DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 28, 2021





SEE PAGE 6

"The Amnesty International's statement on the Digital Security Act in Bangladesh is motivated. INFORMATION MINISTER HASAN MAHMUD

"Our role in Iraq will be ... to train, to assist, to help (Iraqi forces) and to deal with ISIS as it arises... JOE BIDEN ON ENDING US COMBAT MISSION IN IRAQ



"The security situation in Afghanistan remains deeply challenging, and requires a negotiated settlement." NATO CHIEF JENS STOLTENBERG URGES 'NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT' IN AFGHANISTAN

Lockdown to get stricter

May also be extended; govt won't allow factories to run

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The government has turned down the plea from businesspeople, including garment manufacturers, for letting them resume operation of factories, fearing a further surge in Covid deaths and infections.

Moreover, it has decided to make stricter the ongoing lockdown till August 5 to stem the transmission of the virus that has left the health sector in disarray, said sources.

A primary decision has also been made to extend the lockdown beyond August 5 if Covid infections continue to surge

If the infection rate starts to decline, the government will relax the restrictions for some sectors, the sources added.

The decisions came at an interministerial meeting, chaired by Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, at the Cabinet Division yesterday.

The government enforced the "strict" lockdown for 14 days from July 1. It, however, relaxed the lockdown for eight days for the Eid celebrations. The strict restrictions were again put in place on July 23 for two weeks to curb deaths and infections

The high-level meeting was held at a time when the country logged the highest deaths. Yesterday, 258 deaths and 14,925

Govt to act tough to enforce lockdown Union level vaccination to begin on Aug 7 NID card holders to get vaccine without registration

100% mask wearing to be ensured

new infections were recorded. The death toll was 247 on Monday when

a record 15,192 virus cases were logged. The ongoing lockdown will continue

till August 5. Though businesspeople and others have requested [to let them resume operation of factories], we could not accept it," Asaduzzaman told journalists after the meeting.

According to meeting sources, when the issue of reopening garment factories was raised, it was argued that a good number of people will rush to Dhaka which will further worsen the situation.

'The government doesn't want to take such a risk," said an official who attended the meeting.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

With the 14-day lockdown in force since Friday, more and more vehicles are appearing on city streets every day defying the restrictions. Many people are still returning to the capital after celebrating Eid outside Dhaka. The photo was taken on New Airport Road in front of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday.

PHOTO: **SK ENAMUL HAQ**

any misdeed'

PM warns civil servants

'No mercy for Another day, another Dengue cases Covid deaths record

Country logs highest daily tests, more than 50k STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Covid-19 situation The continues to get grimmer as officials yesterday reported 258 deaths, shattering the previous day's record of 247 deaths.

burdened with coronavirus

patients, said ensuring a

"community-based protocol"

could ease the pressure off

those hospitals to some extent.

physicians at

hospitals,

Munshiganj district sees the highest positivity rate of **54**%, Gazipur **53**%

📡 Shariatpur, Rajbari, Narsingdi, Manikgani, Faridpur **30**% and above

keep rising Mobile courts punish owners of Aedes breeding sites

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 143 dengue patients were admitted to different hospitals across the country in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, the highest

Landslides kill 7 in Cox's Bazar

Five of them Rohingyas

STAR REPORT

10:00am.

At least seven people, including five Rohingyas, died in landslides triggered by heavy rains in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The landslide hit blocks

The dead were identified

G-37 and 38 of the Rohingya

camps in Ukhiya upazila at





UNB, Dhaka

Issuing a stern warning to errant public servants, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said no irregularities in their jobs would be tolerated.

"As you get rewarded for your good job, there is no mercy for any misdeed. You'll also have to face tough punishments for that [misdeed]," she said.

Hasina was addressing a programme marking the inauguration of the National Public Service Day and distribution of Public Administration Award at the SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Sylhet division's average positivity rate **40**%, Barishal division **37**%

"Increasing the hospitals' capacity is not a solution during such a public health crisis. The national Covid-19 treatment protocol should be amended by focusing on the community-based treatment strategy and community surveillance," Forhad Uddin Hasan Chowdhury Maruf, medicine and infectious disease specialist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said if Covid-19 patients with mild and moderate symptoms could be treated at community clinics or under similar arrangements, tertiary hospitals could get some relief.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) reported a positivity rate of 28.82 percent after testing 52,478 samples in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday. It was the highest number of tests in a day.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

in a single day this year.

Meanwhile, the two city corporations in the capital operated mobile courts and fined Tk 7.47 lakh as they found Aedes mosquito larvae at different properties.

Owners of multiple under-construction buildings and markets, including a ward councillor, were fined as the courts found Aedes mosquito larvae at their properties.

Mobile courts in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) fined Tk 4.41 lakh and filed 15 cases against house owners for getting Aedes mosquito larvae on their first day of 10-day combing operation.

A mobile court of the DNCC fined Tk 1 lakh to an under-construction shopping centre at Rupnagar as they found Aedes mosquito larvae.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



as Dilbahar, 42, and her son Shafiul Alam, 9, of block G-37, and Dilbahar, 25, Abdur Rahman, 25, and Ayesha Siddika, one-year old, of block G-38.

Shamsud Douza Nayan, additional commissioner of Cox's Bazar's Relief, Rehabilitation, Repatriation Commission (RRRC), told The Daily Star heavy rain caused the landslides in blocks G-37 and G-38 of camps 10 and 18, killing five people. One infant of camp-18, who could not be identified till the filing of this report, died due to floods caused by rain.

Apart from the deaths in the camps, two locals died in landslides at Moheshkhali and Teknaf upazilas.

Mahmudul Hasan, sub-inspector of Huyaikkong police outpost under Teknaf police station, told The Daily Star that a local named Rakim Ali, 45, died when his makeshift home on a hill slope in Teknaf's Monirghona was devoured in a landslide at 11:00am yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Another O2 train to arrive soon STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another Oxygen Express train of Indian Railways has embarked on its journey to Bangladesh carrying 200 tonnes of oxygen to help the country deal with potential shortfall amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The train carrying Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) in 10 containers departed for Bangladesh from Tatanagar in India around 9:50am (local time) yesterday, according to a press release of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.

This consignment will augment LMO reserves in Bangladesh.

With this, India has reaffirmed its commitment to continue to support Bangladesh in its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Oxygen Express is a special train service in India that delivers supplies of oxygen.

Bangladesh on Sunday received the first consignment of 200 tonnes LMO from India by rail.



The mother and sisters cry beside the body of Rejubana, 25, in an ambulance as it leaves Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Rejubana, a resident of Old Dhaka's Satrawja, died of novel coronaviurs at the hospital after undergoing treatment there for about a week.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

EXPAT RETURNEES Cash assistance, counsel for them

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

The government is going to give Tk 13,500 and career counselling to 200,000 migrant workers who returned home amid the pandemic.

The amount will be handed in one go while the counselling will help them to find employment or to become an entrepreneur.

Under the new project, 23,500 selected skilled workers will be given certificates by reputed institutions so that they can have more opportunities at home and abroad.

"We will open offices in 30 districts and recruit consultants in collaboration with the World Bank. From these offices, we shall scrutinise the details about the workers and identify the ones eligible for the benefits," said A Khaleque Mullick, joint secretary (planning) at the expatriates' welfare ministry.

Migrant workers from all over the country can avail the benefits from those offices and services, he added.

"We will provide social, psychological and financial counselling to the workers. Sometimes, our workers go through traumatic experiences abroad. In these cases, they may need counselling. And some workers may need loans or large amounts of financial assistance after returning home. We can connect them to the places where they can get the loans or other assistances.

The new project will cost an estimated Tk 427 crore, of which the World Bank will provide Tk 425 crore and the government will provide the rest, according to project documents. A database of the workers who returned home amid the pandemic will also be developed under the project.

A proposal for the project will be placed today in a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for final approval.

If approved, the Wage Earners Welfare Board of the ministry will implement the project from 2021-2023.

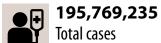
11,98,652



19,779

Deaths





Lost Muslin yarn know-how recovered

BANGLADESH
UPDATE14,925
New cases in 24hrs11,98,62
Total cases

SUKANTA HALDER and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The lost muslin yarn technology used to churn out exceedingly delicate fabrics much coveted in the 17th and 18th centuries the world over has been recovered by an expert team of the government.

In the ancient and medieval period, the muslin cloth made by the weavers of Dhaka became a status symbol for the rich and aristocratic class. In 1747, Dhakai Muslin exports fetched Tk 28.5 lakh, found the researchers.

The fall of the Mughal Empire, lack of patronage of the British rulers, expansion of the East India Company, Industrial Revolution in England, the imposition of high taxes on muslin and the cutting of the fingers of weavers were the main causes behind the loss of the Muslin cloth since the middle of the 19th century.

"The muslin we have made is 99 percent similar to the cloth preserved in the UK's Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Museum in Bangladesh," said M Monzur Hossain, chief scientist of the project titled 'Bangladesh's Golden Tradition Muslin Yarn Making Technology and Recovery of Muslin Fabrics (Phase I)'.

The Tk 12.1 crore project came into being after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked during a visit to the ministry of textiles and jute in October 2014 if the lost technology of muslin could be restored.

Subsequently, a committee was formed consisting of experts from the Bangladesh Handloom Board (BHB), the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation, the Cotton Development Board, the Bangladesh University of Textiles, Dhaka University and Rajshahi University.

The project, which started in July 2018 and wrapped up last month, started with training six weavers to

count. Now, 75 weavers can produce such fine fabrics.

The muslin of yore was renowned for its fineness, with its yarn count starting from 250 and going up to 1,000.

"Since the project started, we have had to go through seven steps from hand-spinning cotton to fabric production and fabric making. We used lots of data from several kinds of research, which brought us success,' Ayub Ali, project director and chief planning officer at the BHB.

