tackling Coronavirus Crisis: Good Governance Challenge in Covid-19 Vaccine Management".

He said the government depended on a single source for getting vaccines and this benefited a third party. But it could have purchased the jabs directly.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Daily Covid cases, deaths jump again

Natore, Khulna set for lockdown

STAR REPORT

As Covid-19 cases began skyrocketing again, both the death and infection rates yesterday were the highest in the last month or so.

Some 44 people died in 24-hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

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BTRC'S NEW BROADBAND TARIFF

Would it bring cheap internet? Unlikely

ZINA TASREEN

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's move on Sunday to fix the broadband prices brings to mind an oft-used quote by celebrated French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: A goal without a plan is nothing but a wish.

On paper, the move has all the ingredients to be a gamechanger for the 'Digital Bangladesh' agenda: in one sweeping stroke, the government made broadband internet accessible and affordable from anywhere in the country

-- right away.

The prices set -- Tk 500 for 5 megabits per second (Mbps), Tk 700-800 for 10 Mbps, and Tk 1,110-1,200 for 20 Mbps -- are indeed a bargain for those who live outside of Dhaka, who currently have to pay many times over for broadband connection.

This is particularly great news for the legions of information technology-enabled services freelancers such as graphics designers, software engineers, mobile app developers, business process outsourcing professionals as well as the e-commerce

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Bangladesh GDP growth 2nd-best in South Asia

Says WB in its publication on FY21

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

The World Bank yesterday upgraded Bangladesh's GDP growth forecast for this fiscal year by 2 percentage points to 3.6 percent, making it the second best-performing economy in South Asia behind the Maldives.

In fiscal 2020-21,

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BANGLADESH UPDATE



2,322
New cases in 24hrs



8,15,282
Total cases



12,913
Deaths



7,55,302
Recoveries



3,757,375
Deaths

174,590,378
Total cases



174,590,378
Total cases

SUPPLY OF COVID VACCINES

Bangladesh should go for production

Experts say at webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For long-term solution to Covid vaccine supply, Bangladesh needs to go for vaccine production as the crisis for the shots is worldwide, experts said at a webinar yesterday.

They also said the government must inoculate the majority of the population against the deadly virus within a short period of time and manage the vaccine properly if herd immunity is to be ensured.

At the webinar, experts stressed the need of more research on the virus locally, prioritising students and teachers for vaccination, creating awareness among people to take vaccine and proper distribution of the shots across the country.

Institute of Health Economics (IHE) of Dhaka University, Initiative for Health and Development (IHD), and Universal Research Care (URC) jointly organised the webinar titled "Covid-19 Vaccine from Different Sources in the Country: Management Issues."

Stressing on research, medical scientist Liakot Ali said it was yet to be known properly how long immunity against the virus stays after vaccination. Also what is the reaction of the vaccine among different age groups is still unclear, and therefore, research is necessary, he added.

Talking about the herd immunity, he said at least 12 crore people have to be vaccinated to ensure herd immunity. This has to be done as soon as possible, or else it won't work, he said.

Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology department at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), said, "According to science, if we want to vaccinate 12 crore

people within 12 months, then we will need two crore vaccine doses monthly. We have to do this within a year, which is the effective period of the vaccine. This won't give a chance for a new variant to develop."

Giving examples of Cuba, Iran and Kazakhstan, he said they are using locally manufactured vaccines without approval of WHO as it is now an emergency. So, a country can make such a decision based on its capacity and research.

He also suggested that the government allocate more money in research and production of vaccine.

Referring to an assembly of WHO, public health adviser Prof Mohammad Abul Faiz said the country has the capacity to produce vaccine because an assembly of WHO named a few countries who are capable of producing vaccine and Bangladesh is one of them.

He said people are yet to know if they could take different vaccines in their first and second jabs or they should stick to the vaccine of one company and therefore, more research is needed.

URC representative Abdul Hamid said, "As vaccines are now coming from different sources, it is getting complicated as people don't know whether they should use the same vaccine or different ones."

"We can't depend on foreign countries for the vaccine in the long term. Besides, there are other diplomatic issues and politics which are well related to vaccines. We have to produce our own," he said.

IEDCR consultant Mustaq Husain gave emphasis on administering vaccine doses to the university students along with the frontliners who are combating Covid-19.

IHE Director Nasrin Sultana and IHD head Abu Jamul Faisal were also present.

DU TEACHER'S FIRING

HC questions legality of syndicate decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the Dhaka University authorities' decision to terminate its teacher Prof Morshed Hasan Khan from his job.

On September 9 last year, the DU authorities terminated Prof Morshed, a teacher of marketing department, on charges of distorting the country's history and defaming Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The decision to dismiss Prof Morshed was made at a meeting of the university's syndicate.

Yesterday, the HC issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of DU and the government to explain in four

weeks why the decision should not be declared illegal.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Sardar Md Rashed Jahangir came up with the rule following a writ petition filed by Prof Morshed challenging the DU authorities' decision.

Petitioner's lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua told the media that his client Prof Morshed has appealed to the DU vice-chancellor against his dismissal, but the VC has not disposed of the appeal in seven months.

On April 2, 2018, the DU authorities suspended Prof Morshed over allegations of distorting history of the Liberation War and defaming Bangabandhu and said the punishment will be effective until further notice.

organisations whose employees got priority in getting jabs.

Of those interviewed, 27.2 percent complained of hassles at vaccination centres while 50.2 percent said they were not briefed about the benefits and side-effects of the vaccine.

Many migrant workers from Bangladesh had to spend an additional Tk 60,000-70,000 each as quarantine cost upon their arrival in the destination countries as they had not been included timely in the priority list of vaccine recipients.

The study said the new Covid variant has spread in the country due to slack surveillance at airports and land ports.

Besides, there was no initiative to encourage people to change their attitude towards the pandemic which led to a spike in virus transmission in March and April.

And 26.6 percent of the Covid infections and 24.2 percent of the deaths occurred in those two months, it mentioned.

The RT-PCR testing is still limited to 30 districts and there is a lack of capacity to detect new strains of the virus.

Besides, the fees for RT-PCR test have not been reduced yet though the price of testing kits dropped significantly.

"People have to wait for four to five days to get Covid test results."

Despite the availability of funds and necessary devices, the plan to install 10 ICU beds in every district-level hospital has not been implemented yet.

Due to the crisis of ICU beds, people are being forced to take treatment at private hospitals which costs a patient more than Tk 5 lakh, the study pointed out.

The TBI recommended setting up RT-PCR labs in every district, fixing Covid treatment cost and providing livelihoods to low-income people during lockdown.

The study revealed that there was corruption in spending allocations for Covid-19 -- Tk 5-crore graft in spending Tk 62.3 crore for five hospitals, and corruption in the purchase of one lakh RT-PCR kits and issuance of purchase orders.

The progress in investigation into the corruption allegations is slow while the officials of the health department involved in these are yet to be brought to justice.

The study also said around 35 percent of the Tk 128,303-crore funds under 23 stimulus packages have not been disbursed yet.

"While most of the funds for heavy industries have been disbursed, the pace was slow in disbursing those for agriculture, small and medium industries, and the low-income people," it mentioned.



Buses on a waterlogged street near Azimpur Chowrasta in the capital after a brief spell of rain yesterday morning. This caused disruption in movement of traffic in the area for hours.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

An extension of chaotic capital?

FROM PAGE 1

Although the initial plan was to only build a residential township, many commercial buildings have been included later on -- replacing playgrounds and other civic amenities.

The Purbachal New Town area will also be under pressure from the private housing sprouting around the project site.

During a recent visit, The Daily Star found former greenery has now turned grey in the project area with workers dismantling a newly-built road to make it wider.

Construction of 100-foot canals on both sides of the road were also going on simultaneously.

The boulevard, known as 300 feet, meanwhile, has become a popular hangout for Dhaka residents.

Md Ashrafur Islam, project director of Detailed Area Plan of Rajuk, said as per the building construction rules-2008, which sets the highest number of buildings within a given area and how much empty space has to be kept, the population living inside the Purbachal project will be around 27 lakh.

Such a population is destined to create great pressure on services and facilities already constructed or under construction based on a design for 10 lakh people.

"Purbachal is destined to fail as a planned town due to long delays and accommodation of commercial and business zones in a residential-only hub without any proper assessment," said Adil Mohammad Khan, secretary general of Bangladesh Institute of Planners.

"Although it is called new town, Purbachal is developing as an unplanned extension of Dhaka city," he told The Daily Star.

Ujjwal Mallick, project director and chief engineer of Rajuk, said the project has so far seen 70 percent physical progress and 65 percent financial progress.

"We are expecting to complete the whole project by 2025," he said.

EVER-CHANGING PLANS

Since the development work of the project started in 2002-03, Rajuk revised its design in 2004, 2005, 2009, and in 2013.

Following a public interest litigation in 2013, the High Court endorsed the fourth revision and directed Rajuk not to "efface, subtract, vary or modify the forest, lakes, canals, urban green, parks, playgrounds", as shown in the fourth

revised layout plan, without the court's permission.

But Rajuk introduced a fifth revision in 2017, violating the 2014 HC judgment and allegedly allotted 89 plots secretly in 2018 taking land from areas earmarked for schools and their playgrounds, open fields and spaces, as The Daily Star previously reported.

It included an "iconic" tower on around 100 acres, more residential plots, and an increased number of hospitals and clinics as part of Rajuk's plan to introduce a Central Business District (CBD) in the project area, according to Rajuk officials.

Rajuk appealed to the HC for approval of the fifth revision but was rejected in 2018.

At the monthly coordination meeting of Rajuk held last March, officials said they are still trying to involve the attorney general's office in this regard.

Rajuk Chief Engineer Ujjwal Mallick, however, said they will do their job as per the court's direction.

Adil Mohammad Khan said the plan to accommodate the CBD will create greater pressure of people in the project area.

He alleged that the additional commercial and residential plots are being created to accommodate those influential and politically connected.

"According to the existing rules there is scope for constructing a 10- or 12- or 14-storey building on a seven- to eight katha plot," he said, questioning how habitable Purbachal will be with up to 20-25 lakh people.

COST HIKED, MONEY AND TIME WASTED

The urban planner also said due to the long delays and many changes in the planning, many roads under the project area now need to be repaired or upgraded.

"Due to the lack of transparency in the planning, main roads which have been constructed as four lanes are now being upgraded to eight lanes, which is a sheer waste of public money and time," he said.

He said this delay was due to Rajuk's failure to determine how the main roads of the project would be classified -- as a national highway or regional highway after construction.

After a digital land survey, land acquisition and development work in the first phase started in the 2002-03 fiscal year. The initial project cost was Tk

3,312 crore and was revised to Tk 7,782 crore in 2010.

In 2015, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecenc) approved another Tk 5,000 crore for the "Excavation and development of a 100 feet wide and 13.2km canal on both sides of Kuril-Purbachal Link Road (from Kuril to Balu river)."

On November 4, 2018, Ecenc also approved a revised project cost of Tk 10,329.66 crore, which was a revision of the 2015 canal development project with the addition of three more canals, eight-lane expressway, bridges, and other ancillary issues, according to project documents.

The government decision to construct the 12.36km eight-lane expressway from Kuril -- including a six-lane expressway from the Balu river to Kanchan Bridge, three service lanes on each side and other ancillary facilities -- was a belated one.

As a result, Rajuk is now dismantling the existing four-lane road, completed in 2018 at a cost of Tk 275 crore from the second revised budget.

Rajuk's Mallick said, "The proposal of an eight-lane expressway was in the first plan, but we had no money to execute the plan at that time. After getting the money we started it."

He said 80 percent of the canal development work from Kuril to Balu river has been completed.

Regarding the three additional canals, Mallick said the land acquisition is yet to be completed. The canal development project completion deadline is in December this year, as is that for the road expansion.

The project director claimed that plot owners could start living in the project area from July 2022. "The area will be suitable for living by July next year as the water supply will be set up by then," he said.

Adil Mohammad Khan also said overhead power lines were initially constructed but Rajuk is now shifting to an underground cable ducting system, adding that there are no clear guidelines or planning about other utility lines like sewerage, water, and gas.

Asked about sewerage and other facilities, Rajuk's Mallick said these facilities and electricity will only be completed by 2030. Between 60-70 percent of electric lines have already been completed while they will start distributing water in sectors 5 and 6 in the first phase from next February.

Anisuzzaman Khan passed away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted zoologist and wildlife expert M o h a m m e d Anisuzzaman Khan passed away on Monday, leaving behind his wife, son, daughter, siblings, and a host of friends and well-wishers to mourn his death.



Anisuzzaman, the younger sibling of prominent wildlife expert and birder Reza Khan, was born on September 30, 1954, at his ancestral home in Manikganj.

He inspired hundreds of people to join hands in nature conservation efforts across the country.

Anisuzzaman was found dead in a bus. He was travelling from Chattogram to Dhaka after attending a programme in the port city.

Shuvo Ranjan Chakma, duty officer of Chouddagram Police Station in Cumilla, said Anisuzzaman was found dead on the bus's chair when it stopped at the Time Square restaurant at Mirbazar, Cumilla.

Later police handed over the body to his family. He was buried at Uttara sector-10 graveyard yesterday morning.

Anisuzzaman graduated from Rajshahi University in 1977 and did his master's in 1978.

Later, he participated in training and workshops organised by the Zoological Survey of India in 1984 and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in 1984.

He also worked briefly for International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Dhaka.

Survey of natural resources of St Martin Island, Sonadia Island biodiversity conservation plan, Biodiversity mapping of Kafanuli river and its recovery plans, Biodiversity mapping of Sangu and Matamuhuri rivers and taking conservation efforts, Survey and research in the coastal area with polders, Afforestation on the bank of Kafanuli, Sangu and Matamuhuri rivers, Finding water source in the hilly area for sustainable water management, and Research and survey in the swatch of no ground was some of the works he did in the recent years.

He was the life member of Wildlife Society of Bangladesh, Bombay Natural History Society, India, member of IUCN Commission on Ecosystem, adviser to River Foundation, Save our Sea, founder member of Nature Conservation Management (Nacom) etc.

Daily Covid cases

FROM PAGE 1

This is the highest number deaths recorded due to coronavirus infection since May 9, when some 56 people died due to the infection.

Besides, at least 2,322 new cases were reported in the same period. The numbers of daily new cases were below 2,000 since April 30, when some 2,177 new infections were recorded, according to DGHS statistics.

The total number of deaths from Covid-19 has now become 12,913, while the total number of infected people are 8,15,282.

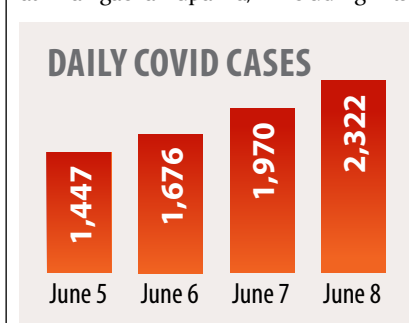
DGHS statistics yesterday said the current positivity rate was 12.12 percent, which was 11.47 percent a day ago.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) standards, if any country's positivity rate remains below five percent for two consecutive weeks, it is considered that the infection rate has come under control in that country.

As people outside the capital are getting rapidly infected, fresh lockdowns are to be enforced in some districts.

In Natore, a seven-day lockdown will be enforced in the district headquarters and Singra municipality area from 6:00am today.

In Khulna, the same will come into effect from 6:00am tomorrow at Paikgacha upazila, including its'



municipal area and four other unions.

In Jashore, the district administration has decided to enforce restrictions at Noapara municipal area under Avoyanagar upazila. However, the length of the lockdown was yet to be finalised till the filing of this report last evening.

In Rajshahi division, the death and infection rates yesterday broke all previous records.

At least 12 people died and some 673 were infected in eight districts of the division in 24-hours till 8:00am yesterday, said Nazma Akhter, assistant director of the divisional office of DGHS.

The current positivity rate in the division is 16.26 percent.

In Dinajpur, the district's civil surgeon Dr Abdus Kuddus said the Covid-19 situation is worsening there as the people are not following the health safety guidelines properly.

In Thakurgaon, the local administration and law enforcers have beefed up vigilance to enforce health safety guidelines.

Border Guard Bangladesh personnel have remained alert to check illegal cross-border movement.

In some bordering districts, lockdowns have been ongoing for the past few days as Covid-19 cases have been increasing.

(Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.)

Would it bring cheap internet? Unlikely

FROM PAGE 1

platforms not based in Dhaka. Their overhead for internet connection would simply come down.

Given the cheap internet and the rise of edtech platforms geared towards teaching coding, the move could potentially go on to create a populace of software engineers and IT professionals in second- or third-tier cities.

No doubt it is a well-intentioned move, but the problem is the BTRC has not actually thought through the logistics of making it work.

For the internet service providers (ISPs), the cost of service includes the price for bandwidth, the cost for transmission and maintenance cost.

Of the three, the ISPs can more or less calibrate the maintenance cost, leaving them at the mercy of third parties for the other two crucial elements of their service.

When there has been no pricing guideline for the nationwide telecommunication transmission network (NTN) operators or the international internet gateway (IIG) providers, how does the BTRC expect the ISPs to manage the new lower rates?

And this is where the BTRC's objective of cheaper internet, particularly in rural areas, falls flat on its face. It simply did not have a plan on how to achieve its goal.

The price ceiling fixed is impracticable and not sustainable, according to the ISPs who spoke on the condition of anonymity to talk candidly on the foolhardy nature of the BTRC order.

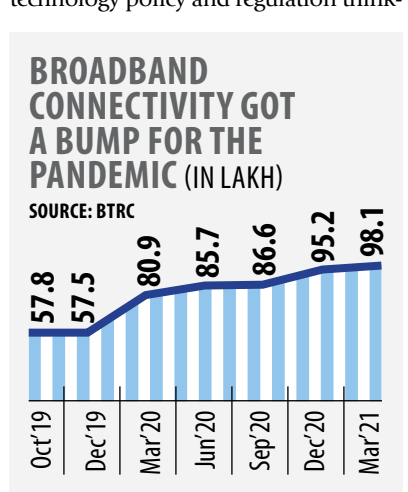
For ISPs in Dhaka and Chittagong, such rates would still be manageable given the density of the transmission network. But as one travels outside the two cities, the prices set are simply unworkable.

