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"Countries like Bangladesh that are capable of producing Covid vaccines should be allowed to do so and be given support for that."
FOREIGN MINISTER AK ABDUL MOMEN



"We need a dialogue (with Russia) to defend our interests... it is a dialogue necessary for the stability of the European continent."
FRENCH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MACRON



"A failure to extend the council's authorization would have devastating consequences."
UN CHIEF GUTERRES ON ALLOWING SYRIA CROSS-BORDER AID

'Total shutdown' anytime

Says state minister after nat'l advisory panel recommends a 14-day shutdown; number of Covid deaths now 4 times higher outside Dhaka

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Runaway Covid infections in every division except Dhaka has prompted health experts to recommend "stricter nationwide lockdowns" rather than focusing on protecting Dhaka.

The National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19 yesterday recommended "a complete shutdown" for 14 days. It warned about hospitals being overrun and said lives and livelihoods would be saved by the shutdown.

A state minister also went on the record to say that he agrees with the experts' recommendations and that an announcement for the "complete shutdown" could come any time.

Covid-19 deaths in seven divisions combined was around four times that of Dhaka's this month. Dhaka had always been the worst affected division until the Delta variant started riding this particular wave.

In May, Dhaka recorded 458 deaths and in April 1,494, the highest in a month. The seven other divisions combined reported 651 deaths in May and 754 in April.

No division recorded more than 100 deaths during April and May, apart from Dhaka and Chattogram.

- High transmission of virus has already been found in more than 50 districts
- Effectiveness of stopgap measures to curb the transmission is in question
- Healthcare facilities will be insufficient if strict measures are not enforced

NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COVID-19

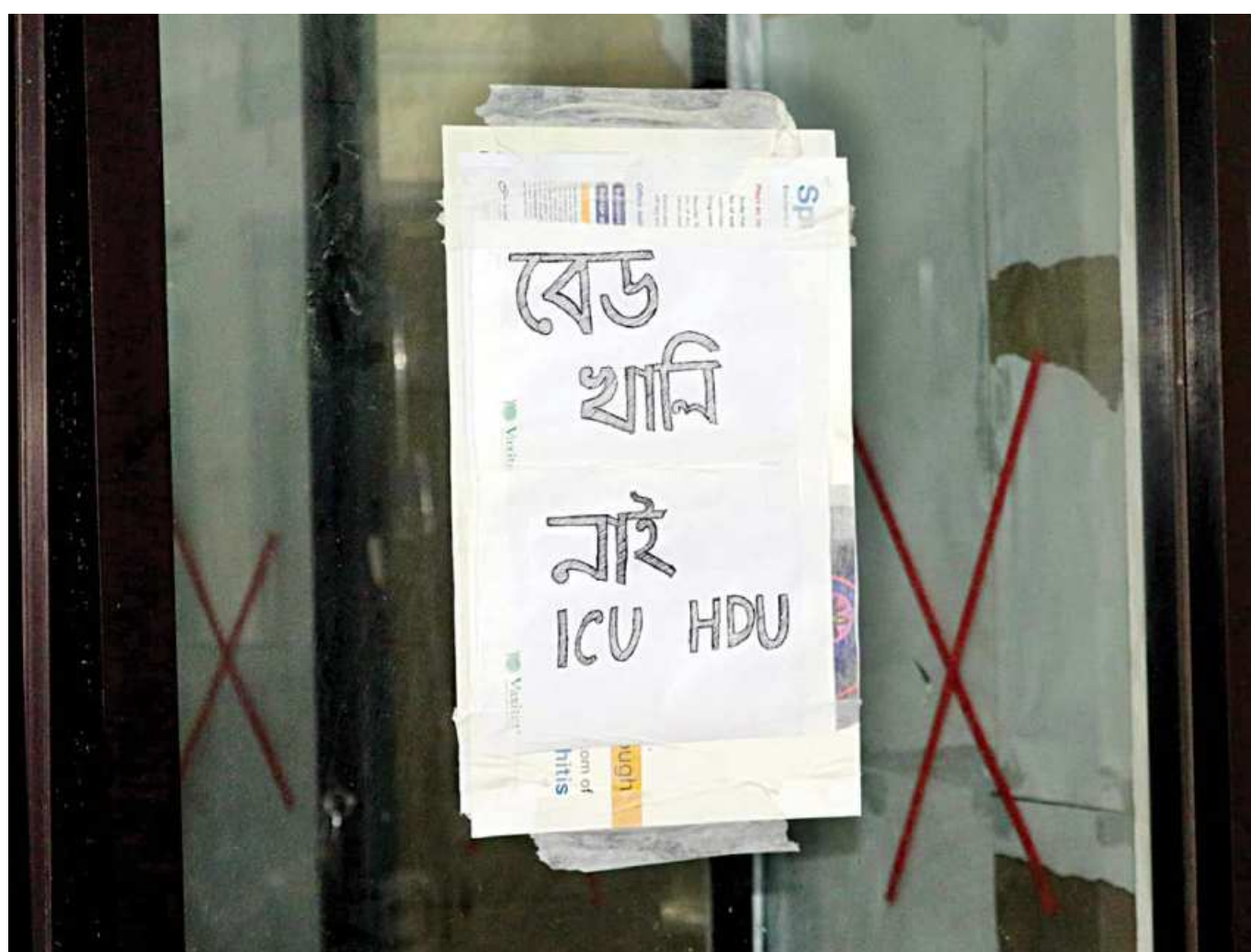
Even yesterday, 68 of the 81 Covid deaths recorded were not in Dhaka division, according to the DGHS.

The NTAC in a press release yesterday said, "No matter what preparations are being made, the healthcare facilities will be insufficient if strict measures are not enforced."

It said a high transmission rate was found in more than 50 districts and that the effectiveness of the stopgap measures to curb transmission was being questioned.

"As the infection has gone out of control, the committee unanimously decided to recommend

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A sign at the entrance to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur says Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and High Dependency Unit (HDU) of the hospital have no beds available. For the last 10 days, the hospital's 50-bed Covid unit has been at full capacity. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

'So much air but not a bit for him'

Wails wife of a patient who died of Covid-19; people jostle for ICU bed in Rajshahi as situation turns alarming there

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Just four years ago, Papia Sultana donated a kidney to save her husband Aman Vardar.

But on Wednesday, when all Aman needed was more oxygen, Papia watched helplessly.

Aman died of Covid-19 at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Her cries of anguish echoed through a hospital already filled with such grief on a day that saw the highest daily deaths -- 18 -- in the RMCH Covid unit. Eight of them were Covid-19 positive.

The unit is dedicated for the treatment of Covid-19 patients and those displaying coronavirus-like symptoms.

"So much air around; I couldn't give him even a bit of it," Papia wailed.

Aman, 35, of Narayanpur village in



Rajshahi's Bagha upazila, was brought to the hospital on June 16 after being diagnosed with Covid-19.

His oxygen saturation level, aided by the hospital's central oxygen supply, was around 93 percent that day.

On the night of June 20, when he started

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Country sees further surge in Covid-19 cases

81 die, 6,058 infected in a day

UNB, Dhaka

Amid growing worries about the coronavirus situation in the country, health authorities logged 6,058 more Covid-19 cases in 24 hours till yesterday morning, up from 5,727 the previous day.

The positivity rate fell slightly to 19.93 percent from Wednesday's 20.27 percent, according to a handout of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Besides, 81 people died of Covid during the 24-hour period, taking the national death toll to 13,868.

The fresh cases pushed up the total caseload to 872,935, the handout added.

However, the mortality rate remained static at 1.59 percent.

A total of 794,783 people, including 3,230 in the 24-hour period, have so far recovered from the virus.

Infections keep rising in different parts of the country as people are defying health protocols amid "lax enforcement" of restrictions despite health experts' repeated warnings about severe consequences.

E-COMMERCE SITES

They'll get payment after delivering items

Decides commerce ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Online shoppers can now make purchases with confidence after a commerce ministry decision yesterday that stipulated holding the payment of local e-commerce platforms until confirmation of safe delivery of items, adding a layer of consumer protection to the transaction.

At present, the merchants' payment is cleared within moments of the customer making the transaction with bank cards or the mobile financial services platform.

Payment will be cleared only after confirmation by the customer, Hafizur Rahman, director-general of the WTO Cell under the commerce ministry, told The Daily Star over the phone.

"If the payment gateways can be controlled effectively, no e-commerce site can cheat or make an unusual delay in delivery of goods as the companies will also need to wait for the payment," he added.

The commerce ministry will send a letter to the Bangladesh Bank on Sunday to work out the logistics of the decision, including how the confirmation of receipt of items would come from the customers.

The development comes after a recent Bangladesh Bank inspection report on the e-commerce juggernaut Evaly that sounded off the alarm bells.

As of March 14, Evaly, which has assets worth Tk 65.2 crore, had delivery pending on goods worth Tk 213.9 crore and owed about Tk 189.9 crore to

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Registration for Covid vaccine likely to start next week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outbound migrant workers' registration for Covid-19 vaccine is expected to begin sometime next week, the expatriates' welfare ministry said yesterday.

"It will be possible to register [for the vaccine] using [the data of] BMET (Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training) registration and passport.

We've got assurance in this regard," Ahmed Munirur Saleheen, secretary to the ministry, told reporters at a cheque hand-over ceremony for migrant workers, who applied for government subsidy to

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Cops reveal identity of rape victim

Court directive bars such disclosure

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Savar police disclosed the identity of a rape victim on their Facebook handle yesterday, violating the law and a court verdict.

The district police on Wednesday arrested three men, accused in the case filed over the rape, and posted about it on Facebook.

In the Facebook post, they uploaded the photos of the accused and mentioned all the personal details of the 16-year-old victim.

The Daily Star has obtained a screenshot of the post.

Contacted, Kazi Mainul Islam, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station, said the identity of the rape victim was disclosed "unfortunately".

The post, however, was later edited and the victim's details were removed from it.

Neither police nor anyone else can disclose a rape victim's details in the

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Shrubs and bushes are growing in and around railway carriages left at a workshop of Bangladesh Railway in the capital's Kamalapur area. These carriages were taken there for repairs but they have been left in the open without care. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

34pc families faced job loss in pandemic

Finds NYU-BRAC-UN Women survey on 6,370 households in April-October 2020

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Between April and October last year amid the pandemic, around 34 percent of households surveyed had a family member who became unemployed, finds a new study by New York University, Brac and UN Women Bangladesh.

They conducted the survey on 6,370 households last December across 21 districts, specifically chosen for being migration-prone.

Around 77 percent of the families saw their monthly earnings go down.

The research findings were unveiled at a virtual international dialogue titled "Demographic and socio-economic changes induced by the Covid-19 pandemic: Challenges of new circumstances" yesterday.

The study found that households with returnee migrants saw a higher rate of unemployment -- 61 percent. Of these families with returnee migrants, 25 percent expressed concern about repaying their outstanding migration loans, which amounted to Tk 76,000 on average, but can go up to Tk 7 lakh.

Household debt in migrant households increased by 82.4 percent, found the researchers. In addition, households with migrant workers had a larger fall in income when compared to households without migrants.

In spite of this, households with returnee migrants saw a birth rate of 33.4 per thousand population, which is nearly double that of the national birth rate.

"Additionally, the average family size was found to be

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BANGLADESH UPDATE



6,058
New cases in 24hrs



8,72,935
Total cases



13,868
Deaths



7,98,783
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



9,909,746
Deaths



180,497,828
Total cases

BOAT CAPSIZE IN CARIBBEAN SEA

5 Bangladeshis rescued

Five more still missing

EZAZ MAHMUD

Five Bangladeshi migrants were rescued after a boat sank in the Caribbean Sea near Puerto Escondido of Colombia.

Five others have been missing since the incident, several Bangladeshis in Colombia told The Daily Star yesterday.

They said the boat carrying 18 people -- 10 Bangladeshis and eight Nepalese -- started from Colombia's Necoci and was heading towards Capurgana through the Gulf of Urabá, the southern Caribbean coast.

The boat sank after being hit by a storm. Later, on June 22 night, a group of fishermen and coastguard members rescued four Bangladeshis near Puerto Escondido.

The next day, another Bangladeshi managed to swim to the shore in the same area, said the Bangladeshi migrants in Colombia.

The coastguard was continuing the rescue operation to trace the missing victims, local media reported.

Of the five rescued, the identities of three were confirmed. They are Sahab Uddin and Omar Faruk of Amishapara of Noakhali's Sonaimuri upazila and Saidur Rahman of Sylhet.

The missing Bangladeshis are Soyeb, Badrul and Rony of Sylhet, Faysal Ahmed of Kashimpur of Noakhali's Begumganj upazila and Sheikh Didar of Amishapara.

The rescued Bangladeshis were in the custody of the Colombian immigration authorities. They are currently in San Jeronimo de Monteria Hospital.

Their condition is stated to be critical as they were in extreme heat and suffered from malnutrition, the local authorities said, adding that one of them was in a very critical state.

"They were trapped for several hours at the place where they were found. They all have signs of dehydration and one of them is in a critical condition," said the Puerto Escondido mayor.

"It was confirmed by an interpreter that these migrants were of Asian descent, more precisely Bangladeshis, who had left Necoci for Panama," said Rocco Manuel Vargas, a representative of the municipality of Puerto Escondido.

Captain Luz Perela Gonzalvez Silva, commander of the Coast Guard station, told the local media that the rescued migrants said their boat had sunk after a crash. However, the matter has not yet been confirmed because their statements about what happened was not very clear.

"The rescued migrants did not have passports or any documents, which made it difficult to learn their full identities," he said.

Nur Islam, elder brother of Sheikh Didar, one of the missing Bangladeshis, told The Daily Star that his brother had left the country a year ago. For a long time, he worked in Suriname, a small country on the Atlantic coast. Didar had arrived in Colombia via Brazil a few days ago. The family last talked with him on Sunday when they came to know that Didar would leave for Panama the next day.

The final destination of this migration route in the Urabá Antioquia region is the United States through the Darien jungle in Panama.

Every year, several thousand migrants, including Bangladeshis, enter the United States through this route.

Some 17,668 people entered the United States through this route in 2019 and some 3,887 in 2020, according to statistics of United Nations (UN).

Ezaz Mahmud is a freelance journalist.



SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, the new chief of army staff, being adorned with the general rank badge by the chief of naval staff and the chief of air staff, in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

SM Shafiuddin takes charge as army chief

BSS, Dhaka

General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed took the charge as the newly appointed Chief of Army Staff yesterday, said an ISPR press release.

Earlier in the day, Shafiuddin was adorned with the new rank badge of General in the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Shaheen Iqbal and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan adorned the army chief with the rank badge of General.

PM's Assistant Press Secretary MM Emrul Kayas confirmed the BSS of the matter.

After the ceremony, he said the premier congratulated the new army chief by presenting a bouquet and wished his success.

The army chief also greeted the PM by presenting a bouquet and sought her blessing.

PM's Security Affairs Adviser Major General (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lieutenant General Waker-Uz-Zaman, PM's Office Secretary Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah, Director General of Special Security Force Major General Md Majibur Rahman and PM's Military Secretary Major General Naquib Ahmed Chowdhury, among others, were present.

General Shafiuddin, who replaced former army chief General Aziz Ahmed, has been appointed to this position for the next three years.

EU must seek 'direct contact' with Putin: Merkel

AFP, Berlin

The European Union should seek direct talks with President Vladimir Putin even as it stands together against "provocations" from Russia, said Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel yesterday.

"In my opinion, we as the European Union must also seek direct contact with Russia and the Russian president," she told parliament.

"It is not enough for the American president to talk to the Russian president," she said, stressing that the European Union too "must also create different formats for talks".

Putin and US President Joe Biden held face-to-face talks last week, in a meeting that both said could lead to a more predictable, albeit still tense, relationship.

34pc families

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with 4.7 members, which is higher than the pre-pandemic national average of 4.06 [according to 2016 data], according to the study findings.

The households tried to cope with these shocks by eating through their savings and taking loans, and on average families experienced a 62 percent decrease in the average monthly savings and a 31 percent increase in debt.

"The international returnee migrants aged 35 and above are 44 percent -- qualitative data suggest they have lesser chance to go back due to age related risk aversion and other factors," said the study.

KAM Morshed, senior director of Brac, presented the research findings. The study also found that there was a higher incidence of child marriage during the pandemic.

Of the marriages that occurred during the survey period, more than three-fourths of the brides were below 18 years and 61 percent were below 16 years at the time of their marriage.

Shoko Ishikawa, country representative, UN Women Bangladesh, said Bangladesh is one of those countries where schools remain closed for over one and a half years although digital learning opportunities for children are quite inadequate particularly in the rural areas.

"Long period of shutdown of schools has implications on child marriage at an increasing rate and economic challenge is forcing families to get their girl children married off. We need to make sure that social protection measures and social safety nets are reaching the families so that they do not need to resort to such measures," added Ishikawa.

Columbia University Professor Daniel Naujoks said, "Our economic and social systems are strained and often broken down being exposed to many vulnerabilities. To address these challenges, we need political momentum to really revolutionise the system and find strong large-scale reforms."

Leah Zamore, humanitarian crises programme lead at the Center on International Cooperation of New York University, moderated the dialogue.

'Total shutdown' anytime

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enforcement of complete shutdown for 14 days across the country to save lives," said the press release signed by Prof Mohammad Sahidullah, chief of the NTAC.

Asked what they meant by shutdown, Prof Sahidullah said, "It means stay home. Everything will be closed except for emergency services."

He said the committee emphasised on staying at home without using the word "lockdown" as the word had lost the significance required to help curb transmission.

"We may have some difficulties for two weeks, but it will save lives and livelihoods," Prof Sahidullah.

State Minister for Public Administrations Farhad Hossain told the media yesterday that he thought the recommendations made by the experts were logical and that the government was prepared to implement it. He also claimed that an announcement could be made any time.

Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director at the DGHS, said had the government enforced strict lockdown in the border districts before it spread across the country, the situation could have been

different.

"Delta variant has now spread across the country and that's why the infection rate is high. If we fail to take strict action now then the coming days will be hard," he said.

Between June 1 and yesterday, 948 people died from Covid in seven divisions and during the same time 260 people died in Dhaka division, according to the data of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

On an average, 50 people died of Covid-19 every day so far this month, the second highest average after 80 deaths a day in April.

Rajshahi and Khulna divisions, which have long borders with India, are the hardest hit now. Khulna recorded 295 deaths and Rajshahi 245 this month.

In the previous 14 months since the first cases of Covid were reported, the death toll in Rajshahi was 691 and in Khulna 792.

Yesterday, Chuadanga, a district in Khulna division with a border with India, reported a 100 percent positivity rate as all 41 people tested turned out positive for Covid-19.

The World Health Organization in its weekly situation report has

highlighted the deteriorating Covid-19 situation in all districts under Khulna division.

The report, released on Tuesday, said the districts in the division were in the very high risk zone. It also put 40 districts of the country in the same zone.

An area with an infection rate of 30 percent or above is considered as a very high risk zone.

According to the WHO, six out of eight districts in Rajshahi division were in a very high risk zone, and the remaining two were in a high risk zone.

Six districts in Chattogram were in a very high risk zone, three in high risk, and one district in medium risk.

Two other districts, including Dhaka, were in a high risk zone.

Experts blamed the Delta variant and people's nonchalance towards health safety guidelines for the surge.

Since late last month, the Delta variant gradually spread across the country, they said.

As of yesterday, a total of 8,72,935 people tested positive for coronavirus and 13,868 died with Covid-19, according to DGHS.

'So much air but not a bit for him'

FROM PAGE 1

experiencing breathing problems, doctors advised ventilator support at the intensive care unit (ICU).

But there were at least 75 other patients ahead of him in line for a bed at the 20-bed ICU, which was full of critical patients.

On the night of June 22, when Aman's condition deteriorated critically, he was shifted to a recently vacated ICU bed.

Aman could never regain the desired oxygen saturation level and he breathed his last at 11:00am the following day.

"He spent three sleepless days and nights till his death, trying to gasp air at every moment," Papi narrated in a tear-choked voice.

"He was telling us repeatedly that he would feel good if only he was shifted to the ICU. But getting an ICU bed was nearly impossible at that time," she said.

Aman's death, after waiting for days for an ICU bed even as his oxygen levels plummeted, is not an isolated case at the RMCH.

Hosne Ara, 61, a Covid-19 patient, was waiting for an ICU bed with her oxygen saturation level at 70 percent while Muktara Begum, 50, with 60 percent and Sohrabi Ali, 60, with 65 percent.

Both of them died.

Hospital staffers said the oxygen saturation level of these patients could not be increased even after providing them with oxygen using high flow nasal cannulas at a rate of 60 litres per minute.

Rajshahi division has a total 100 nasal cannulas, 65 of them at RMCH.

RMCH Director Brig Gen Shamim Yazdani said doctors usually prescribe ICU beds for patients when their oxygen saturation level dips below 86 percent, but it has become impossible for ICU managers to cope with patients with saturation levels below 70 percent.

"Our main focus now is to provide oxygen to those who can survive with the support. We have to lose hope for others," he said.

Although the hospital authorities have been raising the number of beds and oxygen supply capacity almost daily for its Covid-19 unit, they are unable to increase the capacity of its ICU.

"We can't increase the ICU capacity easily as that would require physically expanding the facility and allocation of ventilators," RMCH Director Yazdani told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Even if we are given ventilators and beds, we would need more than a few months to develop the infrastructure," he said.

The 10-bed ICU was turned into a 20-bed one after the pandemic began last year.

As the number of patients spiked in June, the full 20-bed ICU unit was dedicated for treating Covid patients.

"The demand for ICU beds doubled during June," the hospital director said.

In early June, the number of patients waiting for an ICU bed was around 30 and the number is currently around 70, he said.

"Even the BSMMU has no more than a 20-bed ICU unit," he said.

They had proposed a separate 20-bed ICU for a separate Covid-dedicated hospital in Rajshahi, he said.

The new hospital is going to be housed in the two-storey building of Rajshahi Sadar Hospital, which had housed the RMCH's dental unit for the last 20 years.

Once the proposal is approved, the hospital with a central oxygen supply would take at least two months to become ready for service, he said.