The whole exercise cost Tk 3.9 crore, meaning about Tk 8 crore assigned to the project has been saved.

With the rest of the money, a muslin centre would be set up on 3.5 acres of land in Narayanganj, where a plant of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation currently stands, he said.

A revised proposal has been sent to the planning commission for cotton cultivation, production of skilled spinners and weavers, purchase of machinery and construction of sheds etc.

"This project will help to restore the golden heritage of Bangladesh, which was lost almost 170 years ago," Ali said, adding that the fabric will be available to the public by next year.

For the feat, the BHB was awarded the Public Administration Medal under the Technical Research (sciencebased) category for 2020 and 2021 at an event yesterday.

"It is possible to earn a huge amount of foreign exchange by exporting muslin and to brighten the image of Bangladesh in the international arena," said Golam Dastagir Gazi, textiles and jute minister, at the event.

The acquisition of GI certificate and patent for muslin has created the opportunity for sustainable development and expansion of the churn out fabrics with 200 to 557 yarn country's weaving industry, he added.

10,22,414

Recoveries

Prices of vegetables have soared in the capital over the last few days as the supply has decreased amid the lockdown. The city's kitchen markets are seeing fewer customers now mainly due to restrictions on movement and high prices. The photo of this vegetables shop was taken at Hatirpool kitchen market yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Lockdown to get stricter

FROM PAGE 1

Though the lockdown was in place, the number of private vehicles on roads in the capital yesterday was higher than that of the previous day.

Commuters as well as vehicles, including cars, microbuses and motorbikes, were seen heading towards Dhaka, crossing the Padma river through the Paturia-Daulatdia route.

Health officials said there is no alternative but to enforce strict lockdown to prevent the Covid situation from going out of control. On Monday, Health Minister

Zahid Maleque said 90 percent beds at hospitals were occupied.

this, there will be no vacant beds at

decided that necessary measures would be taken to make sure anyone stepping out of home for emergency purposes wears facemask.

The government will also go for extensive community engagement so that the Covid restrictions are enforced properly.

Steps will be taken to ensure

infected with the virus. Besides, launched across the country to make people aware of the pandemic.

The family members (aged over 18) of the frontliners in the fight against Covid will also be given jabs on an emergency basis.

It was also decided that another meeting will be held before August 5 to determine the next course of action.

Talking to the media, Asaduzzaman said the government will launch a massive vaccination campaign on August 7.

The authorities will administer Covid vaccine to anyone with a national identity (NID) card to speed up the inoculation campaign, he mentioned.

"We have seen that the countries which took up vaccination programmes have been able to bring down the infection rate. Our neighbouring country is an example of this. That's why the prime minister has given instructions to strengthen the vaccination campaign.

"She [the PM] has also issued directives to give Covid vaccine to any NID card holder."

Those who do not have NID cards vigorous campaigns would be can also get vaccinated by getting registered at a vaccination point, the home minister said.

"Not only members of law enforcement agencies or government officials, public representatives, and political, social and religious leaders also need to get involved in the vaccination campaign to make it successful. Otherwise, we will not be able to overcome this situation," he observed.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque said, "We are giving emphasis on vaccination. We are setting up vaccination centres in unions where the locals can get jabs... They can get the shots, showing their NID cards...

"About 75 percent of the patients at hospitals are elderly people and 90 percent of them are not vaccinated. Mortality risk is high among them. We request all the elderly people to take jabs," he told reporters after the meeting.

Those aged above 50 will be given priority for vaccination, he noted.

The government has a plan to take the inoculation facilities to the ward level after securing more vaccine doses, added Zahid.

Bodies of three missing climbers spotted on Pakistan's K2

AFP, Islamabad

The bodies of three mountaineers who died during a winter expedition on Pakistan's K2 have been found months after they went missing while scaling the world's second-highest peak, officials said yesterday.

The remains of Pakistani mountaineering legend Muhammad Ali Sadpara, Iceland's John Snorri and Juan Pablo Mohr from Chile were spotted Monday near "the bottleneck" - a narrow gully just hundreds of metres from the summit.

"We are now focusing on a strategy to bring the bodies to a point from where they could be airlifted," Ayaz Shagri, an official with the Alpine Club of Pakistan, told AFP.

"The bodies of the mountaineers are intact and frozen," Shagri added, saying the climbers' remains were at an altitude of 7,800 metres (25,600 feet).

"It is very difficult to bring the dead bodies down from this high altitude," said Karrar Haidri, also from the Alpine Club, adding that the military was helping with the operation.

The trio lost contact with K2's base camp in early February, sparking a massive rescue effort that included military helicopters and planes.

Sadpara's son Sajid is in the team oordinating the recovery effort, Shagri added.

The discovery of the bodies followed the death on Sunday of Scottish climber Rick Allen, who was killed after being hit by an avalanche.

With Pakistan's borders open and few other places to go due to the coronavirus pandemic, the country's summer climbing season is attracting a large number of alpinists.

Dengue cases

FROM PAGE 1

Ward-7 councilor Tofazzal Hossain is one of the shareholders of the shopping centre.

Tofazzal told The Daily Star that their workers cleared waters every three days but during the Eid vacation it remained unnoticed as workers were on leave.

Other mobile courts of the DNCC also fined Tk 3.41 lakh in different areas of the DNCC.

Eleven mobile courts of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) also fined Tk 3.065 lakh to owners of 23 buildings including Bombay Sweets as they found Aedes mosquito larvae at their properties.

The courts also filed 23 cases against the building owners in this regard.

Executive magistrate Mamun Miah said they fined Tk 50,000 to Bombay Sweets.

'No mercy for any misdeed' FROM PAGE 1

Osmani capital's Memorial Auditorium.

Joining the event virtually from the Gono Bhaban, the PM said public servants are the people of this country and their kith and kin are there across the country.

"The more Bangladesh prospers, your close ones will get a much better life. Work for the country with that line of thinking.

She asked the public servants to maintain professionalism, honesty, sincerity and devotion, and to work with innovative ideas which would

be beneficial for the people. Earlier, Hasina distributed public

defying all obstacles caused by the pandemic, presented the national budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year. She asked the public servants working in the public administration to make sure that the budget is implemented properly.

The PM asked them to maintain the standard while implementing development projects. "Let there not be any project that is planned and implemented indiscriminately.

The public servants must look after the development projects so that those deliver the purposes of the mass people, she said.

ass people, she said. Those who're in the public Another day, another Covid deaths administration must serve people and

that's their duty, the PM added. State

Minister for Public Administration

Farhad Hossain, Cabinet Secretary

Khandker Anwarul Islam and Public

Administration Secretary KM Ali

Azam also spoke at the programme.

cover of a book titled "Administration

The premier also unveiled the

"If Covid infections continue like hospitals," he warned. At yesterday's meeting, it was

isolation and quarantine of those

administration medals. Thirty-six officials and organisations received the medals for their outstanding performances in their respective fields

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq distributed the medals on behalf of the premier.

Hasina said the government, of Bangabandhu" at the event.

Landslides kill 7

FROM PAGE 1

Md Abdul Hai, officer-in-charge of Moheshkhali Police Station, told The Daily Star that a 14-year-old girl in Choto Moheskhali area died after being buried by a landslide around the same time.

The Cox's Bazar met office recorded 134 mm rainfall in the last 24 hours since Monday midnight to Tuesday noon. According to its forecast, heavy rain is likely to continue in greater Chattogram, raising the possibility of more landslides.

Over one lakh people live on hills and their slopes in greater Chattogram, including Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati and Bandarban.

Politically influential people grabbed the hills, built makeshift homes and rented them to lowerincome people at low prices.

In Chattogram, the district administration identified 30 landslideprone hills, on which around 10,000

people live. Every monsoon, the authority makes efforts to relocate the people to safer places, but the initiative goes in vain largely due to the poor and unhygienic conditions of the shelters.

Around 170 people died in massive landslides in June 2017 in Chattogram, Rangamati and Bandarban districts, disconnecting regional communication for days.

A high-powered committee, formed after 127 people died in a landslide in the port city's Motijarna in 2007, put forward 30 recommendations, including permanent rehabilitation of the people exposed to landslides, afforestation on hills so they can ward off landslides, stopping hill cutting, and building fences around the hills to protect them from grabbers.

It has been 13 years since the recommendations were forwarded. However, none has been executed yet.

FROM PAGE 1

The positivity rate was 29.82 percent. Infections and deaths caused by the virus have been setting new grim records since the Delta variant spread at the community level in May.

The highest positivity rate of 54 percent was reported in Munshiganj yesterday followed by 53 percent in Gazipur.

Besides, five out of 11 surrounding districts of Dhaka, including Shariatpur, Rajbari, Narsingdi, Manikganj, and Faridpur, had positivity rates of 30 percent and above.

In the Dhaka division, the average positivity rate was 25 percent yesterday.

The Covid-19 situation appeared to be the worst across Sylhet, Barishal and Chattogram divisions with 40,

37 and 35 percent positivity rates, according to the DGHS data.

Among other divisions, the positivity rates was 26 percent in Mymensingh, 28 percent in Khulna, 27 percent in Rangpur, and 25 percent in Rajshahi.

District-wise analysis showed that 12 districts had positivity rates above 40 percent while 24 other districts had positivity rates between 30 and 40 percent, and 23 districts between 20 and 30 percent.

As of yesterday, the pandemic has caused 19,779 confirmed deaths and 11,94,752 infections, shows the data.

Of those reported dead yesterday, 138 were male and 120 female. Rajshahi, 13 in Barishal, 11 each in

Rangpur and Mymensingh, and seven in Sylhet divisions.

While the Covid-19 deaths and cases have been leaping, especially following the Eid, hospitals across the country have been struggling with the rush of patients every day.

The authorities of 100-bed Narsingdi District Hospital, where 80 beds were dedicated for Covid-19 patients, have issued a notice saying they can no longer admit new patients, reports our correspondent from Brahmanbaria.