"It would be particularly challenging for the smaller ISPs," said MA Hakim,

president of the Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh.

For the BTRC's plan to work at all, he demanded the NTN and IIG providers' rates to be fixed as well as a service-level agreement for them.

The most crucial element for effective functioning of telecommunication services is transmission, according to Abu Saeed Khan, senior policy fellow at LIRNEasia, a Colombo-based information and communication technology policy and regulation think-



tank active in the Asia Pacific region.

"But our transmission system is flawed."

The task of transmission by way of optical fibre is in the hands of two companies: Fiber@Home and Summit Communications.

"And the two are not in a position to deliver," Khan said.

The mobile operators and the ISPs are reliant on the two companies for their transmission.

"And the government's plan for a nationwide transmission network rollout through the two companies has

failed. Only 35 percent of the mobile operators' transmission is through optical fibre, which goes to show how pathetic our transmission backbone is."

And what makes for a grim reading is the situation is unlikely to get any better in the foreseeable future.

The industry is suffering from a dearth of human capital in optical fibre, according to Khan.

And the reason for this is a government policy that barred mobile operators from laying out their own optical fibres.

"This anti-investment policy of the government has crippled the sector. The mobile operators are the biggest investors in the telecom industry," Khan said, adding that things began to go sideways for the telecom industry in 2007, before the current Awami League came to power.

In the absence of any improvement in the transmission network, the BTRC's move on Sunday actually bodes bad news for end-users.

Make no mistake, the ISPs would still follow the BTRC's order -- but on paper. For the new pricing regime to make a business case for them, something has to give and that would be by way of slower internet speed.

At present, one broadband line is split between 3-4 users. Under the new pricing structure, the ISPs might opt to divide the line amongst 20 users, meaning dilution of the internet speed.

On paper, one might still be paying Tk 500 for 5 Mbps. Whether one is actually getting that internet speed at that price is highly doubtful.

This begs the question: what was the point of the grandiloquent announcement without any groundwork?

And as Dwight D Eisenhower, former American president, once said: Plans are nothing, planning is everything.

SHAHEED MOTIUR PARK IN GULISTAN To fence off or not?

Renovated and unfenced last year, DSCC now closing off the park again to keep floating population away

HELEMUL ALAM

It seems like the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has plenty of public money to burn.

DSCC renovated the Shaheed Motiur Park in Gulistan spending Tk 9 crore and opened it for public last year. As part of the renovation works, it removed the iron fencing and lowered the boundary walls to give it an open look, and for the easy access of the public.

But now the city corporation is fencing the park boundary with iron structures again, spending around Tk 80 lakh, to "protect it from floating people", according to officials.

"We have decided to set up boundaries so that floating people can't damage the park. They are now entering the park from all sides and destroying its beauty by cooking food and drying their clothes there," said Munshi Md Abul Hasem Abul, DSCC superintendent engineer.

Justifying the decision, DSCC (ward-13) councillor Md Enamul Haque said, "Bangladesh is not like a European country and some decisions have to be taken considering our own realities."

However, city planners said protecting parks with walls and fencing is a wrong concept as it helps drug peddlers and addicts easily occupy the space, which has been the case in the past.

They also said the recent DSCC decision also goes against the concept of keeping the park open from all sides - based on which the city corporation is renovating 19 parks and 12 playgrounds.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Despite experts saying that erecting fences around Shaheed Motiur Park will not solve the issue of floating people occupying the premises, the city corporation is spending Tk 80 lakh to do just that. Last year, authorities removed the fences during the park's renovation work, which cost Tk 9 crore. The photos were taken last week.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Bangladesh elected vice president of 76th UNGA session

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has been elected vice president for the upcoming 76th Session of the UN General Assembly from the Asia Pacific Region for a one-year term, beginning from September 2021.

The election was held at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) yesterday where Bangladesh was elected unanimously, according to a statement from Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN in New York.

Along with Bangladesh, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Philippines have also been elected as vice presidents from the Asia Pacific Region.

Rabab Fatima, permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN, said Bangladesh is a flag bearer of multilateralism and believes in the leadership of the UN in addressing the complex challenges facing the current world.

Maldive Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid has been elected president of the 76th Session of the UNGA, which would be of particular significance as the world recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic and its multidimensional impacts.

Want to install fire hydrants in slums

Says DNCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Atiqul Islam yesterday said they want to install fire hydrants in slums so that its dwellers can respond immediately and minimise losses in case of fire incidents.

"We want to install fire hydrants on the premises of the slums. If we can do it and train slum dwellers how to use them, they will be able to respond immediately," he told reporters while visiting and distributing relief among residents of Sattola slum in Mohakhali that witnessed a devastating fire on Monday, which gutted over 500 shanties.

By using fire hydrants, it will be possible to douse or contain the fire before fire officials arrive, he said.

"You will see a reflection of it in the (DNCC) budget. There will be allocation for it," he said, adding that officials concerned have already been instructed to this end.

Fire fighters will also be able to use those. Replying to a query, the mayor said illegal gas connection in slums is a reality as authorities cannot give legal connection without permanent addresses of residents.

The mayor while distributing relief to the victims at IPH School and College playground at Mohakhali said they have arranged Tk 5,000, three meals, corrugated iron sheet and dry food of around Tk 2,000 for each family.

"No victim of fire will have to suffer as we will take all necessary steps in this regard," he said.

Ensure permanent accommodation for slum dwellers: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday demanded permanent accommodation for slum dwellers.

Party secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir came up with the remark after visiting the Mohakhali's Sattola slum where a fire broke out on Monday.

Over 500 shanties were gutted at the slum. On information, 18 firefighting units rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after a couple of hours.

"The government's first priority should be to arrange accommodation for them," he said, adding that compensation should have to be given to the victims as well.

The BNP leader said a fair investigation has to be conducted to unearth the reason behind the fire.

Saying that the ultra-poor live in the slum, Fakhrul said the country has failed to ensure basic rights of the people even after 50 years of its independence.

"The government is implementing mega projects but no effective step has been taken for the ultra-poor. It's not a tough task. The government can allot khas land to them," he suggested.

Freeze 170 bank accounts of 'Golden Monir', three others

Court orders in laundering case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered to freeze 170 bank accounts of Md Monir Hossain, known as Golden Monir, and three others in connection with a money laundering case.

The other accused are Monir's brother-in-law Md Haider Ali, Sirajganj district Awami League convener Riaz Uddin and Dhaka North City Corporation ward councillor Shafiqul Islam.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after Md Sadeque Ali, an inspector of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and also the case's investigation officer, submitted an application seeking permission for freezing the accounts.

On May 11, CID Inspector Mohammad Ibrahim filed the case with Badda Police Station under the Money Laundering Prevention Act against 10 people, including Monir.

In the case, Monir's wife, son, daughter and sister were also made accused.

According to the prosecution, Monir owns around 30 plots, over a dozen buildings and two car showrooms -- all bought with his illegal money.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

School building tilts, cracks emerge after mild tremor in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

After a mild tremor of magnitude 3.8 that jolted Sylhet city on Monday evening, cracks developed on a two-storey academic building of the century-old Raja Girish Chandra (GC) High School.

The building tilted and developed cracks in several walls and a few columns, confirmed Md Abdul Mumin, head teacher of the school, adding that the school's century-old buildings are intact.

The ground floor of the academic building, named after late Sylhet city mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, was constructed in the early 90s and was vertically extended in 2017 by the Education Engineering Department in Sylhet.

After inspecting the building yesterday, Md Nazrul Hakim, executive engineer of Education Engineering Department in Sylhet declared the building abandoned.

He said, "In the 90s, it was common to construct academic buildings not taller than two-storeys, and they would not consider the threat posed by earthquakes. Construction these days has developed, and we follow building code accordingly now."

He also said the department will now prepare a plan for an alternative academic building on the premises by demolishing the current one.

After the building developed cracks, a team of Sylhet City Corporation, led by Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, visited the institute on Monday.

During the visit, the mayor said, "There was a large pond behind the building, which might have made the building risk-prone. Now, the cracks

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

No shortage of food, but safety an issue

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday called for ensuring safe and healthy foods for the consumers.

They also expressed grave concerns over the excessive use of pesticide in agro products, antibiotic in poultry birds and harmful elements in food.

Though there is no scarcity of food, there is a dearth of safe and healthy foods, they added.

To mark World Food Safety Day 2021, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), a Switzerland-based institution, with the support of Dhaka South City Corporation, organised the discussion at Shitalakhya Hall Room of DSCC.

According to the speakers, although the country's food production is at a satisfactory level, farmers have been deprived of fair prices of their products.

Currently, it is a big challenge to ensure safe foods for the consumers and also fair prices of crops, they added.

They also called on farmers and others concerned not to use the excessive number of harmful elements in poultry birds and crops for ensuring the food safety.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

DSCC ANTI-MOSQUITO DRIVES

Fines four times higher for govt colonies: Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said authorities will fine owners of government housing colonies four times the usual amount, if they find mosquito larvae in any structure.

The DSCC mayor made the comment during a views-exchange meeting with the department of Communicable Disease Control (CDC) of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) at Nagar Bhaban.

"We are conducting mobile court drives at under-construction buildings, especially government housing areas and under-construction structures of different government agencies. I have directed our mobile courts to fine four times higher than usual, if they find any larvae there," he said.

Mayor Taposh said if they want to solve the problem, they will have to identify the source of it first. Till now, their insecticide sprayers could not enter under-construction structures of different government agencies and their housing colonies.

The councillors also could not enter there, and as a result, mosquito control activities are very weak at the places, he said.

Terming government housing colonies and under-construction structures sanctuaries for Aedes mosquitoes, the mayor said if Aedes mosquitoes start breeding there, the population proliferates rapidly, and that is why they are conducting drives at the places.

The mayor asked women councillors to raise awareness among house owners who have rooftop gardens, so that they are informed and take necessary steps to destroy breeding sources.

The meeting was chaired by DSCC Chief Health Officer Brig Gen Dr Md Sharif Ahmed. Among others, DSCC Chief Executive Officer Farid Ahmed and CDC Director Dr Mohammad Nazmul Islam were present as special guests.



Cracks developed on a two-storey academic building of the century-old Raja Girish Chandra High School after a mild tremor of magnitude 3.8 jolted Sylhet city on Monday evening. After inspecting the building yesterday, authorities declared it risky and are planning to demolish it.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



Many residents of Sat tola slum in the capital's Mohakhali, where a devastating fire burned down hundreds of shanties on Sunday morning, returned to the site with nowhere to go. Many were seen picking up pieces of furniture and utensils that survived the fire, while some made makeshift sheds to spend the night there. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

US delivers medical supplies worth \$2m to Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US has delivered emergency medical supplies, including 100 US-manufactured ventilators and gas analysers worth \$2 million, to Bangladesh.

The other supplies include tens of thousands of pieces of locally-produced personal protective equipment, KN95 surgical masks, face shields, hazmat suits, full body gowns, medical-grade hand sanitiser, surgical gloves and medical goggles.

This latest delivery of supplies to save lives, stop the spread of Covid-19, and meet urgent health needs of Bangladeshis brings the total financial amount of US pandemic assistance to more than \$84 million.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller presented the supplies to Bangladesh officials from the foreign and health ministries at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital on Monday night.

"For 50 years, the United States has stood shoulder to shoulder with the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BEGUM ROKEYA UNIVERSITY, RANGPUR

Tenure over, but Prof Kalimullah still 'VC'

Legal notice served on him, treasurer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, DINAJPUR

Although tenure of the vice-chancellor (VC) of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) is over, he is reportedly continuing to do official work of the post. Hence, a section of the university's teachers has served a legal notice to stop his activities as VC.

His tenure ended on May 31. The teachers said neither Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah's tenure was extended nor was anyone new appointed to the post.

Meanwhile, teachers and officials put an attendance board, which shows for how many days Prof Kalimullah was present or absent since his joining on June 1, 2017.

He was present on campus for only 240 days out of 1,447.

Prof Matiur Rahman, convener of Adhikar Suraksha Parishad, a body comprising a section of BRUR's teachers and officials, claimed that Prof Kalimullah is still processing all official documents, despite the end of his term.

He is still working in the university's liaison office in Dhaka. Recently, the government ordered all universities to shut down their liaison office, but he ignored the order, he said.

Legal notices have been served on Prof Kalimullah and BRUR Treasurer Prof Hasibur Rashid.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Savar hospital 'held' body over unpaid bills: family

Say they borrowed Tk 3.20 lakh; hospital denies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SAVAR

Authorities at Enam Medical College and Hospital in Savar allegedly collected outstanding bill of Tk 3.20 lakh by holding the body of a deceased for over 24 hours.

Uzzal Halder, brother of the deceased, said his brother Joy Halder (17) was admitted to the hospital on May 16 after being critically injured in an attack by a juvenile gang in Polo Market area of Rajshon.

He died at the hospital on Sunday.

"The hospital authorities did not release the body due to unpaid bills. We begged them to release the body so that we could bury him. We also expressed our helplessness, but to no avail," he added.

He said authorities released the body on Monday evening after they cleared the bill.

On May 16 night, 10 to 12 youths attacked Joy and left him critically injured,

according to family members.

He was taken to Enam Medical College Hospital the same night and was receiving treatment at its ICU until his death.

Uzzal Halder said, "In the last 21 days, we spent more than Tk 6 lakh for his treatment. We had to borrow money but were unable to arrange the pending bill of Tk 3.20 lakh."

This correspondent could not reach hospital CEO Dr Anwarul Quader Nazim for comments, despite multiple attempts.

However, Dr Enamur Rahman, owner of the hospital, claimed that the allegation was not true. He said there was some delay with billing and issuing death certificate.

The body was handed over to the family already, he said without elaborating further.

Dr Sayemul Huda, upazila health and family planning officer of Savar, declined to comment over the issue.



Bangladesh Chhatra Union activists yesterday formed a human chain in front of Raju Memorial sculpture on Dhaka University campus, demanding that the proposal to impose tax on private educational institutions be scrapped, and scholarships be given to students to overcome Covid-198 fallout.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Shahid Ullah Patwary's 1st death anniversary

CITY DESK

Today is the first death anniversary of Shahid Ullah Patwary, a renowned journalist, said a press release.

He was managing editor of monthly Baniya Bichitra magazine.

Besides, he was a businessman, publisher, philanthropist and entrepreneur.

All are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



To fence off

FROM PAGE 3

DSCC has been renovating these facilities under a project called "Jalsobujer Dhaka", prepared by 70 architects in 2017, with an aim to turn parks and playgrounds beautiful, green and open.

Md Rafiq Azam, principal architect of SHATOTTO, who was the team leader of the project, said the latest initiative of DSCC will not solve the problem.

"There were boundaries surrounding the park before but the problem was not solved. The same thing will happen again this time," said Azam.

In addition, he said floating people also have a right to use the park. What the authorities need is to work on changing their behavioral pattern instead of trying to drive them away, he added.

"The park will have facilities like coffee shops and library and the authorities can involve a group of them [floating people] in activities such as cleaning the park after providing them with training," he suggested.

Once engaged, they will protect the park

and will also build awareness regarding cleanliness among others, Azam said.

He said, "You have to take a programme to develop the community like the one taken at Bahadur Shah Park, which involves the floating population. Trying to drive them out and setting up boundaries is not the solution."

Contacted, DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said they have taken the initiative following the "people's demand".

"People are not enjoying the beauty and facilities of the park due to vagabonds who are occupying the space. That's why we are setting up boundaries so that it can be maintained properly," he said.

He said people will be able to see the insides of the park from outside. "We are not erecting boundary walls, we are only setting up grilles."

The park will have lots of greenery and a flower garden, the mayor said, adding that there will be three to four gates in the park and people will be able to enter from all sides.

Bangladesh, Austria sign air agreement

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Austria signed the Air Services Agreement (ASA) in Vienna on Monday.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Austria Muhammad Abdul Muhith and Andreas Riecken from the Austrian Ministry of European & International Affairs signed the agreement on behalf of their respective countries.

It is expected to boost not only aviation business between the two countries, but also increase the business-to-business and people-to-people connectivity, said a statement yesterday.

Tenure over

FROM PAGE 3

Khandakar Rafiq Hussain, a Supreme Court lawyer, served the notice on Prof Kalimullah on Saturday, on behalf of Zahangir Alam, an engineer of BRUR, asking Prof Kalimullah not to introduce himself as VC anywhere.

The notice also asked him to refrain from signing any university document.

Moshiur Rahman, an assistant professor and general secretary of Bangabandhu Parishad of BRUR, served the notice on Prof Hasibur through the supreme court lawyer on Sunday. In the notice, it was stated why legal action should not be taken against him for financial corruption during his tenure.

The letter asked him to reply within three days.

Mahmudul Haque, an assistant professor of BRUR's journalism and mass communication department, said Prof Kalimullah appointed 25 officials in different posts, even though his tenure has expired. He even called a syndicate meeting, which is scheduled to be held on June 11 in Dhaka.

Prof Kalimullah denied the claims and refused to elaborate further on the issue.

Contacted, Prof Hasibur said he is yet to receive the notice and has nothing to say in this regard.

United Hospital starts evening OPD service

CITY DESK

United Hospital Limited (UHL) has started evening outpatient department (OPD) with 35 consultants, according to a press release by the private hospital.

The mainstream healthcare provider introduced this to make their services more convenient for patients.

This enhanced panel of consultants will be there to treat those who cannot make time to visit a doctor amidst their busy schedules at daytime.

The extended out-patient doctors are now available from 9am to 9pm.

DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (DLP)
Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (BADAS)

ADMISSION NOTICE
CERTIFICATE COURSE ON DIABETOLOGY (33rd Batch)

Applications are invited from doctors (MBBS with permanent BMDC registration) for admission into the 33rd batch of Certificate Course on Diabetology (CCD) for the session July to December- 2021. This course was introduced by Diabetic Association of Bangladesh with experts on distance learning of Open University, UK in 2003. The standard of the course is set to create Specialist in Diabetes Mellitus. The current format of the course is online, where self study and practice on lessons by students are supported by online tutorials by expert tutors.

Doctors willing to get admitted into the course are requested to go for online registration in the following website (<https://www.dlpbadas-bd.org/>). The selected candidates will be instructed to complete the admission formalities through the same online platform. The academic calendar of tutorials of the session is scheduled to start on 06.08.2021.

Prof A K Azad Khan
President BADAS & Chairman DLP
Diabetic Association of Bangladesh

Road crash kills one

OUR CORRESPONDENT, FARIDPUR

A fish trader was killed in a road accident on Majkandi-Bhatiapara road in Boalmari upazila of Faridpur yesterday morning.

The accident took place in Sohasari Bazar area around 8am as a three-wheeler loaded with fish overturned on the road, said locals.

The deceased was identified as Md Ayub Ali (58), son of Sunnat Biswas from Citar Bazar in the same upazila.

No shortage

FROM PAGE 3

Farid Ahmed, chief executive officer of DSCC, attended the discussion as chief guest, while Md Babar Ali Mir, zonal executive officer (zone-3) of DSCC; Dr Monjur Al Morshed Chowdhury, deputy programme manager, Institution of Public Health Nutrition; Prof Dr Md Abdul Alim, member of Bangladesh Food Safety Authority, Md Shakhawath Hossain, project director of Eat Safe project, Sheikh Zahidul Islam, president of Islambagh City Corporation Wet Market, among others, spoke.

Earlier in the morning, the organisation brought out a procession in front of Dhaka College.

Freeze 170

FROM PAGE 3

The CID inspector added that Monir deposited over Tk 791 crore in 129 bank accounts during his involvement in gold smuggling.

Only Tk 6.18 crore is currently available in those accounts.

Rab arrested Monir on November 20 last year, and recovered a foreign-made pistol, bullets, foreign liquor, currencies of 10 countries, eight kilogrammes of gold ornaments and Tk 1.9 crore in cash from his Merul Badda residence.

Rab later filed three cases against him with Badda Police Station.

Earlier, Rab submitted charge sheets against Monir in cases filed under the Arms and Narcotics Control acts.

School building

FROM PAGE 3

made the building very unstable, and I see no way but to demolish it for further betterment."

"We've arranged a meeting with experts of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology on Wednesday [today], where we'll decide on examining all buildings of the city to assess risk," he said.

On May 29, four mild tremors jolted Sylhet city within three hours, starting in the morning at 10:36am, and later, another light tremor was felt the next morning at 4:30am.

Experts showed serious concern over the possibility of a massive earthquake of magnitude more than 7.5, likely to be triggered at the Dauki Fault Line, only 55 kilometres north of Sylhet city.

US delivers

FROM PAGE 3

people of Bangladesh. We will continue to fight this pandemic with Bangladesh until the crisis is over," said Ambassador Miller in a statement.

On June 3, the White House announced its plan to share vaccines directly with Bangladesh, as part of its framework to provide 80 million US vaccine doses globally by the end of the month.

This includes 7 million doses that are destined for Asia.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
Chartering & Tramping Department
BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road
Chittagong, Bangladesh

Memo No. 18.16.0000.373.93.001.21 Date: 08.06.2021

Corrigendum Notice

This is to notify for all concerned that the notice for invitation of applications for renewal/new enlistment of chartering brokers for inter-ministerial chartering committee for the year 2021-2022 vide memo no.: 18.16.0000.373.93.001.21, Date: 23.05.2021, published in the daily newspapers "Amader Notun Shomoy" and "The Business Standard" on 05.06.2021 and the notice hereby amended/corrected as follows:

Item	Present Date and Time	Corrected/Amended date and time
Last date and time for selling Application Form (SI No-08)	Date: 30.05.2020 & Time: 17:00 hours	Date: 13.06.2021 & Time: 17:00 hours
Last date and time for Submission of Application Form (SI No-09)	Date: 06.06.2020 & Time: 17:00 hours	Date: 14.06.2021 & Time: 17:00 hours

Others terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

General Manager
Chartering & Tramping Department
Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
Chittagong
Tel: 88-031-725879/728269
Cell: +88 01711360429
Fax: 88-031-710506
Email: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Mymensingh
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.6100.000.07.001.21-2120

e-Tender Notice: 68/2020-21

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) for the Procurement of

No.	Package No. & scheme name	Tender ID	Last selling date & time	Closing/opening date & time	Tendering method
1	CAFDRIRP/Mymensingh/UNR/W-05/2020-21 Rehabilitation of Tarakanda UP (Madhupur)-Shimultola Bazar Road from Ch. 00-2355m Under Tarakanda Upazila District Mymensingh (Road ID No: 361183007)	586256	Date: 07-July-2021 Time: 17:00	Date: 08-July-2021 Time: 13:45	OSTETM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) is required. The e-Tender Security Submitted last Date & Time from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches respectively. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocurement.gov.bd) also from E-mail: xen.mymensingh@lged.gov.bd or Cell to 091-66376, 091-66110, 091-64365.

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Shahiduzzaman Khan
Executive Engineer
LGED, Mymensingh

Cancellation Notice of Invitation for Tender (National)
Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Memo No: 27.12.0000.164.45.001.21.24 Date: 08/06/2021

Tender Cancellation Notice

Tender for "Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Hardware (1 phase and 3 phase Meter with HES, NIC, HHU, UCC, UVS, DCU, Repeater, DR, Data Centre accessories etc.) & Software for Implementation of AMI with MDM and related service under BREB 5 lac smart meter that will be scalable up to 50 lac smart meter on Turn-key Basis" under tender Package No- SPPM-MCS-01; Lot-1 & Lot-2 invited by the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board vide Tender Invitation Memo No. 27.12.0000.112.35.019.18.120 dated 26.03.2021 published on 28.03.2021 (Amendment published on 23-04-2021 and 20-21 May, 2021) in "The Daily Ittefaq", "Prothom Alo", "The Daily Star" and "Bangladesh Protidin" is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances.

Additional Chief Engineer (P&D)
Office of Additional Chief Engineer (P&D)
BREB HQ Building (5th Floor)
Nikunja-2, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229.
Country: Bangladesh.
Tel: + 8802- 8900313
E-mail: smproject@reb.gov.bd
Web site: www.reb.gov.bd

বাংলাদেশ শিল্প কারিগরি সহায়তা কেন্দ্র (বিটাক)
১১৬ (খ) তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২০৮

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ শিল্প কারিগরি সহায়তা কেন্দ্র (বিটাক) ঢাকা কেন্দ্রের জন্য আউটসোর্সিং প্রক্রিয়ায় জনবল সরবরাহের লক্ষ্যে আউটসোর্সিং, নীতিমালা ২০১৮ অনুসারে প্রকৃত জনবল সরবরাহকারী/সরবরাহকারী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে সীলমোহরকৃত নামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রম নং	সেবার নাম	পদের সংখ্যা
০১	বাস্তুরি	০১টি
০২	সহকারী বাস্তুরি	০৩টি
০৩	পরিষ্কারকারী	০১টি

(১৬) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ও পদবী : আবুল মনজুর আহমেদ, সচিব, বিটাক, ঢাকা।

(১৭) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা : বিটাক, ১১৬ (খ), তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

(১৮) দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও মূল্যায়ন : দরপত্র বর্ণিত দলিলে শর্তাবলী ও পিপিআর-২০১৮ অনুসারে করা হবে।

(১৯) অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী : (ক) দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র সিডিতে বর্ণিত আছে। দরপত্র সিডিতে হিসাবরক্ষক (কোশ), বিটাক, ১১৬ (খ), তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।
(খ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন/সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(২০) বিস্তারিত বিটাকের ওয়েবসাইট www.bitac.gov.bd-তে পাওয়া যাবে।
কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমে দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারি করা হলো।

আবুল মনজুর আহমেদ
সচিব, বিটাক



The four-kilometre section of the unpaved road from Molaish bridge to Shahzadpur Bazar in Sarail upazila of Brahmanbaria becomes unusable for days after one day's rain. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY

Unpaved road the bane of 30k people

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Absence of a paved road in Shahzadpur village seriously hampers communication between the village, district town and Sarail upazila headquarters, causing immense problems for residents of three villages.

About 30 thousand people of three adjacent villages cannot avail education and health facilities and are deprived of development opportunities due to the absence of communication.

While visiting the area recently, this correspondent found that the four kilometre portion of the road from Molaish bridge to Shahzadpur Bazar had become muddy due to rain. Passengers and drivers had to push the CNG-run auto-rickshaws to cross this muddy portion.

Locals said only CNG-run auto-rickshaws can ply this road, but even those cannot cross during rainy season as one day's rain makes the road unusable for around three days.

Shahzadpur Union Parishad Chairman Rafiqul Islam Khokon said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had promised to construct a paved road 11 years ago at the request of local lawmaker Ziaul Haque Mridha. Though 11 years have elapsed, no steps have been taken to build the road.

Students, teachers, traders, farmers, drivers of CNG-run auto-rickshaws and villagers complained that for the last 12 years they have not seen any development of the road. They got only false hope, promise, soil test and measurement of the road by high officials, villagers said.

Kamal Mia of Shahzadpur said they formed human chains and held different programmes demanding construction of the road, but to no effect. "We started to dream after the promise made by the prime minister, but our dream has not been fulfilled," he added.

"We cannot even walk to our college during the monsoon season as the rain-hit road becomes unfit for movement," said Geeta Rani Das of the village.

Md Dowlat Khan, an elderly resident of the village, said the people of Dowriya, Neyamotpur and Shahzadpur villages have been most backward in respect of education only because of the four kilometre portion of the road.

They face immense problems taking patients to the upazila health complex, he said, adding that farmers suffer loss as they cannot take their produce to the markets.

CNG driver Tamim Mia of Dawriya village said it is very risky to move on the road, adding that accidents takes place regularly and the parts of the vehicles get damaged.

Sarail upazila Local Government Engineering Department Engineer Mosammat Nilufa yasmin said the project proposal for construction of the road is under process in Dhaka.

"We sent an estimate last year to turn the road into a paved one but that was not approved. We will send estimate again in July this year," she added.

Erosion puts vital bridge at risk

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A bridge on Sohagi-Atharabari road in Ishwarganj upazila is under tremendous risk of collapsing as earth from both sides of its approach roads has been eroding away.

The erosion is apparently being caused by rising water in Bogaputa canal, over which the bridge -- narrower than the canal's width -- was built about 28 years ago.

The authorities concerned should take immediate steps for saving the vital bridge before a disastrous accident happens, said locals.

Thousands rely on the bridge to transport agricultural goods, the mainstay of the rural economy, in Bogaputa, Sairsha, Sohagi, Bekuarchar, Morichputa, Momrispur, Jigatola, Bhalkapur, Bhalukber and Daribri villages in the upazila.

Ever since the authorities prohibited plying of heavy vehicles on the bridge, locals now have to walk an additional 15 to 20 kilometres to reach different markets such as Rayer Bazar, Sohagi Bazar, Ishwarganj Bazar and Moheshpur Bazar, they also said.

Mozammel Haque, a farmer of Bogaputa village, said he had been making a living from agriculture without a hitch, but after the bridge was declared risky, has been facing extreme difficulty in selling his produce to local markets.

Giasuddin Ahmed, a fish farmer from the same area, said transport cost now has multiplied, diminishing his profits.

When water started to rise in the canal a month ago, they informed it to the engineer concerned, but he did not take any step to protect the old bridge, claimed Mofazzal Hossain Shuvo, organising secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League's (BCL) Sohagi union unit.

Now that bus, truck or other heavy vehicles cannot cross the bridge due to risk of collapse, only small vehicles like auto-rickshaws, motorbikes and rickshaw-vans are left as only means of transport for locals, he added.

Mahbub Alam Shamim, president of BCL Sohagi union unit, said with water level on the rise due to monsoon, the bridge is under a greater risk.

He also said that the authorities should take urgent steps to save the bridge.

While talking to this correspondent, Sheikh Mofazzal Haque, sub-assistant engineer of Roads and Highways Department in Kishoreganj, confirmed that the 26-metre long bridge, constructed in 1993, is at risk due to subsiding of earth from its approach roads.

Stronger seasonal water current in the canal has been causing the earth to subside and they already placed wood logs to stop further damage to the approach roads.

Also, they started to dump sand-filled bags in the cavity caused by the erosion so the approach road can again withstand the pressure of all sorts of vehicles that need to cross the bridge, he also said.

After this correspondent conveyed the situation to Ishwarganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Zakir Hossain, he said he would visit the site soon.



Roads and Highways Department in Kishoreganj recently placed wood logs to stop further erosion of an approach road to this bridge on Bogaputa canal in Ishwarganj upazila of Mymensingh.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

“মুজিববর্ষের চেতনা টেকসই পথযাত্রা”

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Power Energy & Mineral Resources
Power Division
Bangladesh Energy & Power Research Council
IEB Bhaban (Level-12), Ramna, Dhaka-1000.
www.eprc.gov.bd

Memo No.- 27.03.0000.001.21.402 Date: 07.6.2021

e-Tender Notice

E-Tenders are invited through the national e-GP portal for the following procurement of works/Goods.

Tender ID	Name of Works	Closing & Opening Date & Time	Name & Address of Procuring Entity
584314	Purchase of coat pins, pens, masks and gift bags with the logo of the Council and the logo of Mujib year for use in various meetings and seminars of the Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council.	20-Jun-2021 12:15:00	Kazi Nurul Islam Secretary BEPRC, IEB Bhaban (Level-12), Ramna, Dhaka-1000. Phone # 55110324
585024	Purchase of 01 desktop, 07 printers, 3 scanners and 01 monitor for the official use of the officers of Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council.	20-Jun-2021 12:30:00	
585023	Purchase of crockery materials for use by the officials of BEPRC and entertaining of guests and various meetings, seminars and printing of Council logo and Mujib Year logo on crockery.	20-Jun-2021 12:45:00	

The interested persons/ firms may visit website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) to get the details.

07.06.2021
Kazi Nurul Islam
Secretary
Phone: 02-55110324

GD- 1169

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, নাটোর।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	: সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়			
২.	এজেন্সী	: সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা			
৩.	সংগ্রাহক সত্তার নাম	: মহাপরিচালক, সমাজসেবা, অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা এর পক্ষে জেলা প্রশাসক, নাটোর।			
৪.	সংগ্রাহক সত্তার জেলা	: নাটোর।			
৫.	যে কাজের দরপত্র	: সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার ও সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, নাটোর এর নিবাসীদের ২০২১-২২ অর্থ বছরের জন্য খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক, শিক্ষা, প্রশিক্ষণ, স্বাস্থ্য, প্রসাধনী, অন্যান্য এবং বিবিধ মালামাল সরবরাহ।			
৬.	দরপত্রের নম্বর ও তারিখ	: নম্বর: ৪১.০১.৬৯০০.০০০.০৭.০০১.২১.৪২৬ তারিখ: ০৭/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ।			
৭.	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	: ০৯/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ।			
৮.	সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	: উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ও.টি.এম)			
৯.	বাজেট এবং তহবিলের উৎস	: রাজস্ব বাজেট (জিওবি)			
১০.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নং	: ক, খ, গ, ঘ, ঙ = ৪টি			
১১.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজের নাম	: সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার ও সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, নাটোর এর নিবাসীদের ২০২১-২২ অর্থ বছরের জন্য 'ক'-গ্রুপ (খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচন ও অপচনশীল), 'খ'-গ্রুপ (শিক্ষা, প্রশিক্ষণ, স্বাস্থ্য, পোষাক-পরিচ্ছদ, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য), 'গ'-গ্রুপ (খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচন ও অপচনশীল), শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, পোষাক-পরিচ্ছদ, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য), 'ঙ'-গ্রুপ (বিবিধ মালামাল)।			
১২.	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	: ২৩/০৬/২০২১, পুনঃ ০৪/০৭/২০২১, ২য় পুনঃ ১৪/০৭/২০২১ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন।			
১৩.	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	: ২৪/০৬/২০২১, পুনঃ ০৫/০৭/২০২১, ২য় পুনঃ ১৫/০৭/২০২১ তারিখ দুপুর ১২:০০টা পর্যন্ত			
১৪.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	: ২৪/০৬/২০২১, পুনঃ ০৫/০৭/২০২১, ২য় পুনঃ ১৫/০৭/২০২১ বেলা ১:০০টা।			
১৫.	কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানা ক. মূল দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয় প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	: সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান, নাটোর। প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকানা			
১৫.১	সরকারি শিশু পরিবার	: কনবেলঘরিয়া, নাটোর।			
১৫.২	সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম	: কনবেলঘরিয়া, নাটোর।			
খ. দরপত্র দলিল গ্রহণ	: জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, উপপরিচালক, জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয় এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান, নাটোর।				
১৬.	দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা	: জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, নাটোর। ১. বৈধ সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান ২. সিডিউল ক্রয়ের ট্রেজারী চালানোর মূল্যকপি, পূর্বে অনুরূপ কাজ করার অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র, হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ব্যাংক স্বচ্ছলতার সনদ, আয়কর সনদ (২০২০-২১), ভাট নিবন্ধনপত্রের অধিকারী হতে হবে।			
১৭.	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	: দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য ট্রেজারী চালানোর মাধ্যমে কোড নং-১-২৯৩১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ তে (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা দিতে হবে।			
১৮.	গ্রুপ	সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ			
ক	খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচন ও অপচনশীল)	৫০০/-	সিডিউলে দেয়া আছে	প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	সরকারি শিশু পরিবার, নাটোর
খ	শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, পোষাক, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য।	৫০০/-	ঐ	ঐ	ঐ
ঘ	খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচন ও অপচনশীল)	২০০/-	ঐ	ঐ	সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, নাটোর।
ঙ	বিবিধ মালামাল	২০০/-	ঐ	ঐ	দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধীদের ক্ষেত্রে প্রয়োজ্য
১৯.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ও পদবী	: মোঃ শাহরিয়াজ পিএএ, জেলা প্রশাসক, নাটোর।			
২০.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	: জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, নাটোর।			
২১.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের নম্বর	: ০৭৭১-৬৬৭৪১।			
২২.	শর্তাবলী:				
ক.	পিপিএ-২০০৬ এবং পিপিআর-২০০৮ (সংশোধনসহ) এ প্রদত্ত পণ্য ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত পদ্ধতি যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।				
খ.	গৃহিত দরদাতার নিকট হতে উদ্ধৃত দরের ১০% পারফরমেন্স সিকিউরিটি অর্থ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে কার্যক্রমে প্রদান করা হবে।				
গ.	'ঙ' গ্রুপের ক্ষেত্রে বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্ত সাপেক্ষে কার্যক্রমে প্রদান করা হবে।				
ঘ.	কর্তৃপক্ষ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।				
ঙ.	দরপত্র ক্রয়ের তারিখ হতে দরপত্র খোলার তারিখের নির্ধারিত সময় পর্যন্ত দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাবে।				
চ.	পুনঃ দরপত্র আহবানের ক্ষেত্রে আর কোন বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রদান করা হবে না। এই বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লেখিত সময় মোতাবেক কার্যক্রম সম্পন্ন হবে।				
ছ.	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা: বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্র দলিলে বর্ণিত আছে।				

মোঃ শাহরিয়াজ পিএএ
জেলা প্রশাসক
নাটোর।

জিডি-১১৬৬

আপনার সমন্বিত-পরামর্শ চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ১৬১০৪ নম্বরে জানান।

ময়লা আবর্জনা নাশা, নর্দমাংর ফেলোনেন না।

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি।

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Chattogram City Corporation
Anderkilla, Chattogram
www.ccc.org.bd

Memo No: 46.11.1600.38.002.512.21.2029 Dated: 6/6/2021

e-Tender Notice/Mech (RT)

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted to submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following packages from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to particular date specified on tender notice.