More than 50 new patients are admitted every day and the 357-bed Covid unit was treating 404 patients yesterday, according to RMCH data.

Health professionals say the situation has worsened as the community transmission increased, while a large number of households in various parts of Rajshahi city are reporting Covid-19 cases.

Authorities of Rajshahi City Corporation and Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, who offer free supply of oxygen cylinders, told The Daily Star that they were receiving calls from almost every area of the city.

The month of June has so far seen a record number of deaths at the RMCH's Covid unit, with at least 273 people -- 141 of them Covid-19 positive -- having died in the first 24 days of the month.

The previous monthly deaths' record was 124 in May.

The hospital authorities have installed a second oxygen vaporiser at its oxygen plant on Wednesday to increase oxygen pressure in its 11 Covid-19 wards.

In addition to its central oxygen supply, the hospital is supporting the patients with 183 oxygen concentrators and 725 oxygen cylinders.

The authorities is likely to install

Asean nations should tighten screws on Myanmar military

Experts at ANN webinar suggest Asean engage with National Unity Government to ease crisis

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Asean members, collectively or otherwise, should tighten the screws on Myanmar's military by engaging with the National Unity Government (NUG) before geopolitical manoeuvres by superpowers further complicate the crisis, experts said.

The recommendation comes at a time when Myanmar is going facing a crisis since the February 1 coup.

Myanmar has since then seen almost 900 people killed, including 70 children, while 6,200 civilians were detained as political prisoners.

Many fear a civil war brewing as the People's Defense Force, the armed wing of the NUG -- a shadow government -- is gaining strength in Myanmar. The Myanmar junta, meanwhile, is also on the hard line.

The UN General Assembly last Friday adopted a resolution condemning the military coup, calling for preventing the flow of arms into Myanmar and returning democracy in the country.

Of the 156 member states, 119, or 76 per cent, voted in favour of the resolution; 36 abstained and one voted against.

Of the Asean members, six voted in favour, while Brunei, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos abstained.

Asean Chair Brunei failed to convince the junta to implement the five-point consensus approved by Asean leaders back in April to end the violence.

"Last Friday was important for many reasons. It made clear who is who," said Laetitia van den Assum, former member of the Kofi Annan Commission on Rakhine, while addressing a webinar titled "Myanmar: Hope fades, fear mounts" organised on Wednesday by the Asia News Network (ANN), an alliance of 23 media houses of Asia.

The webinar was moderated by ANN Executive Editor Pana Janviraj.

Dr Marty Natalegawa, former Indonesian foreign minister, said nothing would make the State Administration Council (SAC), set up by the junta to run Myanmar, "more disturbed and it would serve as a greater wake-up call for the

Asean to publicly reach out to the NUG".

He voiced support for the NUG's inclusive approach towards civil societies and ethnic groups, and its ambitious attempt at state and peace building, while being in hiding and on the run.

"It is a good ground for the NUG to build on. The Asean can go about engaging them and hearing their opinions, and helping them make it work."

However, he said a division within Asean is extremely damaging because it raises questions about the whole Asean project and its reliability and commitment. This will only benefit the Tatmadaw, and they should not be allowed to reap the benefit from Asean's inaction.

Marty added that the longer Asean delays, global geopolitical manoeuvring involving the US, Russia, China, France and others would be replicated in the region.

"We will become part and parcel of geopolitics that we can't control."

Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar, former Malaysian foreign and defence minister, said the Asean must force itself to play an effective role as agreed at the leaders' meeting in Jakarta. It must not wait for the approval of the Tatmadaw.

"When I looked at the NUG, I was excited -- more inclusive, more open, more willing to discuss..." he said referring to NUG's announcement of equal rights for all, including the Rohingyas, in the constitution.

Kobsak Chutikul, former Thai ambassador, described the Asean as "fractured and disunited", and said they "would not be able to deliver changes or reverse the situation in Myanmar".

Given the humanitarian urgency, he suggested other channels, including the appointment of a non-Asean national as an envoy to rally other countries to work in an alliance, to put pressure on the Tatmadaw.

Moe Thuzar, a Myanmar citizen and researcher at ISEAS Singapore, said the people of Myanmar are more determined than ever before to take matters into their own hands with a civil disobedience movement.

Cops reveal identity

FROM PAGE 1

public domain as it is an offence, said experts.

Salma Ali, human rights activist and the president of Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA), said, rape victims' identities cannot be disclosed in any way as it is a punishable offence.

She said, "Police must clearly know this as a law enforcement agency."

"It is also illegal to disclose the identity of the accused, except for incidents where police caught them red-handed."

She further said, "I strongly condemn such irresponsible attitude of the police, and I want to send a notice in this regard."

Prof Rasheda Akhtar of Jahangirnagar University's Department of Anthropology said police cannot disclose rape victims' identities on a Facebook post.

Prof Rasheda, who is also the head of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Cell at JU,

also said, "It is an offence. If the police do it, they have violated the law."

According to the Facebook post, one Tarek Rahman, 21, Rabbi, 20, and Omir Hassan, 22, were arrested on Wednesday night after the mother of the victim filed a case with Savar Model Police Station in this regard.

According to the case statement, the victim has been working at a garment factory in Savar for the last three months. Tarek and Rabbi are her coworkers.

On June 22, Tarek and Rabbi forcefully took the victim to Tarek's rented room while she was returning from work. Tarek, Rabbi and Omir raped her there and before letting her go, threatened to kill her if she told anyone about the incident.

Later, the victim told her family about the incident after which the mother filed the case.

The victim was sent to the One-Stop Crisis Centre of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment and medical examination, the OC said.

KANCHPUR-GHATARCHAR ROUTE Pilot run pushed back to September

Says DSCC mayor; 155 buses were slated to run from April 1 under one company in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Originally scheduled for an April 1 launch, the proposed pilot to run buses under a single company on the Kanchpur Bridge-Ghatarchar route has been pushed back to September 7, said Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday.

The mayor, also chief of the Bus Route Rationalisation (BRR) committee -- formed to bring discipline to the capital's chaotic bus operations -- made the announcement after the 17th meeting of the committee held at the Nagar Bhaban.

Earlier, for the pilot, 155 buses were slated to run from April 1. The mayor said the launching date had to be pushed back due to delays caused by the coronavirus situation.

He said he and DNCC mayor Atiqul Islam has already visited Ghatarchar and selected 12 bighas of land to set up a bus depot.

Taposh said they have also taken an initiative to construct a bus-bay and passenger shed in the route.

He said they have already finalised the draft for the contract with the owners who will run the buses and prepared a guideline in this regard. The mayor said they will make the contract on July 29.

The mayor said they have another initiative to construct four bus terminals. The terminals will be constructed

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Droves of people, who had just entered Dhaka, were seen walking on the footpaths of the capital's Gabtoli yesterday. With lockdown in place in seven districts, Dhaka-going vehicles were stopped at Savar's Aminbazar area, forcing many to reach the city on foot.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Lawyer arrested for 'bail forgery'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lawyer of Dhaka judges court named Raju Ahmed Rajib has been arrested on Wednesday for allegedly making "fake anticipatory bail order" in a violence and narcotics case filed in Bogura.

The state provided the information to the HC bench of Justice Md Abu Zafar Siddique and Justice KM Hafizul Alam during hearing a suomuto (voluntary) rule.

The bench observed that if the gang of frauds involved in bail forgery cannot be caught what is the necessity of judges and lawyers.

"The frauds are making fake verdicts and orders with seals. But why are they not being nabbed? They must be brought to the book of law", the bench said.

Deputy Attorney General Samira Tarannum Rabeya told The Daily Star on Wednesday night that a resident from Bogura requested a senior Supreme Court lawyer in February

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RAMNA BATAMUL BLAST CASE

20 years in condemned cell!

Death row convict's lawyer requests to move him to normal cell, as HC again adjourns hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A death-row convict in Ramna Batamul bomb blasts case, which killed ten people at Pahela Baishakh celebrations in 2001, has been in a condemned cell for the last 20 years.

The case has been included in the High Court's hearing lists 375 times since 2014, but the benches concerned adjourned the hearing each time following the state's adjournment prayers, said Mohammad Shishir Manir, a defence lawyer for the convict, Moulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin.

Yesterday, Manir prayed to the HC to grant bail to his client or to order the jail authorities to shift him to a normal cell after the HC once again adjourned till October 24 the hearing on the death reference and appeals in the case.

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The HC bench led by Justice Krishna Debnath and ASM Abdul Mobin asked lawyer Manir to submit a written application in this regard to this court.

Contacted, Manir told The Daily Star that he will submit the application to the HC next week.

There is no evidence and documents to prove charges brought against the convicted accused of the case, he said, adding that the trial court has delivered an "emotional verdict" in the case.

"My client has been suffering in a condemned cell for around 20 years although there is no evidence against him," he added.

Meanwhile, the HC bench passed the adjournment order after Deputy Attorney General Shahin Ahmed Khan sought time for hearing the matter.

BRIBERY CASE

Suspended ACC director Basir denied bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected a bail petition filed by the suspended director of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Khandaker Enamul Basir, in a case over transaction of Tk 40 lakh as bribe.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice SM Mozibur Rahman passed the order, claiming that the petition was not presented properly before it.

The bench, however, ordered the lower court concerned to finish the case's trial proceedings under relevant laws, Enamul's lawyer Zahidul Alam told The Daily Star.

He said the trial court is supposed to dispose of the case against his client in 360 days from the date of accepting it for trial.

Zahidul Alam said Enamul's lawyers requested the HC to reject the petition as the HC was reluctant to grant him bail in the case at this stage.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Bangladesh to get fair share of vaccines

Says Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (Democrat-Texas) has assured of a fair share of Covid-19 vaccines for Bangladesh during a meeting with Bangladesh Ambassador to the US M Shahidul Islam at her office in Houston.

The congresswoman promised her help in response to the ambassador's request for her support to Bangladesh's Covid-19 vaccine needs.

"She mentioned Bangladesh as an important ally of the US and that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'We need support to produce vaccine'

Says foreign minister

UNB, Dhaka

Countries like Bangladesh that have the capability to produce vaccines should be allowed and supported in producing those, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has said.

He made the proposal while delivering his speech at the Asia Pacific high-level conference on Belt and Road Cooperation on "Promoting Cooperation on Combating the Pandemic for Sustainable Recovery" held virtually on Wednesday night.

Wang Yi, state councillor and foreign minister of China, chaired the meeting.

Momen said Bangladesh achieved success in managing the first wave of coronavirus. "However, we are facing difficulty in the second wave due to shortage of vaccines," he said.

Despite all good intentions, their actions will go in vain if the availability, access, and distribution of necessary finance are not in place for recovery from this crisis, Momen said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Project for climate-vulnerable people extended by 2yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government and development partners decided to extend the Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) project for two more year at a virtual meeting yesterday for delivering adaptation benefits to the most vulnerable coastal people of Bangladesh.

The project, led by Local Government Division of Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives, is a joint initiative of the Bangladesh government, the European Union (EU), Sweden, UNCDF and UNDP.

The project was initiated in 2016 to deliver climate finance to the most vulnerable households and local government institutions in 72 unions of Khulna, Sunamganj, Kurigram, Bagerhat, Barguna, Patuakhali and Bhola districts.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

No headway for a decade in 30yr-old robbery case

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Even though a decade has passed, trial of a case filed over the robbery at Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) 30 years ago has not made any headway.

Only six out of 74 prosecution witnesses have given depositions before court in 10 years after charge framing in the case, according to the prosecution.

Mohsin Bhuiyan, the then Executive Engineer (Parts) of the BADC Central Store, who filed the case in May 1991, passed away on August of 2013 without providing his depositions.

Among the remaining 68 witnesses, one has died, but 67 others have not appeared before court, despite several summons, the prosecution said.

"Of the 67 prosecution witnesses, 22 are police personnel, while 29 others are employees of BADC," said the case documents.

The trial of the case is now pending at the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court-2 of Dhaka.

The court has issued several summons with non-

bailable arrest warrants against the 67 absentee witnesses, but they did not comply with multiple court orders, a staff of the concerned court said.

"The prosecution's responsibility is to inform the court for issuing summons or non-bailable arrest warrants upon the witnesses to appear before it [court] on the schedule date for depositions. But police will take initiatives to find out whereabouts of the witnesses and produce them before the court," SM Zahid Hossain, additional public prosecutor, told The Daily Star.

"If the police fail to do so, there is nothing for the court or prosecution to do," he said, adding, "Trial proceedings are being delayed as the witnesses are nowhere to be found."

The robbery took place on May 16, 1991. Around 2am, some seven to eight robbers tied up the hands, legs, mouth, and eyes of three night-guards inside the central store of BADC in the capital's Tejgaon area and looted various parts then worth Tk 10-15 lakh, according to case documents.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



A cattle trader stops his truck on Chattogram city's Firingi Bazar area yesterday, and climbs to the back of the vehicle presumably to check on the jam-packed livestock. With the Eid-ul-Azha knocking at the door, traders are making the rounds to wholesale markets far and wide across the country and stocking up for the occasion. Noakhali's Samsul Alam was taking his 19 cows, bought all the way from Cox's Bazar, to his home district in anticipation of the coming festival.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Research not on DU's mind

Gets low priority yet again in budget

DU CORRESPONDENT

Despite repeated complaints raised by different sections on Dhaka University's lack of research work, the university's newest budget still paints a bleak picture for the sector.

The Tk 631.79-crore budget for 2021-2022 fiscal was passed in DU senate yesterday with the highest allocation (31.80 percent) for salary and lowest for research (1.32 percent).

The amount allocated for research is Tk 11 crore.

Although the research sector saw a Tk 2 crore increment from last year, senate members have drew attention of the VC while passing the budget, saying it is still insufficient.

The size of this year's budget has also decreased from last year.

DU had prepared a budget of Tk 869.56 crore for 2020-21, which was the largest in the university's history.

MINI BYTES



The future of supermarkets is here, thanks to Alibaba

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

More than 200 Freshippo supermarkets are open in China, operating as ultra-high-tech supermarkets. In these shops, blue polo clad pickers examine shelves with iPhones, scanning barcodes to find the exact brand of oranges, or spice mixes that match online orders. Items are placed in a bag, attached to the automated conveyor system, and whisked up and out to the back of the store to the delivery motorbikes.

All online orders arrive within 30 minutes of a shopper clicking "buy" within a three-kilometre radius. Conveyor belts for shopping bags, personalised food recommendations, and facial recognition payments make for a unique supermarket shopping experience which many term as 'supermarkets on steroids'.

Alibaba, the e-commerce titan, owns and operates all of them as part of its aim to lead the way in what it calls 'New Retail'. And these Freshippo supermarkets may give a roadmap for how supermarkets in the rest of the world may plan their renovation strategies as they recover from the pandemic's crucial blow on businesses.

Alibaba co-founder Jack Ma created

the term 'New Retail' over five years ago. In 2016, the first Freshippo store debuted in Shanghai. Alibaba had 64 outlets in 14 cities by 2018. Only two years after opening that first store, online grocery sales in China had increased to 32.5 per cent, with each Freshippo store receiving "tens of thousands" of orders every day, according to Guo Xulin, chief of staff at Alibaba's Freshippo Business Group. Over 60 per cent of Freshippo sales come from online.

This concept hasn't simply been tested at supermarkets. According to Xulin, there are now hi-tech convenience stores and breakfast pick-up stations scattered all over China that follow the Freshippo model.

However, Alibaba's impact on the supermarket industry is undoubtedly the most significant. As a result, several of its rivals are also following suit in transforming the industry for good. By the end of 2021, rival retailer JD plans to have 49 of its own seven fresh supermarkets operating in China with robotic shopping carts and wristbands that scan products as they are added into the basket.

For both Alibaba and JD, the pandemic has proved to be a major boost and pushed the businesses to rethink innovation, charting a course for others in the way. It seems like China and its unique brand of high-tech supermarkets might finally have some solutions up their sleeves, and for the time being, the future does not look too bad.

Pilot run

FROM PAGE 3

at Hemayetpur, Vaturia, Keraniganj and Kanchpur. Bangladesh Bank will allocate Tk 100 crore loan in this regard, sources said.

After the meeting, DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam said 1,646 buses in Dhaka are now running without route permit, one of the main reasons behind traffic congestion in the city.

The city corporations and BRTA will conduct a joint drive against those buses from July, he said.

The initiative to rationalise the city's bus service was first taken by late mayor Annisul Huq. The plan looked to bring all buses in the capital under a few companies, each to be provided with permits for their respective routes and made responsible for proper public transport management and minimising congestion. However, after his death in late 2017, the project lost momentum.

The issue returned to the fore in 2018 when students demonstrated for safe roads following death of two students in a road accident on July 29.

On September 9 that year, a 10-member committee -- comprising representatives from government bodies, police, transport owners, workers and transportation experts -- was formed, with then DSCC mayor Sayeed Khokon as convener.

However, the project faltered again since the start of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, as the committee failed to hold meetings for around six months.

No headway

FROM PAGE 3

Mohsin Bhuiyan filed a case with Tejaon Police Station accusing some unidentified people. After around 19 and half years' probe, IO Magfurul Wadud, inspector of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police, submitted the charge sheet to Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka against 11 people on October 17, 2010.

Of them, Munjur Rahman Khan, Bipul Chandra Biswas, Khondoker Rofiquzzaman, and Mobarak Hossain were deputy assistant engineers of BADC, while Syed Mosharraf Hossain and Abdur Rahman were also its staffers.

On March 8, 2011, the court framed charges against the eleven accused. Munjur, Shahjahan, Mobarak Bepary, Mobarak Hossain, Mosharraf and Abdur Malek are now on bail, while Bipul, Rofiquzzaman, Ruhul Amin, Abul Hossain, and Abdur Rahman are on the run.

"If the court cannot complete the trial proceedings of a case for want of witnesses' deposition for a long time, it can go for the verdict based on recorded depositions as per provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure," Supreme Court's senior lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said.

"The court can issue non-bailable arrest warrants against the absentee witnesses again and again and sent the letter to the authorities concerned to produce them [witnesses] before it," he added.

20 years

FROM PAGE 3

He told the HC that the state wants to place its arguments in this case in physical presence after ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is over.

On March 14 this year, Deputy Attorney General Shahin Ahmed Khan sought adjournment from the HC bench led by Justice Krishna Debnath for hearing the case, saying that the attorney general will place arguments on the issue.

Earlier, two separate HC benches had refused to hear the same matter for different reasons.

If a lower court sentences any person to death, its judgment is examined by the HC through hearing arguments for confirmation of the death sentence.

The case documents and judgment reach as death references to the HC from the lower court as per the relevant rules of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The HC bench led by Justice M Enayetur Rahim had started hearing the death references and appeals of the Ramna case on January 8, 2017; after hearing for several days, it adjourned the hearing on February 22 the same year.

This bench then dropped the matters from its cause list on August 8, 2017 as state counsel had not officially informed it about the execution of Mufti Hannan.

Subsequently, the chief justice assigned the HC bench led by Justice Md Ruhul Quddus to finish the hearing of the death references and appeals.

But this bench too could not hear the case as its hearing jurisdiction was reconstituted.

THE RAMNA BLASTS

Two bombs went off during Bangla New Year 1408 celebrations on April 14, 2001 organised by Chhayanaut, a leading cultural organisation, at Ramna Batamul in Dhaka. Ten people were killed and dozens injured in the incident.

On June 23, 2014 a Dhaka court handed down the death penalty to eight militants of Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (Hujj), including its top leader Mufti Abdul Hannan, for the killings. Six other militants of the banned Islamist outfit were sentenced to life imprisonment for their involvement in the blasts.

The accused who got capital punishment by the trial court are

Mufti Abdul Hannan, Moulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin, Hafez Jahangir Alam Badar, Moulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Mufti Abdul Hye, and Arif Hasan Suman.

The court awarded life imprisonment to Moulana Abu Taher, Moulana Sabbir alias Abdul Hannan, Moulana Yahya, Moulana Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid, Moulana Abdur Rouf, and Shahadat Ullah alias Jewel.

Nine of the convicted accused are in jail while five -- Tajuddin, younger brother of BNP leader Abdus Salam Pintu, Hafez Jahangir, Moulana Abu Bakar, Mufti Shafiqur, and Mufti Hye -- are absconding.

Mufti Abdul Hannan, one of the country's most notorious militants involved in plotting and carrying out terror attacks by Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh, was executed at Kashimpur High Security Prison on April 13, 2017.

Hannan was executed for carrying out a grenade attack on the then British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet on May 21, 2004.

Project for

FROM PAGE 3

The project is designed to roughly support 4,00,000 of the most climate-vulnerable people under its Performance-based Climate Resilience Grants and Community Resilience Fund schemes.

Attending the event as chief guest, Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives Minister Md Tazul Islam said the project has proven to be a good system to deliver climate finance through local government institutions, and it directly reaches climate-vulnerable people for investment on local adaptation.

Rensje Teerink, ambassador/head of the EU delegation to Bangladesh, highlighted the EU's decade-long support to Bangladesh in combating climate change.

She said, "Through LoGIC, together with Sweden, UNDP, UNCDF, and thanks to the strong ownership of Local Government Division, this mechanism is now being put in place."

The recent addition of approximately EUR 7 million will go in the right direction and bring innovation for climate finance in Bangladesh, she continued.

"We look forward to continuing partnering with local government actors to ensure climate funds go where they are most needed, embracing a long-term perspective," she added.

Christine Johansson -- charg  d'affaires and deputy head of mission of Embassy of Sweden, which is also a partner of the project -- in her speech, said, "Bangladesh is not just a victim of climate change; the country has also become a global leader on adaptation. LoGIC is one example. Sweden is proud to be part of the solutions with the people of Bangladesh."

Van Nguyen, deputy resident representative of UNDP Bangladesh, stressed the importance of a collaborative approach like LoGIC to deal with the greatest threat to mankind, climate change.

She said, "UNDP is committed to transcending the knowledge from LoGIC project across global networks. We hope to continue our global cooperation by working collaboratively with development partners and the government to help attain the LDC graduation and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030."