Meanwhile, relatives of a female patient allegedly vandalised the ICU unit of a hospital in Noakhali after the patient died "due to an Of them, 84 were in Dhaka, 61 in interruption in oxygen supply", Chattogram, 50 in Khulna, 21 in reports our correspondent in the district.

The two city corporation authorities started operating raids as the number of dengue patients at the hospitals is on the rise.

With yesterday's 143, a total of ,954 patients have been diagnosed with dengue this year and only 51 of them are from outside Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Among the total infected, 1,573 were diagnosed with dengue during the current month till this morning, which indicates the fast-rising trend of the Aedes-borne disease.

Two hundred and seventy-two were infected in June while 43 were infected in May.

Most of the patients, who were hospitalised, have so far been released.

A total of 509 patients are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, the DGHS data shows.

Natore AL ignores lockdown rules, holds gathering

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Natore Awami League ignoring the

were held at the temporary office of district AL in Kandivitua area where around 300 leaders and activists were present. Social distancing, a key health Covid-19, was not followed there.

guest.

seen during the programme.

about the non-compliance.

Shamim Ahmed said, "Public representatives should be the most responsible persons in the country. We expect all to follow the rules. We will take steps in future so that they follow the rules.'

Chowdhury Jolly said, "We asked

ongoing lockdown held a programme yesterday to celebrate the 51st birthday of Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her ICT affairs adviser.

Cutting of a cake and a discussion safety rules to prevent the spread of

Shafiqul Islam Shimul, lawmaker of Natore-2 and also general secretary of Natore AL, was present as the chief

Two mobile courts, deployed in the area to ensure the lockdown, were not

"Everybody came after hearing that it was a celebration of Sajeeb Wazed Joy's birthday, that's why health safety rules couldn't be followed entirely," lawmaker Shafiqul said when asked

Natore Deputy Commissioner

Natore Municipality Mayor Uma



Disregarding health safety rules, people gather to celebrate the birthday of Sajeeb Wazed Joy at the office of Natore AL in Kandivitua area yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

rules, but they did not. In fact, it is not possible to implement such rules in these party programmes."

Meanwhile, over 200 AL men gathered in Kanaikhali area to celebrate the founding anniversary of Swechchhasebak League yesterday.

maintained there.

Shariful Islam Ramzan, Natore Sadar upazila chairman and also AL joint general secretary of the district, League, said, "I asked them [leaders said they could have organised the and activists] to follow the health programme with the presence of rules. But I was not completely thousands of leaders and activists. But successful .'

the leaders and activists to follow the Health protocols were hardly considering the health rules, the event was held in a limited scale.

> Shafiul Azam Swapan, general secretary of Natore Swechchhasebak

Cash assistance, counsel for them

society.

FROM PAGE 1

Industry and Energy Division of the Planning Commission has been facilitating the development of this project.

Sharifa Khan, member of the division, said, "Last year, thousands of migrant workers started to return to Bangladesh due to the impact of the pandemic. A large number of those workers remain jobless and they are spending their savings. We were thinking of how we can utilise the human resources by employing them at home or sending them abroad again as skilled workers.

"Then the World Bank stepped forward to collaborate and we developed this project. If this project is implemented, migrant workers, who return home without any significant

amount of savings and those who had had adverse experiences abroad, will find the assistance needed to reintegrate to the society and to find a suitable employment or financial assistance if necessary and they will receive Tk 13,500."

According to ministry sources, more than 1.75 crore Bangladeshis are working in 175 countries across the world at present. In 2020, 4,08,408 migrant workers returned amid the pandemic.

According to a recent survey by Brac Migration Programme, 47.23 percent of the 417 interviewed migrant workers do not have any income. Besides, 98 percent of them said they were under serious stress due to inadequate earnings, unemployment and inability to reintegrate to the

COVID VACCINE None will be *left out* PM reassures all

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vesterday reaffirmed her government's stance to ensure Covid-19 vaccine doses for all



"Whatever money is needed, no matter how many dose is required, we'll buy that," she said.

The prime minister said this while inaugurating National Public Service Day 2018 and distributing Public Administration Award 2018 at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

Hasina joined the programme virtually from her official residence Gono Bhaban.

The prime minister said Bangladesh will produce vaccines in the future so that people of the country do not have to suffer.

Hasina said the government has started procuring and providing vaccines. "We have to start mass vaccination programmes so that all can stay safe. Inshallah, we'll get rid of this coronavirus."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



A police official checking vehicles at a check-post in Gabtoli area yesterday to inquire about the reason for them to venture out. Though this spell of lockdown was enforced after Eid to stem the spread of Covid-19, with each passing day, public and vehicle movement continues to increase in the capital. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

5th Day of 'Lockdown' Not so 'strict' anymore STAR REPORT

With each passing day, the countrywide 14-day "strict lockdown" seems to be easing up

On the fifth day yesterday, public and vehicular movement increased significantly on the roads in Dhaka and elsewhere.

Despite restrictions, hundreds of Eid holidaymakers continued to enter the capital through different entry points from their village homes, by changing different modes of transports.

Rickshaws were seen dominating the city's main thoroughfares, while a arge number of vehicles plied the roads.

Even though police check-posts were set up at different points to enforce the lockdown, law enforcers at some points were seen a bit relaxed with the checking.

However, many had to face police interrogation on their way to work.

"I work at a medicine shop in Kalabagan area. I was going to my work place around 9am when police intercepted me at Panthapath intersection and interrogated me," said Sohel Rana, a resident of Shantinagar.

Besides, long queues of cars were seen at some streets while Airport Road witnessed a huge rush of traffic around 10am.

Kamrul Hasan, a private job-holder, who started from his Kalyanpur home around 10am to go to his office at Motijheel, said, "I got stuck in traffic gridlock at Shyamoli intersection for a few minutes.

Like the other days, Dhaka alleys and by-lanes remained crowded while some shops and tea stalls were found open. Many were seen walking on footpaths without wearing masks.

Visiting several police check-posts in Mohakhali, Bijoy Sarani, Manik Mia Avenue, Mohammadpur and Tejgaon areas yesterday noon, it was noticed that there was lax monitoring at the check-posts.

Meanwhile, police detained 555 people for defying Covid-19 restrictions and health guidelines in the capital yesterday, according to a statement of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

2019 DENGUE OUTBREAK Uncertainty over hearing of judicial probe report Ashutosh Sarkar

The High Court could not deliver its decision on a judicial inquiry committee's findings over the dengue outbreak in 2019 even 16 months after the submission of the probe report.

The committee, formed by an HC bench, found "partial negligence" of the authorities concerned of Dhaka south and north city corporations over the dengue outbreak in 2019 when Bangladesh saw the highest number of over 1 lakh dengue cases and 179 deaths.

If the hearing on probe report takes place, the HC can pass an order over the issue and hold the authorities concerned accountable for their "negligence" and order departmental action against them, Supreme Court lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan, editor of Dhaka Law Reports, told The Daily Star yesterday.

But the HC could not hold a hearing on the issue in all these months. Even it has become uncertain as to when the court will deal with the case and pass an order.

The uncertainty existed because the jurisdiction of the then HC bench, which had issued the suomuto (voluntary) directive to this effect, has been reconstituted following the promotion of its presiding judge.

Besides, vacations and closure of the court's functions during the ongoing pandemic also caused the delay, said court sources.

At least 101,354 dengue cases were reported in 2019, of which 49,544 were outside Dhaka. The number of deaths was 179, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

the HC bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka enjoyed healthy air after Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka's air saw significant fall in pollution level during the three days following Eid-ul-Azha.

Dhaka showed AQI (Air Quality Index) score of 22, 25 and 43 on July 22, 23 and 24 respectively, according to IQAir, a real-time air-quality information platform.

That means Dhaka's air was healthy during the three days, as AQI score of 0-50 is considered "good" -- represented with the green colour code.

Dhaka's air is no stranger to the colours yellow -- meaning 'moderate" (AQI 51 to 100) -- or Orange -- meaning "unhealthy for sensitive groups" (AQI 101 to 150).

The pollution level in the air or particulate matter (PM2.5) reading between 12.1 to 35.4 micrograms per cubic metre is classified as "moderate" by the World Health Organization. PM2.5 level under 12.1 micrograms per cubic metre is considered "healthy".

PM2.5 reading for Dhaka air on July 22 was 5.3, on July 23 it was 6.1 and on July 24 it was 10.5 micrograms per cubic metre, making Dhaka air "healthy", a rare phenomenon for one of the most polluted cities in the world.

In 2019, Dhaka saw a PM2.5 reading of 83.3 micrograms per cubic metre as the yearly average, according to the air quality information platform.



Residents of Chattogram city's Kazir Dewri area wait for a truck of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh to get their daily produce yesterday, but in doing so ignore social distancing amid an alarming rise in daily cases. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Ctg sees highest cases, infection rate, deaths

Most residents still violating health guidelines

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Yesterday saw the highest number of positive Covid-19 cases and deaths detected in a day since the start of the pandemic in Chattogram, indicating that the situation has taken a terrible turn. Despite this, people largely are yet to take the pandemic seriously, as most were not seen following health rules outside. Out of 3,389 samples, 1,310 cases were detected in Chattogram district in 24 hours till 11:30pm on Monday. The positivity rate was around 39 percent, also a new record. Eighteen patients died from Covid-19 during the period.

of patients, CGH set up a second unit of its Covid-19 ward, with 60 beds, at Holy Crescent Hospital.

The same situation prevailed in private hospitals.