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID	Last date of selling documents	Last date of submission documents	Opening date & time
1	ME-PR-BB-004-08	Supply & Installation of 50 Ton Capacity 02 (Two) Unit Weighbridge for Halihsahar T.G. & Arifin Nagor T.G.	585962	21/06/2021	21/06/2021	21/06/2021

Sudip Basak
Superintending Engineer (Mech)
Chattogram City Corporation

C.C.C./PRD-214/20-21
GD-1170

'BUTCHER OF BOSNIA'

UN court upholds life sentence for Mladic

AFP, The Hague

War crimes judges yesterday upheld the genocide conviction of former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic over the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, Europe's worst act of bloodshed since World War II.

The UN tribunal in The Hague rejected Mladic's appeal against his 2017 life sentence for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity over the 1992-5 Bosnian war.

Dubbed the "Butcher of Bosnia", the once burly general who is now in his late 70s sat impassively and listened to the judgement through headphones as it was read out by presiding judge Prisca Nyambe.

"The appeals chamber affirmed the sentence of life imprisonment imposed on Mr Mladic by the trial chamber," the tribunal in The Hague said in a statement.

The verdict by five judges at the UN International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals -- which deals with cases from the now-closed Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal -- is final and cannot be appealed any further.

Mothers of some of the 8,000 mostly Muslim men and boys killed in cold blood when Bosnian Serb troops overran Srebrenica were outside the court where they have long campaigned for justice.

"Today is a historic day, not only for us

mothers, but also for the whole Balkans, Europe and the world," Munira Subasic, president of one of the "Mothers of Srebrenica" associations, told AFP outside court. At the genocide memorial near Srebrenica, a giant screen broadcast witness testimony ahead of the verdict, near the lines of white headstones where the bodies of some 6,600 identified victims are laid to rest.

Mladic was the military face of a brutal trio led on the political side by ex-Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

Captured in 2011 after a decade on the run, Mladic was found guilty in 2017 of genocide for personally overseeing the massacre at the supposedly UN-protected enclave of Srebrenica.

Footage from the time showed him handing out sweets to children before they and the women of Srebrenica were taken away by bus, while the men of the town were marched into a forest and executed.

Mladic was also found guilty of orchestrating a wider campaign of "ethnic cleansing" to drive Muslims and Bosnians out of key areas to create a Greater Serbia as Yugoslavia tore itself apart after the fall of communism.

The war left around 100,000 people dead and 2.2 million displaced.



A man photographs "Mount Trashmore", an artwork depicting the G7 leaders looking towards Carbis Bay, made from electronic waste by Joe Rush, ahead of the G7 summit, at Hayle Towans in Cornwall, Britain, yesterday. The first in-person meeting of the leaders of major developed economies for nearly two years will start on Friday and take place in Cornwall on the tip of southwestern England, with the focus on the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change.

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

UNSC backs Guterres for 2nd term as UN chief

The United Nations Security Council yesterday backed Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for a second term, recommending that the 193-member General Assembly appoint him for another five years from Jan. 1, 2022, said Estonia's UN Ambassador Sven Jürgenson, council president for June. The 72-year-old former prime minister of Portugal has held the office since 2017 and faced no competitors for the next term in the job. Jürgenson said the General Assembly was likely to meet to make the appointment on June 18.

Lightning strikes kill 27 in West Bengal

Lightning strikes killed 27 people and four passengers on a flight were hospitalised after severe turbulence during monsoon storms in West Bengal, officials said yesterday. "Many of the 27 killed on Monday evening... in the state were farmers and working in the fields," West Bengal disaster management minister Javed Ahmed Khan told AFP. A flight from the western city of Mumbai to Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal, was caught in the storm as it was about to land, officials added. Eight passengers were injured with four taken to hospital. Nearly 2,900 people were killed by lightning in India in 2019 according to the National Crime Records Bureau.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

FIGHTING BETWEEN MYANMAR MILITARY, REBELS

100,000 more displaced

UN warns of humanitarian crisis; junta defends response to crisis amid Asean criticism

AGENCIES

An estimated 100,000 people have been displaced by new fighting between Myanmar's military and rebel groups in the east of the coup-stricken country, the UN said yesterday.

Myanmar has been in chaos and its economy paralysed since the generals ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's government in February, accusing it of fraud during 2020 elections.

The junta has failed to impose control since then. The security forces have killed at least 849 protesters and arrested more than 4,500 people, a rights group says.

Fighting has flared in several communities -- especially in townships that have seen a high death toll at the hands of police -- and some locals have formed "defence forces".

Recent clashes and "indiscriminate attacks by security forces against civilian areas" had forced an estimated 100,000 to flee their homes in eastern Kayah state near the Thai border, the UN's Myanmar office said yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Myanmar junta's foreign minister had defended its plan for restoring democracy, state media reported yesterday, after a meeting at which Southeast Asian counterparts pressed the army to implement a regional agreement meant to end turmoil.

The junta has paid little heed to demands from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to respect a "consensus" agreed in late April to end violence and hold political talks with its opponents.

Southeast Asian foreign ministers expressed disappointment at the meeting in China on Monday at the "very slow" progress made by Myanmar on its proposal for ending the turmoil.

State media cited junta-appointed foreign minister Winna Maung Lwin as telling the Asean-China foreign ministers' meeting that the military had made progress on its own five-step roadmap for the country unveiled after its coup.

GLOBAL CRIME STING

Over 800 arrested worldwide

AFP, The Hague

Police arrested more than 800 people from 18 countries in a huge global sting involving encrypted phones that were secretly planted by the FBI, law enforcement agencies said Tuesday.

Cops in 16 countries were able to read the messages of global underworld figures as they plotted drug deals, arms transfers and gangland hits on the compromised ANOM devices.

Mafia groups, Asian crime syndicates, motorcycle gangs and other organised crime syndicates around the world were all monitored using the spiked phones as part of Operation "Trojan Shield".

The sting, jointly conceived by Australia and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, prevented around 100 murders, foiled several large-scale narcotics shipments and led to seizures of weapons and cash, they added.

"The results are staggering," FBI Assistant Director Calvin Shivers told reporters at the headquarters of the EU's police agency Europol HQ in The Netherlands.

Shivers said the FBI had provided criminal syndicates in over 100 countries with the devices over the last 18 months "that allowed us to

monitor their communications".

Europol hailed the "exceptional" operation, which saw around 12,000 of the ANOM devices distributed worldwide to criminals who thought they were chatting in secret.



"This information led over the last week to hundreds of law enforcement operations on a global scale from New Zealand to Australia to Europe and the USA, with impressive results," said Jean-Philippe Lecouffe, Deputy Director Operations at Europol.

"More than 800 arrests, more than 700 locations searched, more than eight tonnes of cocaine."

Police also seized 22 tonnes of cannabis, two tonnes of methamphetamine, 250 firearms, 55 luxury vehicles and over \$48 million (39 million euros) in various

currencies and cryptocurrencies, Europol said.

Australian police said the supposedly hardened encrypted devices were handed out to operatives within the mafia, Asian crime syndicates, drug cartels and outlaw motorcycle gangs as part of the elaborate FBI-led plot.

The operation began after global police work in the past two years disrupted two other major encrypted phone networks used by criminals, Encrochat and SkyGlobal.

To fill the void, "the FBI operated its own encrypted device company, called 'ANOM'", the New Zealand police added.

The FBI's Shivers said this enabled them to "turn the tables" on criminals.

Showing the massive global scale of the sting, Australia said more than 200 people had been charged already. Sweden said it had arrested 155 people, Germany detained 70 suspects, the Netherlands 49, and New Zealand 35 as a result of the operation.

Most of the 27 million ANOM messages obtained by the sting were in Dutch, German and Swedish, Dutch police said.

CO2 in the air hits record high

REUTERS

Despite a massive reduction in commuting and in many commercial activities during the early months of the pandemic, the amount of carbon in Earth's atmosphere in May reached its highest level in modern history, a global indicator released on Monday showed.

Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego, said the findings, based on the amount of carbon dioxide in the air at NOAA's weather station on Mauna Loa in Hawaii, was the highest since measurements began 63 years ago.



The measurement, called the Keeling Curve after Charles David Keeling, the scientist who began tracking carbon dioxide there in 1958, is a global benchmark for atmospheric carbon levels.

Instruments perched on NOAA's mountaintop observatory recorded carbon dioxide at about

419 parts per million last month, more than the 417 parts per million in May 2020.

Because carbon dioxide is a key driver of climate change, the findings show that reducing the use of fossil fuels, deforestation and other practices that lead to carbon emissions must be a top

priority to avoid catastrophic consequences, Pieter Tans, a scientist with NOAA's Global Monitoring Laboratory, said in a report on the emissions.

"We are adding roughly 40 billion metric tons of CO2 pollution to the atmosphere per year," Tans wrote. "That is a mountain of carbon that we dig up out of the Earth, burn, and release into the atmosphere as CO2 - year after year."

The amount of carbon in the air now is as much as it was about 4 million years ago, a time when sea level was 78 feet (24 meters) higher than it is today and the average temperature was 7 degrees Fahrenheit higher than it was before the Industrial Revolution, the report said.

Bangladesh GDP growth

FROM PAGE 1

neighbouring India's economy is forecasted to contract by 7.3 percent, while Pakistan will register a GDP growth of 1.3 percent, according to the latest version of the Washington-based multilateral lender's flagship publication 'Global Economic Prospects', which was released on Tuesday.

The improved WB's GDP growth forecast for this fiscal year is still lower than the government's target of 6.1 percent, which is closer to the Asian Development Bank's forecast of 5.5-6 percent.

Recoveries in Bangladesh and Pakistan face new headwinds from a recent rise in COVID-19 cases accompanied by rising restrictions to stamp out the new surge, it said, adding that mobility around places of work and retail has again dropped below pre-pandemic levels.

Subsequently, the Bangladesh economy is forecasted to grow at 5.1 percent in the next fiscal year that begins in July -- up by 1.7 percentage points from its forecast earlier in January but once again lower than the government's target of 7.2 percent.

"In Bangladesh, the recovery is expected to be gradual." Private consumption, the main engine of growth, will lead the recovery and will be supported by normalising activity, moderate inflation and rising garment exports, it said.

In fiscal 2022-23, Bangladesh's GDP is forecasted to grow at 6.2 percent, behind India and the Maldives in South Asia. Per capita income losses will not be unwound by 2022 for about two-thirds of emerging market and developing economies. Among low-income economies, where vaccination has lagged, the effects of the pandemic have reversed poverty reduction gains and aggravated insecurity and other long-standing challenges.

"While there are welcome signs of global recovery, the pandemic continues to inflict poverty and inequality on people in developing countries around the world," said David Malpass, the WB Group president.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1,
WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce
Level-12 (West side), Probashi Kollayn Bhaban
71-72, Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka-1000



Memo no. 26.00.0000.066.11.003.18-490

Date: 07 June 2021

Request for Expressions of Interest "Procurement Specialist"

Assignment Title: National Procurement Specialist

Reference No.: BRCP/MOC/SD 04

WTO Cell, the Ministry of Commerce is implementing the Technical Assistance Part of IDA financed Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 (BRCP-1). The BRCP-1, MoC intends to apply a part of the IDA Credit for procuring services of individual consultants for the Procurement Specialist position. The broad scope of consulting services ("the Services") include to carry out following in the project.

1. Develop procurement plan for goods and services under the project, and update the plan as and when needed (at least quarterly) through the Bank's Systematic Tracking of Procurement Exchanges System (STEP). Upload and update the procurement transactions using STEP;
2. Prepare drafts to Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI), Invitation for Bids (IFB), Bidding document, Request for Proposals (RFP) and Pre-Bid meeting minutes as per World Bank Procurement Regulations, working in collaboration with technical staff, consultants, and Project Director (PD) of the project;
3. Guide and conduct procurement in accordance with World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (July 2016, Revised November 2020) ("Procurement Regulations");
4. Participating as member of the bid/proposal evaluation committee in evaluation of bids/proposals.

Expected date for commencement of the services is July 2021 and the tentative duration of the entire assignment is around 13 (thirteen) months (July, 2021 to July 30, 2022) to be renewed as needed and approved from competent authority. A draft TOR can be found at the following website: (<http://brcp-1.gov.bd/> or can be obtained at the address given below).

Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 (BRCP-1), WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce now invites eligible individual to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Individual should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. S/he should have at least Bachelor's degree in Engineering/Masters in Procurement Supply Chain Management, Law, Commerce, Finance, or Business Administration. Professional certifications/degree in procurement from any recognized institution will be given preference. The short listing criteria are:

- At least total 07 (Seven) years of experience in carrying out public procurement with primary responsibilities and substantial content of his/her position in practical application of internationally accepted procurement and contracting procedures and documents for works, goods and services.
- Of which at least 03 (Three) years of experience in managing internationally competitive procurement under projects funded by multilateral organizations such as ADB/AIB and particularly World Bank.
- Individuals who are currently working full-time at any World Bank funded project and have a contract validity period of more than 6 (six) months are not eligible for this position.

The attention of interested consultants is drawn to the section III, Para 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the world Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 and updated in November 2020," setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

An individual will be selected in accordance with the individual consultants selection (ICS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (9.00AM to 17.00PM BST).

Expression of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by 03:00 PM (BST), June 24, 2021, Necessary documents in support of educational qualifications and experience & skills shall have to be submitted for individual consultants.

Md. Mijanur Rahman

Project Director (Joint Secretary)

Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1

Email: pdbrcp1moc@gmail.com

Phone: 55138022

GD-1164

Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
E/M Division-1, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229

File No. 30.31.0000.412.17.001.20/1696 Date: 06/06/2021

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). Package information is available in tender notice under e-GP System portal. This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Tender ID No.	Tender package No.	Description of goods	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
566335	CAAB/EM-1HSIA/2020-21/E.C-3005	O & M of Passenger terminal building at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka during the year 2020-2021 (S:H-Repairing & fitting /fixing of cable carrier tray, different type curtain, stair step i/c other related works for CIMC and Jetway Passenger Boarding Bridges No.04, 05, 06, 10 & 11 at HSIA).	22/6/2021 5:00pm	23/6/2021 12:30pm	23/6/2021 12:30pm

Further information and guidelines is available in the e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.১৭.০০১.২১/২০৬
তারিখঃ ০৭/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ
GD-1165

Shahriar Morshed Siddiqi
Executive Engineer (E/M)
E/M Division-1 CAAB, Dhaka

COVER STORY

ON DANCE & MUSIC

The leading exponent of classical Indian dance in Bangladesh, Shibli Mohammad, and the celebrated singer and composer, Sadi Mohammad sat down for an interview with Rafi Hossain. The two brothers shared their thoughts on the dance and music industry, and discussed topics ranging from stories about their mentors to happenings and memories of their eventful lives.

SHIBLI MOHAMMAD

Rafi Hossain: We have lost many people throughout this pandemic, and recently Arok da. How are you coping with that?

Shibli Mohammad: Losing so many loved ones has put me down to the point where I keep expecting it's my turn to go next. Rather than feeling a sense of loss for losing them forever, I feel as though I will meet them quite soon. Arok da was very close to our family, we truly miss him.

Rafi Hossain: You have faced a lot of adversity for being a male dancer, but you're still as connected to your art as you can be. Can you tell us about that?