Among others, Helal Uddin Ahmed, senior secretary to Local Government Division, and Jesmul Hasan, country focal point at UNCDF, also spoke in the virtual event.

Suspended

FROM PAGE 3

Lawyer Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal appeared for Enamul while ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan opposed the bail petition during the virtual hearing.

Enamul, now in jail, filed the petition with the HC on June 2 through his lawyer Zahidul Alam.

Enamul sought bail since he is ailing, suffering in jail for a long time, and the trial proceedings against him are not running now due to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The HC earlier refused to grant bail to Enamul on several occasions considering the gravity of his offense, the lawyer said.

On July 16, 2019, ACC Director Sheikh Md Fanafillah filed the case with the ACC's Dhaka District Integrated Office-1 under the anti-money laundering act on charge of taking Tk 40 lakh as bribe from suspended deputy inspector general of police Mizanur Rahman.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 3

two countries enjoy the best of their relationships," said the Bangladesh Embassy in the US yesterday.

Lee, who is one of the most influential legislators in the US House of Representatives, has also expressed her interest to advance Bangladesh-US cooperation further on wide-ranging areas including trade, commerce, Covid-19 support, and Rohingya repatriation to Myanmar.

She praised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for giving shelter to over one million persecuted Rohingyas in Bangladesh and assured her of continued efforts in the US congress to resolve this humanitarian crisis.

Lee expressed her willingness to help revitalise the Congressional Bangladesh Caucus to promote Bangladesh's interest in the US Congress as well as the administration.

She encouraged more people-to-people contact between Bangladesh and the US, and Texas in particular, and shared her idea about establishing a sister-city relationship between Houston and a city in Bangladesh in this regard.

Lawyer

FROM PAGE 3

this year to inquire whether this HC bench on February 14 had passed any order granting anticipatory bail to 30 accused in the violence and narcotics case of Bogura.

We need

FROM PAGE 3

"Given the scale of threat posed by Covid-19, we need a globally harmonised structure of financial infrastructure," he said.

In his five-point proposal, the minister sought rapid information sharing -- nationally and globally -- through digital means, in a time-sensitive manner; taking globally united and coordinated efforts to combat against the common enemy; stronger and concerted advocacy with the vaccine producing states to strengthen COVAX by WHO; ensuring that no one is left behind; declaring the Covid-19 vaccines a global public good, and implementing its distribution through strong international cooperation.

Although the pandemic has not spared any country from its devastating impacts, the least developed and developing countries are the most affected, he said.

"This is happening while the same groups of countries are already grappling with the adverse ramifications of climate change."

The minister said timely sharing of transparent and correct information at national, regional and global level is of the essence in abating the impacts of Covid-19 crisis.

This calls for fortification of digital infrastructure, both intra and inter-nations, and smooth transmission of critical data, he said.

Such data sharing would help in augmenting country and region-specific information tools for better policy devising.

He said vaccines remain the centrepiece in the effective fight against the pandemic. "Bangladesh believes that vaccines should be declared a global public good."

He said it is encouraging to see countries like China playing important roles for availability of vaccines.

"The COVAX initiative by WHO is highly laudable. Thus, to realise the objectives of such multilateral efforts, we need transitioning to non-linear, big data driven, and prioritised supply chain systems to ensure availability, access, and affordability of vaccines to build back better and stronger socio-economically," he said.

Momen said infrastructure will play a critical role in this regard. "Bangladesh is ready and willing to work with the BRI partners to develop sustainable infrastructures for the benefit of the people in Asia-Pacific."

"At the same time, through our chairmanship of the 48-member Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) and V20, we are going the extra mile in ensuring a climate resilient recovery from this pandemic not only for ourselves but also for the whole membership," he said.

Invitation to Bid for Laboratory Grade Equipment

Tender Ref. No. icddr,b/SCM/OTM/2021/624

Date: 24th June 2021

icddr,b invites renowned equipment manufacturer and authorized agent to participate in a bidding process for supply and installation of two equipment:

- LOT-1: Horizontal front-loading Autoclave for Capacity: 340 - 400 L**
LOT-2: Horizontal front-loading Autoclave for Capacity: 200 - 250 L

Interested participants can download the ITB Documents from the below web address:
<https://www.icddr.org/work-with-us/tender-notices>

Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **04th July, 2021 at 3:00 PM** through Microsoft Teams. Interested bidders should notify icddr,b about their interest of participating in the pre-bid session through email [\[supplychain@icddr.org\]](mailto:supplychain@icddr.org) within **1st July, 2021**. Please mention 'Bid reference' and 'Interested in Pre-bid Participation' in the email subject.

Offers shall submit their Technical & Password protected Financial offers through email to supplychain@icddr.org. Offers must be received no later than **12th July 2021; 3:00 PM**. Please note, bid opening session will not be conducted as a Public Opening. Please see the bid document for details.

icddr,b reserves the right to accept or reject all/part proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. This ITB invitation will also form a part of the contract and will be binding upon the tenderer.



Senior Manager, Procurement
 Email: supplychain@icddr.org

Invitation for ENLISTMENT



Ref No: BCB/Admin/T&PC/376

Date: 25th June, 2021

Sealed applications are invited from bonafide Suppliers/ Manufacturers/ Sole Agents/ Distributors/ Stores/ Whole sellers/ Contractors/ Service Providers operating within the territory of Bangladesh for enlistment with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in the following groups / categories for a period of **03 (Three) years** (To be effective from 1st August 2021).

- Group A : Design, Printing & Artwork.
- Group B : Catering Service.
- Group C : Transport Service.
- Group D : General Suppliers.
- Group E : Automobile Maintenance & Engineering Works.
- Group F : Advertising (Branding) & Event Management.
- Group G : C&F Agents / Freight Forwarder.
- Group H : Sports Goods & Attires.
- Group I : Courier Service (Domestic & International).
- Group J : IT support and Accessories (Computer, IPS, UPS, Printer & Accessories Suppliers).
- Group K : Gifts & Souvenirs (Crest, Trophy, Gift Item etc.).
- Group L : Tailors (Shirts, Trousers, Suits and any formal attire).
- Group M : Repair and maintenance of Grounds & Facilities Equipment.
- Group N : Repair and maintenance works (Civil & Electrical Work).
- Group O : Furniture & Interior Decoration.
- Group P : General Hospitality (Hotel & Accommodation).
- Group Q : Travel Agent (Domestic & International).
- Group R : Advertising Firm for ads in Print, Web & Electronic Media.
- Group S : Automobile Accessories.
- Group T : Security Equipment Service Provider & Supplier (Walkie-Talkie, CCTV, Metal Detector).
- Group U : Suppliers of Coir Mat and Boundary Rope.
- Group V : Pitch Clay / Soil.
- Group W : Home & Office Appliances (Electrical).
- Group X : Medicine and Medical Equipment & Accessories Suppliers.
- Group Y : Cleaning Service.
- Group Z : Security Service.
- Group AA : Health, Life & General Insurance Service.
- Group AB : Audio Visual & Sports TV Production Service (Local).
- Group AC : Repair & Maintenance Service (IT, Electrical Office Appliances, Electronics).

Non-Eligibility :
 i) Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (Surrogated & Non-Surrogated), Betting, Online Betting shall not be eligible to participate in the invitation process.
 ii) Any person(s) or entities / companies with an existing unresolved dispute (i.e. Financial, Disciplinary and any other) with BCB or ICC on a point of law or fact shall also be ineligible to participate in the invitation process.

The following documents must be submitted along with the application :
 a) Updated Trade License, VAT Registration Certificate and TIN Certificate, Income tax return acknowledgement copy.
 b) Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile
 c) Experience/performance certificate along with a list and contact details of existing clients.
 d) Sole Agency / Dealership / Distributorship certificate and price list of products.
 e) Name of the Proprietor / Partner / Managing Director / CEO and the Key Person with Business Address, Telephone / Fax number / E-mail.
 f) Bank Solvency Certificate along with bank Statement.
 g) Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation and Schedule-X.
 h) In case of Consortium Notarized consortium Agreement.
 i) Updated financial audit report (in case of consortium each members' financial audit report needs to be submitted individually)

Other Information :
 Schedule for enlistment can be purchased from Tender & Purchase Department, BCB upon cash payment of BDT 2,000/- (Taka Two Thousand only) to the Finance & Accounts Department of BCB Management Office, Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur, Dhaka during Saturday to Thursday between 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM on or before **25th July, 2021**.

The application for enlistment will be evaluated by the concerned committee and short listed suppliers will be called for an initial interview for further queries. Qualified suppliers then need to deposit a refundable amount as decided by the concerned committee in the form of a "Pay-Order" in favour of "Bangladesh Cricket Board".

Duly filled up Application Form for enlistment along with all supporting documents must be submitted in the designated drop box located at the BCB Reception (1st Floor of Management Office, SBNCs, Mirpur, Dhaka) by 2:00 PM on or before **26th July 2021**.

The BCB reserves the right to cancel or make any changes in the terms to the entire process at any stage and to accept or reject any application for enlistment at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

হিন্দু পাত্রী চাই

সুইডেনে বসবাসরত এবং Scania CV AB- তে চাকুরীরত মেকানিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ার এবং Industrial Economy তে মাস্টার্স করা পাঠের (৩৫-৫-৭) জন্য সুইডেনে স্থায়ীভাবে বসবাস করতে ইচ্ছুক ডাক্তার (এমবিএস)/IT Engr. পাত্রী চাই। যোগাযোগ-
ksanjibaha@gmail.com

জমি বিক্রয়

ঢাকার উত্তরখান মৌজা গোবিন্দপুরে একেবারে মেইনরোড সংলগ্ন একটি স্বনামধন্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের মালিকানাধীন, নিষ্কল্টক, বামেলাবিহীন ১৯৮০ শতাংশ জমি বিক্রয় হবে।
 যোগাযোগ: ০১৭০৯-৩৫৫২৬৫

রেডি অফিস স্পেস বিক্রয়

ঢাকার গ্রাইম লোকেশনে পাঁচদপার ডি.আই.পি রেড উদ্যোগের লগিস্টিক হেডকোয়ার্টার দায়ী অফিস সার্ভিসার ও নিজস্ব লিফট সহ ৪৭০০ বর্গফুটের দক্ষিণমুখী রেডি অফিস স্পেস বিক্রয় হবে।
 যোগাযোগ: ০১৮০৬-০৫৫১৭৭, ০১৮৭৭-৭২৩০০০

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CAREER OPPORTUNITY



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- Process of structured and unstructured data, cleansing data, and verifying the integrity of data to be used for analysis
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- Develop credit scorecards, testing & monitoring frameworks and overseeing the deployment of scorecards
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- Proficient in Linear & Logistic Regression, Decision Trees, Random Forests, Gradient Boosting, SVM, Neural Networks, k-NN, Naive Bayes etc.
- Strong analytical and problem solving skills
- Expert in customer centricity, results oriented and self-propelled
- Ability to work in a team, capability to meet deadlines and keen to develop others

Only short-listed candidates will be invited for the interview as per the recruitment process. BRAC Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason whatsoever.

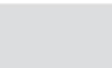
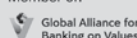
If you are interested to take this challenge, please 'Apply Online' at www.bdjobs.com and send your résumé with a recent passport size photograph along with your NID number (mandatory).

BRAC Bank does not charge any fee at any stage of the recruitment process. Please note that BRAC Bank is an equal employment organization. Any form of persuasion will disqualify the candidature.

FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Application Deadline: July 10, 2021

Member of:





The miners of BCMCL in Dinajpur's Parbatipur upazila have been living a life of prisoners since the outbreak of coronavirus in the country. They are not allowed to go home and have been living in the company premises. In this photo, the families are seen giving food items to the miners at the company entrance.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

BCMCL miners living like prisoners

Claim their families, gather at gate to see their loved ones

KONGKON KARMAKER

Since the coronavirus pandemic hit the country in March last year, the officials, staffers and miners of Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited (BCMCL) have been virtually leading a confined life inside company premises to prevent the spread of the highly transmissible contagious viral infection in the mining complex.

The mine is situated in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur, a subsidiary of the state-owned Petrobangla.

According to the company's high officials, around 1,000 employees, including officials and staffers of BCMCL, Chinese and Bangladeshi miners of the contracted company CMC-XMC, have been staying at the mine compound since the authority restricted movement on March 24 last year.

Most of the officials are staying with their family members at the residential quarters inside. There is a separate residential quarter for the Chinese miners as well. But, the 450 local miners have been leading an isolated life without their family members, just like prisoners.

The situation is similar for the officials under the outsourcing company.

The miners talked with The Daily Star wishing not to be named.

The miners alleged that CMC-XMC, the contracted company of BCMCL, does not allow the local miners to go home although they are from surrounded villages of the coal mine.

Every day, family members gather at the mine gate to see their near and dear ones, if the Chinese contracted company allow the miners to meet, far away from the padlocked entrance.

Anjuara, a miner's wife, said she came to the mine gate with her two minor children to see her husband at around 10.00am. After waiting for two hours, she was finally able to see him. The miner said he has been staying inside with other miners for the last seven months. He works around 10 hours under the ground every day. The miners cook meal for them individually.

There are no sufficient number of fans for cooling during the scorching heat.

Anjuara said she comes to the coalmine gate once a month to

take the money from her husband to manage family expenses.

"I brought some cooked meal for him", she said, sobbing. Before the onset of the viral pandemic, he used to commute to the coalmine from home every day, but he has been staying there since the detection Covid-19 cases in the country last year.

"It is hard to manage a family without a male person", said Anjuara adding that she has been doing everything being a woman to manage her family.

Rafiza Begum, another miner's wife, said the isolation of the miners inside the coalmine compound for months after months is nothing but torture and violation of human rights. She claimed that GTC, the contracted company of Maddhapara granite mining company, allows the local miners to go home after their everyday work. "Why are they so harsh?" she questioned.

She also brought some cooked food with her. Rafiza alleged that her husband needs to cook a meal every day.

During the visit, this correspondent found that family members of 20 miners gathered in

front of the coalmine's gate to meet with their near and dear ones.

A miner seeking anonymity alleged that the officials and Chinese miners often go out of the coalmine compound every day if they needed. But, none of the local miners is allowed to go outside the compound.

"They are so hard on us", he said.

As there is no scope for the miners to go outside the coalmine, they buy their essentials from the mine gate, which is much expensive.

"We want a solution to the problem", said a miner.

Despite maintaining such tough lockdown, the authority could not be able to stay away from coronavirus infection. Recently, a Chinese miner tested positive.

Besides, there are at least 30 officials and staffers inside the coalmine suffering from fever. So, the coalmine authority has decided to conduct a test for them to be sure whether they test covid-19 positive or not.

The Daily star tried to reach Md Kamruzzaman Khan, the managing director, for his comment, however, he did not receive the phone call.

They deliver hope on bike

Chulkathi Oxygen Bank stands beside serious Covid patients

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Time and again, the youths rose to the occasion when the country needed them the most. This time around, when the Coronavirus pandemic has been sweeping through the bordering districts, eight youths from Chulkathi area of Bagerhat Sadar upazila have come to the rescue of affected locals.

On May 1, they launched a 24-hour service named 'Chulkathi Oxygen Bank' to stand by critical Covid patients who cannot afford to buy oxygen-filled cylinders due to its skyrocketing prices.

Soon after getting a distress call on their hotline (01711309483) or a message on their Facebook page, two of their volunteers hop on a motorbike with an oxygen cylinder and rush out to the home of the patient.

Aside from providing the free service to patients in Bagerhat Sadar, the volunteers so far served patients in Morrelganj, Fakirhat and Mongla upazilas in Bagerhat, and Rupsa upazila in neighbouring district of Khulna.

Out of the eight volunteers, Shakib Hasan Johnny, Kazi Rezwana and Choyon Debnath already contracted Covid-19. But the disease could not deter them from their will to serve the less fortunate and they resumed their voluntary work soon after they tested negative.

Arif Dhali, one of the founders of the oxygen bank, said several of his friends decided to provide free oxygen support to Covid patients as finding affordable oxygen supply was getting difficult due to its rising

demands.

They first got training from doctors on how to handle oxygen cylinders and necessary apparatus and gathered Tk 34 thousand to buy two sets of oxygen dispensing units along with cylinders.

With the third set of cylinder they received a from a well-wisher recently, they have been working day and night to save every possible human life, Arif said, adding that they refill the three cylinders at a time, for Tk 150 each, from Khulna and they pay Tk 1,000 for the round trip transport of the cylinders.

Covid survivor Shakil, an employee of Local Government Engineering Department in Rampal upazila, said he was thankful to the Creator for sending the volunteers of Chulkathi Oxygen Bank with the crucial oxygen support that saved his life.

Lalima Ahsan, a relative of Covid patient Shipon, from Morrelganj upazila, said they called Chulkathi Oxygen Bank when Shipon was in dire need of oxygen.

"We are grateful to Chulkathi Oxygen Bank" and its volunteers for promptly delivering the oxygen, which ultimately saved his life, she also said.

Jakaria Hossain Shawan, another of the founders and the coordinator of the oxygen bank, said thanks to the courage displayed by their volunteers and the contributions made by a few kind-hearted souls, they have so far been able to continue the invaluable service for people in the region.

If more people from the affluent section of the society joined their cause, they would be able to reach out to a larger number of critical patients, he added.



Two volunteers of Chulkathi Oxygen Bank, located in Bagerhat Sadar upazila, headed for the home of a Covid patient to deliver an oxygen cylinder.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

LUHAIUNI TEA GARDEN

Stalemate continues over firing of tea worker

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

For the third consecutive day, the workers of Luhaiuni Tea Garden, in Kulara upazila of Moulvibazar, staged demonstrations on Thursday, to press home their 11-point demands that include job reinstatement of a fellow worker. The tea workers have been holding agitations as the authorities closed the garden indefinitely since Wednesday morning.

Worker Shyamal Pachi said on May 20, without issuing any prior notice or warning, Assistant Manager Nazrul and Gatekeeper Sadhu cut down a tree that he had planted inside the garden. Referring to Section 26 (Ka) of the Bangladesh Labour Act, they terminated his job on May 22, as he protested their chopping down his tree the other day, he claimed.

Under Section 26 (Ka), job of any worker can be terminated without showing any reason.

The job termination of Shyamal Pachi on May 22 sparked a workers' unrest at the garden and the workers have been gathering there to press home their 11-point demands that include reinstatement of his job.

Ajit Kairi, president of the tea garden Panchayat committee, said on June 22 morning, when the workers took position in front of the



A section of tea workers during a demonstration at Luhaiuni Tea Garden in Kulara upazila of Moulvibazar yesterday.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

garden office and threatened to call a strike, the authorities called police in and declared indefinite work suspension.

That same day, a 13-member delegation led by Satya Narayan, a member of the local union parishad, met Mabud Ali, the garden's general manager.

But while talking to reporters, Mabud claimed

that Shyamal Pachi tried to attack the garden's assistant manager with a sharp weapon after an altercation on May 20, Ajit also said.

Habibur Rahman, sub-inspector of Kulara Police Station, said police have been maintaining law and order in the garden since Wednesday morning and the workers had been hold demonstrations peacefully.

Two held for killing 2 dolphins in Brahmaputra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Two people were detained and fined Tk 5,000 each by a mobile court for capturing two Ganges river dolphins in the Brahmaputra river in Chilmari upazila of Kurigram.

The mobile court led by Mahbubur Rahman, executive magistrate and Chilmari upazila nirbahi officer (UNO), passed the order under Section 37 (2) of the Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation and Security Act-2012 in the yesterday morning.

The UNO said that the two endangered mammals were found dead and they were buried as per the order of the mobile court.

The detainees are Suzan Chandra Das, 35, a fisherman, and Amber Ali, 40, a battery-run easy bike driver of Ulipur upazila.

Ahsan Habib, sub-inspector (SI) of Chilmari Model Police Station, said that the two dolphins were entangled in a fishing net in the river and died.

Later on, Wednesday afternoon, Suzan bought the two dolphins for Tk 10,000 from a fisherman.

But locals detained him and Amber Ali in Matikata area while they were taking the



Two people were detained and handed down a fine of Tk 5,000 by a mobile court on Thursday morning for killing two Ganges river dolphins in the Brahmaputra River at Chilmari in Kurigram.

dolphins to Ulipur upazila.

Locals handed them over to the police along with the two dead dolphins. Police later informed the UNO and the Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Authority, SI Ahsan Habib said.

Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Officer in Rangpur Smriti Singh Roy said she visited the spot after receiving the news.

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JOB REQUIREMENTS:

- **Academic qualifications:** Applicants should have minimum 4 years' Graduation in any subject/ discipline from UGC approved reputed University / Foreign University with at least CGPA 3.00 out of 4.00 or First Class/equivalent result and minimum GPA 4.00 out of 5.00 in SSC, HSC and equivalent levels. In case of "O" level and "A" level, minimum "5Bs" and "2Bs" respectively.
- **Nationality:** Applicant must be a Bangladeshi citizen
- **Age:** Not over 30 years as on July 15, 2021

SELECTION PROCEDURE:

The selection process will be purely on merit basis and short-listed candidates will have to sit for competitive written test. Successful candidates in written test will be called for interview

PLACEMENT POLICY AND COMPENSATION:

Selected Probationary Officer shall remain on probation for a period of 1 (one) year with consolidated salary of Tk.41,900/- per month. On satisfactory completion of probation period, Probationary Officer will be confirmed as Senior Officer in the regular scale of the Bank of Tk.52,000/- per month with other benefits

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OTHER CONDITIONS:

- Candidates selected for appointment as Probationary Officer will be required to execute a Bond on non-judicial stamp for serving UCB for a minimum period of 03 years from the date of joining
- Candidates unwilling to work anywhere in Bangladesh, need not to apply
- Incomplete application will not be considered for selection process.
- UCB reserves the right to accept or reject any application without any reason whatsoever. Persuasion/ canvassing in any stage of selection process shall be treated as disqualification

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

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act:onaid The Daily Star

Translating 8th Five Year Plan into Fiscal Year Budget 2021-22: Youth Perspective

The Daily Star and ActionAid Bangladesh jointly organised an online discussion titled "Translating Eighth Five Year Plan into Fiscal Year Budget 2021-22: Youth Perspective" on May 31, 2021. The primary objective of the roundtable was to have a conversation with important stakeholders and experts to determine how the upcoming national budget can accommodate the needs of the youth. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.