"Most beds dedicated for Covid-19 patients have already been occupied while many facilities had to add more beds to treat additional patients, said Dr Liakat Ali, general secretary of Private Hospital Owners' Association, Chattogram. "Patients outnumbered the beds in almost all hospitals. The situation is becoming horrible." All ICU beds in both government and private hospitals are occupied, and so, people are having to wait for ICU patients to either get discharged or die, freeing up the beds.

ad-interim bail extended for one month

Following the record-breaking cases, SEE PAGE 4 COL 1 All HC orders of | HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASE

19 Jamaat, Shibir men held in Ctg

Police in Chattogram

arrested 19 leaders and activists of Jamaat-e-Islami

SC stays Azam Khan's bail STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for six weeks a High Court order that granted bail to Md Azam Khan, an alleged ringleader of a human trafficking gang, in a case filed for human trafficking to abroad.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC Justice Obaidul

Staff Correspondent

All the ad-interim orders delivered by the High Court including those regarding bails have been extended for the next one month because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Md Golam Rabbani, registrar of the Supreme Court's High Court Division, issued a notification to this effect on Monday under the directive from Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain.

The High Court orders that granted bail to accused for specific periods or granted ad-interim bail to accused on condition of their surrender to lower courts concerned in connection with the cases against them.

The effectiveness of all other adinterim orders have been extended for the next one month, the notification further said

The SC registrar general issued the notification in continuation of a similar notification he issued on June 27.

Hassan passed the order following a petition filed by the state seeking a stay on the HC bail.

The apex court judge also asked the state to file a leave to appeal petition with this court against the HC order in six months.

Deputy Attorney General Bishwajit Debnath told The Daily Star that the SC chamber judge stayed the HC bail order for Azam Khan on the ground that he that he gave a confessional statement to a magistrate, admitting his involvement in human trafficking.

Besides, few victims of human trafficking have given statements to magistrate about how they were trafficked by Azam and his accomplices, he said.

Azam Khan's lawyer Zainul Abedin told this correspondent that his client cannot get released from jail following the SC chamber judge's order.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin appeared for the state during virtual hearing of the stay petition yesterday.

Following a bail petition filed by Azam Khan, the HC on July 19 this year granted him bail in the human trafficking case.

CID on July 2 last year filed the case with Lalbagh Police Station against Azam Khan and several others. On July 13 last year, he reportedly confessed to a Dhaka magistrate that he, along with eight others, was involved in forcing 60 to 70 girls into sex work in Dubai.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam recorded his confessional statement after CID Sub-Inspector Md Kamruzzaman, also investigation SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

and its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir from a house on Monday night while they were allegedly holding a clandestine meeting amid the lockdown.

They were held from a house in Chandgaon's Baniyapul-Majargate area.

Tipped-off, police raided the house and arrested them while they were holding a secret meeting with an aim to create unrest in the city, said Inspector (Investigation) Rajesh Barua of Chandgaon Police Station. Local Jamaat leaders

Hasan Mohammed Yasin, Rafiq Uddin and Md Iskander were among the

arrestees, he added. A case was filed under the special powers act with the police station in this regard.

With the number of patients increasing day by day, almost all Covid-19 dedicated beds in hospitals are occupied. In many hospitals, patients outnumbered the beds.

A total of 310 patients were receiving treatment at the 300-bed Covid-19 ward of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday, while 170 patients were being treated at the 150-bed Covid-19 ward of Chattogram General Hospital (CGH).

In Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (BITID), 43 patients were admitted at the 50-bed Covid-19 ward yesterday, said sources.

To cope with the increasing number

The beds are becoming vacant mostly because of deaths.

None of the 10 beds in CMCH's ICU is vacant, and there is a long list of patients who need ICU support. They have to wait until a bed is vacant, said Prof Sujat Paul, head of medicine and Covid-19 ward at CMCH.

Amid the dire situation, many people in Chattogram are not bothering to follow health rules. During visits to different

Bunker barge

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'Prevent injuries and deaths from lightning strikes'

Govt served legal notice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A rights organisation yesterday served a legal notice on the government, requesting it to take necessary steps in 15 days to avoid deaths and injuries due to lightning strikes.

Law and Life Foundation sent the legal notice via email to secretaries at ministries of disaster management and relief; environment, forest and climate change; planning; and health and family planning.

It also sent it to director general of Directorate General of Health Services, and director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

In the notice, the organisation said if respondents (notice receivers) do not take necessary steps in 15 days, a writ petition will be moved before the High Court, seeking necessary directives on them for taking steps.

The respondents have failed extremely in taking relevant steps to control incidents of lightning strikes, and reduce deaths and injuries, Law and Life Foundation said.

In the notice, it said respondents can take different steps, including informing and educating people, arranging advanced awareness telecommunication system, establishing lightning strike shelters at haor areas, planting plum trees and setting up anti-lightning machines at areas where lightning strikes are more frequent.



Amid rising dengue cases, a team of Dhaka South City Corporation is going door-to-door to inspect homes for Aedes larvae. If larvae are found, families are being fined for not keeping their houses free of mosquito breeding grounds like this container with stagnant water, inset. This photo was taken from Manik Nagar vesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

sinks near Patenga beach Staff Correspondent, Cig A small bunker barge partially sank at the outer anchorage of Chattogram Port near Patenga sea beach yesterday afternoon, due to strong current in the sea. All the four crewmembers were rescued.

The 18-metre-long barge named "MT Sufola" owned by Sufola Oil Supplier Company anchored at the Karnaphuli river and the port channel, sources said.

Chittagong Port Authority Secretary Md Omar Faruk said the small oil tanker while returning to the river after supplying fuel to a lighter vessel faced strong current and partially capsized near Jelepara coast adjoining to the Patenga Sea Beach around 2pm.

However, vessel movement at the Karnaphuli channel was not hampered due to the accident, said the CPA secretary, adding that the owning firm has been asked to salvage the tanker.

Sources said after bunkering 2,200 litres of fuel to a lighter vessel near the estuary of Karnaphuli, when the barge was about to return, it went out of control due to strong current and tilted to one side. All the four crewmen were rescued by a rescue vessel of the same company, they added.

Uncertainty

FROM PAGE 3

and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton, during a hearing of a suomuto (voluntary) rule on November 12, 2019, formed the probe committee led by Dhaka District Judge Md Helal Chowdhury.

The committee was asked to identify the persons responsible for outbreak of mosquito-borne diseases like dengue fever and chikungunya in Dhaka.

The bench ordered the probe body to submit the inquiry report before it.

On March 10 last year, the judicial probe committee submitted the report to the HC bench through Deputy Attorney General Amit Dasgupta.

In the report, the committee said, "Based on experts' opinions and analysis of other information, it appears that Dhaka north and south city corporations were partially negligent over the dengue outbreak in 2019, but they cannot be held fully responsible for it.

Besides, nobody is solely responsible for the surge in dengue cases, it said.

The committee talked to experts and recommended that an integrated initiative was needed to prevent the spread of dengue and chikungunya.

Though it is the duty of city corporations to fight mosquitoes, it is not possible for them to do so alone; it has to be done in a coordinated way, the probe body said, suggesting taking up short-, mid- and long-term plans.

Contacted, DAG Amit Dasgupta told The Daily Star the report has been sent to the section concerned of the HC after the bench led by Justice Tariq ul Hakim was reconstituted following his promotion to the Appellate Division.

"Annual vacations of the court and closure of its functions due to the ongoing pandemic are delaying the hearing and the subsequent order on this matter," he said. He said the settlement of the matter became uncertain

as there is no petitioner or party of the case (suomuto rule). If the state places the matter before the chief justice for assigning an HC bench, then it might be settled otherwise it will remain uncertain, he added.

When asked whether his office will take any initiative for the HC hearing and disposal of the suomuto rule, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin told The Daily Star on July 27 that he does not know anything about the issue and he cannot make any comment.

"I have just heard from you about the High Court's suomuto rule over the dengue menace in 2019. I have to know the details and then I will take necessary steps," he added.



Cables dangling precariously between the utility poles have become a common sight in the capital. These webs of wires not just pose serious danger, but also remain an eyesore. The photo was taken from Tajmahal Road in Mohammadpur.

SC stays FROM PAGE 3 officer of the case, brought him to his

chamber in this connection.

magistrate sent Azam Khan to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj.

he along with some brokers used to lure girls, aged between 18 and 20, promising them lucrative jobs in Dubai. He said they turned into sex workers. The girls were

brokers would also promise jobs paying up to Tk 50,000 per month and, Azam After recording the statement, the managed tourist visas for the girls and send them to Dubai, he added.

When they reached Dubai, the girls were Azam reportedly told the magistrate that first given jobs as receptionists or waitresses at three- or four-star hotels. Later, they were forced to work at dance clubs and then offered the girls the trip to Dubai for free tortured with electric shocks if they refused

and Tk 20,000 to 30,000 as advance. The to do so, he told the magistrate.

Another accused Alamin Hossain alias Diamond also gave a confessional statement before the same magistrate saying he helped Azam find girls in exchange for Tk 10,000 for each. He was also sent to the same jail.

Earlier, two victims gave judicial statements before magistrates describing their traumatic experiences.

Not so

Besides, some 236 people were fined Tk 4.83 lakh and 497 vehicles were fined Tk 11.73 lakh for violating lockdown rules.

Outside Dhaka, two major ferry routes - Shimulia to Banglabazar and Paturia to Daulatdia -- witnessed huge rush of people and vehicles.

Shimulia point is located in Munshiganj, Banglabazar in Madaripur while Paturia in Manikganj and Daulatdia in Rajbari.

Commuters and vehicles including motorcycles, private cars and microbuses were seen crossing the river via Paturia-Daulatdia route.

Those heading towards Dhaka were travelling on motorcycles, CNG-run autorickshaws and private vehicles as all public transport services were suspended.

Those vehicles were seen plying the highway dodging police check-posts and using alternate by-lanes.

Contacted, Md Zillur Rahman, deputy general manager of BIWTC Aricha office, said eight ferries are operational for transporting vehicles involved in emergency services.

Taking the opportunity, some commuters are also crossing the river using those vehicles, he said.