Shibli Mohammad: I see this in two ways. Firstly, an artist can only make a livelihood from their work if they achieve recognition. Secondly, many people ask me why there haven't been many male dancers after me. Here, I believe one reason is the lack of encouragement from parents. In addition, the amount of hard work I put in and the *reyaz* I did for four years in India, alongside the environment there, made me into the artist I am. I have been teaching for 30 to 35 years now, and I have had very talented students. But they don't put in any work beyond attending classes. However, I do realise that nowadays children have a lot of pressure put on them, be it from school or coaching centres. That is why dance always ends up as only being a hobby for them. When it becomes a hobby, you can only ever be an amateur artist, not a professional trying to turn it into a livelihood. There are hardly any artists in Bangladesh that can say that they do *reyaz* the way we did for hours, other than those who have studied in India and came back. For years we would wake up at 4 or 5 in the morning for it and spend the evening engaged in it. Moreover, they don't have the atmosphere we did, which is perhaps why our dance touched the audience so much. Channels such as BTV also helped



raising us. During that time, our brother had just graduated, and he was working at Biman. I was pursuing my third year of an honours degree in physics when I got a scholarship from the Indian government. Our brother, who has now passed, was crucial to convince our mother to let me go. She was worried, as Sadi had already gone to Santiniketan after getting his engineering degree. So, I gave her my word that I would complete my honours degree. I would often travel between Lucknow and Jahangirnagar University because of this. After that, I went to Pandit Birju Maharaj in Delhi, where I realised there was no looking back. Before Sadi and I started getting recognised in our fields, our relatives would often express their disappointment to our mother for not being able to guide us properly. However, soon after our success, it was as though we were in demand for every

based on the interpretation of the song, but after a discussion with Sadi, I will go for a completely different one. As, he explains the essence and spirit of the song, which is different from what I had interpreted it to be. Even when I was a judge on BTV for Notun Kuri, I would often have 30 participants, of which 25 of them would choose to sing Sadi's songs. The producer of the show Qayyum Chowdhury would joke that the name should have been changed to Sadi Kuri.

Rafi Hossain: Can you tell us more about Pandit Birju Maharaj?

Shibli Mohammad: I first met him in Delhi, and my previous guru had sent a letter to him saying that I had potential. The moment he met me, he said, "You're from Bangladesh, the land of Sheikh Mujib!" and welcomed me with warmth. He held Bangabandhu in high regard and had the utmost respect for him. I was his first Bangladeshi student, and I received so much love from him, as much as one would from a father. Mumun mentioned one day that he holds so much love for me that she's almost envious. Even now, I video call him at least three times per month. Recently, he didn't pick up my call for a while, and when he finally did, I got to know that he had contracted the Coronavirus. Thanks to the Almighty, he is now well again. I always say that without him and his love and blessings, I would not be who I am today or even touched the lives of half the people I did. I am eternally grateful.

Rafi Hossain: How is the current state of the dancing in regards to teaching new students?

Shibli Mohammad: All gurus and teachers are working very hard right now in Bangladesh. Of course, there is some negativity in every industry, such as people going for acting and modelling to get instant fame. However, I feel most of the work is being done for the better. Parents are genuinely interested and trying hard to encourage their children, and we salute them for this. We see working parents bringing their children in and staying until rehearsals are over, even if they run as late as 1 am. However, we do have trouble getting sponsors when we want to execute the ideas we have. While people like Ameenah apa and others constantly support us, we receive almost nothing from corporate companies who would rather invest in promoting a band or fashion shows. They see no benefits business-wise from promoting such cultural events. This is why our neighbour, India, is succeeding. Moreover, no channel except



BTV has a proper show dedicated to classical dance. On special days such as Eid, they say that having real artists does not attract sponsors. They prefer a model or actor with genuine dancers behind them. They push this idea to the audience, even if they do want to see proper dance. I find this to be quite insulting. There is no place for an audience that prefer more cultural programs.

Rafi Hossain: Would you like to share something with your fans and students?

Shibli Mohammad: I am happy with the staff, students, and parents we have at our foundation. I am glad about what we have achieved, and I believe myself to be very lucky. I am satisfied with what I have received until now. I especially feel so when I enter my house and see my mother's face smiling at me. The only thing I would ask from the audience is prayers for my mother. I hope everyone stays safe during these difficult times.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

SADI MOHAMMAD

Rafi: How are you doing with your institution, Robiraag?

Sadi Mohammad: I am very satisfied with Robiraag. I have been running that institution for a long time now. However, nowadays we have resorted to doing classes online due to the pandemic.

Rafi Hossain: I think that no prominent Rabindra Sangeet singers are coming out of the newer generation. For some reason, the audiences are not accepting them completely, and barely any of them have been able to showcase their potential. Why do you think that is?

Sadi Mohammad: I think that talented musicians are coming from the newer generation. I don't want to mention anyone in particular, as I am no one to judge who is a good singer or not. But there are some and, in many cases, we do not see new singers coming up as they might not receive the opportunities. However, what I think many lacks is passion. To be a singer, you need to be passionate and have the will to work hard. Even now, I spend all my day working on music. In the past, we had to struggle a lot as well. We had to face a lot of restrictions in music. As I recall, during one of the occasions, I was not allowed to sing two songs on the radio as it contained the word "puja", and it might anger some extremists. Overcoming all these types of difficulties, we had to stay passionate and work for the music.

Rafi: You were studying engineering when you had a change of heart and became a musician. What made you come to this path?

Sadi Mohammad: From an early age, all of us siblings were always very attracted to music. However, we were also very disciplined since we were kids. We had to be in school on time every day, come home and eat lunch and then learn more from the home tutor who would come. We would make sure to come back in the evening if we did go out to play. All ten of us siblings were well disciplined. My elder sister and I would sing a lot, and I still think that she was better as a singer than me. I would enjoy singing songs that I would hear. But, I did not learn music properly until I went to Santiniketan. When I saw how religious extremism was rising in Bangladesh following the murder of Bangabandhu, I was left very unhappy with staying here. So I decided to try for Santiniketan, and I went there.

Rafi: After losing your father in the liberation war, your mother had to raise all of you. What was her role in your life when you were growing up?

Sadi Mohammad: I think that it is sad how people always bring up stories of our fathers and fail to mention our mothers. I think we need to give more recognition to mothers. I think that the government should reward mothers for giving so much towards their children. I would be happy to never receive another award again if it meant that award would go to a mother who worked hard to help her child.

Rafi: Are you close to Shibli bhai?

Sadi Mohammad: He is much younger than me, but we still have a strong bond. We talk to each other whenever something important comes up. There are times when I am so bothered by something that I cannot sleep at night, so I ask Shibli to come to my room, and I'll tell him everything. Every time I do that, it helps me feel at ease. The bond we have is indeed strong.

Rafi: Do you think people are losing interest in getting into the music industry?

Sadi Mohammad: If we exclude the COVID-19 situation, I would say that many of the newer generations are interested in getting into the industry or learning how to sing. Many are even eager to learn how to sing online, and some are also doing it quite well. What makes me sad is how I often see some young artists who haven't even finished learning come up to me and request me to help them get on stage and perform somewhere. I think anyone wanting to get into the industry should practice and keep on singing.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahub



us get where we are, and we are forever indebted to them. Back then, some producers such as Badrunnesa Abdullah would even fight for us when they would not let us wear *dhotis* during dances to Rabindranath's songs. We are thankful that such struggles aren't prevalent nowadays, and we can perform the way we wish to. Hopefully, we will not have to be under such a government again where we are forbidden from using *modniras* or putting our hands together in the manner of prayer during dances as it was deemed irreligious. Our persistence helped us get through it.

Rafi Hossain: Tell us about your family's reaction when you chose to go for an unusual career.

Shibli Mohammad: After our father passed away, our mother had big dreams while



wedding and birthday party. But, I also want to mention that we weren't hurt by this, it was justified from their view as they were looking out for us. After all, the path we went on did not guarantee success. We are eternally grateful to the Almighty for blessing us and indebted to the general public for their love and support.

Rafi Hossain: Would you say you and your brother are close friends?

Shibli Mohammad: Definitely. We share everything. We have to manage the four-storey building by ourselves. Whenever I have any trouble resonating the meaning of a song to my dance or choreography, I try to consult him. It is especially true with Rabindra sangeet, as the composition is based on feelings. The same thing often happens with costumes as well. Sometimes I will have a costume design in my mind

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

FRIENDS: THE REUNION

Friends: The Reunion is an unscripted special episode of the iconic sitcom Friends on HBO Max. It has been directed by Ben Winston and produced by Kevin S. Bright, among others. This special episode stars the main cast who reunite once more to relive some of their most nostalgic moments in the show, along with many celebrity guest appearances. It first premiered on May 27, 2021.



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



CRUELLA

Cruella is the live-action prequel to Disney's animated movie 101 Dalmatians. It has been directed by Craig Gillespie, produced by Andrew Gunn, Marc Platt, and Kristin Burr, and stars Emma Stone in the lead. The story follows a young Estella, who teams up with two thieves, as she plots her revenge against a fashion icon who had hired her. The film was initially released on May 18, 2021. *Cruella* can be streamed on Disney Plus with Premier Access.



Nobody is an action thriller film directed by Ilia Naishuller, produced by David Leitch, among others, and stars Bob Odenkirk in the lead. The story follows Hutch Mansell, a seemingly average man who disappoints his family after he refuses to fight two burglars that break into their home, which leads him into a path of vengeance. It was first aired on March 18, 2021. It can be streamed on Amazon Prime, Vudu, Apple TV and so on.

Rakaat Shari

MPs blast health ministry's dereliction

It is high time for officials to be held accountable

IT was encouraging to see our dysfunctional parliament be enlivened for once with the type of challenging questions that ought to be asked in the great parliamentary hall. As this newspaper reported on Tuesday, during a parliamentary discussion on the supplementary budget for fiscal year 2020-21, opposition lawmakers heavily criticised the health ministry for its failure to curb corruption and ensure healthcare for people amid the Covid-19 pandemic. They also demanded increased budgetary allocation for the health sector and its proper utilisation.

Since the pandemic began, we have seen the health ministry perform disastrously. The sector has been plagued by one incident of corruption after another, including in the procurement of basic safety items such as masks and PPEs, the issuance of fake Covid certificates, private hospitals operating without proper licence, etc. Furthermore, it has been revealed how syndicates, in collusion with ministry officials, had been carrying out systemic corruption even at the height of the pandemic. In response, we have seen the authorities basically do nothing—a handful of officials were transferred, while others were similarly let off the hook with a slap on the wrist. And this is what has allowed corruption to flourish.

Instead of addressing the corruption, we have constantly been hearing top health officials make lofty promises and, time and again, failing to deliver on them. The MPs also criticised the government in this regard, particularly in reference to the procurement of vaccines and the mystery surrounding when they will arrive in Bangladesh and when a large proportion of the population can finally be vaccinated.

The poor budgetary allocation to the health sector was another item of discussion in the parliament. Amid the pandemic, India increased its allocation for the health sector by 137 percent in this year's budget, while in Bangladesh, it has been raised by only 12 percent. We understand that part of the reason for this is the woeful track record of the health ministry in properly utilising funds allocated to the health sector. But why isn't that being addressed? If officials in the health ministry are inept, then why aren't they replaced? Why isn't anyone being held accountable for all this incompetence?

For months we have been asking the same questions that were raised in parliament by the MPs, in these columns. But unfortunately, we are yet to get any satisfactory answers. We can only hope this prompts the authorities to react and take the matter seriously.

Our healthcare sector is in shambles and the responsibility for that comes solely down onto the shoulders of the corrupt health officials, and the authorities that have allowed them to continue with their corruption without taking any action. This can no longer be allowed. Transparency and accountability must be brought back to the health sector. Corruption must be rooted out, and the health sector must be made efficient enough for it to effectively absorb the entire budgetary allocation.

Recurring slum fires a cause of concern

Take substantive measures to prevent fire, plan proper rehabilitation of slum dwellers

INCIDENCES of fire in the slums of Dhaka have taken frighteningly endemic proportions. In the last six months, fires have engulfed several large slums in the city, creating greater suffering for already marginalised and distressed populations. In the latest incident, on June 7, more than 500 shanties in a large slum in Mohakhali were gutted. The authorities are still looking for the causes of fire. But need one spend so much time to look at the causes of fire, given the very hazardous environment the slum dwellers live in?

The growth of slums in Dhaka city, as in many other big cities, particularly of Asia, is a natural phenomenon, economically driven by the pull of the metropolis. One doesn't have to read volumes to discover the causes and consequences of shanty fires. It is, thus, surprising that our planners have spared little time to this very destabilising phenomenon. It is worth mentioning that, out of an estimated 20 million people living in Dhaka, more than a million live in the hundreds of slums dotted across the city. The official estimate, according to the LGRD minister's comment in 2019, is half that number. But that figure is already outdated by half a decade, since it is from 2014.

However, the difference in numbers notwithstanding, there is no substantive plan (nor is one on the anvil) that would address the problems of the slum dwellers in totality, and more importantly, help reduce the chances of disasters by eliminating their hazardous living conditions. Given the existing conditions of the slums, what is surprising is not that there are periodic incidences of fire, but that these do not occur more often.

We believe that the government should expand its interventions in slum areas. As a first step, these slums must be freed of rent-seekers and gang lords who hold the residents in bondage. A comprehensive plan to make the slums of Dhaka more resilient should be formulated. There are already several NGOs working in the slums to address and mitigate different problems. Their experiences must also be garnered into a cohesive action plan. Unless concrete steps are taken to prevent all kinds of hazards, including fire, and mitigate their consequences, the people of the slums will be consigned to suffer from them in perpetuity. There is also an urgent need to develop low cost housing for slum-dwellers. Does the government have any plans for these people, who are significant contributors to the economy and yet are forced to give up a huge portion of their income as rent for accommodation that is substandard and risky?

Tremors in Sylhet might hint at bigger earthquakes

Are we ready to deal with the fallout?



MOHAMMED NORUL ALAM RAJU

IN two days (May 29-30), six successive mild earthquakes shook Sylhet city and its adjacent areas, leaving people panicking and running out into the streets. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department confirmed that one of the tremors was of the magnitude of 4.1 on the Richter scale. On Monday, Sylhet was jolted by another mild earthquake. In the meantime, Sylhet City Corporation sealed off 24 vulnerable buildings for 10 days after the series of tremors caused a building to tilt. One must question why it took so long for this action—specialists from the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology had flagged 35 buildings as vulnerable to earthquakes almost six years ago.

Bangladesh has not experienced a major earthquake in over a century, since the 8.1 magnitude Great Indian Earthquake in 1897. At the time, 545 buildings collapsed in Sylhet district and a large number of people died, even though the population density and number of concrete structures were far less back then. However, an escalation in seismic activity has been observed recently. A magnitude 6 earthquake was felt on April 28 this year. Three earthquakes were felt in 2020—a magnitude 4.4 on November 3, 5.8 on June 22 and a magnitude 5.1 earthquake on June 21.

Experts say that in earthquake prone areas, earthquakes occur more after every 100 years, and Bangladesh is situated in a high risk zone for earthquakes. The observatory at BUET recorded 86 tremors over four magnitudes during January 2006 to May 2009. These minor tremors indicate the possibility of heavier quakes.

Dhaka is more vulnerable to earthquakes due to its geological location and human and economic exposure. According to the earthquake disaster risk index, Dhaka tops the list of the 20 most vulnerable cities in the world. According to a seismic zoning map from BUET, 43 percent of Bangladesh can be rated as high risk, 41 percent as moderate and 16 percent as low risk. The high risk group includes major population belts such as Chattogram, Dhaka, Rangpur, Bogura, Mymensingh, Cumilla, Rajshahi and Sylhet.

A study from the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme

(CDMP) suggested that some 72,316 buildings in the capital will be fully damaged and 53,166 others will be partially damaged in the case of a 7.5 magnitude earthquake, leading to an economic loss of about USD 1.1 billion from structural damage only. At least 10 major hospitals and 90 schools in the capital may be destroyed completely and another 241 hospitals and clinics may be partially damaged. Economic loss due to

Plan has been prepared for emergency response agencies, including the Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD), Armed Forces Division, Department of Disaster Management and Cyclone Preparedness Programme. Finally, the Ministry of Housing and Public Works has been able to get approval for the National Building Code after five years of delays. Back in 2012, CDMP built a team of 62,000 urban volunteers to carry out immediate

There is also not enough engagement of NGOs and the private sector in response mechanisms. For example, debris management will be a big issue if an earthquake hits. The Rana Plaza collapse generated around 7,000 tons of debris. If we see an earthquake like that of 1897, about 300 million tons debris will be generated and the first task would be to clear the roads leading in and out of cities before any rescue drive could commence. However, despite the scale of these tasks, contingency plans are yet to be tested and standard operating procedures for agencies are yet to be developed. A specific authority and implementation plans are yet to be placed for acting building codes.

The narrow and crowded road in the capital, such as in old Dhaka, would be a serious bar to future rescue operations. So what can we do to ensure that we are ready to manage the worst case scenario, in the event of a disaster? First, a coordination platform should be in place, involving different government and non-government agencies. Additionally, extensive mass awareness programmes must take place on a regular basis and span all strata of society, including city dwellers, government officials, municipality officials, politicians, engineers, architects, designers, builders and medical people.

Secondly, the government must enforce proper implementation of the National Building Code. Experts have continuously pointed out the need for a proper implementation plan, as well as an authority nominated to oversee implementation of the building code. Initiatives should be taken to demolish old and high-risk buildings as a first step towards minimising casualties, followed by retrofitting to make vulnerable buildings more resilient.

Finally, capacity enhancement of emergency response agencies is a must in the areas of both skill and equipment. Coordination amongst the agencies should be the top priority. Disaster risk reduction measures should also be institutionalised at community and household levels. In this, both public and private sectors should be more involved. In the area of mass awareness, the systemic engagement of the media could play a vital role.

It should be said that we are not expecting a big tremor in our country any day now, but if it does strike, only the development of a culture of resilience can contribute to reducing the loss of lives and property.