Farah Kabir, Country Director, ActionAid Bangladesh

As we approach the announcement of the upcoming budget, the most important question that we should keep in mind is how the National Budget can accommodate the Eighth Five Year Plan on the issue of young people. After 2026, the proportion of the young population is going to gradually decrease. Thus, it is high time to invest in the youth. We have to ensure adequate provisions are kept in the budget for the youth constituency so that they can realise their potential.

We started with a concern regarding the feasibility of the rollout of the Eighth Five Year Plan in the middle of a pandemic. Before developing the 2021-2022 budget, it was imperative to keep the COVID-19 situation in mind. Our response should not only be about creating more hospital beds and facilities but also focusing on health, education, farming and employment issues through a holistic approach.

We have seen a reverse migration during this pandemic. People have migrated back to villages from Dhaka. Healthcare systems are very poor at the rural level. We need to ensure necessary health care services are available at the rural level as the pandemic is not restricted to just the urban areas. Recently it has spiked in the border areas.

We should conduct a survey to identify the demand of the youth, the transgender community and marginalised people, and then create a shadow budget. This will enable youth to undertake advocacy and lobbying effectively.

Iqbal Hossain, Deputy Manager- QAPS, ActionAid Bangladesh

It is time to Integrate young people into political, economic, and social aspects of society and enable them to share in the benefits of development. This will involve guaranteeing quality education, providing decent work opportunities and addressing the myriad of other challenges young people face. Thus, the youth demographic landscape should be a central part of the fiscal year budget 2021-2022. Though there are national plans and programmes, such as the national youth action plan, in place which deal with some of these issues, we must make separate allowances under the national budget and the Eighth Five Year Plan to bring these plans and programmes to fruition.

Sheikh Imran, President, Rising Star Youth Group

I think one aspect that can be extremely useful for the youth, is access to good vocational education. Not many students opt for vocational or technical education and, as a result, end up being unemployed. If we



Farah Kabir



Iqbal Hossain



Sheikh Imran



Marjana Khatun



Kashfia Feroz



Rizwan Rahman



Jahangir Alam



Kamrul Hossain Shuvo



Dr Mahbubul Mokaddem



Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya



Munmun Akter



Md Hozzatul Islam



Dr Atiur Rahman

normalise and popularise vocational education amongst students, then students can gain entry into a lot of jobs instead of being unemployed.

Marjana Khatun, President, Agnibina Youth Group

In our country, a lot of women are married off at a young age or after they finish school. This results in them becoming homemakers instead of being economically active. The upcoming budget should include some measures to empower these women so that they can engage in economic activities while also running their households so that they can become independent income earners.

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Member, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Board of Trustees and Distinguished Fellow

One of the primary problems we face is a lack of data. Whether it is the population of the youth or the number of youth in the job market, we are still using data from five to six years back. The current Eighth Five Year Plan has been made taking into account past data, and this weakens the effectiveness of the plan. Another key issue is that while the national budget is prepared by the finance ministry, the Eighth Five Year Plan is established by the planning ministry. This leaves a disconnect between the two plans, thus preventing them from working in cohesion successfully.

We need private sector investment and quality government services. If the fundamental elements of education are not improved, youth-related support services will be futile. This has been recognised in the Eighth Five Year Plan as well. The only time government

services improve is when the local youth speak up. We must shift our approach from supply to demand-driven so that youth voices are highlighted.

Rizwan Rahman, President, DCCI

School closures prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic have caused many students to drop out as their families fell below the poverty line. Many young girls have also been married off. We need more national budget allocation to digitise education, so schools don't need to shut down. Although the private sector will implement 81 percent of the Eighth Five-Year Plan, it is the government that is responsible for improving education.

There are around two lakh new unemployed graduates every year. We need to bridge the gap between the industry and academia by incentivising industries and letting them have a say in the curriculum.

Jahangir Alam, Joint Secretary, Department of Youth and Development

The mandate of the Department of Youth and Development is based on self-employment. There are over five crore unemployed youths in the country. It is impossible to provide jobs for all of them; hence the government is focusing on entrepreneurship. Our primary function is to give people aged between 18 and 35 years formal and informal training on 82 different trades in various districts. After the completion of training, they are given loans worth a maximum of one lakh taka. Many of them become self-made entrepreneurs and are awarded by the government.

Kamrul Hossain Shuvo, HERproject Country Coordinator, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, garments factory owners will increasingly switch to automation, which means the industry will require the work of fewer RMG workers. The people losing jobs will primarily be female workers. The proportion of female workers has already dropped from 82 to 58 percent. The only solution is to train them, for which budget allocation is required.

In the Ease of Doing Business Index, Bangladesh ranked 168th, the lowest in South Asia. To improve, we must focus on creating young entrepreneurs. We must support them with payment gateways, product delivery, and inventory systems through budget allocation and planning, even beyond 2025.

Dr Mahbubul Mokaddem, Professor & Chairman, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka

The Eighth Five Year Plan considers data from 2016-2017 as the benchmark. It aims to reduce youth unemployment from 10.6 percent to five percent and the NEET population from 29 percent to 15 percent by 2025. It also promises to increase the population in secondary schools from 75 percent to 85 percent. Therefore, we can't say that there is no data available.

A plan requires a roadmap with annual budgets. There needs to be a list of projects under annual plans and their projections. This disaggregation must be available to the youth, and they must follow the roadmap and protest wherever there is corruption.

The government has promised to reduce the unemployment rate and they are taking necessary steps to achieve the goal. The government may not disclose the plan as a whole, but they will surely follow the annual projects. Our youth is also accounted for. The youth should follow the roadmap accordingly and identify failures and corruption.

Kashfia Feroz, Director - Girls' Rights, Plan International

The number of child marriages has increased throughout the pandemic. Domestic violence has increased too. We want specific allocation in the budget to reduce child marriage and unwanted pregnancy. Also, we must ensure the safety of our women and girls. Access to health services for young girls and women is a must.

Munmun Akter, Member, Brihonnola

A new budget is on its way but I want to know how many people are thinking about us, the transgender community. Everyone is talking about men, women, girls and boys. Only a few students and organisations are working for the transgender community. We want more accountability from the government for our communities because we are citizens of the country too.

Md Hozzatul Islam, Deputy Programme Manager- Civic Engagement, Transparency International Bangladesh

The Eighth Five Year Plan is a 900-page document and the first clause of this document is the creation of jobs for youth. But 56 percent of our youth are not in the job market. This is a tremendous failure for society. We have not been able to involve the majority of our youth at work. The Seventh Five Year Plan was not a major success itself and there are contradictions between the documents, achievements, and agendas. These contradictions divert us from our goal. So we must ensure proper access and flow of information.

Dr Atiur Rahman, Professor, Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka

I think this upcoming budget will mostly reflect upon COVID-19. The previous plan to reduce unemployment is no longer valid as the unemployment rate skyrocketed during the pandemic. Therefore, we should plan around how our youth can recover economically from this pandemic. Some of our youth returned to their village after losing their job during the pandemic. We need to find ways for them to be employed. Digital marketing companies are playing an important role in creating employment and this sector is anticipated to expand even more. We should look into how they can be assisted to increase the number of available jobs for our youth.

ADVERTISEMENT

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Director
Chattogram Medical College Hospital
www.cmch.gov.bd

Memo No. CMCH/Tender/2021-2022/Outsourcing manpower/Re-Tender/6199 Date: 24-06-2021

Invitation for Tender (Re-Tender)

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from recognized Contractors/Manpower Suppliers to supply **Outsourcing manpower for CMCH** in the fiscal year 2021-2022. As per PPA-2006 & PPR-2008 (Including all corrigendum); Terms and conditions are as follow(s):

KEY INFORMATION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1 Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.														
2 Agency	Chattogram Medical College Hospital, Chattogram.														
3 PE name, designation & contact details	Brigadier General S M Humayun Kabir, Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital. Telephone: +88031630179, Fax No. 88-031-610022, E-mail address: cmch@hospi.dghs.gov.bd														
4 Procuring entity code & district	GOB, Chattogram.														
5 Invitation for	Tender for procurement of supplying outsourcing manpower for CMCH in the fiscal year 2021-2022.														
6 Tender Ref. No. & date	CMCH/Tender/2021-2022/Outsourcing manpower/Re-Tender/6199 Date: 24-06-2021.														
7 Procurement method	Open Tender Method (OTM).														
8 Budget and source of funds	GOB in Bangladeshi Taka.														
9 Tender publication date	24-06-2021.														
10 Tender schedule selling starting date and time	27-06-2021 during office hours.														
11 Pre-tender meeting	06-07-2021, 11:00am.														
12 Tender last selling date and time	11-07-2021, 12:00pm.														
13 Tender dropping & closing date and time	Dropping date: 12-07-2021, Dropping time: From 09:00am to 12:00pm, Closing time: 12:01pm.														
14 Tender opening date and time	12-07-2021 at 01:00pm.														
15 Name and address of the offices	(a) Selling tender documents 1 Cashier, Office of the Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital. 2 Cashier, Office of the Civil Surgeon, Chattogram District. (b) Receiving tender documents 1 Office of the Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital. 2 Officer In-charge, Panchlaish Model Thana, Chattogram Metropolitan Police. Tender documents opening place Office of the Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital, KB Fazlul Kader Road, Chattogram.														
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	16	17													
Bidders eligibility	Details in Tender Booklet.														
Description of Group, Price of Tender Document, Tender Security etc.	Sl. No.	Description of group	Price of tender document in BDT (only in cash, non-refundable)	Tender security in BDT (Bank Draft/Pay Order to be submitted with the tender booklet in favor of The Director, CMCH). Bank guarantee is not acceptable.											
				1	Tender for procurement of supplying outsourcing manpower (Re-Tender)	2,500.00 (two thousand five hundred only)	6,00,000.00 (six lac only)								
18	Description of related services	Detailed description in Tender Booklet.													
Note:															
(a) Corrigendum if necessary in future will be a part of this notice. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.															
(b) If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.															
Brigadier General S M Humayun Kabir Director Chattogram Medical College Hospital Telephone: 880-31-630179, Fax No. 88-031-610022 E-mail: cmch@hospi.dghs.gov.bd															

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০১.	হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা (গ্রেড-১০) ১৬০০০-৩৮৬৪০/-	০১ (একটি)	৩০ বছর	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ব্যবসায় প্রশাসন বা বাণিজ্য বিভাগে স্নাতকোত্তর বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি অথবা ২য় শ্রেণীর স্নাতক (সেবা) ডিগ্রি এবং কোনো পরীক্ষায় কোনো এক শ্রেণী গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার প্রশিক্ষণ প্রাপ্ত।

শর্তাবলী:

- ১। সরকারি/স্বায়তশাসিত/আধা-স্বায়তশাসিত/সেবেদিত্ব প্রকল্পে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে।
- ২। লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।
- ৩। এই নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি সম্পর্কিত যেকোনো সংশোধন, সংযোজন (যদি থাকে) নিজস্ব ওয়েবসাইটে (www.pmeat.gov.bd) পাওয়া যাবে।
- ৪। আবেদনপত্র পূরণ সংক্রান্ত শর্তাবলী:
 - ক. পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক প্রার্থীগণ <http://pmeat.teletalk.com.bd> এই ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ করতে পারবেন।
 - আবেদনের সময়সীমা নিম্নরূপ:
 - i. Online-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও পরীক্ষার ফি জমাদান শুরুর তারিখ ও সময়: ২৭/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ, সকাল ১০:০০টা।
 - ii. Online-এ আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ২৭/০৭/২০২১খ্রিঃ, বিকাল ৫:০০টা। উক্ত সময়সীমার মধ্যে User ID প্রাপ্ত প্রার্থীগণ Online-এ আবেদনপত্র Submit-এর সময় থেকে পরবর্তী ৭২ (বাহাত্তর) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে এসএমএস-এর মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষার ফি জমা দিতে পারবেন।
 - খ. Online আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থী তার স্বাক্ষর (সর্বোচ্চ ৩০০ x ৩০০ pixel) ও রঙিন ছবি (সর্বোচ্চ ৩০০ x ৩০০ pixel) করে নির্ধারিত স্থানে Upload করবেন।
 - গ. Online আবেদনপত্রে পূর্ণকৃত তথ্যই যেহেতু পরবর্তী সকল কার্যক্রমে ব্যবহৃত হবে, সেহেতু Online-এ আবেদনপত্র Submit করার পূর্বেই পূর্ণকৃত সকল তথ্যের সঠিকতা সম্পর্কে প্রার্থী নিজে শতভাগ নিশ্চিত হবেন। পূর্ন-পূর্ণকৃত সকল তথ্যের সঠিকতা সম্পর্কে প্রার্থী নিজে শতভাগ নিশ্চিত হবেন।
 - ঘ. প্রার্থী Online-এ পূর্ণকৃত আবেদনপত্রের একটি প্রিন্টকপি পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো প্রয়োজনের সময় ছবি হিসেবে সংরক্ষণ করবেন।
 - ঙ. **SMS প্রেরণের নিয়মাবলী ও পরীক্ষার ফি প্রদানঃ** Online-এ আবেদনপত্র (Application Form) যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করে নির্দেশনা মতে ছবি এবং Signature upload করে আবেদনপত্র Submit করা সম্পূর্ণ হলে কম্পিউটারে ছবিসহ Application preview দেখা যাবে। নির্ভুলভাবে আবেদনপত্র Submit করা প্রার্থী একটি User ID, ছবি এবং স্বাক্ষরমুক্ত একটি Applicant's copy পাবেন। উক্ত প্রার্থী Applicant's copy প্রিন্ট অথবা download করে সংরক্ষণ করবেন। Applicant's copy তে একটি User ID নম্বর দেয়া থাকবে।
 - চ. উক্ত User ID নম্বর ব্যবহার করে প্রার্থী নিম্নোক্ত পদ্ধতিতে যেকোনো **Teletalk pre-paid mobile** নম্বরের মাধ্যমে ০২ (দুইটি) SMS করে হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা পদের জন্য পরীক্ষার ফি বাবদ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা ও Teletalk এর সার্ভিস চার্জ ৬০/- (ষাট) টাকাসহ মোট ৫৬০/- (পাঁচশত ষাট) টাকা অনন্যিক ৭২ (বাহাত্তর) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে জমা দিবেন। বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখ্য, "Online-এ আবেদনপত্রের সকল অংশ পূরণ করে Submit করা হলেও পরীক্ষার ফি জমা না দেয়া পর্যন্ত Online আবেদনপত্র কোনো অর্থাভুক্তই গৃহীত হবে না"।

প্রথম SMS: P~~E~~A~~T~~<space>U~~S~~ER ID লিখে ১৬২২২ নম্বরে Send করতে হবে।
 দ্বিতীয় SMS: P~~E~~A~~T~~<space>Y~~E~~S<space>P~~I~~N লিখে ১৬২২২ নম্বরে Send করতে হবে।

৫. প্রবেশপত্র প্রাপ্তির বিষয়টি <http://pmeat.teletalk.com.bd> অথবা, প্রধানমন্ত্রীর শিক্ষা সহায়তা ট্রাস্ট-এর Website: www.pmeat.gov.bd এ এবং প্রার্থীর মোবাইল ফোনে SMS-এর মাধ্যমে (শুধু যোগ্য প্রার্থীদেরকে) যথাসময়ে জানানো হবে।
৬. SMS-এ প্রেরিত User ID এবং Password ব্যবহার করে পরবর্তীতে রোল নম্বর, পদের নাম, ছবি, পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও কেন্দ্রের নাম ইত্যাদি তথ্য সমন্বিত প্রবেশপত্র প্রার্থী Download পূর্বক Print (সম্ভব হলে রঙিন) করে নিবেন। প্রার্থী এই প্রবেশপত্রটি লিখিত পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের সময় এবং উত্তীর্ণ হলে মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় অবশ্যই প্রদর্শন করবেন।
৭. শুধু টেলিটক প্রি-পেইড মোবাইল ফোন থেকে প্রার্থীগণ নিম্নবর্ণিত SMS পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করে নিজ নিজ User ID, Serial এবং PIN নম্বর প্রেরণ করতে পারবেন।
 i. User ID জানা থাকলে P~~E~~A~~T~~<space>H~~E~~L~~P~~<space>U~~S~~ER ID & S~~E~~N~~D~~ 16222.
 Example: P~~E~~A~~T~~ H~~E~~L~~P~~ U~~S~~ER ABCDEF & S~~E~~N~~D~~ 16222.
 ii. PIN Number জানা থাকলে P~~E~~A~~T~~<space>H~~E~~L~~P~~<space>P~~I~~N<space>U~~S~~ER ID & S~~E~~N~~D~~ 16222.
 Example: P~~E~~A~~T~~ H~~E~~L~~P~~ P~~I~~N 12345678 & S~~E~~N~~D~~ 16222.

৮. মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় সকল সদস্যদের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে এবং পূর্ণকৃত Applicant Copy এর কপি সহ সকল সদস্যদের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে। এছাড়া, ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদ প্রদান করতে হবে। চাকরিতত্ত্ব প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতিপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
৯. যেকোনো তথ্য ও কারিশমার সহায়তার জন্য Teletalk Customer Care এ যোগাযোগ অথবা Online-এ আবেদন করতে কোন সমস্যা হলে যে কোন টেলিটক মোবাইল নম্বর থেকে ১২১ এ কল করুন। এ ছাড়াও vas.query@teletalk.com.bd এবং ad.admin@pmeat.gov.bd এই ই-মেইলে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে। (Mail এর subject-এ Organization Name: P~~M~~E~~A~~T, Post Name: *****, Applicant's User ID ও Contact Number অবশ্যই উল্লেখ করতে হবে)।
১০. কর্তৃপক্ষ যেকোনো সময় এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে এবং নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে। উপরে উল্লেখ করা হয়নি কিন্তু প্রয়োজ্যতা রয়েছে এমন ক্ষেত্রে জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক জারিকৃত বিবি-বিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে।
১১. বিজ্ঞপ্তি পত্রিকা ছাড়াও প্রধানমন্ত্রীর শিক্ষা সহায়তা ট্রাস্টের নিজস্ব ওয়েবসাইটে (www.pmeat.gov.bd) পাওয়া যাবে এবং <https://alljobs.teletalk.com.bd> পাওয়া যাবে।

****** শেষ তারিখ ও সময়ের জন্য অপেক্ষা না করে হাতে যথেষ্ট সময় নিয়ে Online-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমাদান করতে পরামর্শ দেয়া যাচ্ছে।

নাসরিন আকরোজ
 ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক (অতিরিক্ত সচিব)
 ও
 সভাপতি
 ১ম ও ২য় শ্রেণির কর্মচারী নিয়োগ কমিটি
 প্রধানমন্ত্রীর শিক্ষা সহায়তা ট্রাস্ট

বিডি-১২৬৮



THE DAILY STAR CAMPUS STARS

UAP aims to build future leaders

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

"The Daily Star Campus Stars" is a show that highlights promising individuals who have excelled in their academics and extracurricular activities, alongside securing success in their professional paths. The fourth episode of the show took place on June 15, 2021, featuring panelists from University of Asia Pacific (UAP).

The online event was hosted by Shuvashish Roy, Head of Business, *The Daily Star*. The speakers included Prof Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz, Professor of Relationship Marketing, Department of Business Administration (BDA) and convener, UAP Branding Committee (UBC), Md Tarek Khan, Assistant Director, Admission and Directorate of Students' Welfare (DSW), UAP, Engr Khan Mohammad Kaiser, Vice Chairman, Computer Engineering Division, IEB Co-Founder, e-CAB President, UAP CSE Alumni Association, and Shahriar Islam Shovon, student of Law and Human Rights at UAP.

Students of UAP have managed to reach promising levels at different sectors, be it in science, commerce, or humanities. Under the guidance of prominent leaders, they have been allowed to nurture their skills, and overcome their difficulties.

"Philanthropist Sultan Mahmud, our vice chancellor, asked if I wanted to become

an engineer when I first visited UAP for an admission. That time we had renowned physicist Sadruddin Ahmed Chowdhury, and Prof Dr Mir Shamsur Rahman among many others as our professors in the engineering department. Their love and down-to-earth nature alongside genuine appreciation always instigated me to keep learning and growing in my profession," shared Khan Mohammad Kaiser.

He also discussed the importance of the undergraduate project in forecasting a student's future skills. "National consultant Kazi Anwar Hossain was my supervisor during my undergraduate project. The things we had learned still come in handy in my profession," he added.

Shahriar Islam Shovon spoke about UAP's helpful student facilities. "Our teaching method is divided into three parts: curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular. It helps enhance students' hard and soft skills," he said. "The university's tuition waiver facilities encourage students to keep their CGPA up. The research platforms at UAP aid the process of transforming theoretic knowledge into practical implementation for positive change."

UAP is determined to keep up with global standards of teaching methodologies.

Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz shared that the faculty of UAP is supporting students in



this digital era and implementing updated pedagogy in the coronavirus pandemic. "To ensure all students had access to online education was our prime goal when the pandemic broke out. Our secondary goals were to

protect our curriculum, and guarantee proper grading and evaluation," she mentioned. "With efforts from the staff, we ensured delivery, accountability, and processing, through intense research. We have even come out

with a manual on online education, which has been of help to many."

UAP has collaborated with numerous foreign institutions to enhance capacity-building among students who wish to gather interdisciplinary knowledge and also be drawn to cultural activities while enhancing their communicative skills, especially in English. "Our DSW platform offers seminars, workshops, collaborations and participation opportunities at national and international competitions," shared Md Tarek Khan. "While these involvements help students to boost their confidence, it also directs them towards enhancing their creativity, alongside academic intelligence."

"Knowledge about different topics is aided by the research facilities, and grooming sessions and guidelines on public speaking, debating, or other such skills helps us boost our confidence," shared Shahriar Islam Shovon.