Almost similar situation was noticed on Shimulia-Banglabazar route. A large number of Dhaka-bound passengers, motorbikes and cars were seen crossing the river on ferries as social distancing remained a far cry.

After getting off the ferries, Dhaka-bound passengers were seen desperately looking for vehicles. Some were seen travelling on motorbikes, rickshaws and auto-rickshaws. Many had to resort to walking.

A total of nine ferries plied the route yesterday, said BIWTC officials.

The government enforced the "strict lockdown" from July 23 to August 5 to check the spread of coronavirus. Earlier, similar lockdown was enforced from July 1 to 14. But the government withdrew it for eight days due to Eid.

[Our correspondents from Manikganj and Munshiganj contributed to this report]



Ctg sees city areas in the last two days,

majority of people were seen without facemasks, while many had their masks on the chin until confronted by law enforcers.

district administration The conducted mobile courts, while law enforcers put check-posts to ensure instructions of the lockdown are being followed, but this could not raise awareness among people. Residents were seen going outside,

Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) filed 219 cases and took action

citing different reasons.

The

against 250 vehicles in the port city for violating the lockdown on Monday, said Arafatul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of CMP.

traffic department

of

Mobile courts of Chattogram District Administration filed 218 cases and realised Tk 1.27 lakh as fine from people violating the lockdown on Monday, said sources.

Public health experts said awareness among people is necessary to curb the infection rate in the district.

Prof Dr Shakeel Ahmed, head of BITID laboratory, said awareness campaigns should spread from the city to rural areas to curb the infection rate.

Public representatives, and social, cultural, political and voluntary organisations should come forward in this regard.

সময়সীমা



বিষয়ঃ ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ পুরস্কার ২০২১ এর জন্য মনোনয়ন/আবেদনপত্র আহবান।

Even almsot a week after Eid, those who left for their village homes right before the festival were still seen returning to the capital yesterday. Due to the lockdown, many had to walk long distances with luggage, as public transport remains unavailable. This photo was taken from Babubazar Bridge. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি খাতে বিশেষ অবদান রাখার জন্য ব্যক্তি, দল ও প্রতিষ্ঠানকে অনুপ্রেরণা, উৎসাহ ও উদ্দীপনা যোগানো এবং স্বীকৃতি প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে বিভিন্ন ক্যাটাগরিতে শ্রেষ্ঠ ব্যক্তি, দল ও প্রতিষ্ঠানকে 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ None will প্রবাসীর স্বপ্ন পুরস্কার ২০২১' প্রদানের নিমিত্ত মনোনয়ন/আবেদনপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। মনোনয়ন/আবেদনপত্র দাখিল ও এনআরবিসি ব্যাংক 🏹 NRBCBANK FROM PAGE 3 বাছাইয়ের তফসিল নিম্নুরূপ-**NRBC Bank Limited** The premier said she has পর্যায় Registered Office: 114 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 already given directives to vaccinate the helping PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION মনোনয়ন/আবেদনপত্র আহবান ২৭/০৭/২০২১ hands of a family, including This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of NRBC Bank Limited in its 124th Board জেলা পর্যায়ের বাছাই কমিটি ও কেন্দ্রীয় বাছাই কমিটির নিকট আবেদন দাখিল Meeting held on 27.07.2021 commencing from 2.00 p.m. through digital platform has considered and approved the housemaids and drivers, ২৭/০৮/২০২১ Second Quarter (Q2) un-audited Financial Statements of the Bank for the period ended on June 30, 2021 and also so that all of a family can জেলা পর্যায়ের বাছাই কমিটি ও কেন্দ্রীয় বাছাই কমিটি কর্তৃক আবেদন যাচাই-বাছাই ২০/০৯/২০২১ disclosed the following key financial indicators of the Bank in compliance with the guidelines of the respective remain protected. Regulatory Authorities: Hasina said the কেন্দ্রীয় বাছাই কমিটি কর্তৃক জেলা পর্যায়ে ও কেন্দ্রীয় পর্যায়ে প্রাপ্ত বাছাইকৃত ৩০/০৯/২০২১ has caused AS on 30 June, 2020 pandemic AS on 30 June, 2021 AS on 30 June, 2020 AS on AS on 31 AS on 31 Particulars আবেদনসমূহ হতে পুরস্কারের জন্য সুপারিশ 30 June, 2021 December 2020 massive problems for December, 2020 every sector, including the সুপারিশকৃত আবেদনসমূহ 'জাতীয় পুরস্কার সংক্রান্ত মন্ত্রিসভা কমিটি'র নিকট প্রেরণ 979.75 20/20/2022 Net Asset Value (NAV) BDT in Crore 1,128.73 807.56 983.51 1,120.65 806.23 economy, education and 15.30 10.95 13.33 15.19 10.93 13.28 Net Asset Value (NAV) Per Share in BD1 social sectors. পুরস্কার প্রদান >2/>2/>2/202> lidated She also urged all to উল্লিখিত পর্যায় ও সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী ২০২০ (জানুয়ারি-ডিসেম্বর) সালের কর্মকান্ড বিবেচনাপূর্বক 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ April 01 to June 30, 2021 April 01 to June 30, 2021 April 01 to June 30, 2020 April 01 to June 30, 2020 January to June 2021 January to June 2020 Particular follow the health guidelines anuary to une 2021 to June 2020 strictly and asked the field-পুরস্কার ২০২১' প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ পুরস্কার নীতিমালা ২০২১' অনুসারে নিম্নোক্ত শর্তাবলী level administration to Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT (0.78) 1.27 9.05 4.33 (0.42)2.03 9.64 4.40 প্রতিপালন সাপেক্ষে প্রয়োজনীয় কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করার জন্য নির্দেশক্রমে অনুরোধ করা হলো। raise awareness about it 0.49 0.22 1.11 0.49 0.69 0.22 1.05 0.66 among the people. শৰ্তাবলীঃ Note: The details of un-audited Financial Statements of the Bank for the Second Quarter (Q2) ended on June 30, 202 The prime minister said will also be available in the website of the Bank at www.nrbcommercialbank.com that 1.87 crore people (ক) 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ পুরস্কার নীতিমালা ২০২১' অনুসারে মনোনয়ন প্রেরণ করতে হবে। বিশেষতঃ এ By order of the Board have so far been vaccinated Sd/-Date: Dhaka নীতিমালার ৮ ধারায় বর্ণিত মনোনয়ন প্রেরণ ও বাছাই প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কিত বিধান যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করতে and all will be brought 27 July 2021 Md. Mozammel Hossain under the vaccination Company Secretary হবে। programme. (খ) জেলা বাছাই কমিটি সাধারণ ও কারিগরি পৃথক ২টি ক্ষেত্রে সরকারি ও বেসরকারি পর্যায়ে আলাদাভাবে শ্রেষ্ঠ "No one will be left out ... we're procuring vaccines Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh ব্যক্তি, শ্রেষ্ঠ দল ও শ্রেষ্ঠ প্রতিষ্ঠান-এ তিনটি শ্রেণিতে ১টি করে মোট ১২টি প্রস্তাব বাছাইয়ের স্বপক্ষে কারণ for all. Our vaccination Office of the Executive Engineer DPHE programme will go on," লিপিবদ্ধ করে সুপারিশসহ কেন্দ্রীয় বাছাই কমিটির নিকট নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে প্রেরণ করবে। she said. Natore District, Natore (গ) নীতিমালায় বর্ণিত মনোনয়ন ছক (সংযোজনী ক, খ ও গ) যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করতে হবে। নীতিমালায় বর্ণিত পুছিন 🗤 State minister for E-mail: ee.natore@dphe.gov.bd উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র public administration মনোনয়ন ছক (সংযোজনী ক, খ ও গ) এবং ওয়েবসাইটে প্রকাশিত মনোনয়ন ছক ব্যতীত অন্য কোনো ছক-এ শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র ministry Farhad Hossain, Invitation for Tender Notice মনোনয়ন/আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না। cabinet secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam and public Memo No. 46.03.6900.061.18.001.20-51 Date: 26.07.2021 (ঘ) পূরণকৃত মনোনয়ন ছক ও বাছাই কমিটি সভার কার্যবিবরণীর হার্ডকপির পাশাপাশি সফটকপি word ও pdf administration secretary Ministry/Division Local Government Division. KM Ali Azam also spoke at ফাইলে ই-মেইল (dbd2021@doict.gov.bd)-এ প্রেরণ করতে হবে। Department of Public Health Engineering 2. Agency the programme. (ঙ) ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ পুরস্কার নীতিমালা ২০২১, মনোনয়ন ছক ও অনলাইনে আবেদন দাখিলের জন্য বিস্তারিত Earlier, the prime Bangladesh Municipal Water 3. Project name Supply and minister distributed the তথ্য জানতে www.ictd.gov.bd, www.doict.gov.bd এবং www.digitalbangladesh.gov.bd Sanitation Project (30 Pourashavas) Public Administration Procurement nature 4. Works. ওয়েবসাইট ভিজিট করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। Medals for the years 2020 595473 & 595474 5. e-Tender ID and 2021. A total of 36 officials ড. খন্দকার আজিজুল ইসলাম Description of work Construction of RCC Drains at Bonpara & 6. and organisations were Baraigram Pourashava, Natore. অতিরিক্ত সচিব (অর্গানাইজেশনাল সাপোর্ট অনুবিভাগ) awarded the medals Tender closing date and time 26-Aug-2021 12:00 7. তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি বিভাগ for their outstanding This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and performances in their ও no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the respective fields. website www.eprocure.gov.bd Liberation War Affairs সদস্য-সচিব Minister AKM Mozammel Md. Alamgir Miah কেন্দ্রীয় বাছাই কমিটি, ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ পুরস্কার Huq distributed the medals Executive Engineer, DPHE on behalf of the prime জিডি-১৩৮২ ফোনঃ +৮৮০ ২ ৫৫০০৬৯১২ GD-1377 Natore District, Natore minister.