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A major earthquake may cause massive destruction in the highly populated capital crammed with unplanned buildings, like that seen in this picture from Mohammadpur.

PHOTO: RASHED SUMON

damage of structures is likely to be USD 1.07 billion in the case of a magnitude 6 earthquake. It took 21 days to complete the search and rescue operation of the tragic Rana Plaza collapse. If a single building can take that long, what will happen if a moderate earthquake hits the city and the estimated damage occurs?

The government of Bangladesh has already taken a number of initiatives to minimise the potential damage of a sizeable earthquake. By analysing the seismic data, earthquake risk maps of Dhaka, Chattogram, Mymensingh and Sylhet City Corporations were prepared, and similar mapping projects are underway for some of sub-regions. The Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) were updated in 2019, where responsibilities were defined according to relevant ministries, departments and agencies to reduce risks and damages. Ward level disaster management committees have also been introduced.

Additionally, the National Contingency

rescue operations if disaster occurs. This programme was then handed over to the FSCD. The government has also spent Tk 62 crore to procure search and rescue equipment, and has handed it over to concerned agencies.

However, although the government has taken several initiatives, this level of preparedness is not enough with respect to the country's vulnerabilities, which was demonstrated in the Rana Plaza rescue, as well as during recent fire incidents in Banani, Chawkbazar or Nimtoli. Our citizens have immense gaps in knowledge when it comes to how they should act during earthquakes. Out of 62,000 urban volunteers created by CDMP, only around 37,000 been trained by FSCD and the programme has all but disappeared. The volunteers who are trained are not on track, although there was a plan to develop an inventory and organise refreshers on a regular basis.

A lack of coordination among responding agencies is the biggest obstacle.

In-country international higher education: The right step forward

SHAMSUL HAQUE

IT'S no secret that the Bangladesh education system seems to be, slowly but surely, achieving quite notable standards. Let's take a look at the numbers, starting with primary and secondary education. In the past two decades, Bangladesh has witnessed significant gains for children in access to these levels of schooling. As per the latest government statistics, net primary school enrolment rate stands at 97.74 percent, with the Grade 5 completion pass rate at 97.59 percent. These figures are better than those of many developed countries.

One of the prime reasons for the government's drive to improve education standards to international benchmarks is the growing economy. In fact, Bangladesh is one of the world's fastest growing economies—NASDAQ placed Bangladesh at the third position globally in 2020. A surging economy with increasing foreign investments in modern new-age industries requires a continuous supply of manpower that has international standard higher education and work experience.

There are three principal routes to fulfil this requirement. First, open our borders to expatriates with the required international education and experience—this is a suboptimal strategy that comes at significant cost, with outflow of valuable foreign exchange in terms of salaries, and of course a reduction in job opportunities for the domestic population.

Two, empower our youth to join leading universities on foreign shores to gain the required skills. This is an unviable strategy. On one hand, foreign-educated youth might not come back, procuring gainful employment in foreign shores instead after completing their education. On the other hand, there is a debilitating economic impact on the country due to these local students paying the fees of their respective foreign universities and trying to cover living expenses abroad. In these cases, not only do families end up mortgaging and liquidating all their fixed assets for their children's foreign education, there is also an unceasing outflow of precious foreign exchange.

The numbers are striking. UNESCO reported in 2019 that close to 60,000 Bangladeshis annually went abroad for

higher education. The minimum duration of graduation abroad is three years—in other words, at any given moment, one can assume that there are 180,000 Bangladeshi students in foreign universities. The average annual cost of graduate education in any good institution in the West is around USD 20,000, with postgraduate studies costing more. Even quite conservatively, this means that for 180,000 Bangladeshi students, with each spending USD 20,000 on an average, our country remits USD 3.6 billion or Tk 305 billion every year. This is clearly unsustainable.

That leaves us with our third route—that is, to provide affordable international

they undertaken the same programme abroad.

As mentioned earlier, the advantages are immense. Not only are we talking about saving a large part of the annual USD 3.6 billion outflow (the local fees will be paid in Taka and the royalty payments to foreign universities are relatively minimal); it immediately achieves the dual objectives of empowering domestic institutions to match international curriculum, teaching and research standards as well as positioning the country as being at the forefront of progressively internalising global education.

There is a caveat however. Setting up

the Strategic Plan for Higher Education (SPHE) 2018-2030, which enshrines the tenets of the government's outlook. While launching the plan, PM Sheikh Hasina reiterated, "SPHE 2018-2030 is a step forward in embodying our determination to help evolve a human capital on par with the global standards [...] The Strategy will help make the higher education of Bangladesh globally competitive."

The strategy itself is defined very clearly: "Private universities play an important role in saving foreign currency as many students who would have taken admission in overseas universities enrol in these universities [...] As a policy option, the government may allow foreign universities to open their branches in Bangladesh. This will help meet the increasing demand for higher education in the country. In the age of globalisation, shutting out outstanding regional and global providers from our higher education scene would be counterproductive."

In light of the above, let's look at the government's recent decision to approve a Monash College study centre in the country. Monash College is owned by Monash University Australia, a university ranked in the top 60 globally. The Monash College curriculum being offered in Bangladesh is the same as the international Monash College curriculum. The exams and teaching in Bangladesh are under the oversight of the Australian campus and all teachers are apparently being trained and developed in partnership with Monash Australia's direct involvement. Setting up Monash College's study centre here seems to have the potential of not only allowing local students a chance to access global education in the country, but also opens up possibilities of improving local teachers' skills. The entry of Monash could lead to other international universities replicating their own models here in Bangladesh.

While there is still much distance to be covered for Bangladesh to become the international higher education destination of choice for students across the subcontinent, the government's decision to be a global player in international higher education is a step in the right direction.

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ILLUSTRATION: BIPOB CHAKROBORTY

higher education opportunities in-country, which will ensure that our new-age industries get a steady stream of highly skilled domestic manpower possessing global standard education, resulting in appreciable increase in domestic employment rates as well as in per capita income. This can be done by encouraging government and private higher education institutions to initiate academic centres of leading international universities via memorandums of understanding, joint ventures, twinning and similar arrangements. This would offer the same foreign degree inside the country at relatively lower fees as compared to what the student would have had to pay had

of such international academic centres in the country will involve crores of Taka of investment, and in many cases, foreign investment. However, private companies and foreign investors can be encouraged through limited companies and not through non-profit trusts, as investors bring in equity investments against issued shareholding.

With foresight, the government seems to have already put in process a plan covering all the above aspects. The three pillars of the government's plan for internationalising higher education are the Private University Act (amended in 2010), the Foreign University (Branches and Study Center) Rules 2014 and most importantly,

'Institutional reforms are central to effective budget implementation'

Economist and researcher Dr Binayak Sen, Director-General of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), speaks to Shuprova Tasneem of The Daily Star about the proposed budget, poverty and workers' rights in Bangladesh, and the importance of data-driven policy

Does the proposed budget make adequate provisions for the new poor that have been created by the Covid-19 pandemic, and do you think the expanded social protection measures will reach them?

At the moment, we do not know exactly what proportion of the new poor are transient poor—those who fell into poverty due to lockdowns but will gain access to employment income again when restrictions are properly lifted—and what proportion are a permanent addition to the existing poor. Our quarterly estimates found that the poverty rate increased from 20 percent in the first quarter of last year to 29 percent in the second quarter (when Covid-19 first hit the country) before decreasing again—overall, the poverty rate for 2020 was estimated to be around 25 percent at the national level. In 2016, our poverty rate was 24 percent

involved in this process.

In fact, the involvement of community organisations is critical not only for social protection programmes, but also for health and safety practices. I don't see that kind of drive beyond government machinery involving private sector, NGOs, community level leaders, etc. Imams, for instance, were involved in the family planning drive in the early 80s, so why can't we involve them and other local political/social leaders in the campaign against Covid-19? Without Covid safety and mass immunisation, especially in cities, we cannot aspire to achieve the kind of stability that will generate employment and ultimately address new poverty.

Despite a global pandemic, in FY20-21, the health ministry failed to utilise its allocated funds. Why do we always see this disconnect between policy and action, and in the new fiscal year,



Dr Binayak Sen

be on vaccines. At least 50 percent of the population should be vaccinated for smooth functioning of the economy and to open educational institutions, and it is absolutely a requirement for addressing new poverty and unemployment.

Do you believe the proposed tax cuts/benefits and other economic stimulus will reach the industries that have been most affected by the pandemic?

Every year, the proposed budget announces benefits such as concessionary measures, tax holidays, cash incentives, interest rate subsidies, etc. However, whether these benefits actually lead to greater labour productivity and export competitiveness, or whether they only add to profit accounts, has to be discussed, analysed, and monitored. During the pandemic, we also saw that the larger industries were better able to utilise the stimulus packages that were provided.

However, instead of pursuing problem-oriented discussions, let us try to change the narrative and focus on solutions-oriented thinking. For instance, how do we reach the cottage industries or small/micro industries that are not registered and not under the banking radar, and may not even be covered by mobile financial services? My proposal is that their NID cards can be linked with their tax ID/banking information, including mobile banking. That would help the finance ministry monitor the transfer of incentives and stimulus packages to this segment. SME Foundation, BSCIC, PKSE, Agent Banking, etc. can become involved in disbursing industrial incentives to cottage and small industries.

Another issue is tax revenue. Year after year, our tax-GDP ratio is stagnant at nine to 10 percent of GDP, while our neighbours (India, Nepal) have around 18 to 20 percent of GDP. In the budget speech, it was lamented

that only 25 lakh people are giving direct income tax in a country of 170 million. If we really want to advance public goods and social protection systems, it goes without saying that we need more public revenue, but how do we increase it? One experiment the tax authorities can try is a randomised control trial where selected tax zones are given certain incentives, while other zones are given different incentives or no incentive at all. In six months' time, they can check whether the incentives have had an effect on the number of taxpayers and the amount of tax collected. We really need this kind of experimental design in government policies, especially in the area of taxation, in addressing banking debt default and in disbursing industrial incentives to small and cottage industries. In short, we need a solution-oriented state and solution-oriented discourse.

We have seen worker's wages become more precarious in the pandemic. How do we make sure they are able to claim their rights in the post-pandemic era?

In that respect, the rural agricultural workers are in a better position. Due to a tightening of the agricultural labour market as people leave villages for towns/abroad, and increased mechanisation, agricultural wage workers' situation has improved overall. Agriculture provides the broad social protection for the poor so this is going in the right direction.

What concerns us in the industrial sector is that when we are talking about adequate measures to protect workers during the pandemic, say in garments factories, we are not checking to what extent these rules are being implemented. It is being done in certain categories of factories of course, but can we say the same in relation to all four million plus RMG workers in Bangladesh? I'm not so sure. We must have institutional factory inspections or some such mechanism of periodically checking these conditions. However, it cannot end there. Health and safety in the workplace does not ensure residential health and safety. It is quite possible that they are getting masks and hand sanitisers in the factories, and then going home to crowded and unsanitary conditions.

This is an issue faced by all capitalist countries in the early stages of industrialisation. In 19th century Victorian England during the 1830s-40s Chartist movement, the choleric infection rate in labourer areas led to one of the biggest investments of that time—the underground sewerage system. It later turned out to be a convenient place of shelter during World War II bombing campaigns, but it started off as a public health measure. We need to have similar public health-oriented thinking for our workers as well.

As a minimum, we need a counterpart of community health clinics in urban areas. How can we have zone-based lockdowns but not a zone-based public health system? Reinvigorating the urban healthcare system is essential for the urban working class. Everyone can have some kind of health card or minimum health insurance, similar to what government employees have. In the case of industrial workers, it can be co-sponsored—partly financed by their own arrangements, and partly financed by factory owners and the government health budget. This is especially critical at a time when we are only providing workplace based protective measures in the form of masks and sanitisers and thinking we are done with our responsibility towards workers.

Of course, this is just one part of workers' health rights. Going forward, we have to seriously consider and provide for their right to housing as well.

How do we ensure that our policies are informed by the evidence/data being generated by experts?

This depends on whether there is a demand for data use, and that demand will depend on the institution behind it. Already, we are lagging in generating reliable poverty data (the latest HIES was in 2016) and employment data (the last LFS was in 2016/17). Clearly, there is not enough demand for up-to-date data. If we need to generate information about the status of the old poor, new poor, and transient poor separately, the BBS needs to undertake fresh surveys, at least in city areas where Covid-19 is more concentrated. For instance, it would be easier if we had some kind of high-level planning/economic advisory council like in other middle-income, developing countries—an overarching body to coordinate economic actions and act as a bridge between knowledge and practice. This can be in Planning, Finance or PMO. There also used to be a post called economic adviser to the Ministry of Finance, whose role was to bring out the yearly economic review as well as create demand for data and analysis from research institutions, BBS, etc. This post is very much functional and quite important in India and Pakistan. That is currently missing here.

These are only two examples of encouraging demand for evidence-based policy, but that can change quite easily. The question is whether in the current institutional culture, there is enough steam for institutional reform. Policy reforms could only do so much in terms of growth and development. There is a limit to which we can effectively pursue policy reforms without undertaking institutional reforms. We need to ensure that the issue of institutional reform, especially in key sectors, does not get lost or sidelined in the discussions about the proposed budget.

To target the new poor and transient poor, we need up-to-date data. The finance minister himself noted that we do not have the poverty numbers that could have helped the ministry to design social protection for this new segment.

at the national level. This is not only a one percentage point poverty increase; it signifies a five-year loss in our poverty reduction process. That is the central message—we lost five years of growth efforts from 2016-2020 because of Covid-19 and this is clearly showing up in the poverty data.

To target the new poor and transient poor, we need up-to-date data. The finance minister himself noted that we do not have the poverty numbers that could have helped the ministry to design social protection for this new segment. It is unfortunate that even as we celebrate 50 years of Bangladesh, we do not have vital statistics on poverty and employment.

However, if the pipe is leaky, whatever resources you pump through it will not fully reach the intended beneficiaries, and that is still the case for our social protection programmes. From a multiple indicator cluster survey that was conducted in 2018 by UNICEF/Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), we found that 50 percent of social protection beneficiaries are non-poor. This considerable presence of non-targeted beneficiaries cannot be reduced by goodwill. A mechanism must be developed to identify the intruders, such as the National Household Database that was generated by BBS during 2016-18, but which has not been used yet to update the current list. Local government and NGOs also need to be

how do we ensure effective budget implementation?

We need to transform the public health sector so that it is consistent with the idea of a welfare state. Article 10 of the 1972 Constitution enshrines Bangabandhu's vision of creating a just and egalitarian society. I don't think that ideal can be served by utilising only 49 percent of public health resources in a pandemic year. As citizens, the least we can expect is a greater emphasis on utilising resources—we are not even talking about the quality of healthcare yet, which has to be discussed as well.

A lot of this stems from years-long neglect for institutional reforms. If you look at the series of reforms that contributed to economic growth and helped us get out of the LDC club—we find that policy reform was in the right direction, but institutional reform lagged behind. This is the next big challenge, whether it concerns tax collection authorities, financial sector vulnerabilities, health sector implementation capacities, or the leaky social protection system. There are other potentially weak areas of course, but from the economic standpoint, banking sector, tax revenue management, social protection and public health are the four key sectors where institutional reform is necessary and the budget does not do full justice to these issues, which need to be taken up urgently.

Right now, the top priority should

Covid-19 and climate change: World leaders must tackle both

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



SALEEMUL HUQ

IN past weeks, there have been a number of significant events which may seem unconnected but are actually deeply connected in terms of whether the world is

able to successfully come out of the current Covid-19 pandemic and also deal with the looming catastrophe of climate change. The first event was Cyclone Yaas, which hit India more than Bangladesh but nevertheless caused significant overtopping of many parts of our coastal embankments, as the cyclonic surge coincided with high tide. This has shown that the existing coastal embankments are no longer fit for purpose against the more severe cyclones that will come with climate change. These, therefore, need to be strengthened to withstand cyclones and the fiercer tides of the future.

The second event was the visit by the President-designate of COP26 Alok Sharma from the UK, who met with PM Sheikh Hasina and held meetings with different government and non-government stakeholders, including the youth. He also visited the Sundarbans. I had the opportunity to meet him while he was in Dhaka and was impressed by his level of understanding of the human-induced climate change impacts that the people and habitats

of Bangladesh are having to face. He promised to ensure that Bangladesh's concerns, both of the government as well as of the people, are heard and taken forward to COP26, which will be held in Glasgow, Scotland in November this year. We sincerely hope that he is able to do so.

The third and perhaps most important event was the just-completed meeting of finance ministers of the G7 countries in London, UK, where they made commitments to both ensuring the global rollout of vaccines against Covid-19 and to finances for tackling climate change. The G7 environment ministers had already met earlier and agreed to phase out all future investment in coal power around the world, in another positive development.

The next major event to look forward to is the meeting of the G7 presidents and prime ministers in the UK this weekend, which will be followed by a meeting of the leaders of G20 countries in Italy a month later. Now is the time for global leaders to become more effective at tackling global problems like the pandemic and climate change, where no single country, no matter how big or powerful, can hope to tackle the problem alone. In fact, often trying to protect one's own citizens while neglecting other countries can be counterproductive. This is clearly true for Covid-19 vaccinations—even if every single citizen in a developed country gets vaccinated, they remain at risk from new variants if citizens



Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak speaks at a meeting of finance ministers from across the G7 nations.

PHOTO: REUTERS

elsewhere remain unvaccinated. No one is safe until everyone is safe.

Our problem is that although we have the UN, where all 200 or so countries are represented, we have no functional global government. So, the G7 and G20 leaders are important decision-makers when it comes to taking concrete steps to tackle global issues. These can be tackled successfully, but only if world leaders think of their primary responsibility as keeping the entire world safe rather than only their own citizens.