Furthermore, UAP offers a very convenient location, with a modern teaching-learning environment, and research and extra-curricular activities for students. "We believe in building not just leaders of tomorrow, but also ambassadors," concluded Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz.

The author is trainee reporter, Arts & Entertainment, *The Daily Star*. Email: ashley@thedailystar.net.

YOUNG ACHIEVER

Reigning over the chessboard

MORMEE MAHTAB

18 year-old Mohammad Fahad Rahman is the youngest chess player in Bangladesh to earn the lifelong titles of International Master (2019) and FIDE Master (2013). The self-taught genius relies mainly on books to practice and perfect his moves across the chessboard. He is an SSC candidate from Little Jewels International School.

Fahad was only five years old when he first got to know about chess, and instantly fell in love with the game. "I was fascinated by everything in chess, and began learning the rules. After two months of practicing, I won a competition organised by my school," he shares.

What began as a fun hobby soon cultivated into a serious pursuit for Fahad, who went on to participate in a tournament organised by Bangladesh Shishu Academy in 2008, qualifying amongst participants across 8 divisions. Just after two years, he became an age group champion for the National School Chess Tournament, organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation. Soon after, he joined the national team.

"By 2011, we moved to Dhaka from Faridpur, as the federation was nearby. I began preparing for more competitive tournaments," says Fahad, who participated and won the National Sub-Junior and National Junior titles from 2014 to 2017, and 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively. His streak of brilliant performances in the nationals opened the doors to many international championships for him.

He played in the Asia Championship held in India, clinching a gold medal under both Standard and Blitz categories, and one bronze medal in the Rapid Chess category. He also participated in 14th Dubai Juniors Chess Tournament and ASEAN Age-Group (U-10) Chess Championship of Thailand.



PHOTO: COLLECTED FROM MOHAMMAD FAHAD RAHMAN'S OFFICIAL FACEBOOK PAGE

"I also participated in the 43rd World Chess Olympiad held in Georgia in 2018, which helped me earn an international rating to become an International Master," adds Fahad. The same year, he won the Asian Zonal Championship which led him to FIDE World Cup 2019, held in Russia.

"I got the chance to play alongside my idols, some of the best chess players in the world. I enjoyed their performances, witnessing their moves and learning about their strategies," Fahad says about his experience in the world cup.

The pandemic made it quite challenging for him to participate in many important international tournaments that would have assisted him in becoming a Grandmaster, the highest title a chess player can attain, apart from World Champion. Yet, Fahad has not remained idle. "I have played opposite the leading Grandmasters in our country. No matter what, I have always put up a strong fight. I aspire to keep working hard to become the youngest Grandmaster in Bangladesh," he concludes.

The author is a student of Political Science, and a freelance journalist. Email: mormeehtab23@gmail.com.

YOUTH IN ACTION

'Jibon' saving lives

LABIBA KABIR

Jibon is a non-profit organisation based in Rangamati, which provides blood to the needy, free of cost. It was established in November 2011 as a Blood Donor Association, and gained the trust of the Chitragong Hill Tract (CHT) localities swiftly.

Sazid Bin Zahid, with six of his friends from Rangamati Govt High School, started the organisation when they experienced the lack of proper blood donation and blood management in Rangamati. The Co-founders are Meher Niger, Gayatri Chakraborty, Tasnima Hoque Zarin, Yeah Hakim Pias, Ashfaq Hossain, Sabyasachi Chakma.

Inspired by Anwarul Kabir, the current President of Jibon, the team follows a simple rule: the right blood supply at the right time can save a life. However, finding the right resources in a short time can be

a challenge. Recipient of the Joy Bangla Youth Award 2018, Jibon aims to create a safe space for willing blood donors, as well as governmental hospitals, blood banks, and volunteers.

The organisation does not take direct blood donations from people. Rather, it works as a medium. Jibon's team has a list with the blood groups, locations, and phone numbers of willing donors.

Those who need blood urgently, can post on the Facebook Group of Jibon. All posts must mention the health issues, exact blood groups, number of blood bags required, names, addresses, hospital cabin or ward numbers of patients, and relevant contact numbers. Currently, Jibon is operating with over 7,500 willing blood donors.

The organisation also launched workshops and mask distribution programmes in Rangamati to raise awareness about the

severity of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jibon operates widely in the CHT areas. The organisation's team has also expanded their work at Khagrachari, Bandarban, Cumilla, and Dhaka.

Currently, Jibon is working on multiple projects, along with blood donation.

"We are focusing on 'Hello Campus', a campaign that aims to help students through leadership and motivational training, debate sessions, sports, cultural programmes, and general knowledge competitions. So far, this campaign has covered over 10 educational institutions in Rangamati," says Sazid.

Moreover, 'Skill Drops' is an initiative of Jibon for skill development programmes such as basic computer training, graphic design courses, and handicraft training.

The author is a freelance journalist. Email: labibakabir99@gmail.com.



Sazid Bin Zahid (L), with six of his friends, started Jibon when they experienced the lack of proper blood donation and blood management in Rangamati. Photo: Courtesy of Jibon

Quotes of the day



“They (Big Techs) bury or buy rivals and abuse their monopoly power, conduct that is harmful to consumers, competition, innovation and our democracy.”

US REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE AS CONGRESS BACKS REGULATIONS AGAINST TECH GIANTS



“We must also seek direct contact with Russia and the Russian president. It is not enough for the American president to talk to the Russian president.”

GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL



People dance to celebrate Midsummer Eve during sunset at the Amager Strandpark in Copenhagen, Denmark, on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

EU divided over Russia summit plan

Members urge caution as France, Germany say direct contact with Putin needed for Europe's stability

REUTERS, Brussels

France and Germany yesterday called for a European Union summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin but met firm resistance from Poland and Baltic countries who distrust the Kremlin.

French President Emmanuel Macron said the first EU summit with Putin since January 2014 would be a chance for dialogue and won support from Austria's chancellor as EU leaders arrived for their regular summer meeting in Brussels to discuss a new strategy to improve ties with Moscow.

“We need a dialogue to defend our interests... it is a dialogue necessary for the stability of the European continent,” Macron said.

“We cannot remain in a purely reactive logic when it comes to Russia,” he said. “I hope that we can, with real European unity and coordination, have this ...dialogue.”

“We as the European Union must also seek direct contact with Russia and the Russian president. It is not enough for the US president to talk to the Russian president,” Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel said ahead of the summit.

EU leaders are also set to ask the European Commission and the EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell for “options for additional restrictive measures, including economic sanctions” against Russia, according to a draft of the summit statement seen by

Reuters.

After Nato warnings that Russia is trying to divide Western democracies through disinformation and covert attacks, many EU countries said talk of summits was premature. Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda said the idea was like “trying to engage the bear to keep a pot of honey safe”.

The Kremlin welcomed the idea of a summit, saying both Brussels and Moscow needed dialogue.

On opposing sides in standoffs in Ukraine and Belarus, and at odds over human rights, the EU and Russia accuse each other of meddling in elections, disinformation and threatening security and stability from the Baltics to the Black Sea.

The EU yesterday imposed economic sanctions on Belarus, an ally of Russia that the Kremlin sees as a buffer state between Russia and Nato.

The new package looks to hit key sources of revenue for the authorities in Minsk by restricting trade in potash fertiliser, petroleum and tobacco products, a statement said. It limits access for Belarus to the EU's capital markets and bans providing insurance to government and public bodies.

There is also a prohibition on the sale of technology to Belarus that could be used to intercept phone or internet communications and “dual-use” military equipment that could be used to crack down on demonstrators.

» EU imposes sanctions on key Belarus sectors

» New sanctions on Russia also on the table

Pandemic fallout to be felt 'for years'

Warns UN drug agency

AFP, Vienna

The coronavirus pandemic is pushing more people into drug use, while illicit cultivation could also get a boost, the UN said Thursday, warning that the crisis's fallout was likely to be felt “for years to come”.

The Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which each year pulls together data from its wide network of member countries in its annual report, said it also feared illicit opium poppy and coca leaf cultivation could rise as the economic crisis caused by the pandemic led to joblessness and other problems around the globe.

“The new report shows that drug markets have swiftly resumed operations after the initial disruption at the onset of the pandemic” last year, a statement by agency said.

Top opium producer Afghanistan reported a 37 percent jump in the amount of land used for illicit poppy cultivation during 2020 compared with the previous year, the report said.

Inequality, poverty and mental health conditions -- known factors that push people into drug use -- are also on the rise globally, it said in a chapter entitled “Covid-19 fallout likely to be felt in drug markets for years to come”.

Most countries have reported a rise in the use of cannabis during the pandemic, it said, noting generally people increasingly saw risks in its use.

The crisis has also seen an increase in the non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs, while consumption of drugs that are “typically used in social settings”, such as cocaine, has dropped.

In a positive development seen by UNODC the area under coca bush cultivation declined globally by five percent in 2019.

This was largely driven by the first significant fall in cultivation in six years in Colombia though the South American country continued to be by far the largest source of cocaine globally.

NEWS IN brief

EU MPs pass climate law

The European Parliament on Thursday approved a landmark law to make the European Union's greenhouse gas emissions targets legally binding, paving the way for a policy overhaul to cut planet-warming pollution faster. Negotiators from Parliament and the EU's 27 member countries reached a deal in April on the climate law, which puts tougher emissions-cutting targets at the heart of EU policymaking. The bill sets targets to reduce net EU emissions by 55% by 2030, from 1990 levels, and eliminate net emissions by 2050.



Philippines' ex-president Aquino dies

Former Philippine president Benigno “Noy” Aquino, the reserved 61-year-old bachelor from one of Asia's most famous political families, died yesterday, the country's foreign minister and several officials said. Aquino, who ruled the archipelago nation from 2010 to 2016, was the only son of the late former president Corazon Aquino and her assassinated husband, senator Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino. Aquino died in a Manila hospital of renal failure as a result of diabetes, his family said.

Trudeau survives vote of no confidence

The minority government of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence Wednesday in a face-off over the proposed budget, eliminating the possibility of early elections this summer. The House of Commons voted 211 to 121 in favor of approving the budget, which was proposed in April and contains a plan to spend CANS\$101.4 billion over three years. The conservative opposition voted together against Trudeau, who was able to hang on thanks to the support of three other smaller blocs in the lower chamber.



World's highest hotel opens

The world's highest luxury hotel, boasting a restaurant on the 120th floor and 24-hour personal butler service, has opened in Shanghai to guests with deep pockets and a head for heights. Elevators whizz guests up the intimidating spiral-like skyscraper at ear-popping speeds of 18 metres per second to the J Hotel's 165 opulent rooms. The hotel occupies the top floors of the 632-metre Shanghai Tower in the city's financial district, the second-tallest building in the world after Dubai's Burj Khalifa. Its opening was delayed partly by the coronavirus pandemic but the hotel has now started receiving guests at any hour.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

June 25

1950 - North Korea invaded the South, heralding the beginning of the Korean War.

1991 - Croatia and Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia, plunging the federation into a violent breakup.

1998 - World's first consumer copy of Microsoft Windows 98 sold in Sydney.

2005 - Ultra-conservative Tehran mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad swept to a stunning landslide in Iran's presidential run-off against former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

2009 - Pop star Michael Jackson died.

SOURCE: REUTERS

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Winner: Best Published Annual Reports in Bangladesh

Rated B+ S&P Global Ratings

Rated BA3 MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE



A 'victim of tyranny'

Says Apple Daily as Hong Kongers snap up final edition

AFP, Hong Kong

Hong Kong's pro-democracy Apple Daily tabloid said it was a “victim of tyranny” in a defiant final edition yesterday after it was forced to close under a new national security law, ending a 26-year run of taking on China's authoritarian leaders.

The sudden death of the popular newspaper is the latest blow to Hong Kong's freedoms, deepening unease over whether the international finance centre can remain a media hub as China seeks to stamp out dissent.

Queues formed across Hong Kong yesterday as residents raced to snap up one of the one million copies Apple Daily said it planned to print. Many vendors sold out within minutes and were awaiting fresh deliveries.

The swansong front page featured the paper's own journalists waving goodbye to crowds outside its headquarters.

“Apple Daily is dead,” deputy chief editor Chan Pui-man, who was arrested last week on a national security charge, wrote in a farewell letter to readers.

“Press freedom became the victim of tyranny.”

In the working-class district of Mongkok, hundreds queued through the early hours of the morning to get their hands on the final edition, some chanting “Apple Daily we will meet again!”

“It's very shocking,” a 30-year-old woman, who was in the queue and gave

her first name as Candy, told AFP.

“Within two weeks, authorities could use this national security law to dismantle a listed company.”

Hong Kong's most popular tabloid had long been a thorn in Beijing's side, with unapologetic support for the city's pro-democracy movement and caustic criticism of China's authoritarian leaders.

Those same leaders used a new security law to bring about its rapid demise.

Owner Jimmy Lai, currently in jail for attending democracy protests, was among the first to be charged under the law after its imposition last year.

But the final chapter was written over the last week when authorities deployed the security law to raid the newsroom, arrest senior executives and freeze its assets.

That last move crippled the paper's ability to conduct business or pay staff and the news group decided yesterday's newspaper would be its last.

Overnight it took down its website, Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Its edition in Taiwan will continue to operate. But some 1,000 people, including 700 journalists, are now out of work.

“Hong Kongers lost a media organisation that dared to speak up and insist on defending the truth,” eight local journalist associations said in a joint statement.

China imposed its security law on Hong Kong last year after the city was convulsed by huge and often violent democracy protests in 2019.

AIRSTRIKE ON TIGRAY MARKET

At least 64 killed; 180 injured

UN calls for urgent investigation

AFP, Addis Ababa

UN demanded an urgent investigation as an Ethiopian air strike on a market in the war-torn Tigray region killed at least 64 people and injured 180, an official of the rebel territory said.

"The air strike was in the market area, so many, many people were injured," Mulu Atsbaha, an advisor to the Tigray regional administration on maternal and child health said yesterday.

The strike on Tuesday in Togoga town also left 180 injured, Mulu added.

He said the toll had been gathered from residents of Togoga town, 30 kilometres (18 miles) north-west of the regional capital Mekele, and "confirmed with local leaders".

Ethiopia's army spokesman yesterday said that the military carried out the attack on Togoga, but said rebel fighters were the target.

But survivors and health workers described aerial explosions striking a busy market at the peak of trading, killing and injuring dozens, including children.

The attack came as vote counting was underway following Monday's national elections in Ethiopia. However, the conflict in Tigray meant no vote was held there, and the region has seen an upsurge in fighting in recent days.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent troops to Tigray in November to oust the dissident regional leadership, promising a swift victory. But nearly eight months later, fighting continues, which has triggered a humanitarian crisis with the UN warning 350,000 people are on the brink of famine.



A building that partially collapsed is seen in Surfside near Miami Beach, Florida, US, yesterday. Inset, A relative weeps near the disaster site.

NEWS IN brief

230,000 displaced in Myanmar in 2021: UN

The United Nations humanitarian agency yesterday said an estimated 230,000 people have been displaced by fighting and violence in Myanmar this year and are in need of assistance. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in an update on the situation in Myanmar, said operations were ongoing but were being hindered by the insecurity in the country.

Indonesia jails hardline cleric over virus lies

Indonesian police fired tear gas and water cannon at supporters of a hardline Muslim cleric jailed yesterday for spreading false information about Covid-19 after he held rallies that drew thousands. Rizieq Shihab, 55, was handed a four-year jail term for claiming in a viral video that he was healthy, despite knowing that test results showed he may have been infected with the virus. Thursday's ruling comes after the same court in May sentenced Shihab to eight months' jail for holding sermons and other gatherings that drew tens of thousands of followers, breaking virus restrictions in one of Asia's worst-hit nations.

Sri Lanka pardons 16 Tamil Tigers

Sri Lanka's president pardoned 16 men linked to the Tamil Tiger rebels yesterday, as the country faced renewed pressure from the UN over detentions without charge under an anti-terrorism law. The men were convicted under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) that gives security forces sweeping powers to arrest and detain suspects. The UN Human Rights Council and other international rights groups have called for it to be repealed. The men had been behind bars for at least a decade. Government officials said the release was the first phase of a plan to free all 78 people held or charged under the PTA.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

J&K statehood will be restored

Modi assures 14 political leaders from the formerly state

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a three-hour meeting with 14 political leaders of Jammu and Kashmir yesterday, reportedly assured that he was committed to restoring statehood to the region.

The crucial meeting, the first such outreach by the government since the abrogation of J&K's special status, was also attended by Union home minister Amit Shah, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha.

The government sources said that Modi patiently heard out suggestions and inputs from all participants and expressed happiness that everyone shared their frank and honest views.

The sources said it was discussed that elections in J&K can happen soon after the delimitation process and that most of the participants

expressed willingness for it.

"It was an open discussion which revolved around building a better future for Kashmir," they said.

Sources said the main focus of the meeting was to strengthen the democratic process.

"PM Modi said that we are fully committed to the democratic process in J&K. He stressed that the holding assembly elections just like the successful conduct of DDC elections is a priority," they said.

National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah said his party told the leaders that the trust between the Centre and state was broken with the scrapping of Article 370, reports TNN.

Speaking about the meeting, the junior Abdullah told reporters that whatever happened in August 2019 is not acceptable and his party will fight the issue in the court.

NC chief Farooq Abdullah said

that restoration of the statehood would be the first trust-building exercise from the Centre's side.

J&K Apni Party leader Altaf Bukhari said that PM Modi assured during the meeting that the election process in the Union Territory will begin once the delimitation exercise concludes.

Senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad told reporters after the meeting that his party raised five key demands during the discussions.

These included restoration of J&K's statehood, holding assembly elections, a guarantee on domicile and job rules, rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits and release of political prisoners under detention since August 5, 2019.

Officials said the Centre is keen on holding assembly elections in the union territory as early as possible, maybe in December this year or March 2022.

FLORIDA APARTMENT BLOCK COLLAPSE

1 killed, '51 missing'

AFP, Miami

A 12-story oceanfront apartment block in Florida partially collapsed early yesterday, killing at least one person and leaving dozens unaccounted for as rescuers combed the rubble for possible victims.

Video footage posted online showed a large portion of the building in the town of Surfside -- just north of Miami Beach -- reduced to rubble, with the apartments' interiors exposed.

It was unclear what caused the building to collapse, nor how many people were inside at the time, since it was occupied by a mix of full-time and seasonal residents and renters according to Miami-Dade County

Commissioner Sally Heyman.

"It's hard to get a count on it," Heyman told CNN. "It is 51 people who were supposedly, supposedly, residing there at the time (and) have not either called out or had people call in to reach them."

Local media said records showed the block was built in 1981 and had more than 130 units inside.

Around 55 apartments were affected by the collapse, according to Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Assistant Chief Ray Jadallah. 35 people have been rescued from the building. Some 14 survivors had been recovered from the rubble.

At least four Argentinians were among those unaccounted for, according to reports.

A pro-democracy protester holds a large replica of the 1932 Siamese Revolution plaque as he walks with others in an anti-government march in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday. Hundreds of pro-democracy protesters rallied in Bangkok yesterday to call for the government's resignation, defying warnings from authorities about the kingdom's soaring coronavirus cases.



PHOTO: AFP

ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED

395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka- 1208, Bangladesh

Date: 24 June, 2021

EDCL/PD-Gopalganj/OTM/WM&T/2021/192

Amendment of Tender Notice (Amendment No -1)

Project Title : Establishment of Essential Drugs Company Limited (3rd Plant), Gopalganj

Package Name : Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Testing of Workshop Machinery and Tools

Package No. : GD-14

Ref. No : EDCL/PD-Gopalganj/ Workshop Machinery and Tools /2021/36, Date : 20 June, 2021

Notice Sl. No	Subject to be Amended	Existing As	Shall be amended As
16	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	11 June, 2021, Time : 03:00 PM (Local Time)	11 July, 2021, Time : 03:00 PM (Local Time)
17	Tender Closing Date and Time	12 June, 2021, Time : 01:00 PM (Local Time)	12 July, 2021, Time : 01:00 PM (Local Time)
18	Tender Opening Date and Time	12 June, 2021, Time : 01:30 PM (Local Time)	12 July, 2021, Time : 01:30 PM (Local Time)

All other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.

Prof. (Dr.) Ehsanul Kabir
Project Director
Establishment of Essential Drugs Company Limited (3rd Plant), Gopalganj

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব) এর কার্যালয়

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির কার্যক্রম স্থগিত

নং-৯৩-সি/৭৩৭/৭৫০/৭৪৯/৭৩৮/অনবোর্ড/সিআরডি-৩/২০২১ তারিখঃ ২৩-০৬-২০২১

ঢাকা-কিশোরগঞ্জ-ঢাকা রুটে চলাচলকারী ৭৩৭/৭৫০/৭৪৯/৭৩৮ নং 'এগারসিক্স প্রভাতী/গোধূলী' ট্রেনে অনবোর্ড সার্ভিস বেসরকারি ব্যবস্থাপনায় ন্যস্তকরণ সংক্রান্ত পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি দৈনিক যুগান্তর- তারিখঃ ০৯-৬-২০২১, দৈনিক সমকাল- তারিখঃ ০৯-০৬-২০২১ এবং ডেইলি স্টার তারিখঃ ১০-৬-২০২১ পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত হয়। করোনার প্রাদুর্ভাব বৃদ্ধি পাওয়া, ঢাকার সাথে সারাদেশের দূরপাল্লার যানবাহন চলাচল বন্ধ করে দেয়া হয় এবং সরকার কর্তৃক লকডাউন চলমান থাকায় পুনঃ দরপত্রের বিজ্ঞপ্তির কার্যক্রম এতদ্বারা স্থগিত করা হল।

মোহাম্মদ নাজমুল ইসলাম

চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব)

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

S(21)(184)
GD-1267

Couples must use same surnames

Rules Japan SC

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's top court on Wednesday ruled a law requiring married couples to have the same family name is constitutional, rejecting plaintiffs who sought the right to keep separate surnames, local media said.

The plaintiffs -- three couples -- submitted marriage registration documents with different surnames for wives and husbands in 2018. But municipal governments refused to accept the documents, the Mainichi Shimbun reported.