Some of the hilsa on sale at KB Bazar in Bagerhat. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY

Fishing trawlers getting poor catch from Bay

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Southern region's largest fish market and fishing trawler landing station, KB Bazar in Bagerhat, is witnessing a poor supply of fish after a 65-day ban on fishing at sea was over on July 23.

Unabated fishing by Indian fishing trawlers near the Bangladesh maritime borders during the fishing ban might have depleted fish population in the Bay of Bengal, speculated many fishers in Bagerhat.

Some of the local fishers also blamed the recent turbulent weather for the dwindling catch in the Bay.

In the morning this Sunday, while visiting KB Bazar -- located by the town protection embankment along the Daratana River, the area was seen teeming with fishers, sellers and buyers

Out of all fish varieties, hilsa is the highest selling commodity at the market where daily trade amounts to several crores of taka.

Aside from hilsa, at least 50 different varieties of fish -- including Kaua, Koiya Bhol, Jaba Bhol, Mochan Gagra, Chela, Dhela, Laitta, Bhol, Kankon, Meid, Tengra, Rupchanda and Botal -- are usually available at KB Bazar.

A single piece of hilsa, weighing 1 kilogram, was being sold for between Tk 1,000 and Tk 1,100. The smaller ones, weighing 500 grams each, were being sold for Tk 500 per kg. The rest were selling in sets of 4 to 6 pieces at Tk 300 to Tk 450 each kg.

Many fishers said freshly caught fish could have been sold at higher prices if imported frozen fish were not allowed to be sold at the ıme market

Kabir, who brought sea fish to KB Bazar for sale, said while Bangladeshi fishers refrained from catching fish in the sea during the ban, large Indian fishing trawlers continued to catch fish near the Bangladesh maritime boundaries. For that reason, fishers in Bangladesh have not been getting a good catch now despite their

compliance with the lengthy ban, he added. "We support the ban imposed by our

government, but the Indian fishermen had been catching fish along our boundary lines all this time," alleged another fisher named Shukkur.

"The handful of fish we are getting now does not even cover our voyage cost. Moreover, fish prices have been falling at markets due to the

ongoing lockdown," he lamented.

Bagerhat Coastal Fishermen's Association President Sheikh Idris Ali said over one lakh fishers and their families depend on fishing at the sea

But this time around, their livelihood is at risk as many fishing trawlers have been incurring huge losses after returning emptyhanded amid the turbulent sea.

Contacted, Bagerhat District Fisheries Officer ASM Russell said the rough seas might be one of the reasons behind the poor catch of fish at this time.

Acknowledging that fishing ban periods in Bangladesh and India are different, he said the ministry concerned has been working on to adopt a common maritime fishing ban calendar for the region under the banner of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

On the alleged netting of fish along the Bangladesh maritime boundaries by Indian fishing trawlers during the fishing ban in Bangladesh, he said in order to thwart such attempts by intruders, the maritime boundaries of the country are under constant surveillance by the navy and coast guard.

Jamuna erosion intensifies with receding water level

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The Jamuna has become furious in Tangail with receding water level devouring several hundred of dwelling houses, roads, markets, weaving factories, poultry farms and different other structures as well as vast tracks of croplands for the last two weeks.

City

Of these, around one hundred families at Durgapur union in Kalihati upazila lost their dwelling houses in the last couple of days.

The erosion hit the Bhairabbari village in the union on Friday night (July 23) and continued to Saturday (July 24), devouring 14 dwelling houses while 78 families shifted their moveable to evade the wrath of the river, said Anwar Hossain, chairman of the union parishad.

Many of the dwelling houses and other structures also remain on the threat erosion and people living there were passing sleepless nights.

Most of the homeless families were living under the open sky while some others took shelter to relatives and neighbors' houses.

Being informed, Deputy Commissioner Dr Ataul Gani along with local government officials and public representatives visited the area on Sunday and distributed cash money and foods among the affected villagers.

The DC said that the Water Development Board (WDB) had already started dumping GEO bags to check the erosion.

"The government will stay beside the erosion affected villagers and they will be provided necessary supports, including corrugated iron sheets and cash money so that they can construct houses to other places," he added.

Meanwhile, Sadar, Kalihati, Nagarpur and Bhuanpur upazilas of the district are at a closer proximity to the Jamuna river. This time the erosion of the river started at the beginning of the monsoon. The erosion has intensified since July 12 with decreasing water level. Meanwhile, around one hundred

structures including dwelling houses, weaving factories, a saw mills, a market and vast tracks of croplands in three wards of Kakua union of Sadar upazila were devoured by the river within couple of days (from July 10 to 12).

The other erosion affected areas in Sadar upazila are Makarkol, Keshabmaijhail, Titulia, Nayapara, Kukuria and Barbaria of Mahmudnagar union, Deorgachha, Rashidpur, Ichhapasha, Khoshalia Chanpasha and Nandapasha of Katulee union, and Maspur, Barbela, Chakgopal, and Kachua of Hugra union.

Poet Masum Ferdous, a man from Hugra of Sadar upazila, said the concerned department and other quarters looted crores of taka every year in the name of emergency works when the erosion started during monsoon. However, the nominal works could not save the areas from the erosion but made some quarter rich.

"The areas are getting smaller by the years due to the erosion and there is no alternative of constructing permanent dam to protect the area from disappearing," he added.

On the other hand, the Paishka Maijhail, Khas Ghunipara, Khas Tebaria, Char Solimabad, and Bhuter More of Solimabad union and Shahjani, Bharra, Pachtara and Agdigholia of Bharra union and also Doptior union of Nagarpur upazila, and Govindasi and Gabsara in Bhuanpur upazila were also hit hard by the erosion of the river.

There is no data available that how many people have become absolutely destitute by the river.

Mohammad Sirajul Islam, executive engineer of WDB in Tangail, said works of dumping GEO bags were going on at the affected areas to check the erosion. "It will take time to construct permanent embankments in the areas," he added.



A view of erosion affected Durgapur area in Tangail's Kalihati upazila.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

AI statement on DSA 'motivated'

The cyber tribunal based in Dhaka, which holds trials of cybercrimes including cases filed under the DSA, has received 199 cases between January 1 and May 6 this year.

criminal, the statement said.

Hasan yesterday said Amnesty International did not issue any statement when hundreds of people were killed by petrol bombs in Bangladesh They had also issued statements in

Low over the Bay

with caution until further notice.

FROM PAGE 12 All boats and trawlers over north Bay have been advised to come close to the coast and proceed Yahya will commit suicide

had pinpointed 29 camps within India where Bangladesh were being distributed by guerrillas were being trained. Now I hate to Pakistani agents in Kolkata. "These leaflets tell you this, Mr President, but the guerrilla are not only being quoted in a section of threat is growing by leaps and bounds. They're averaging 18 Pakistanis a day now; they are averaging two bridges a day. Killing that many. And this is [unclear]. And once the refugees get there, they are being prohibited, are prevented from coming back by Indira's own statement. Political accommodation in her book means Bangladesh. This is bad." The three top officials of the American administration were very unhappy over the activities of American officials posted in India and Dhaka. Nixon reproached, "They're basically pro-Indian. ... And they want to believe what the American press is writing. And the Indian press, of course, the American press is the same as the Indian press, follows everything they say." Ambassador Farland expressed his disgust of Archer Blood, consul general in Dhaka, and Eric Griffel, associate director in charge of AID operations in Dhaka, for blowing the whistle on the Pakistani atrocity. Archer Blood was already called back to Washington. Farland requested Nixon to get rid of Griffel. Nixon added, "Sick bastards.

reported that leaflets in Urdu carrying He further informed, "Yahya told me that they vicious lies against the people of Indian Urdu press but some irresponsible editors feel roused enough to publish lurid accounts of imaginary massacres of Urdu-speaking refugees by Bangalee nationalists during the month of March,' added the clandestine radio operated by the Bangladesh government-in-exile.

Amnesty International has found that 134 of those cases clearly specified the sections under the DSA. Eighty percent of those cases (or 107 out of 134) were filed under both sections 25 and 29 of the DSA, the statement added.

Section 25 refers to the transmission, publication, etc. of offensive, false or threatening data or information, section 29 pertains to the publication, transmission, etc. of defamatory information and section 31 criminalises a person for deteriorating law and order.

"The way in which defamation is criminalised under the DSA shows the serious shortcomings of a criminal approach to defamation, where the law has been further instrumentalised to silence dissent." the statement said.

The rights body called on the Bangladeshi authorities to ensure that defamation was treated as a matter for civil litigation, not the act repeatedly," he added.

favour of war criminals.

He said, "Even, they remained silent when people were killed like birds in Palestine. In fact, the acceptability of the organisation has been lost.'

The minister added that the DSA was enacted for ensuring security of the people of the country

"The act is for all, including housewives farmers, rickshaw pullers, officials and iournalists.

He said the act is needed to ensure digital security of people to save them from harassment on digital platforms.

The minister said such an act is also there in many countries, including neighbouring India and Pakistan, Singapore, Australia and many of the countries of the European Union.

"So, it is motivated to make statements over

Humayun Ahmed's family serves

FROM PAGE 12

The episodes have over three million views. The family claims Grameenphone did not

comply with the customary laws for such use (of intellectual property), which resulted in a violation of the intellectual property law.

In this regard, Humayun's wife Shaon said that among the many characters created by Humayun Ähmed, Baker Bhai, Elachi Begum, Sobhan Saheb and Taiyab Ali are very popular and still in the hearts of the viewers.

Unauthorised and commercial use of all these characters are clear violations of Humayun Ahmed's intellectual property rights.

His family members said they will do their best to protect his intellectual property and rely on the existing laws in this regard.