The twin global emergencies of

the pandemic and climate change have been well studied by scientists who have come up with solutions, such as the vaccines, as well as recommendations for leaders. What world leaders have failed to do so far is act collectively in the global interest as opposed to their own narrow national interests. The meeting of the G7 and G20 leaders will thus be critical to whether they can exhibit true global leadership. While they talk about the need to build back better, greener and more equitably, they are still failing to deliver on their promises.

An example of this failure is the promise by developed countries to provide USD 100 billion a year, starting from 2020 onwards, to support developing countries tackle climate change via mitigation and adaptation actions. However, 2020 has already passed and the promised amount was not delivered. This amount is no longer sufficient to tackle climate change either, but as Alok Sharma said in a meeting in Dhaka, it is a totemic figure whose non-delivery has tainted any future promises made by these same leaders.

Going forward, the world economies collectively need to not just allocate finance to tackle the pandemic or climate change in separate amounts in the tens, or even hundreds of billions—but rather direct the hundreds of trillions of investment being made in the wrong things (such as fossil fuels) to the right things, such as renewable energy, as just one example.

World leaders in the G7/G20 meetings and the upcoming COP26 have to demonstrate that they can indeed be worthy of being called world leaders, as opposed to just national leaders. This time, they need to represent their children and grandchildren and not just themselves, as the very future of the planet is at stake and time is running out. We shall see if they are able to rise to the challenge.

Dr Saleemul Huq is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh.

Operation Hotel

FROM PAGE 12
The majority of the five million East Pakistani refugees now in India were repatriated. Senator Church, a member of the foreign relations committee which would consider the measure, said in a Senate speech that "a full-scale international relief operation is mandatory".

He also told the Senate that the refugee situation not only imposed an unbearable burden upon India but could threaten peace.

"The creation of another refugee problem along the Indian border, like that which plagues the Middle East, would be alarming in its implications for the future," he declared. "Under these circumstances the United States must apply such leverage as it can to alleviate this human tragedy through the implementation of essential international relief and the speedy repatriation of refugees."

BRITISH FOREIGN SECY CALLS FOR POLITICAL SETTLEMENT

British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home made a strong appeal today for a political settlement in East Pakistan, terming it an essential condition for any permanent solution to the Pakistani refugee disaster.

Speaking in an emergency debate in the House of Commons on the

relief situation in East Pakistan and India, Sir Alec said the real tragedy lay in the fact that this was not a natural disaster but a political one.

He said the relief of immediate suffering should be followed "very soon by the creation of a political framework in which civil government can be formed and which will give confidence to the refugees to return home".

Sir Alec also urged continued restraint in the tense relations between Pakistan and India. Otherwise, he said, "the danger of war would be very real and would convert what is already a tragedy into a catastrophe".

Politicians of all parties rose to deplore the disorders in East Pakistan and to express concern at the plight of the refugees.

REORGANISING EAST PAKISTAN

The martial law administrator in East Pakistan issued an order reorganising the province. Radio Pakistan in a broadcast today said the province had been divided into four sectors -- Dhaka, Rajshahi, Jessore and Chittagong, excluding Chittagong Port. The object of the reorganising move was not immediately known.

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An Oxfam activist wearing a giant head depicting French President Emmanuel Macron holding a syringe is seen during a protest in Paris, France yesterday. The slogan reads "Lift patents on Covid-19 vaccines, Mr President choose your side" and "A vaccine for the planet".

PHOTO: REUTERS

HC rejects writ against

FROM PAGE 12
Daily Star.

He said the HC bench made the observation in line with article 66(2) (d) of the constitution of Bangladesh.

The article says, "A person shall be disqualified for election as, or for being, a member of Parliament who has been, on conviction for a criminal offence involving moral turpitude, sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years, unless a period of five years has elapsed since his release."

Kazi Papul's sister Nurunnahar Begum and Shahadat Hossain, a resident of Laxmipur-2 constituency and proposer for Kazi Papul's nomination, submitted the writ petition on March 15 challenging the legality of Jatiya Sangsad decision and seeking stay on the process for holding by-election scheduled to be held on June 21.

On February 22, the parliament secretariat issued a gazette notification announcing that the Laxmipur-2 constituency fell vacant because of Kazi Papul's moral turpitude.

On March 4, the Election Commission issued a schedule announcing that the by-election to this constituency will be held on April 11.

Later on, the date for holding the

by-election was deferred to June 21 due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Lawyers Rokonuddin Mahmud and Mostafizur Rahman Khan appeared for the petitioners.

Citing the petition, lawyer Mustafizur Rahman Khan told The Daily Star that the speaker to Jatiya Sangsad must wait to know whether any appeal of a convicted sitting Member of Parliament is pending with any court and its result before declaring his JS membership cancelled as per articles 66 and 67 constitution and the rules of businesses of parliament.

But, the speaker of Jatiya Sangsad did not follow these provisions in respect of Kazi Papul's JS membership cancellation, he said.

Mustafizur Rahman said no court of Bangladesh has convicted and sentenced lawmaker Kazi Papul and Kuwait court, which sentenced him, has not officially informed the JS Speaker about his conviction.

A Kuwaiti court on January 28 sentenced Bangladeshi lawmaker Mohammad Shahid Islam alias Kazi Papul and four others to four years in jail in a bribery case. Issuing the judgment, the court, headed by Counselor Abdullah Al-Othman, also fined them 1.9 million Kuwaiti dinars.

His colleague killed him

FROM PAGE 12

Howlader used to take illegal benefits from different contractors, but Delwar opposed such illegal activities.

"Selim would frequently harass most of the staffers at the office. That's why the staffers disliked Selim and loved Delwar. This led to a feud between Selim and Delwar," the report added.

Selim was served with a show cause notice over a forgery in 2018 when he was at the Konabari zonal office of the city corporation. He thought Delwar was behind the notice and became aggrieved.

"In September 2019, Delwar was attached to Nagar Bhaban. At that time, Selim wanted to take over as the executive engineer of Gazipur City Corporation. But Delwar was transferred to the city corporation as an executive engineer on February 26 last year. Selim was very displeased about this," the charge sheet said.

On May 5 last year, Selim had a quarrel with Delwar. He then decided to kill his colleague and hired Helal Howlader alias Horila Ghorami and Habibur Rahman Khan, a microbus driver.

In the morning of May 11, Selim along with the two went to Delwar's home in the capital's Mirpur by a microbus.

To get Delwar out of his home, they used a trick. They gave a rickshaw-puller Tk 100 to call Delwar saying that he needed to collect a parcel.

"Delwar then came out of the home and saw a microbus waiting there. Selim told him that he hired the microbus to go to office. Delwar boarded the microbus in good faith," the probe report said.

As the vehicle reached Rupnagar Beribadh area, Helal strangled Delwar with a rope while Selim grabbing the victim's legs. After killing the executive engineer, they dumped the body in an empty plot of Uttara Sector-17 near Beribadh, the IO said.

They also threw Delwar's cellphone in a lake in Dishari area. Police on the same day recovered the body from Beribadh around 4:00pm.

On May 12, victim's wife Khodeja Akhter identified the body at the morgue of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College.

Khodeja filed the murder case with Turag Police Station that day, accusing some unidentified people.

Police later arrested the three. They made confessional statements to magistrates on different dates.

The three are now behind bars. In the charge sheet, 33 people have been named as prosecution witnesses.

53 tonnes of sugar

FROM PAGE 12

about 53 tonnes of sugar had gone missing.

"We have forwarded it to the Anti-Corruption Commission," he said.

The mill authorities formed a four-member probe committee, led by the factory's GM (Finance) Kalyan Kumar Debnath. Talking to The Daily Star, he said a corrupt racket has held "the entire industry hostage", but declined to reveal any findings saying that their investigation was underway.

The five-member committee by the industries ministry is led by Additional Secretary Shivanth Roy. The other members include Anwarul Alam, joint secretary of the ministry and Ainul Haque, planning chief of Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation.

During their visit to the mill on Monday, the committee members examined the current stock, sales and income related documents. They also talked to current and former in-charge of the warehouses and other stores, said sources at the mill.

Rakibur Rahman, general manager (administration) of the sugar mills, said a corrupt syndicate of mill employees was behind the misappropriation. "But I can't say anything more now as the investigation is still on."

Think-tanks' new

FROM PAGE 12

a short time," Mannan added.

The survey will be completed in the next one and a half years, said Muhammad Yamin Chowdhury, secretary of the statistics division.

"It can then be said how many people have actually become poor."

Asked if they can survey in a shorter time, he said there is no scope to verify the authenticity of quick surveys.

Conducting surveys over the phone can give a general idea, but the exact number can be verified by asking more in-depth questions and doing follow-ups, which the BBS does in its longer surveys, he said.

"Last year we did a similar survey through the mobile phone. This year, maybe a [more in-depth] survey can be done to get an idea about the issue," Chowdhury added.

Despite the increase in the allocation of the social safety net in the proposed budget for fiscal 2021-22, the government has not brought the newly poor people under it.

Social safety net schemes were allocated Tk 107,610 crore in the upcoming fiscal year, which is up 12 percent year-on-year but lower than the average 17.7 percent growth of allocation between fiscals 2009-10 and 2020-21.

According to an estimate of the Centre for Policy Dialogue in April, some 1.60 crore new poor were created by the pandemic.

Another survey done around the same time by the Power and Participation Research Centre and the Brac Institute of Governance and Development showed that 2.45 crore fell into poverty even before the second wave of the pandemic hit.

About 20.5 percent of the population was already living in poverty and the pandemic raised the ratio to 30 percent, according to the World Bank.

WHO warns of two-track

FROM PAGE 12

He voiced his frustration that several poor countries have been unable to immunise their health workers, the elderly and other populations most vulnerable to severe Covid-19 disease.

Some rich countries meanwhile, having bought up vaccine supply, are drawing up preparations to start vaccinating children, he said.

Tedros has called for a massive global effort to vaccinate at least 10 percent of the population of all countries by September, and at least 30 percent by the end of the year.

That will require an additional 250 million doses by September, with 100 million doses in June and July alone.

"This weekend, the G7 leaders will meet for their annual summit," Tedros told journalists. "These seven nations have the power to meet these targets."

"I am calling on the G7 not just to commit to sharing doses, but to commit to sharing them in June and July," he said.

"I also call on all manufacturers to give Covax first right of refusal on new volume of Covid-19 vaccines, or to commit 50 percent of their volumes to Covax this year," Tedros added.

Meanwhile, nearly 30 celebrities, from singer Katy Perry to footballer David Beckham, called on the G7 to share Covid-19 vaccines with poorer countries.

The entertainment and sports figures urged the seven countries -- France, Italy, the UK, Canada, Japan, Germany and the United States -- to pledge at least 20 percent of their supply between June and August, amounting to 150 million doses.

Hefajat men

FROM PAGE 12
correspondent.

Sajidur is the director of Jamia Darul Arqam Al Islamiya Madrasa in West Medda area of Brahmanbaria town and Mubarak is the principal of Al Jamia Al Islamiya Al Younusia Madrasa in Kandipara area of the district.

Leaders and activists of various socio-cultural and political organisations, including those of the ruling Awami League, have been demanding arrest of the two Hefajat leaders since March 26.

Sajidur and Mubarak went into "hiding" after criticism of Brahmanbaria violence from across the country.

However, Sajidur was seen at a press conference at Makhjanul Ulum Madrasa in the capital's Khilgaon on Monday during the announcement of the new central committee.

Awami League lawmaker RAM Obaidul Moktadir Chowdhury (Brahmanbaria-3) had filed a petition with Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station under the Digital Security Act on May 1 against 16 people, including the two Hefajat leaders, on charges of committing cybercrime.

The police station recorded the petition as a general diary.

Supporters and activists of Hefajat carried out massive violence across Brahmanbaria on March 26-28 protesting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh.

BFIU SEEKS BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) has sought details about the bank accounts of 44 Hefajat leaders, reports our staff correspondent.

Issuing a notice on May 2, the BFIU asked commercial banks to send the information to it in seven working days.

"Banks have been asked to give details of all the accounts belonging to those persons as part of a BFIU investigation to detect whether they are involved in money laundering and terrorist financing," an official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The 44 are leaders of different Hefajat units.

On March 31, the BFIU had sought bank account details of 24 leaders of different organisations, including Hefajat and 30 madrasas.

Officials said the Intelligence Unit has taken the initiative to look into the sources of funds of Islamist outfits.

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তারিখ: ০৮/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ

স্মারক নং- ৮১ (রেশন),
The Public Procurement Act, 2006 (PPA) & The Public Procurement Rules-2008 (PPR) এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী মোতাবেক ২০২১-২২ অর্থ বৎসরে ১ম কোয়ার্টার (জুলাই/২০২১ হতে সেপ্টেম্বর/২০২১ পর্যন্ত) এর জন্য রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশের রেশন সামগ্রী উন্মুক্ত দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে ক্রয়/সংগ্রহ এবং নিলাম বিক্রয় (ব্যবহৃত পুরাতন চটের বস্তা/সিনথেটিক বস্তা) এর জন্য রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর রেশন স্টোরে টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন ব্যবসায়ী/টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহর ও সীলগালায়ুক্ত খামে পৃথক-পৃথক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/পুলিশ বিভাগ।			
০২।	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।			
০৩।	ক্রয়/সংগ্রহ স্বত্বাধিকারীর নাম	পুলিশ কমিশনার, রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর।			
০৪।	দরপত্র আহ্বানের কারণ	রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয় এবং নিলাম বিক্রয়।			
০৫।	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (OTM)।			
০৬।	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত।			
০৭।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	০৮/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ।			
০৮।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	২৪/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত)।			
০৯।	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৭/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।			
১০।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৭/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।			
১১।	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ	২৮/০৬/২০২১ খ্রিঃ।			
১২।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	(ক) পুলিশ কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর। (খ) ডিআইজি, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রংপুর রেঞ্জ, রংপুর-এর কার্যালয়, রংপুর। পুলিশ কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর।			
১৩।	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিস	পুলিশ কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর।			
১৪।	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	পুলিশ কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর।			
১৫।	দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিলকৃত কাগজপত্রাদি	জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি, ট্রেড লাইসেন্সের কপি, আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্র, ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশনের কপি, আর্থিক স্বচ্ছতার সনদপত্র, পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। দাখিলকৃত সকল কাগজপত্রাদি হালনাগাদ ও সত্যায়িত হতে হবে।			
১৬।	কাজের বিবরণ	সম্ভাব্য পরিমাণ (মেট্রন/লিটার)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (ফেরৎযোগ্য)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত (ফেরৎযোগ্য)	কাজ সম্পাদনের সময়সীমা
	মসুর ডাল (উন্মতমানের)।	৩০,০০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/-	৫০,০০০/-	
	সয়াবিন তেল (উন্মতমানের)।	৩০,০০০ লিটার (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/-	৫০,০০০/-	
	পোলাও এর চাউল (উন্মতমানের)	১,৫০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৪০০/-	৫,০০০/-	
	গম পেছাই করতঃ উন্মতমানের প্যাকেটজাত আটা সরবরাহ।	১০০ মেট্র টন (আনুমানিক)	৪০০/-	৫,০০০/-	
	জ্বালানী কাঠ (চেরাইকৃত শুকনা আম খড়ি)।	৩০,০০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৪০০/-	৫,০০০/-	
	কুলিসহ পরিবহন সরবরাহ কাজ:- (ক) চাউল- নির্ধারিত সরকারী খাদ্য গুদাম হতে রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর রেশন স্টোরে পৌঁছানো এবং গুদামজাত করণের লক্ষ্যে ট্রাকসহ লেবার সরবরাহ কাজ। (খ) গম- নির্ধারিত সরকারী খাদ্য গুদাম হতে নির্ধারিত গম পেছাই মিলে পৌঁছানো এবং গুদামজাত করণের লক্ষ্যে ট্রাকসহ লেবার সরবরাহ কাজ। (গ) চিনি- নির্ধারিত চিনি কল হতে রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর রেশন স্টোরে পৌঁছানো এবং গুদামজাত করণের লক্ষ্যে ট্রাকসহ লেবার সরবরাহ কাজ।	চাহিদানুযায়ী	৪০০/-	৫,০০০/-	জুলাই/২০২১ হতে সেপ্টেম্বর/২০২১ পর্যন্ত
১৭।	নিলাম বিক্রয়: (ক) ব্যবহৃত পুরাতন চটের বস্তা (ছোট) (৩০ কেজি) (খ) ব্যবহৃত পুরাতন চটের বস্তা (বড়) (৫০ কেজি) (গ) ব্যবহৃত পুরাতন সিনথেটিক বস্তা (বড়) (৫০ কেজি)	= ১,৯০০টি। = ২,৪৪০টি। = ৩০০টি।	৪০০/-	২০,০০০/-	
১৮।	(ক) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তা : মোঃ মহিদুল ইসলাম, উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সদর দপ্তর ও প্রশাসন), রংপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, রংপুর। (খ) যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম : মোবাইল: ০১৩২০-০৭৩০২০; ফোন: ০৫২১-৫৭৩০৩; E-mail: dchqrpmp@police.gov.bd				
১৯।	বিশেষ শর্তাবলী: (ক) কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোনো দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা রাখেন। (খ) দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত যে কোনো আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে। (গ) দরপত্র কার্যক্রম পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮-এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে। (ঘ) দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী সিডিউলে উল্লেখ রয়েছে।				

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Two arrested

FROM PAGE 12

to greet a man who, instead of shaking hands, slapped the 43-year-old across the face.

Macron's bodyguards quickly intervened and two people were arrested afterwards, local officials said.

"The man who tried to slap the president and another individual are

currently being questioned by the gendarmerie," the regional prefecture said in a statement.

The incident in the village of Tain-l'Hermitage in the Drome region represents a serious security breach and overshadows the start of Macron's tour which he said was designed to "take the country's pulse."

Australia's largest

FROM PAGE 12

"Based on the preserved limb size comparisons, this new titanosaur is estimated to be in the top five largest in the world," said Robyn Mackenzie, a director of the Eromanga Natural History Museum.