The plaintiffs argued requiring married couples to choose a single name "is against equality under the law and freedom of marriage, which are guaranteed by the constitution."

The ruling is in line with a 2015 Supreme Court decision that also found the law constitutional but urged MPs to discuss a bill addressing growing calls for flexibility on the issue.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Upazila Engineer

Upazila: Natore Sadar, Dist: Natore

www.lged.gov.bd

Date: 23/06/2021

Memo No. 46.02.6963.000.07.007.20.405

e-Tender Notice: 04/2020-21

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

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tendering method
1	589410	3	4	5
1	589410	e-Tender/Nat-S/Nat/INF-2019-20-506963-01	Construction of Wash Block at Secondary Educational Institutions under Natore Sadar Upazila, District: Natore.	OTM
2	589411	e-Tender/Nat-S/Nat/INF-2019-20-506963-04	Supply of High & Low Bench at Different Secondary Educational Institutions under Natore Sadar Upazila, District: Natore.	OTM
3	589412	e-Tender/Nat-S/Nat/INF-2019-20-506963-02	Construction of Waiting Room for Corona Patients at Upazila Health Complex under Natore Sadar Upazila, District: Natore	OTM
4	589413	e-Tender/Nat-S/Nat/INF-2019-20-506963-03	Supply of modern equipment for co-operative basis to farmers group under Natore Sadar Upazila, District: Natore	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not 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 from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 4:00pm date: 12/07/2021. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and also from e-GP help desk (E-mail: ue.natore-s@lged.gov.bd Or Call to 0771-66636).

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Sk. Md. A. S. Mostafaezur Rahman
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Natore Sadar, Natore
Phone No. 0771-66636
E-mail: ue.natore-s@lged.gov.bd

GD-1266

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA FRIDAY JUNE 25, 2021, ASHAR 11, 1428 BS

When the DAG catches the bribe-takers

Land-related offices need thorough spring-cleaning!

It was by a fluke that the victim of extortion for a routine public service happened to be a Deputy Attorney General (DAG), for which reason the crime was made public. According to our report, two employees of Kushtia Sub-Registrar's Office demanded Tk 30,000 to prepare the deeds of his family land. Even after knowing his identity, the duo persisted and offered a Tk 5,000 concession... so brazen were they about asking for the bribe. Their audacity comes from an entrenched system of rent-seeking and irregularities that has characterised most offices related to land issues. A report by the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has found massive corruption at the district registrar and sub-registrar offices, with people paying bribes from Tk 500 to Tk 5 lakh at every step of the process of getting land-related services.

Digitisation of the entire land administration and management has been suggested by many as a way to curb the corruption. The idea is that all land transactions and land records will be maintained in the digital platform. However, while digitisation can ease some of the problems, experts have warned that it is more important to remove existing anomalies that have been created and sustained for many years. An op-ed in this paper by researchers of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) has pointed out the discrepancies in our land survey records which make digitisation quite challenging. With constantly changing land use and demarcation, regular updating is necessary. And with four different land surveys—none of which were completed—complications are bound to arise with demarcations of land being contested all the time (as different surveys can give different information of ownership).

According to the law, the Revisional Survey record takes precedence but disputes are informally resolved through local arbitrators or land officers. Therefore, there are many loopholes that leave leeway for corruption. So before taking any digitisation initiative, records have to be verified, illegal possession and fake documents have to be done away with, and discrepancies among various documents have to be resolved and made consistent. Otherwise, many errors and fraudulent documents will remain in the system and people will have very little recourse to get them corrected.

In this particular case, it was after the DAG narrated the incident on a Facebook post that the officials of the sub-registrar's office and deed writers called him up to apologise.

Is an apology sufficient to absolve these individuals from this crime? An office assistant has been suspended but it is quite certain that he is way down the ladder in this "unofficial fee structure". This particular incident, where a public official became a victim of the corrupt system leading him to make it public, should be a trigger for the government to get the land office in order. In the long run, all the records and documents have to be verified for authenticity and disputes resolved fairly after proper investigation and then the government can think about digitising, of course, with security measures in place to prevent tampering or hacking into the system. In the short run, however, the government must clamp down on corrupt employees and ensure that people who seek their service are not harassed or made to suffer.

Dengue surge looming amidst Covid-19 surge

Proper initiatives from all stakeholders needed to stamp it out

IT'S disturbing enough that Covid-19 infections continue to rage across the country, but now another life-threatening disease has presented itself following the arrival of monsoon: dengue. Between June 1 and 23, 147 dengue infections were detected in the country, which account for 59.5 percent of all dengue cases recorded in the current year. Aedes mosquitoes, which are carriers of the dengue and chikungunya viruses, find the wet monsoon months to be ideal for breeding, and they breed anywhere there is clean or stagnant water.

The alarming increase in the number of dengue cases in June is especially a cause for concern due to hospitals and healthcare resources already being strained under the country's Covid-19 extended second wave. It goes without saying that if the danger of a dengue surge is allowed to fester, health systems across the country will find it extremely difficult to accommodate and treat all incoming patients. And, as experts have opined, the situation will be particularly critical if a patient is infected with both dengue and Covid-19—a real possibility, given the circumstances.

We believe it is crucial to not only prepare hospitals and healthcare personnel to handle this double threat, but also to make people aware about how easily Aedes larvae can breed all around them and how they can protect themselves from dengue by making sure there are no places or receptacles holding water for too long. We commend the DNCC for "issuing letters to all government, semi-government, autonomous, private organisations and educational institutions to take necessary steps so that Aedes larvae do not get any suitable place to breed" since April—and also for asking, via text messages, 1,700 house owners (where Aedes larvae were detected last year) to destroy the breeding sources of mosquitoes or face stern action. We would urge the two city corporations of Dhaka to step up their anti-mosquito drives, road shows, and "routine spraying of larvicide and adulticide".

At the same time, we urge the health authorities to raise awareness of this growing menace and equip all hospitals in the country accordingly, instead of focusing all their efforts and attention on the capital only. After all, the numbers of dengue patients recorded this year originate from all over the country, and no disease discriminates between districts or divisions.

'A polarised nation is a paralysed one, and we're dangerously headed in that direction'



Prof Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam.

PHOTO COURTESY: SMI

A lot has changed since the start of the pandemic. For many of us, it has come to instantiate the kind of epoch-making events that depend not just life but also perspectives, leaving a profound mark on the civilisation. As a writer and thinker, what has it altered or reinforced about your view of our society?

When the world was reeling under the onslaught of Covid-19 pandemic around this time last year, I was quite heartened to see the beginning of a global conversation about healing humanity and nature. There was strong optimism that nations would reflect on their failure to address inequality, violence and rights abuses, and would put all their efforts in righting the wrongs. From medical scientists to politicians, all pledged their support to ensure the efforts deliver results. We were told that collaborations are the future. For a time, I believed that we too would have some soul-searching and the post-pandemic Bangladesh would see a more caring and compassionate society, although altruism had never been one of our strong points. Nevertheless, I was hoping for a change in our mindsets and in the way we had connected with the less fortunate.

But when I saw inequities and violence against women and children rising and stories emerging of relief goods being sold and Covid-19 test certificates being forged, among many other instances of injustice and corruption aggravating the fallout from the pandemic, I realised that nothing substantial was going to change. Not in the way I, and perhaps many others, had hoped. So I resigned to the sad wisdom of the idiom I first learnt in school: a leopard never changes its spots.

On the brighter side though, the optimist in me found solace in the selfless service and sacrifice of the frontline Covid fighters, in the kindness of people providing food to the hungry and helping Covid patients find hospital beds or get decent burials.

Sadly, the pandemic hasn't changed my worldview for the better.

What's your favourite pandemic quote?

An old one—from *The Plague* by Albert Camus—that sums up humanity's predicament in times of pestilence: "We tell ourselves that pestilence is a mere bog of the mind, a bad dream that will pass away. But it doesn't always pass away and, from one bad dream to another, it is men who pass away."

But isn't tragedy also a time that brings people closer? I ask this because I look around and all I see is the opposite, with deepening polarisation marked by sharply contrasting positions in the ideological architectures of our society. What does this polarisation bode for us and how do we get over it?

To be frank, ours has always been a polarised society, with the rich and the poor, landowners and peasants, factory owners and workers, the urban privileged class and the rural subalterns occupying the two ends of our social and economic spectrum. With capitalism becoming rampant, inequalities between these groups have widened.

In post-independence Bangladesh, there was a realisation that economic and social polarisation should end, but the political and social forces, the main drivers of change, preferred to take the old, beaten track. In the absence

of system overhauls (in governance, judiciary, education, policy planning), the instruments and institutions that would ensure the end of polarisation failed to emerge. And with time, society and politics splintered into opposing and clashing interest groups. The polarisation that resulted was led by the two main political parties which, over time, became rigid, uncompromising and confrontational.

Today, political polarisation has morphed into tribalism which is undermining our democracy, judiciary and governance, and affecting the media environment, academia, workplaces, and even social relations. What is worse is that the traditional providers of checks and balances on the conduct of the government and political parties—such as civil society and the media—have become increasingly partisan. The social media, which has emerged as an alternative platform of public dialogue, has become something like an echo chamber, amplifying the divisiveness, hatred and intolerance that mark our political and social landscapes. Amidst the resulting

see themselves in the role of politicians, becoming minor players in the game of power.

Today, vice-chancellors of public universities are appointed more on the basis of their political affiliation than their academic performance, and it is not unexpected that a few of them have taken advantage of their position to misuse their power. In spite of irrefutable charges of corruption and irregularities, no vice-chancellor has been taken to court. Such immunity emboldens others. So I sadly agree with you that this may be a new normal we have to live with.

Fifteen years ago, no one would have imagined there would be a new frontier in social inequality called "digital divide". Today, it is as ubiquitous and quite as impactful as lack of food, housing, etc. As a teacher who witnessed first-hand how it's been affecting students, what's your take on this?

I see it as an injustice, a denial of the right to education—since online teaching depends on equal access to digital technology and related electronic

Today, political polarisation has morphed into tribalism which is undermining our democracy, judiciary and governance, and affecting the media environment, academia, workplaces, and even social relations. What is worse is that the traditional providers of checks and balances on the conduct of the government and political parties—such as civil society and the media—have become increasingly partisan.

chaos and panic, we tend to forget that a polarised nation is a paralysed one, and we're dangerously headed in that direction.

There is no easy solution for this, but as a teacher I believe education and culture can open the door to a less polarised and more tolerant, just, humane and equitable world. But without a sea change in the way we teach our children and view the role of culture, that door will remain shut.

In a recent interview, you talked about how politicisation of universities has had a dreadful effect on the students, teachers and even vice-chancellors. Let's hear your thoughts on the last group—the VCs—many of whom have made headlines for allegations of corruption and irregularities recently. Is it just a few rotten apples, or are we going to have to accept it as a new normal?

The society expects exemplary behaviour and guiding roles from thought leaders, intellectuals and educators, including the vice-chancellors. Historically, they have met these expectations and played their part in enlightening and leading the society. But in post-independence Bangladesh, especially in the last few decades, there has been a slide in both the performance of these actors and in society's expectations about them. With the politicisation of academia and the rise of partisanship, many academics began to

devices—and lastly, as a failure of the society and the state in imagining and addressing this vital issue. Digital divide, which has been described as the new face of inequality, threatens to become unbridgeable because of the widening geographical (urban-rural) and economic divides. The authorities will have to address this issue on a priority basis, as the use of computers will increase exponentially in the years to come, and going online in every field of activity—from education to domestic travel—will become the norm.

How would you respond to worries about the apparent "degeneration" of today's youth—a term increasingly used in reference to modern lifestyle problems like drug/TikTok addiction, etc.?

When our culture first took a visual turn, I was worried that the youth, without any media literacy, would be lured into a world of make-believe where, in addition to viewing pleasure, they would encounter violence, sexuality and drugs. The arrival of the Internet and social media and the ready availability of drugs have, unfortunately, proved me right. As our economy developed, money flowed, corruption surged, and education became just a key to enter the job market, the safeguards of ethics, good conduct and culture that had largely protected earlier generations from corrupting influences

Syed Manzoorul Islam is a leading scholar and writer in Bangladesh. A retired professor of Dhaka University, he currently teaches at ULAB and is a trustee of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). In this free-flowing interview with Badiuzzaman Bay of The Daily Star, he talks about the larger effects of the pandemic, deepening polarisation in society, politicisation of universities and recent VC scandals, the digital divide, Bangladesh's Covid-19 response, and other issues.

crumbled. We cannot protect young people from Internet predators and cyberbullying as we are unable to protect our banking system from hackers. And it does not need the genius of a Steve Jobs to realise how the mix of drugs and temptations of the TikTok kind can be so dangerous, and how heavy a price we have to pay for the youth's daily exposure to violence and communalism and their disconnect from culture.

Banning any media or putting all the burden on gatekeepers would never work, however. I would rather go back to solutions that our education and culture offer. Bring back purpose and pleasure in education, make culture a means of meaningful self-expression and peer bonding, and revive the forgotten role of the family in walking a child through to adolescence and beyond. Difficult, yes, but not impossible. All it needs is a political will, supported by all stakeholders and the society at large. This is not a choice we have, but an obligation.

What's your thought on how Bangladesh has managed the Covid situation so far?

When the Covid pandemic began to spread, the government reacted with some degree of urgency, shutting down the country and limiting people's movement. These and other measures worked for a while, and I should say, the government did well to contain the first wave of the pandemic. But once the country descended into Covid chaos, things began to unravel. The government succumbed to the pressure of maintaining a fine balance between life and livelihood, and even allowed super-spreader events to take place.

It is now clear that there was no long-term plan to manage the Covid crisis, no well-laid pandemic policy response (which has exposed our vulnerability in the face of new, more infectious variants of the virus), and no roadmap for efficient procurement of equipment and vaccination (for the latter, we put all our eggs in the basket of one supplier). We still don't have enough ICU beds and intubation facilities, and have a shortage of specialist doctors in district hospitals. The problems have been compounded by corruption in the health sector which the health ministry consistently denies.

We could have done better.

Despite our numerous achievements post-independence, especially on the economic front, why do you think we have failed to build a fair and inclusive society even after 50 years?

Our achievements indeed are numerous and the government deserves praise for consolidating growth. But we have failed to build a fair and inclusive society because we have not created equitable opportunities for all the stakeholders. We have allowed gender-based inequities to grow, and failed to allocate resources to the extreme poor. We have allowed communal forces to dominate our politics and pose a threat to the minorities. We have not respected the rights of ethnic minorities who, consequently, feel alienated and ignored. We have not been kind to people with disabilities and children who are employed in our labour force. Above all, we have not invested enough in areas that promote inclusive growth—education, culture, healthcare and social welfare.

Mohiuddin Ahmed: An institution in himself

BLACK, WHITE AND GREY



ALI RIAZ

TO the average reader, Mohiuddin Ahmed is better known as the founder of University Press Limited, a reputed publishing house in the country. However, that describes only a part of his identity, an incomplete one. Limiting his identity to the founding of the UPL ignores his contributions to the world of publishing in Bangladesh and his impacts on Bangladesh studies. It is an understatement that Mohiuddin Ahmed was a pioneer in the publishing scene of Bangladesh, because he was much more than that. The news of Mohiuddin Ahmed's passing is still hard to believe. He breathed his last early Tuesday, at the age of 77. He fought his long-term illness with remarkable courage and fortitude. Neither old age nor illness of one can prepare us for their departure. This is truer in the case of a personality like Mohiuddin Ahmed. His passing is an irreplaceable loss for us all. The news of the demise of people who have, through their work, greatly changed an entire domain not only fills us with sorrow and pain but also reminds us, with greater clarity, how profoundly they impacted the lives of others. The absence of those whose endeavour has opened the door for the creative work and research of others reminds us of their importance in this world, and how badly we need them

now and always. To me, Mohiuddin Ahmed was a person dedicated to bringing the global standard of research, particularly in social sciences, at home. Throughout his life, he has tirelessly worked to introduce research works on Bangladesh, produced in Bangladesh, to the outside world—as well as to familiarise local readers with the research on Bangladesh being done internationally. The impact of his work can be grasped by looking at the books published by the UPL, the breadth of the topics covered, and how it has encouraged new researchers to engage in perceptive works. This is how he has enriched Bangladesh studies, both at home and abroad. For more than 40 years, that is what he has done wholeheartedly, without any respite. His driving forces were neither material success nor any expectation of recognition, but rather his love for his work and a profound sense of duty. He was a soft-spoken person



Mohiuddin Ahmed (1944-2021).

PHOTO: COLLECTED

in Pakistan. Therefore, it was not surprising that he had considered an academic trajectory. However, publishing and editing for the Oxford University Press (OUP) attracted him more. This happened in 1969, and became the turning point of his life. When Mohiuddin Ahmed told me about this episode of his life in London in 1997/98, my spontaneous response was: "Thankfully, you joined the OUP instead of doing a PhD!" With his characteristic smile, he said, "I think so too." Then we talked more about how UPL was founded in 1975 and its journey in becoming the premier publishing house in Bangladesh. No wonder that under his leadership, UPL has won the National Book Centre Award a total of 16 times since 1981.

I often wondered, could anyone else have set the trend of publishing research-based English books in Bangladesh with such commitment? I think not.

The way he built the UPL and devoted himself to the world of publishing was only possible through patience, dedication, and love. In a country where such organisations do not have a history of surviving long, where their untimely demise is considered inevitable, Mohiuddin Ahmed built an institution that Bangladesh can be proud of. In the process of building this institution, he became an institution in himself.

Ali Riaz is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the Illinois State University, a non-resident Senior Fellow of the Atlantic Council, and the President of the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS).

The way he built the UPL and devoted himself to the world of publishing was only possible through patience, dedication, and love.

who preferred to remain behind the scenes. But the history of the publishing industry and its endeavour for quality—both in content and production—cannot be written without his name in it. He is the principal protagonist of the publishing history of the country and he will remain at the centre of it.

His talent and labour propelled him to this position. But above all, he has paved the way for his successors. Those associated with the publishing world in Bangladesh must acknowledge that the lion's share of the credit for Bangladesh's recognition in the

international publishing industry belongs to him. That the books published in Bangladesh now draw the attention of the international community is largely because of his efforts and his attention to the quality of published content. This is where he is unique, and he has carved a space for himself.

His life began with journalism. He was invited to step into the academic world permanently when he was offered admission into a PhD programme at Stanford University. He previously taught in the journalism department of Punjab University

PROJECT SYNDICATE

The G7 Vaccine Charade



JAMES K. GALBRAITH

IN a recent essay on Samantha Power, President Joe Biden's new administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, Michelle Goldberg of the

New York Times writes, correctly, that Power's "first big test... lies in what America does to help vaccinate the rest of the world against Covid-19." And Power herself is quoted as saying that, "It's about a very, very tangible, results-oriented agenda."

Results seemed to follow. At the G7 summit, Goldberg duly reports, Biden announced that the US would contribute 500 million vaccine doses for use in "low- and middle-income countries." According to Goldberg, this "spurred other countries to step up their contributions," ensuring "a billion doses by 2022."

Except that it didn't.

According to the World Health Organization, the actual new commitment was for 870 million additional doses, not a billion, "with the aim to deliver at least half by the end of 2021." In other words, the "aim" would be to get "at least" 435 million additional vaccine doses to the COVAX facility (the international mechanism established to ensure vaccine access in poorer countries) "by 2022." Even if all billion come in over the course of 2022, Agnès Callamard, the Secretary-General of Amnesty International, has called it a "drop in the ocean," made of "paltry half-measures and insufficient gestures." As Gavin Yamey of Duke University summed up the outcome for a *Lancet* working group, the "rich countries behaved worse than anyone's worst nightmares."

And there is a further problem: the G7 commitments are only promises,

and the G7's track record on meeting its promises is not especially good. Here the language of the G7 communiqué is telling: "aim to deliver." Even if one believes that those words were chosen in good faith, they are not exactly precise or categorical.

Today, Africa and India have vaccinated barely 3 percent of their combined populations of about 2.5 billion people. Why is that? The US alone is reputed to have the capacity to produce 4.7 billion doses by the end of 2021—four billion more than America needs. Again, according to Amnesty

Progressive International. Meanwhile, outside the rich-country bubble, the virus can spread, mutate, sicken, and kill.

This is not merely a humanitarian issue. If viruses are not eradicated, they evolve. Already, multiple variants of the coronavirus have appeared. As far as we know, none can overcome the available vaccines. But no one can say for sure that such a variant will not emerge, and the more time lost, the greater the risk—and not merely for the world's poor.

One obvious solution is to get

The US and Europe are offering crumbs, protecting their billionaires, their pharmaceutical lobbies, and their politicians' campaign contributions.

up to five billion doses for the world—enough for India and Africa combined. Meanwhile, Chinese producers are determined to build production sites worldwide, beginning recently in Egypt. And Russia has plans to produce over 850 million doses of Sputnik V in India alone this year. That's just about the same as the entire G7 commitment, and it will happen sooner.

Not everything we read on these matters is necessarily reliable. Not every projection will work out. It may be true, as reported, that the Chinese vaccines are less effective than those produced by Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, and Sputnik V.

But for now, where this is heading is obvious. The US and Europe are offering crumbs, protecting their billionaires, their pharmaceutical lobbies, and their politicians' campaign contributions. Meanwhile, China and Russia have other ideas, and the capacity to realise them. So, before too long, when the back of this pandemic is finally broken, the world will have fresh evidence about who is reliable and who is not.

I would say that all of this is unprecedented, but it's not. In the cold and hungry European winter of 1947-48, Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak foreign minister, pleaded with the US for food shipments. The US dithered, imposing conditions. Klement Gottwald, head of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, appealed to Joseph Stalin, who put 300,000 tons of wheat onto trains. Czechoslovakia fell under full communist control in February 1948.

Samantha Power is right. It is all about tangible results.

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A prop vaccine is seen during a protest of Oxfam activists at a beach near Falmouth, on the sidelines of G7 summit, in Cornwall, Britain, June 11, 2021.