In the legal notice, Humayun's family members have asked Grameenphone to remove the infringing episodes within three days and pay the financial compensation within 15 days. The matter, otherwise, will be resolved

through court, the late author's heirs said. Contacted, Grameenphone said the legal

notice was served in connection with a fulllength radio show and an abridged social media content, originally produced by Radio Shadhin. While the company reserves its rights and is

currently assessing the legal notice, it took down the content from social media out of respect for Humayun Ahmed's family members.

It said it sincerely respects and treasures the contributions of the legendary author and honours the views and emotions his family.

NSO 'should be sanctioned'

FROM PAGE 12

The findings of the Pegasus project reignited concerns about government surveillance carried out through technology provided by private companies.

"Énough is enough. The recent revelations regarding misuse of the NSO Group's software reinforce our conviction that the hacking for hire industry must be brought under control," Representatives Tom Malinowski (D-N.J.), Katie Porter (D-Calif.), Joaquin Castro (D-Tex.) and Anna G. Eshoo (D-Calif.) said in a joint statement.

The lawmakers added that companies that sell such tools to authoritarian regimes "should be sanctioned, and if necessary, shut down."

They called on the Commerce Department to consider adding the NSO Group and any companies engaged in similar behavior to its economic blacklist and to impose sanctions on its "abusive" clients under federal law.

Before publication of the investigation, known as the Pegasus Project, the NSO Group had called the probe's findings exaggerated and baseless. The firm also said it does not operate the spyware it licenses to clients and "has no insight" into its specific use, reports The Washington Post.

After publication, NSO co-founder Shalev Hulio said he was concerned by reports that journalists' phones had been hacked and promised an investigation.

In their statement, the House Democrats also called for the federal government to investigate reports of the spyware being used to target American journalists, aid workers and diplomats overseas and to establish a "sanctions regime to hold accountable individuals and companies that sell these tools to authoritarian states.

Tunisia's biggest party

FROM PAGE 12

ago, was thrust into a constitutional crisis on Sunday

Saied appeared on national television to declare he had dismissed the premier, Hichem Mechichi, and ordered parliament closed for 30 days, later sending army troops to the legislature and the prime minister's office.

The president's actions, ostensibly "to save Tunisia", followed a day of street protests against the government's poor handling of the Covid pandemic, which has claimed one of the world's highest official per-capita death tolls in Tunisia.

The president also said he would pick a new prime minister, lifted the parliamentary immunity of lawmakers, and warned armed opposition would be met with a "rain of bullets". He later fired the defence and justice ministers. PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

Street clashes between his backers and opponents broke out Monday outside the barricaded parliament, leaving several people wounded.

Police also shuttered the TV station of Qatarbased broadcaster Al Jazeera.

The office of the Tunisian parliament, chaired by Ennahdha leader Rached Ghannouchi, late Monday voiced its "absolute rejection and strong condemnation" of the president's actions.

Many Tunisians have expressed support for the president, and thousands flooded the streets to celebrate on Sunday night, while others voiced fear of a return to dictatorship.

Huge comet heading

FROM PAGE 12

UN271, is from the outskirts of our solar system and has been making its way toward our sun for millions of years. This is also the most distant comet to be discovered on its inbound journey, which will provide scientists a chance to observe and study it for years to come.

Comet Bernardinelli-Bernstein was found in six vears of data collected by the Dark Energy Camera, which is located on the Víctor M. Blanco 4-meter Telescope at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile. The data collected by this camera feeds into The Dark Energy Survey, a collaboration of more than 400 scientists across seven countries and 25 institutions.

WB to finance extra jabs FROM PAGE 12

(WHO), the Gavi vaccine alliance and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations.

The financing mechanism "will allow Covax to unlock additional doses for low- and middleincome countries" Gavi chief executive Seth Berkley said in a statement.

"As we move beyond initial targets and work to support countries' efforts to protect increasingly large portions of their populations, World Bank financing will help us advance further towards our goal of bringing Covid-19 under control," he said.

INDIAN MUSLIMS MISLED

Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra today

As a result, the radio station said, there were unmistakable indications that a section of Indian Muslims was finding it difficult to sympathise with the suffering millions of Bangladesh.

KENNEDY PLANS TO VISIT BANGLADESHI REFUGEES

American Senator Edward M Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, would visit India and Pakistan soon, shared the senator's office today. Kennedy, who was chairman of the senate judiciary subcommittee on refugees, had received a visa for India. He applied for a visa to Pakistan. Senate sources said Kennedy would seek to inspect the relief programme for 7.1 million Bangladeshi refugees who had fled to India.

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

Jamuna to inject up to Tk

FROM PAGE 12

of Tk 338.62 crore by Evaly.

The move created concerns among many customers and merchants of Evaly about whether they would get delivery of their products or get refunds

A recent Bangladesh Bank probe said the liabilities of Evaly to its customers stood at Tk 213.94 crore and to merchants Tk 189.85 crore as of March 14.

The digital commerce platform had a total asset of Tk 91.69 crore as of March 14. Its current asset was Tk 65.17 crore, according to the probe.

Following the investigation, the commerce ministry early this month suggested the ACC, home ministry, the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection and Bangladesh Competition Commission to investigate the allegation against Evaly, which now has around 50 lakh registered customers.

In the statement, Evaly yesterday said it would spend the fresh investment money on future development and creating new scopes for business.

"We're trying to get more investment to deliver old orders to customers and clear our backlogs," Rassel said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Jamuna Group Director Monika Islam said, "We signed a memorandum of understanding today. We are investing in Evaly."

She said the group would invest Tk 100-200 crore initially. "If needed, we will invest Tk 1,000 crore in phases and in different forms."

Monika said Jamuna's main goal is to strengthen the e-commerce platform in Bangladesh. "After an analysis, we have found that Evaly platform is very big. If a big group like us joins Evaly, they will become stronger.

However, she said the ratio of shareholding at Evaly has not been fixed yet. "You will come to know about it soon

About the central bank's probe and asset-liability mismatch of Evaly, she said the crisis was related to fund management and that's why the online platform was looking for an investor.

Jamuna has been doing business with quality products and services in the country, she said.

Jamuna Future Park is the largest offline marketplace in Bangladesh and Evaly will remain as the largest online marketplace with Jamuna Group, Monika added.

Shamim Islam, managing director of Jamuna Group, said the current global business trend shows that e-commerce can play a vital role in economic development of a country.

Two Koreas restore hotlines

AFP, Seoul

North and South Korea signalled a surprise thaw in relations yesterday, announcing the restoration of cross-border communications that were severed more than a year ago and an agreement between their two leaders to improve ties.

The joint announcement, which coincided with the anniversary of the end of the Korean War, was the first positive development since a series of summits between the North's Kim Jong Un and the South's President Moon Jaein in 2018 failed to achieve any significant breakthrough.

The two sides revealed that Kim and Moon had exchanged a series of letters Both countries have expressed that this since April in which they agreed that re- resumption of communication may usher establishing hotlines would be a productive more opportunities for dialogue.



first step in re-booting relations between the two rivals who, despite the end of their 1950-53 conflict, remain technically at war.

US ends Iraq combat role

AFP, Washingtor

President Joe Biden declared US relations with Iraq would enter a new phase with American troops exiting combat operations in the country by year-end as he held talks with Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi.

Amid the threat of an Islamic State resurgence and Iran's powerful influence in Baghdad, Biden stressed that Washington remains "committed to our security cooperation" while Kadhemi reaffirmed their "strategic partnership." US troops in Iraq will "to continue to train, to assist, to help, to deal with ISIS (Islamic State) as it arises," Biden said.

Eighteen years after the US invaded Iraq to remove strongman Saddam Hussein, and seven years after a US-led coalition battled Islamic State extremists who threatened



the country, Washington now says its 2500 troops in the country will help Baghdad to fight Covid-19, confront the impacts of climate change, and support private sector development.

IN brief

Facebook assembles team to build 'metaverse'

Facebook on Monday said it was combining specialists from across its hardware, gaming and virtual reality units to build an immersive digital world known as the "metaverse." The "metaverse," a term coined by sci-fi writer Neal Stephenson, refers to a shared online world in which multiple users can hang out, spend money, consume media and potentially even work. The project is seen as central to Facebook's future by CEO Mark Zuckerberg. "The defining quality of the Metaverse will be presence -- the feeling of really being there with people," Facebook executive Andrew Bosworth said in a post. Facebook hardware such as Portal smart-screens and Oculus virtual reality head gear are already tools for making people feel close together despite being far apart, according to Bosworth.

Antibodies from Sinovac's shot fade after about 6 months

Antibodies triggered by Sinovac Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine declined below a key threshold from around six months after a second dose for most recipients, although a third shot had a strong booster effect, according to a lab study. Chinese researchers reported the findings from a study of blood samples from healthy adults aged between 18-59 in a paper published on Sunday,

which has not been peer reviewed. Among participants who received two doses, two or four weeks apart, only 16.9% and 35.2% respectively

still had neutralising antibodies above what researchers regard as a detectable threshold level six months after the second shot, the paper said. The study also said that participants who received a third dose of the Sinovac shot about six months after the second showed around a 3-5 fold increase in antibody levels after a further 28 days, compared with the levels seen four weeks after the second shot.



Mamata meets Modi, seeks SC probe on Pegasus scam

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official residence in New Delhi, their first meeting after the West Bengal state polls. Emerging from the 20-minute meeting, Mamata told reporters that the PM should convene an all-party meeting to discuss the Pegasus spyware issue and decide on a Supreme Court-monitored probe into it, our New Delhi correspondent reported. The call came a day after Mamata herself announced the setting up of a judicial inquiry led by a former SC judge to investigate reports that some West Bengal leaders were allegedly targeted by the Pegasus spyware. Mamata termed her meeting with Modi as a 'courtesy visit' and she discussed the Covid situation in Bengal, supply of vaccines

First person charged under HK security law

Judges finds former waiter guilty of terrorism,

inciting secession in a landmark case

REUTERS, Hong Kong

The first person charged under Hong Kong's national security law was found guilty yesterday of terrorism and inciting secession in a landmark case that carries long-term implications for how the legislation will reshape the city's common law traditions.