The fossilised bones were found on Mackenzie's

family farm in 2006 about 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) west of Brisbane in the Eromanga Basin and nicknamed "Cooper".

Initially kept secret as scientists painstakingly dug up and studied the bones, the skeleton first went on display to the public in 2007.



Mushfiqur Rahim and Mosaddek Hossain embrace each other after striking half-centuries to guide Abahani to a seven-wicket victory over Gazi Group Cricketers in the Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier Division T20 League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. (Inset) Veteran left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam took three wickets for one run to deliver Legends of Rugganj their first victory of the campaign. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Results galore despite rain

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite the rain halting the majority of the six games of the fourth round in the Dhaka Premier League T20 competition, all the matches eventually ended with a result yesterday.

Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club continued their unbeaten run in the league as they handed the second consecutive defeat to Shakib Al Hasan's Mohammedan Sporting Club by 22 runs on a six-over curtailed match at BKSP.

Doleshwar rode on the blistering start from the two openers Imran Uzzaman and Shamim Hossain to post 78 for 4 in six overs where Mohammedan in reply, ended up on 56 for 4. Followed by a long wait due to rain, the match finally began with a flurry of sixes and fours by Imran who struck five sixes and two fours for his 14-ball 41 while Shamim remained unbeaten on 29 off 16 balls, thus Doleshwar had the momentum.

Mohammedan in reply, faced a double blow from pacer Shaiful Islam in the first over of the innings who removed Parvez Hossain and Shuvagata Hom- both out on a duck.

Shakib Al Hasan attempted a comeback with his 14-ball 21 before he became Shaiful's third victim and Mohammedan fell well short of the target eventually. With four wins in five

games, Doleshwar sits at the top of the table with nine points while Mohammedan slips down with three wins and two defeats in five games.

Unlike Mohammedan, their archrival Abahani Limited returned to the winning ways, courtesy of skipper Mushfiqur Rahim's unbeaten fifty to register a seven-wicket win over Mahmudullah Riyad's Gazi Group.

Despite a flying start from the openers Soumya Sarkar and Mahedi Hasan, adding 78 runs for the opening stand in nine overs, things changed dramatically for Gazi afterwards.

Mahedi was the first to depart on 43 off 32 balls while Soumya scored his second consecutive fifty before being dismissed on 67 off fifty balls laced with two sixes and six fours.

Since then, Gazi kept losing wickets at regular intervals where Shohidul Islam and leg

spinner Aminul Islam bagged two wickets each for the bowling side.

In reply at one point, Abahani were struggling on 48 for 3 inside nine overs, before Mushfiqur along with Mosaddek Hossain added an unbeaten, match-winning 105 runs on the fourth-wicket stand.

Mushfiqur's 53 off 35 balls included four boundaries and a six while Mosaddek's fifty off 28 balls featured three sixes and four boundaries as Abahani reached the target with two overs to spare.

Elsewhere, Prime Bank Cricket Club extended their winning run and registered a comfortable seven-wicket win over Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club.

Sheikh Jamal kept losing wickets at regular intervals right from the start and eventually posted 133 for 9 in 20 overs, courtesy of Sohrawardi Shuvo's 34. Pacers Mustafizur Rahman and Rubel Hossain grabbed two wickets each for the bowling side.

In reply Rony Talukdar top-scored with 48 while Anamul Haque added 35 runs to reach the target with ease as Prime Bank remains in second place with eight points in five games.

On the other three matches Brothers Union clinched a 33 runs win over Partex Sporting Club, Legends of Rugganj beat Shinepukur Cricket Club by 14 runs and Old DOHS Sports Club sealed a 16 run win over Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samity.



'Such defeat is not acceptable'

SPORTS REPORTER



Neighbouring India may have comprehensively edged over Bangladesh football team in

terms of the result but their outstanding ball possession display against the men in red and green in their reverse fixture of the World Cup and Asian Cup Qualifiers in Qatar on Monday remains unprecedented.

Historically, India had capitalised with genuine strikers against Bangladesh and the 27th encounter between the two sides in Doha was no exception, with veteran striker Sunil Chhetri once again taking the match in favour of India by scoring a brace.

Apart from their 74 percent of ball possession against Bangladesh's 26, India's latest dominant display was superior in terms of passing accuracy as well, where they hit 83 percent compared to Bangladesh's 54.

"I've also played against India and watched a lot of games but never saw a one-sided affair of this manner. You can go down 5-0 with a fight but such defeat is not acceptable. I can't get over it," national team manager Iqbal Hossain told The Daily Star

stated that they failed to play their own game and conceded two goals due the lack of concentration in the last moments.

After a resurgent display against Afghanistan, Bangladesh was expected to carry the momentum to the India match and they did get off to a fine start within the first 10 minutes before handing over the upper hand to India for the remaining time.

"The first 10 minutes went well but I think we could have done better had we pressed them some 10 to 15 meters up instead of defending deeper. I think we lacked fresh legs against India," explained captain Jamal Bhuiyan.

Asked if they were under pressure to win the match, Jamal said, "We wanted to win this prestigious match which is equivalent to El Clasico of South Asia but we made plenty of errors and could not create many chances against India compared to Afghanistan match. We must improve our ball possession, and have to do better in pressing the opponents in future."

Manager Iqbal believes India have not played that extraordinary rather they kept the ball in their control.

"I admit, India did well in set-pieces and created a couple of good chances but the first goal Bangladesh conceded was



Bangladesh players reflect on previous night's defeat against India at the team hotel in Doha yesterday. PHOTO: BFF

over phone from Qatar yesterday.

"I talked to the players last night [Monday] and today [Tuesday] but they can't justify such a poor display, despite putting up a better show against Afghanistan," said former national midfielder Iqbal.

"Players had no pressure from the management to win, but I think they had put pressure on themselves by being too serious about the India match and tried to play better than the Afghanistan match."

Finland-born defender Tariq Raihan Kazi

unacceptable. There were three defenders inside the box and Tapu should've marked Sunil well while goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico should've come out from his line or made a call for the defenders when the ball was drifting into the six-yard box but none of the players did their job. I have nothing to say about the second goal," Iqbal expressed his frustration.

Finally Jamal urges all to forget the match against India for now and look forward to the match against Oman for a better show.

Top-ranked Belgium at a disadvantage

REUTERS



Belgium are at a disadvantage in the European Championship as they will not play any home games in the tournament, defender

Thomas Vermaelen said on Tuesday.

Brussels had been one of the 13 original venues picked to host games for Euro 2020, which kicks off on Friday, but after numerous delays to a planned new Euro stadium, was removed from the list by UEFA in 2017.

It means that if the top team in the FIFA rankings are to go on and win a major trophy for the first time, all their matches will be on foreign soil -- in contrast to other contenders like England, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain.

Of the 24 teams at Euro 2020, nine get to play in front of home fans.



Romelu Lukaku scored the only goal as Belgium beat Croatia 1-0 in a warm-up match for the European Championship at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels on Monday night. PHOTO: REUTERS

However, Belgium have a heavy travel burden in the opening round, playing their first game on Saturday in St Petersburg against Russia, then meeting Denmark in Copenhagen on June 17 before returning to St Petersburg to complete their Group B programme against Finland.

"It is certainly a disadvantage that we have to play away games and have to travel," Vermaelen told a news conference. "We would prefer to play home games. That would be an advantage, that you do not travel. The other countries we play against play home games. That is a shame for us but we have to accept the situation as it is."

Belgium will leave for St Petersburg on the eve of their opening game and return back to their base at Tubize, some 25km south of Brussels, straight afterwards. After three days back home, they head to Copenhagen for their second group game and from there will travel straight onto St Petersburg.

GPS to track foreign journos in Tokyo

AFP, TOKYO

Overseas journalists covering the Tokyo Olympics will have their movements tracked by GPS, the Games president said Tuesday, and could have their passes revoked if they break the rules.

Organisers of the pandemic-postponed 2020 Games, which open in just over six weeks, are trying to reassure a sceptical public that the mega-event can be held safely under strict virus rules.

The about 6,000 reporters visiting Japan for the Olympics must provide a detailed list of areas they will visit for their first two weeks in Japan, such as sports venues and hotels.

And Tokyo 2020 chief Seiko Hashimoto said tracking technology would be used to make sure they only go where they are supposed to.

"To make sure that people don't go to places other than the places where they are registered to go, we will use GPS to strictly manage their behaviour," Hashimoto said before a Tokyo 2020 executive board meeting.

Reporters will be urged to stay in designated hotels rather than private lodgings, she added.

The number of hotels will be reduced from an originally planned 350 to around 150, she said.

Outsider Zidansek into semis



AFP, PARIS



World number 85 Tamara Zidansek became the first woman from Slovenia to reach the semifinals of a Grand Slam at the French Open

on Tuesday.

The unheralded Zidansek advanced 7-5, 4-6, 8-6 against Spain's Paula Badosa and will play Kazakh 21st seed Elena Rybakina or 31st-seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia for a place in Saturday's final.

"I'm really, really happy to be in the semi-finals," said Zidansek, who had never gone beyond the second round of a Slam before this year's Roland Garros.

Zidansek recovered from 3-0 and a double break down in the first set and then saved three break points at 6-6 in the decider against Badosa, the 33rd seed with the most clay court wins (17) on the WTA tour this season.

The Slovene took her second match point to continue her breakout

performance. She is two wins away from emulating Maribor-born Mima Jausovec, who won Roland Garros in 1977 while representing Yugoslavia.

World number 22 Rybakina, who denied Serena Williams in her latest bid for a record-tying 24th Grand Slam title, is the highest-ranked player left in her half of the draw.

The 21-year-old made the final at four of her first five events in 2020, but her momentum was then stalled by the Covid-19 shutdown.

Born in Russia, but representing Kazakhstan, Rybakina has advanced here without losing a set. She next meets doubles partner Pavlyuchenkova, back in the French Open quarter-finals for the first time since 2011.

"The end goal is always to win the tournaments and dream and go of course to win the Grand Slam," said Rybakina.

"So every time I step in on court I try not to think against who I play. Just try to do my work, follow the plan which we have. If it works well, I'm winning, and if it's not, I'm just learning."

Spain squad to be vaccinated

REUTERS, Madrid

The Spanish soccer squad's players will get a COVID-19 vaccine shot on Wednesday, less than a week before their opening Euro 2020 match, after captain Sergio Busquets tested positive, Sports Minister Jose Manuel Rodriguez Uribes said on Tuesday.

Busquets' positive has thrown Spain's tournament preparations into chaos with the remaining 23 players going into isolation along with the coaching staff. An Under-21 side led by their coach Luis de la Fuente will face Lithuania



on Tuesday in what was supposed to be the nation's final warm-up game before the Euros.

Coach Luis Enrique called up a group of six players, including Chelsea goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga, to complement the squad. They will train separately in "parallel bubble" away from the main Euros squad with a view to them being added should the need occur. So far, all the other players and staff have tested negative.

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MP PAPUL'S JS MEMBERSHIP HC rejects writ against cancellation

Observes sentence by court of any state for 2yrs or more for moral turpitude disqualifies MP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that if any court of sovereign state convicts and punishes a lawmaker of Bangladesh with imprisonment for two years or more for moral turpitude, he or she becomes disqualified to hold the office of Member of Parliament.

With this observation, the court summarily rejected a writ petition filed challenging the legality of decisions for announcing the Laxmipur-2 constituency, where Mohammad Shahid Islam also known as Kazi Papul was elected an independent lawmaker, vacant and the schedule for holding a by-election to this constituency on June 21.

A Kuwaiti court on January 28 sentenced Kazi Papul and four others to four years in jail in a bribery case.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Mohammad Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Kamrul Hossain Mollah passed the rejection order also saying that the writ petitioners have no locus standite (quality) to move such a writ petition as they are not persons aggrieved due to the decisions, petitioners' lawyer Mustafizur Rahman Khan told The

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A group of people callously crossing the busy Airport Road putting their lives at risk. They could have taken the footbridge seen only a few metres away. The photo was taken in the capital's Banani area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hefajat men involved in violence now in key posts

BFIU seeks account details of 44 Hefajat men

STAR REPORT

Hefajat-e Islam leaders Maulana Sajidur Rahman and Mufti Mubarak Ullah, who were allegedly involved in the Brahmanbaria mayhem on March 26-28, have secured posts on the newly formed central committee of the Islamist organisation.

The 38-member central committee was announced in Dhaka on Monday.

Sajidur, president of Brahmanbaria district Hefajat-e Islam and also a former joint secretary general of the organisation, has been reinstated in the same position of the central committee and Mubarak, general secretary of Brahmanbaria district Hefajat, has been made the first member of the central committee, reports our Brahmanbaria

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

KUSHTIA SUGAR MILLS 53 tonnes of sugar vanish, probe on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

About 53 tonnes of sugar, worth around Tk 33 lakh, has been stolen from a warehouse of state-owned Kushtia Sugar Mills.

A probe committee, formed by the mill authorities, has filed a general diary with Kushtia Model Police Station over the matter.

The industries ministry has also launched an investigation and members of a committee formed by it visited the spot on Monday.

Sources said the mill was supposed to have 121 tonnes of sugar in its reserve, but the latest stock statement revealed that the sugar was missing.

The matter first came to light on June 3 when the mill authorities received a report on the stock situation, prepared by store keeper Faridul Islam. The report had several discrepancies.

Faridul on June 5 was suspended as he failed to give any explanation over the discrepancy, the sources said.

Sabirul Alam, in-charge of Kushtia Model Police Station, said the mill authorities filed a GD mentioning that

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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Operation Hotel InterContinental

JUNE 9, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

HIT & RUN
Commandos of the Crack Platoon today launched an attack at InterContinental Dhaka. The commandos, armed with grenades, bayonets, and submachine guns, stopped in a car in front of the hotel. Five grenades were thrown in the attack which took place between 7:45pm and 8:00pm.

The purpose of the mission was to stop the World Bank aid mission and Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, head of the UNHCR, from providing financial assistance to the Pakistani junta and, through them, draw the attention of the world to the strong resistance put up by Bangalee freedom fighters.

The team from the World Bank and the UNHCR had been informed and assured by the Pakistan propaganda machine that everything in the then East Pakistan, especially in Dhaka city, was absolutely normal. Moreover, they said that the eastern part of Pakistan was totally under the control of the Pakistani rulers and the army.

MOVE TO CUT AID TO PAKISTAN
A bipartisan amendment to cut off US economic as well as military aid to Pakistan was introduced in the Senate today.

The measure was cosponsored by Senators Frank Church (Democrat, Idaho) and William Saxbe (Republican, Ohio). It would suspend military and economic aid to Pakistan until food and medical relief supervised by international agencies was provided on a regular basis throughout East Pakistan and

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Think-tanks' new poor figure flawed

Says planning minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The surveys conducted by private think-tanks to deduce the number of new poor due to the pandemic do not stand scientifically, said Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday.

According to the various organisations, the number of new poor ranges from one crore to five crore, he told journalists after the National Procurement Committee meeting at the ministry.

"As a result, it is difficult to say which of these is true. Finding out how many people have become poor in a scientific way takes time."

But the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics is conducting a survey to find out a ballpark figure.

"However, I will request the BBS to estimate the number by conducting a conceptual survey in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Australia's largest dinosaur a new species



AFP, Brisbane

A gigantic dinosaur discovered in Australia's outback has been identified as a new species and recognised as one of the largest to ever roam the Earth, according to palaeontologists.

The Australotitan cooperensis, part of the titanosaur family that lived about 100 million years ago, has finally been named and described 15 years after its bones were first uncovered.

It is estimated to have stood at 5-6.5 metres (16-21 feet) high and measured 25-30 metres (82-98 feet) in length -- which would make it Australia's biggest dinosaur.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Two arrested for slapping Macron

AFP, Tain-l'Hermitage

A bystander slapped French President Emmanuel Macron across the face during a trip to southeast France on Tuesday on the second stop of a nationwide tour.

Images on social media and broadcast on the BFM news channel showed Macron approach a barrier

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 9

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:05 12:45 5:00 6:45 8:15
JAMAAT 4:40 1:15 5:15 6:50 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

ENGR DELWAR MURDER His colleague killed him for obstructing bribery

Cops say in charge sheet

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Delwar Hossain, then executive engineer of Gazipur City Corporation, was killed last year over a disagreement with his colleague Mohammad Selim over the latter's illegal activities, a police probe has found.

Investigation Officer Sheikh Mofizul Islam, also an inspector of Turag Police Station, filed the charge sheet in the murder case of Delwar with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on May 3.

The IO in the charge sheet described how Delwar, 45, was brutally killed in a planned way by Selim, assistant engineer of the city corporation, and his two accomplices -- Helal Howlader and Habibur Rahman Khan.

According to the probe report, Selim alias Anis

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



People living on the foot and slope of a hill being warned of landslides and asked to move out in Chittagong's Motijhorna area. Heavy rains during the monsoon pose serious risks of landslides in the area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

WHO warns of 'two-track pandemic'

Says cases decline but vaccine inequity persists, urges jab makers to give Covax 50pc of doses

AGENCIES

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said unequal distribution of vaccines has allowed the coronavirus to continue spreading, thus increasing odds of a variant emerging that could render these treatments ineffective.

"Increasingly, we see a two-track pandemic: many countries still face an extremely dangerous situation, while some of those with the highest vaccination rates are starting to talk about ending restrictions," he told a media briefing from WHO headquarters in Geneva on Monday evening.

More than 2.15 billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been injected in at least 215 territories around the world, according to an AFP count.

But just 0.3 percent have been administered in the 29 lowest-income countries, home to nine percent of the world's people.

"Inequitable vaccination is a threat to all nations, not just those with the fewest vaccines," said Tedros.

He called for Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers to give Covax first refusal on new doses, or commit half of their volumes to the global jab equity scheme.

Tedros said manufacturers should turn their attention to the Covax facility, which has struggled to get donation-funded doses to poorer countries.

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