PHOTO: REUTERS/PETER NICHOLLS

International, the G7 will have "three billion doses surplus to requirement by the end [of 2021]."

Where are those doses going? Apparently to wealthy customers. This includes 1.8 billion doses committed to the EU for "booster shots," as reported by Varsha Gandikota-Nellutla of

the hoarded stockpile into arms all around the world. A second would be to waive patent protection and supply restrictions on the Western vaccines, so that they can be produced more rapidly in other countries. If India alone—the world's largest vaccine producer—could overcome current production

difficulties, it could resume exports and start supplying doses to the rest of Asia and to Africa, while meeting its own requirements by the end of this year. And enough doses could be produced to end the pandemic, for practical purposes, by the end of 2022.

In early May, the Biden administration announced its support for a proposal, advanced by India and South Africa, to waive Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) enforcement on Covid-19 supplies, including vaccines. But what does this amount to? So far, just support for negotiations. With whom? Over what?

It was government, not the big drug companies, that underwrote the basic research used to invent these vaccines. The companies have patents only because they were granted as an "incentive" to produce the vaccines. The claim that otherwise they would not do so is absurd: the US government has the power of compulsion under the Defense Production Act, which it has already used to get vaccine production ramped up, including in a way that briefly disrupted Indian production.

Meanwhile, there's China, and at a smaller scale, Russia. China currently is vaccinating more than ten million people per day—an accelerating pace that will cover their entire population this year. In 2022, China could produce

QUOTABLE Quote

MAYA ANGELOU
(1926-2014)
American poet

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Godzilla's home
- 6 Part producers
- 11 Digression
- 12 In the know
- 13 Ties
- 14 Nigeria neighbor
- 15 Scrooge cry
- 16 Badmouths
- 18 Freud topic
- 19 Knight address
- 20 Bauxite, e.g.
- 21 Bakery buy
- 23 Chimes
- 25 Near-eternity
- 27 Summer shirt
- 28 "Get outta here!"
- 30 Sing like Ella
- 33 Stew sphere
- 34 Power, in old

DOWN

- 1 Prattle
- 2 Crumbly cheese
- 3 Primitive picture taker
- 4 Throw in
- 5 Comfy homes
- 6 Berlin-based musical
- 7 Has debts
- 8 Street sights
- 9 Prickly plants
- 10 Reason
- 17 Vault part
- 22 John, in Jersey
- 24 Trumpeter Elgart
- 26 Nine-day devotions
- 28 Pulpit delivery book
- 29 Frank McCourt
- 31 Ark's landing site
- 32 Adds up
- 33 Aspirin targets
- 35 Rhythmic jazz
- 38 Freeway exit
- 42 "The Gold Bug" author

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

J	A	M	S	Q	U	O	T	E
A	L	O	T	S	U	N	D	E
C	O	R	E	L	A	D	D	E
K	E	E	P	P	A	C	E	
A	T	R	I	S	K	C	A	V
R	E	I	N	S	N	O	I	S
C	C	C	I	N	C	I	N	D
S	H	O	E	L	A	C	E	
F	U	T	U	R	E	F	A	C
A	N	O	D	E	S	O	I	N
R	O	P	E	S	T	A	T	S

BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

Toll to go up around 17pc

FROM PAGE 14
next year, sources said.

Contacted, BBA Executive Director Abu Bakr Siddique, also the secretary of Bridges Division, said they decided to increase the toll rate "to some extent".

Replying to another question, he said the average rise in toll for Bangabandhu Bridge would be around 17 percent.

He, however, could not immediately recall the revised toll rate of Mukterpur Bridge. "I have to see the documents. However, the rise is likely to be similar to that of Bangabandhu Bridge."

The 4.8-kilometre Bangabandhu Bridge, which was opened to traffic in 1998, on the Jamuna river is a vital strategic economic road, rail, energy, and telecommunication link between the western and eastern parts of the country.

The project was implemented at a cost of Tk 3,745 crore.

Quader on June 6 told parliament that Tk 6,434 crore was collected as toll from vehicles using the Bangabandhu Bridge till May this year since its inauguration 23 years ago.

In his scripted answer to a question from an MP, the minister said Tk 4,104.21 crore was spent as operational and maintenance costs and also for payment of DSL (debt service liability) of the bridge during that period. The loan taken from development partners for the construction of the bridge would be repaid by 2034, he added.

On the other hand, BBA opened 1.52km Mukterpur Bridge over the Daleshwari in 2008. The bridge was built under a Tk 208.35 crore project to connect Munshiganj with Dhaka and Narayanganj.

REVISED TOLL RATE

As per the Bangabandhu Bridge toll rate revised in 2011, a motorcycle now pays Tk 40, car Tk 500, minibus Tk 650, bus Tk 900, small truck Tk 850, and large truck Tk 1,400 for using the structure.

The BBA attempted to increase the rate twice, but in vain. When it placed a revised toll proposal in November last year, the BBA broad did not endorse it considering the pandemic situation in the country.

The toll hike proposal for Mukterpur Bridge was also rejected at that meeting.

As per the present rate, a motorcycle pays Tk 10, an auto-rickshaw Tk 20, a car Tk 40, a minibus Tk 100, a bus Tk 200, a small truck Tk 150 and a large truck Tk 500 to cross the bridge.

Yesterday, the BBA again placed the toll hike proposal before the board. It

proposed raising the toll rate by 10 to 50 percent.

For Bangabandhu Bridge, it proposed a toll of Tk 50 for bike, Tk 550 for car, Tk 750 for minibus, Tk 1,000 for bus and small truck, and Tk 1,600 for large truck.

On the other hand, the BBA proposed a toll of Tk 30 for auto-rickshaw, Tk 50 for car, Tk 150 for minibus, Tk 250 for bus, Tk 200 for small truck and Tk 600 for large truck for using Mukterpur Bridge. It, however, proposed keeping the toll for bikes unchanged.

An official, who was aware of the meeting, said the BBA board discussed the toll issue elaborately and the road transport minister suggested reducing some rates.

Quader also said the revised rate should not be introduced before October this year, the official told The Daily Star wishing not to be named.

WHAT TRANSPORT OWNERS SAY
Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, said they were not aware of any move regarding hiking of the toll rate.

"Our business has already taken a hit from the pandemic. Amid such a situation, raising the toll rate without holding talks with us is not appropriate at all," he told this newspaper yesterday.

Rustam Ali Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Truck-Covered-Van Owners Association, said if the operational costs of vehicles go up, the fares of truck and covered van will rise as well.

Asked about the matter, Abu Bakr Siddique said they have to depend on the toll revenue for bearing the maintenance costs of the two bridges, repay loans, and collect funds for two new projects.

"The toll hike proposal was placed before the last meeting [in November 2020]. But it was not approved then and the BBA was asked to place the proposal before the next meeting. So we have placed the proposal before the board meeting today [yesterday] and got the approval," he told The Daily Star.

Although there was a restriction on movement of long-haul buses in the first 24 days of May, a total of 826, 216 vehicles used the Bangabandhu Bridge that month and the BBA collected record 57.68 crore as toll, show documents.

The authority collected 1.72 crore as toll from Mukterpur Bridge last month.



Afghan Taliban hand over their weapons to the Afghan government as they join the peace program in Herat province, Afghanistan yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

They'll get payment after delivering items

FROM PAGE 1
merchants from whom it bought products.

Besides, Evaly owes another Tk 73 crore to customers in their digital wallets. But the company has only Tk 2 crore in deposits in 10 banks.

With its assets, Evaly can repay only one-third of its liabilities to customers.

And the constant rise in liabilities puts the organisation at the risk of collapsing, the report said, while raising concern on nine other e-commerce sites including Alesha Mart and Dhamaka Shopping.

This prompted Brac Bank, Bank Asia and Dhaka Bank to suspend the use of cards for making purchases on the 10 e-commerce sites.

The other sites are E-orange, Sirajganj Shop, Aladiner Prodig, Qoom, Boom Boom, Adyen Mart and Needs.

City Bank, United Commercial Bank and LankaBangla Finance also

notified their customers that they will not be held liable for any fraud while purchasing goods on the e-commerce sites using their cards.

Then in a meeting yesterday at the commerce ministry -- which was attended by representatives of the BB, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, the National Board of Revenue, home affairs' ministry, the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB), MFS operators and banks -- the decision to hold payment came.

The move though can prove to be a hammer blow to the business model of Evaly, which is centred on taking payment from customers in advance.

However, Evaly welcomes the commerce ministry decision, said Mohammad Rassel, its chief executive officer.

The new payment mechanism was a proposal of the e-CAB to curb the anomalies by a section of the

e-commerce platforms in the country, said its President Shomi Kaiser.

The decision will bring back discipline in the sector, said AKM Fahim Mashroor, chief executive of AjkerDeal, a leading e-commerce site.

"However, I think this decision should only apply to companies against which allegations have been made. Otherwise, many good e-commerce platforms will be in trouble."

If it is applied to all, there should be exemptions for certain small amount transactions, he added.

However, no decision was taken at the meeting yesterday of what actions would be taken, if any, against Evaly and the other e-commerce companies, according to Rahman.

Asked why the ministry did not take a call on the 10 e-commerce sites, he said: "The aim of the meeting was to prevent further anomalies by the e-commerce sites in future."

11 nations decline aid to Pakistan

FROM PAGE 14
that nations intend to give Pakistan or its refugees in India. It does, however, hold up several hundred million dollars in development funds on which Pakistan President Yahya Khan's regime had been counting.

In the previous year in which normal aid flowed -- the budget year ending June 30, 1970 -- Pakistan received \$316 million from the donors.

In addition, it was learned, the IMF decided for now against giving the central government a \$250 million package of foreign exchange that the Fund had been considering.

The Paris consensus was reached with the assent of the United States, despite strong urgings to the contrary from some US quarters. Washington's ambassador to Pakistan, Joseph S Farland, was known to believe the donor nations should meet soon to pledge assistance to greater influence the central government and lessen its dependence on China.

But the Paris meeting concluded that no early gathering of the aid

consortium should be held because it would openly confirm the widespread opposition to assistance now.

According to reliable sources, Belgium, Canada and Britain argued strongly in Paris that public opinion in their countries deeply opposed aid to Pakistan and that none should be forthcoming until Yahya's regime reestablished civilian rule in East Pakistan.

CHOLERA CASES AND DEATHS DOUBLED

The World Health Organization said today that there had been 64,924 cholera cases and 10,595 deaths from cholera, throughout the world so far, more than double the figures for the same period in 1970.

The most serious outbreak of the disease is in West Bengal where 24,394 cases and 3,588 deaths were recorded up to June 20 among Bangladeshi refugees.

PROTEST RALLY BEFORE US EMBASSY

A protest rally of Bangladeshis, led by KM Shehabuddin, representative

of the Bangladesh government and former second secretary to the Pakistan High Commission in India, was held in front of the US embassy in New Delhi. The demonstrators handed a memorandum to the US embassy officials. The memorandum urged the US government "to stop ships from proceeding to Pakistani ports and to take back the weapons. We can assure you that by such an act, the great American people will earn the lasting gratitude of our emerging nation at the critical juncture for helping it to protect democracy and the most basic human freedom and the lives of millions".

TAMABIL AND JAFLOM FREED

Two companies of EPR under the command of Subedar Major BR Chowdhury attacked Pakistan army locations at Tamabil and Jaflo. After a fierce fight, the Bangladeshi forces succeeded to free the two important areas. Two freedom fighters embraced martyrdom in the operation.

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

Journalist stabbed

FROM PAGE 14
the journalist wrote some reports which reportedly left Mirza, mayor of Basurhat municipality, irked. They alleged that Mirza at a public rally even threatened that he would break Suvash's leg.

The Daily Star could not verify this claim.

Around 12:45pm yesterday, some 40-45 people, all followers of Mirza, stormed into the journalist's home in Sahajadpur village of Companiganj, said the family.

Some of them beat up Suvash with iron rods and some stabbed him.

As Baby and Promit tried to save the journo, they were beaten as well.

As neighbours gathered outside the house hearing cries for help, the attackers left.

Suvash was rescued and taken to Noakhali General Hospital. His mother and son were at the local health complex.

"We have found critical injury marks on Suvash's head, hands and legs," said Syed Mohiuddin Abdul Azim, resident medical officer of the general hospital.

Companiganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge Saif Uddin Anwar said, "We will take legal action after receiving a written complaint."

This correspondent tried to contact Quader Mirza over cell phone repeatedly yesterday, but he did not

pick the calls.

His personal assistant Shadat Shahed said they were not linked with the incident. He said Suvash was a "journalist paid by the Quader Mirza's rival group."

"We have heard that Suvash has come under attack. But we don't know the attackers and we don't have any connection with the incident," said Shahed.

Meanwhile, the upazila administration yesterday enforced section 144 in Basurhat municipality area for 12 hours from 12:00pm as two groups of local AL convened rallies at the same time -- at 3:00pm -- and at the same place -- Rupali Chhattar.

One group is led by Mirza and the other by Mizanur Rahman Badal, organising secretary of upazila unit AL, also a follower of Mohammed Ekramul Karim Chowdhury, lawmaker of Noakhali-4 constituency.

As per section 144, no one was allowed to hold any rally, said Ziaul Haque Mir, upazila nirbahi officer of Companiganj.

Mirza came to limelight after making comments against corruption and misdeeds committed by AL men in Noakhali and Feni a few months ago. He also repeatedly criticised his brother Obaidul Quader and his wife.

This made the political situation in Companiganj volatile triggering multiple deadly clashes.

Complainants have to provide

FROM PAGE 14
a short order following a writ petition filed by a businessman, Ekramul Ahsan Kanchan, who has been implicated in 49 criminal cases, seeking necessary directives to identify the informants and complainants.

On that day, the HC bench has ruled that the informants and complainants must submit the photocopies of their national identity cards and phone numbers to the police stations or courts when they file cases.

The court ordered the Criminal Investigation Department of police to enquire into the 49 criminal cases filed against Ekramul to find the informants and complainants. The CID has also been asked to submit the enquiry report to the HC within 60 days.

Besides, the court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain why they should not be directed to find the informants and complainants of the cases filed against Ekramul.

In the full text of the order, the HC bench ruled that the police officers concerned will follow other relevant procedures of their own consideration to identify the informants if their national identity cards or passports are not available.

The lawyers concerned of the complainants will identify them

(complaints) when they file cases with tribunals or courts if they have no national identity cards or passports, the HC said in the full text of order.

In the order, the HC judges said if the informants and complainants are foreign citizens or expatriates, they must mention the numbers of passports of the countries concerned while filing the cases.

On June 14, petitioner Ekramul's lawyers Zainul Abedin and Enamul Hoque Bosir told The Daily Star that 49 criminal cases have been filed with different police stations and courts across the country against their client Ekramul, a businessman from the capital's Shantinagar, on various charges, including murder, rape, torture of women, extortion and human trafficking, in last 11 years.

Ekramul has been acquitted and exempted of 36 cases and trial proceedings of the rest are running, the lawyers said, adding that their client has suffered in jail for over eight years in connection with 40 cases.

They said Ekramul is now out on bail. Ekramul told The Daily Star that a group has filed "fake" cases against him in 13 districts in order to grab his land, house and factory. "I don't know the complainants and informants by face," he said.

Slipping back

FROM PAGE 14
He also alleged that the houses were poorly built and the officials have misappropriated the funds.

Fifty-five-year-old Aysha Begum, another resident, said, "If these houses get inundated after a little rain, what will happen during actual floods? Where will we go?"

She added that the inundated toilet and kitchen make it particularly harder for women to live there.

Contacted, Mahmuda Parveen, who was the UNO of Shajahanpur during the construction of the houses, said, "We didn't have any other land where we could build the houses for the homeless. When we constructed the houses, the land was dry. The local chairman told us that they would make system to drain the water from the place."

However, she refuted the allegations of corruption and said the houses were well-built.

Asif Ahmed, who is the current UNO, said, "We arranged a primary school building where the residents will be taken for the time being. There is a canal called Danguli. Locals blocked the canal at seven places... We have cleared the canal. Hopefully, the water will be drained [through the canal] soon."

Man returns

FROM PAGE 14
said Ratan and dozens of his accomplices went to a disputed land in the capital's Hazaribagh area on June 4 and fired three bullets at a man who claims to be the owner of the land.

They were hired by Abdul Hashem, the other man who claims ownership of the land, said the officer.

"In primary interrogation, Ratan and Arman admitted that they took part in the attack," he added.

Police have arrested Hashem and are looking for the others accused in a case filed with Hazaribagh Police Station over the incident.

Officials said Ratan was wanted in at least 25 separate cases.

Saiful Islam, additional deputy commissioner (Mirpur zone) of DB, said in 1996, Ratan hurled a bomb at a procession in Hazaribagh and killed a man named Sanu. Ratan was arrested and convicted.

Soon after he got released, Ratan got involved in extortion and other criminal activities and got arrested by Lalbagh police in an arms case, he added.

Saiful said Ratan got married in 2018 and has two children.

Hubble Telescope

FROM PAGE 14
their vast force, would simply devour everything that came close to it, the accretion of material releases huge amounts of radiation, releasing heat and light.

Scientists put together this image using a composite of light from different parts of the spectrum, which revealed a "fascinating secret". Using Hubble's Wide Field Camera 3 (WFC3), scientists can capture our universe in ultraviolet, visible, and near-infrared light.

This galactic phenomenon is relatively uncommon, though, as Seyfert galaxies only account for ten percent of all galaxies in the known universe.

Hubble's space telescope is not without its own drama, however. Recently, NASA had to restart the spacecraft after a computer glitch put it, and all its scientific instruments, into safe mode.

The main computer stopped receiving the "keep-alive" signal, a standard "handshake" (a way of establishing a connection) between the payload and the spacecraft's main computers. It is set to be soon replaced by the James Webb Space Telescope, which NASA will send into orbit on 31 October aboard an Ariane 5 rocket.

This will give scientists the opportunity to look back 150 million to 1 billion years after time began -- something that has been previously inaccessible to them with Hubble.

Philippines grounds Black Hawk fleet after deadly crash

AFP, Manila

The Philippines grounded its entire fleet of Black Hawk helicopters yesterday after one of the new aircraft crashed during a night-time training flight, killing all six on board.

Three pilots and three airmen died when their S70-i went down near the Crow Valley training range north of Manila on Wednesday, Defence Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said.

"The entire Black Hawk fleet are grounded while the incident is being investigated," Lorenzana said.

The country ordered 16 of the multi-role aircraft from a Polish firm that made them under licence from the Sikorsky division of US defence manufacturer Lockheed Martin.

Eleven have been delivered since late 2020. The government bought the Black Hawks to replace the air force's ageing fleet of Bell UH-1H helicopters, commonly known as the Huey. Many of them were acquired as surplus from the United States, Manila's longtime military ally.

Brazil sets record as 3rd wave breaks

FROM PAGE 14
states such as Sao Paulo predicting shots for all adults by September.

The government of President Jair Bolsonaro is under scrutiny for delays and alleged misconduct in obtaining vaccines, having failed to respond to early offers from Pfizer last year.

The government instead struck a deal for more an expensive vaccine made by India's Bharat Biotech.

A Senate committee is probing allegations related to Bharat

amid a wider investigation of the government's response.

A Brazilian health ministry official told prosecutors he faced internal pressure from an aide to then-health minister Eduardo Pazuello to buy the Bharat shot.

In a press briefing on Wednesday, Bolsonaro's Secretary of the Presidency Onyx Lorenzoni said there had been no influence peddling in the Bharat deal and the vaccines were not overpriced.

The ministry did not respond

to request for comment about the allegations.

On Wednesday, the committee also called representatives of Facebook, Google and Twitter to testify before the committee as it weighs possible crimes related to misinformation online about Covid-19.

RUSSIA'S DELTA SPIKE

The pandemic has killed at least 3,893,974 people since the virus first emerged in December 2019, according to an AFP compilation of official data yesterday.

Brazil maintain their prefect record

AGENCIES



Brazil continued their winning romp through the Copa America Wednesday, eking out a controversial 2-1 victory against Colombia after struggling most of the match to answer a magnificent bicycle-kick goal by Luis Diaz.

The 11th-hour win gave the "Selecao" a perfect nine points from three matches in the South American championships, and extended their current winning streak to 11 matches.

However, the victory was steeped in controversy: Brazil's second-half equalizer, a Roberto Firmino header, was preceded by a Neymar pass that glanced off Argentine referee Nestor Pitana.

Colombia heatedly argued afterward that play should have been stopped, but Pitana ruled neither side was hindered and allowed the match to continue.

Disgruntled Colombia fans on social media turned the referee's name into a viral hashtag, joking he had played as



Brazil had already qualified for the quarter-finals from Group B and with four points from four games, Colombia join them. Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela are vying for the last two spots from the group. In Sunday's final group games, Ecuador face Brazil on Monday (3am, Bangladesh Time) while Peru play Venezuela (Monday, 3am, Bangladesh Time).

"Brazil's 12th man."

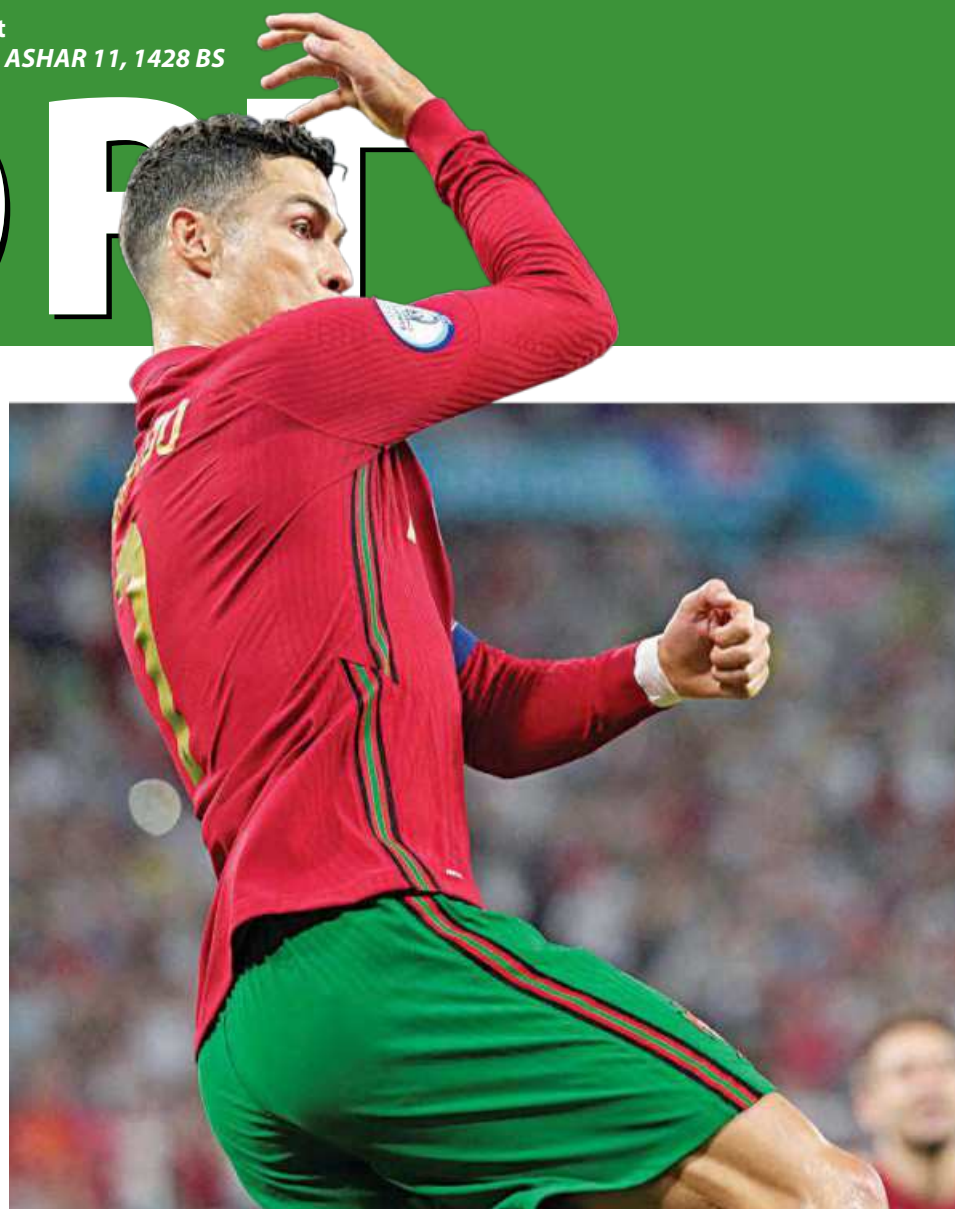
The resentment only grew when an unmarked Casemiro headed in the winner deep into stoppage time. However, Colombia, who are second in Group B with four points from four matches, still secured a spot in the quarter-finals.

Captain Casemiro however said Brazil fully deserved the three points.

"Brazil deserve congratulations for their mental strength, for being well on top, and getting our reward in the end because we had the coolness to keep plugging away in search of a goal," he added. "That's the mentality you have to have."

"They came forward once, scored a goal, sat back and it turned into a game of attack against defence."

In the early match, Ecuador and Peru failed to settle who advances to the quarter-finals, drawing 2-2 in Goiania.



PROLIFIC RONALDO in line to break more records

AGENCIES

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 109th goal for Portugal in Wednesday's Euro 2020 game against France to equal former Iran striker Ali Daei's all-time international record.

The 36-year-old Ronaldo, the leading scorer in European Championship history, converted his second penalty of the game in Budapest to match the record in his 178th international appearance.

Ronaldo has already broken a few records playing at the Euro 2020. He became the only player to have played

"Congratulations to @cristiano who is now one goal away from breaking the men's international goal scoring record. I am honoured that this remarkable achievement will belong to Ronaldo - great champion of football and caring humanist who inspires and impacts lives throughout the world."

ALI DAEI WROTE ON INSTAGRAM

"The true champions are champions forever. I'm very proud to read such kind words from a big idol like you. Thank you, Ali Daei."

RONALDO THANKED ALI DAEI ON INSTAGRAM

at five Euros and has also scored in every Euro he has taken part in, making him the only player to score in five different Euros. Ronaldo was tied with Michel Platini on nine Euro goals as the highest goalscorer in the tournament. He took that record for himself, having scored five goals already in three games. He now has 14 goals to his name and is well clear of Platini.

At 36 years, 130 days, Ronaldo also became the oldest player to score for Portugal at a major tournament, breaking the record set by Pepe at World Cup 2018 (35 years, 124 days), when he scored against Hungary.

But that's not the end. The superstar is in line to create a few more records during the course of the tournament, with Portugal expected to go deep into the competition.

It is highly probable that Ronaldo will surpass Iran's Ali Daei and become the player with most international goals. Having already equalled Daei's record of 109 international goals, Ronaldo could overtake him when Portugal face Belgium next in the last 16 of Euro on June 28.

The prolific scorer could also become the player with most assists in Euros. Currently, the record for the most assists made in Euros belongs to Karel Poborsky who is on eight assists. However, Ronaldo is only one away with seven assists.

In terms of caps, Sergio Ramos has 180 caps for Spain and is the highest-capped European international. Ronaldo has 178 caps after the France match and if Portugal progress to the semifinal, he will have broken Ramos' record.

ROUND OF 16



EURO 2020 is down to the knockout stage, with the 24 qualifiers now 16 as they are whittled down to the side that lifts the trophy on July 11. All the fixtures have now been confirmed after Wednesday night's thrilling conclusion to Group F as a late goal in Munich saw Germany go through after a dramatic 2-2 draw with Hungary, while Portugal qualified as one of the best third-placed teams thanks to their 2-2 draw with France. England will play old rivals Germany in the Round of 16 at Wembley Stadium. Cristiano Ronaldo and Co will take on Belgium in the other stand-out Round of 16 tie in Bilbao.

GROUP WINNERS:

Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, England, Sweden and France.

GROUP RUNNERS-UP:

Wales, Denmark, Austria, Croatia, Spain and Germany.

BEST THIRD-PLACED TEAMS:

Switzerland, Czech Republic, Ukraine and Portugal.

ROUND OF 16 TIES

June 26: Wales vs Denmark (10pm, Amsterdam)

June 27: Italy vs Austria (1am, London)

June 27: Netherlands vs Czech Republic (10pm, Budapest)

June 28: Belgium vs Portugal (1am, Seville)

June 28: Croatia vs Spain (10pm, Copenhagen)

June 29: France vs Switzerland (1am, Bucharest)

June 29: England vs Germany (10pm, London)

June 30: Sweden vs Ukraine (1am, Glasgow)

***ALL TIMES ARE IN BANGLADESH STANDARD TIMES



Germany coach Joachim Loew and Leon Goretzka are all smiles after the match as a late Goretzka goal salvaged a 2-2 draw for Germany against Hungary on Wednesday night, in a whip-saw contest that sets the Germans up for Round-16 match against England at Wembley. PHOTO: REUTERS



Sheikh Jamal batsman Mohammad Ashraful celebrates after his unbeaten 72-run knock helped his side to secure a six-wicket victory against Abahani in the Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier Division T20 Super League match in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Mohammedan lose again

SPORTS REPORTER



With the Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier Division T20 Cricket League coming close to its conclusion, few of the national team players found morale-boosting runs ahead of the series against Zimbabwe.

Gazi Group condemned Mohammedan Sporting to their fourth successive defeat in the Super League phase as Mahedi Hasan relished an opportunity to bat in the opening slot, blazing a 58-ball 92 before capsizing in the final over. Gazi seized victory with three wickets and as many deliveries in

hand. Liton Das, struggling for from and also missing much of the premier league through injury, showed deft touches mixed with powerful strokes during a 51-ball 70 for Abahani but the title contenders' 173 for 7 was upstaged by Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi's Mohammad Ashraful, who hit an unbeaten 48-ball 72. Nurul Hasan also continued his good vein with the bat during a 22-ball 36 as Sheikh Jamal won by six wickets.

Table toppers Prime Bank were bundled out for 126 against Prime Dolshwar and their match against Abahani on the final match day will decide the title.

'The worthy champions'

AGENCIES



New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and its greatest cricketer Richard Hadlee led the tributes on

Thursday after the Black Caps claimed the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) by beating India.

Kane Williamson's team became Test cricket's first official world champions after prevailing by eight wickets in Southampton on Wednesday, the reserve day of a match plagued by bad weather.

"The Black Caps have made New Zealand proud. This was a masterful performance from a team at the top of their game and on top of the world," Ardern said in a statement.

New Zealand have been to the semi-final of the 50-over World Cup eight times and lost the last two finals, in heartbreaking fashion to England on the boundary countback rule after the 2019 decider was tied.

Throughout those setbacks, New Zealand have continued to play in a spirit sometimes derided as "nice guy" cricket.

More importantly, they have won all but one match, a draw,

in four Test series since a 3-0 drubbing in Australia around the turn of 2020.

"Over the past two years, the Black Caps performances in the Test arena have been outstanding with Test match and series wins at home and abroad," the 69-year-old Hadlee said in a statement.

"The whole team has shown a high degree of professionalism. Their skill sets have complemented each other to make them a complete playing unit. "It's fair to say that this current group of players is the best in our history."

Kiwis dominated global headlines and Indian media

outlets also praised the Black Caps as worthy champions.

Former England international Mike Atherton described them as a "humble, hardworking and outstanding Test team - worthy champions", while former Kiwi cricketer Scott Styris tweeted it was a "sensational performance".

The Telegraph commended New Zealand's discipline and dominance and it also pointed out the rise of Kyle Jamieson.

Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar said New Zealand deserved their victory. "Congrats @BLACKCAPS on winning the #WTC21. You were the superior team," Tendulkar wrote on Twitter.



New Zealand's pace quartet-- Kyle Jamieson, Tim Southee, Trent Boult, and Neil Wagner-- was relentless and never let the Indian batsmen settle down in both the innings of the WTC final. PHOTO: TWITTER

BANGABANDHU BRIDGE Toll to go up around 17pc

Bridge authority also hikes toll of Mukterpur bridge to meet maintenance cost, repay loans

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) has decided to raise the toll rate of Bangabandhu Bridge by around 17 percent aiming to boost its income for covering maintenance costs and repaying loans.

The authority has also decided to increase the toll rate of Mukterpur Bridge in Munshiganj for the first time since its inauguration in 2008.

The BBA board, chaired by Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, made the decisions at its 110th meeting yesterday, officials said.

However, the revised toll rate has to be approved by the prime minister before being implemented. Once approved, the new rate may be introduced from October, they added.

The move comes at a time when the country is witnessing a second wave of Covid-19 and the fare of buses has already been increased by 60 percent to run those at half their capacity.

The fresh initiative may further increase fares of transport which would use the two bridges.

Meanwhile, the BBA board did not approve a toll rate proposal for the under-construction Padma Bridge as the project work has not been completed yet.

The meeting decided to fix the rate three or four months before the opening of the bridge to traffic, likely in June

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1



Two people of Pallipara Manikdipa Ashrayan project in Bogura's Shajahanpur waded through almost knee-deep water as rain inundated the road connecting their homes. In January, the local administration handed over nine houses to the same number of homeless families as a gift marking Mujib Borsho.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Slipping back to uncertainty

Houses given as PM's gift to nine homeless people inundated after moderate rain

MOSTAFA SHABUI, Bogura

A homeless freedom fighter and eight others, who have been blessed with a cluster of houses in Shajahanpur, Bogura, have found that even moderate rains can leave their new houses completely flooded.

Thanks to the rains last week, even the front and back yards of the houses, given to the homeless people as a gift from the prime minister, are still under water, causing unbearable suffering to the residents.

The houses were built under the Ashrayan Prokolpo-2 at a cost of Tk 15.39 lakh by the Department of Disaster Management in 2020. The nine individuals, including six widows, moved in six months ago.

Locals said it was no surprise that the houses have been flooded, because the low-lying piece of land, on which these have been built, always got flooded during monsoon. Some said they pointed this out to the officials at the outset, but the latter didn't pay heed to their advice.

"We are suffering a lot. There is water inside. Our toilets, and tube wells have been inundated. We have to wade through knee-deep water if we want to leave the neighbourhood," said 68-year-old freedom fighter Hujur Ali.

"We are homeless, the prime minister gifted us the houses, but they made these on a piece of land where nobody can live in monsoon. Where will we go now?" he asked.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 6

CRIMINAL CASES

Complainants have to provide proof of identity

HC issues five directives in full text of its order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court in a full text of an order has issued five directives to ensure that the identities of informants and complainants of criminal cases are recorded.

The informants and complainants must submit photocopies of their national identity cards, or passports and their numbers to the police stations or courts concerned when they file cases so that police can find them during investigation.

If any informant or complaint doesn't have national identity cards, the photocopy of the ID card of the person, who identifies the informant or complaint, must be submitted to the police station or court concerned during filing of the case, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman said in the full text of the order.

The bench released the two-page order on Wednesday.

On June 14, the HC bench delivered

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

11 nations decline aid to Pakistan



Demonstration before American Embassy in New Delhi on June 25, 1971, by Bangladeshis led by KM Shehabuddin, diplomatic representative of the exiled Bangladesh government.

JUNE 25, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

AID POSTPONED

The major aid-giving nations, led by the World Bank, quietly agreed to postpone indefinitely any new economic assistance for Pakistan.

The 11 donors reached a consensus at a meeting on June 21, 1971 in Paris, it was learned today. The informal decision was taken after a mission from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund reported after a visit that Pakistan was in administrative and economic shambles.

The agreement would not affect the humanitarian assistance

SEE PAGE 12 COL 3

Journalist stabbed by 'followers of Quader Mirza' 2 family members beaten up

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A local journalist was stabbed and his mother and son were beaten up in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila yesterday.

The family alleged that the attackers were followers of Abdul Quader Mirza, brother of Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader.

Mirza's associates, however, claimed that they were not involved in the incident.

The injured are Prashanta Suvash Chandra, 47, his mother Baby Rani, 70, and his son Promit, 20. Suvash is Companiganj upazila correspondent of Dainik Bangladesh Samachar and chief reporter of a local online portal named Chalaman Somoy.

His family members said

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

Hubble Telescope spots distant galaxy with 'fascinating secret'



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Hubble Space Telescope has captured an image of a spiral galaxy that is hiding a supermassive black hole at its centre.

Galaxy NGC 3254 is a "Seyfert galaxy", a collection of planets and stars defined by their extremely active centres, located approximately 118 million light-years from Earth.

The black hole at its core, with its huge gravitational power, can pull gas, dust, stars and planets, around in space - captured by Hubble using both visible and infrared light.

While one might assume that black holes, with

SEE PAGE 12 COL 6



PRAYER TIMING JUNE 25

Fajr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-30 5-00 6-54 8-17
JAMAAT 4-20 1-15 5-15 6-57 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Man returns to world of crime after 23yrs in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After his 22-year sentence for murder ended, Rafiqul Islam was released in 2017.

But in 2019, he was arrested again in an arms case filed with Lalbagh Police Station in the capital and was sent to jail for a year.

Rafiqul, who goes by the alias Ratan, spent 23 years of his 45-year life behind bars. However, while investigating an incident of gun violence that took place earlier this month, the Detective Branch of police again arrested Ratan in Savar on Wednesday, said AKM Hafiz Akhtar, additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Police recovered a pistol with a magazine, a revolver, two bullets and a motorcycle from Ratan and his associate Arman's possession.

At a press briefing at DMP's media centre, Hafiz Akhtar yesterday

SEE PAGE 12 COL 6



A yellow-wattled lapwing spotted in the capital's Purbachal recently. It is found mainly on the dry plains and has a sharp call and is capable of fast flight. Around Dhaka city, the only reported place where this species is found is the Purbachal area.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SM BASITUR ROSHID

DAILY COVID CASES Brazil sets record as 3rd wave breaks

Russia's daily infections, deaths hit six-month highs

AGENCIES

Brazil set a new record for Covid-19 infections with 115,228 new cases identified within 24 hours, the health ministry said on Wednesday, confirming the arrival of a third wave of the pandemic.

During the same period 2,392 new deaths were recorded, bringing the total to 507,109.

Brazil is the second worst-hit in the world in absolute numbers of fatalities, behind the United States which has suffered more than 600,000 deaths.

The largest country in Latin America, with 212 million inhabitants, Brazil has a total of 18,169,881 confirmed Covid cases, according to official figures, which many specialists considered an underestimate.

The number of daily infections has been rising steadily for more than a month and the average death rate has been around 2,000 per day since last week.

"With this continual acceleration in the number of cases, we are already in the third wave," said Carlos Lula, president of the National Council of Health Secretaries (Conass), which brings together health authorities from the countries various states, told the daily O Globo.

The country has been slow to roll out vaccines with only 12% of Brazilians fully immunized, according to the ministry data. Efforts have accelerated recently, with certain

SEE PAGE 12 COL 3

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Leather bags produced by eco-friendly factory built on 271 decimal land in Gazipur are being exported to Europe and America. The current annual production is 3 million units which will increase further in the coming years.



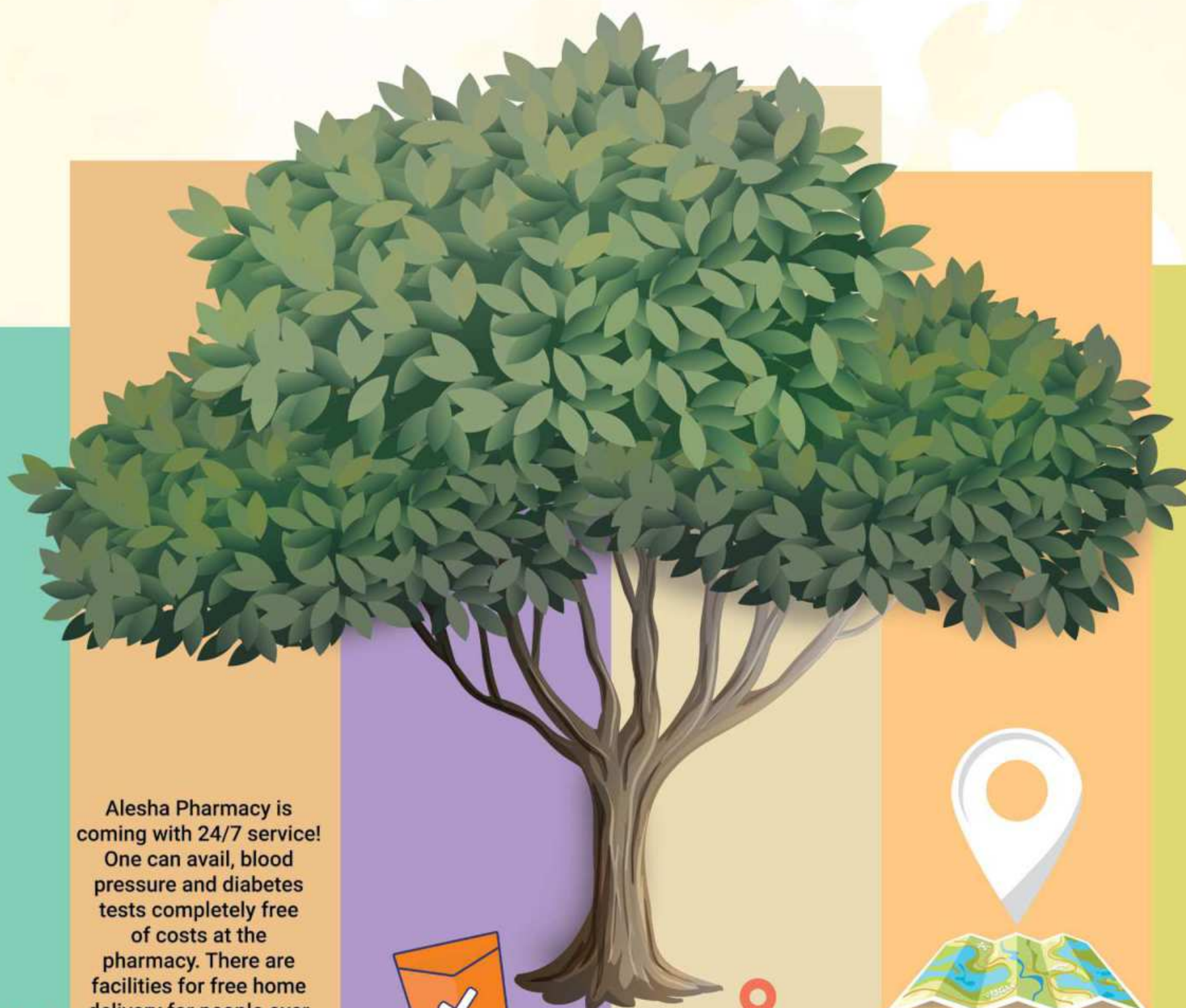
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**INSTANT
SALARIES**



Alesha Ride the most secured ride sharing app. With facilities of IP camera, IP sound tracker and dedicated security team we will ensure the safety of our passengers. The main objective of Alesha Ride is to provide the safest and relaxing ride to our valuable customers.

**ALESHA
RIDE**



Alesha Mart is not only seeking profit but also here to serve people. Already created jobs for 50,000 people and generated opportunities for around 22,000 small businesses. For the first time ever in the e-commerce sector of Bangladesh, Alesha Mart introduced physical customer care centres which are placed in the major locations throughout the country. In addition, Alesha Mart has become the first-ever to create an e-commerce motorbike delivery point for online orders.

**ALESHA
MART**



We are always seeking to engage and encourage the youth and young talents of the country. So we are supporting the next generation by signing an agreement for 1 year with the National Newspaper Olympiad for all of their activities and also assisting them in hosting the Alesha Mart Presents NNO Season-2 National Round.

**SUPPORTING
THE YOUTH**

HOME SERIES TITLE SPONSORSHIP

Alesha Holdings Limited has become the title sponsor of Bangladesh Cricket Team for all the home ODI series till 2023. We have joined with the Tigers to motivate them and share the excitement with the people of this country. We believe it by heart that with proper support, Bangladesh cricket will be more prosperous and the team will be able to continue its winning streak in the international arena.