Former waiter Tong Ying-kit, 24, was accused of driving his motorcycle into three riot policemen while carrying a flag with the protest slogan "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times," which prosecutors said was secessionist.

The widely anticipated ruling, much of which has hinged on the interpretation of the slogan, imposes new limits on free speech in the former British colony. Pro-democracy activists and human rights groups have also criticised the decision to deny Tong bail and a jury trial, which have been key features of Hong Kong's rule of law.

His trial was presided over by judges Esther Toh, Anthea Pang and Wilson Chan, picked by city leader Carrie Lam to hear national security cases. Toh read out a summary of the ruling in court, saying "such display of the words was capable of inciting others to commit secession.

She added that Tong was aware of the slogan's secessionist meaning, and that he intended to communicate this meaning to others. He also had a "political agenda" and his actions caused "grave harm to society".

Tong had pleaded not guilty to all charges, which stemmed from events on July 1, 2020, shortly after the law was enacted.

The governments in Beijing and Hong Kong have said repeatedly the security law was necessary to bring stability after the often-violent 2019 protests and that the rights and freedoms promised to the city upon its return to Chinese rule in 1997 remain intact.

Beijing's claims have 'no basis'

Says Pentagon chief, insists US committed to stable ties with China

AFP, Singapore

Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin yesterday said that Beijing's expansive claims in the South China Sea have "no basis in international law", taking aim at China's growing assertiveness in the hotly contested waters.

Austin's broadside came at the start of his first trip to Southeast Asia as US defence secretary, as he seeks to rally allies in the region as a bulwark to China.

President Joe Biden's administration wants to reset relations with Asian countries and build alliances to face Beijing, after the turbulence and unpredictability of the Trump era.

Speaking in Singapore, Austin criticised China's actions in the disputed sea, where Beijing has overlapping territorial claims with several Southeast Asian states.

"Beijing's claim to the vast majority of the South China Sea has no basis in international law," he said in a speech hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank.

"That assertion treads on the sovereignty of the states in the region," he said, adding that the US



would support countries in defending their rights.

China claims almost all of the resource-rich sea, through which trillions of dollars in shipping trade passes annually, with competing claims from Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Beijing has been accused of deploying a range of military hardware including anti-ship missiles and surface-to-air missiles there, and ignored a 2016 international tribunal decision that declared its historical claim over most of the waters to be without basis

Austinsaid that the US "will not flinch

POST-COUP CRISIS IN MYANMAR UN special rapporteur calls for 'Covid ceasefire'

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar yesterday called on the UN Security Council and member states to push for an emergency "Covid ceasefire" in light of an explosion of Covid-19 infections and deaths in Myanmar where attacks against the health workers escalated.

UN Special Rapporteur Tom Andrews stressed the urgent need for the member states to use all the tools of the UN, including passage of resolutions, demanding that the State Administrative Council (SAC) immediately cease all attacks, especially against health care professionals who are desperately needed to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Too many in Myanmar have needlessly perished and too m



With donations, Bhutan vaccinates

At least 57 migrants die off Libya coast: UN

REUTERS, Geneva

At least 57 people drowned on Monday after a boat capsized off the Libyan coast near Khums, the latest tragedy in the Mediterranean where nearly 1,000 have perished this year, the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) said.

when our interests are threatened" --**SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW**

but he insisted Washington does "not seek confrontation" with China. "I am committed to pursuing

a constructive, stable relationship with China, including stronger crisis communications with the People's Liberation Army.'

US-Ćhina relationship The has deteriorated over a range of issues from cybersecurity and tech supremacy to human rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

Biden has largely kept the hawkish stance on China of Donald Trump, describing the Asian power as the preeminent challenge to the US.

After Singapore, Austin will visit Vietnam and the Philippines, and will seek to underline that the US is a "stabilising force" in Southeast Asia, said a senior defence official

Austin's visit is the latest by a senior US official to Asia.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is arriving in India today, where he will speak about supporting Afghanistan as worries grow in New Delhi about Taliban gains as US-led foreign forces withdraw.

85pc of its population

AFP, Thimpu

Bhutan has inoculated most of its eligible population with second doses of Covid-19 vaccinations in a week, in a speedy rollout hailed by Unicef as a "success story" for international donations.

More than 454,000 shots were administered over the past week in the remote Himalayan kingdom -- just over 85 percent of the eligible adult population of more than 530,000 people -- after a recent flood of foreign donations.

UNICEF's Bhutan representative, Will Parks, hailed the ambitious vaccination drive as a "great success story for Bhutan".

"And if there's anything that I hope the world that can learn, is that a country like Bhutan with very few doctors, very few nurses but a really committed king and leadership in the government mobilising society -- it's not impossible to vaccinate the whole country."

The tiny nation had quickly used up

most of the 550,000 AstraZeneca jabs donated by India in late March and early April for first jabs, before the neighbouring country halted exports over a massive local surge in infections.

Half a million Moderna doses donated by the United States via Covax -- the distributor backed by the World Health Organization and the Gavi vaccine alliance and another 250,000 AstraZeneca shots from Denmark arrived in mid-July.

More than 150,000 AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Sinopharm shots are also expected to arrive in the South Asian nation of 770,000 people from Croatia, Bulgaria, China and other countries.

The government has meanwhile bought 200,000 Pfizer doses that are expected to be delivered later this year.

Bhutan, wedged between India and China and famous for measuring gross national happiness, has reported just under 2,500 Covid-19 infections and two deaths so far.

Bodies have not been recovered from the shipwreck, but survivors included migrants from Nigeria, Ghana and Gambia, IOM spokeswoman Safa Msehli told Reuters.

"According to survivors brought to shore by fishermen and the coast guard, at least 20 women and two children were among those who drowned," she said. The migrants, the

majority from West Africa, departed from Khums, presumably to reach Europe, Msehli said.

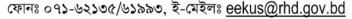
The deaths of 57 migrants brings the number of lives lost on the central Mediterranean crossing route this year to around 970, the United Nations said yesterday.



জিডি-১৩৭৯

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া



স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.৫০৭৯.৪৩৯.০৭.০০৩.২১-১৬১০

তারিখঃ ২৭/০৭/২০২১ইং

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, কুষ্টিয়া সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালন (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে প্রতিক্ষেত্রে ৫০.০০ (পঞ্চাশ) লক্ষ টাকা পর্যন্ত প্রাক্কলিত মূল্যের অভ্যন্তরীণ ক্রয়কার্য (NCT-Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া অথবা উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক দ্রাফট নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, কুষ্টিয়া সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া এর অনুকুলে জমা প্রদান করে অথবা মানি রিসিটের মাধ্যমে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধকরতঃ আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ আগামী ২৬ আগস্ট ২০২১খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে এ অফিসে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।

উল্লেখ্য যে, সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি ৬৩ এবং ৬৪ অনুসরণযোগ্য এবং এ তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহ্বান/কাজ প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা বিধান করে না।

মোঃ শাকিরুল ইসলাম
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২২৭২
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ), সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া

will die without action by the United Nations," Andrews warned.

Myanmar junta since taking over power from elected government in February, has murdered at least 931 people and is holding at least 5,630 in arbitrary detention where they are in danger of being infected with the virus, the statement said.

and medicine to the state a to rename Bengal as Bangla. TMC has been demanding renaming West Bengal as "Bangla" since 2016 and the state assembly twice passed resolutions to this effect.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS, THE STATESMAN



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh National Board of Revenue Rajaswa Bhaban, Segunbagicha, Dhaka www.nbr.gov.bd

Corrigendum-4

Tender Name: Supply, Installation and Commissioning and Testing of 10 (ten) X-ray Baggage Scanners and 01 (One) MW Human Body Scanners.

Tender Number: File-08.01.0000.067.42.012.20 Corrigendum No: File-08.01.0000.067.42.012.20

Date: 15/07/2021

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the Tender invitation notice published for "Supply, Installation and Commissioning and Testing of 10 (ten) X-ray Baggage Scanners and 01 (One) MW Human Body Scanners" has been changed as follows:

Serial Number as per invitation notice	Description of the content	As per Tender Schedule Content	Amended Content		
16	Tender Last	26/07/2021,	22/08/2021,		
	Selling date	Time-3.00 PM	Time-3.00 PM		
17	Tender Closing	27/07/2021	23/08/2021		
	Date & Time	Time-3.00 PM	Time-3.00 PM		
18	Tender Opening	27/07/2021	23/08/2021		
	Time	Time-3.40 PM	Time-3.40 PM		

Tender Schedule	Description of the content	Existing Content	Amended Content
Tender Data Sheet, Page no- 30	ITT 38.1	The deadline for submission of tenders is: Time & Date: 27/07/2021 at 3.00 PM	The deadline for submission of Tenders is: Time & Date: 23/08/2021 at 3.00 PM
Tender Data Sheet, Page no- 31	ITT 44.1	The deadline for opening of Tenders is : Time & Date: 27/07/2021 at	Tenders is :
		3.40 PM	3.40 PM

02. All other terms and conditions of the tender document will remain unchanged.

(Zakia Sultana) [5(07 (202) Member (Customs: Audit, Modernization and International Trade) National Board of Revenue Rajaswa Bhaban, Segunbagicha, Dhaka Phone: 8391200





COVER STORY STAYING OPTIMISTIC

The national film award-winning actor-director Shahiduzzaman Selim and actor Rosy Siddiqui has contributed immensely to our cultural arena. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, the couple shared their thoughts on the current pandemic situation and what they are doing to keep themselves healthy.

Rafi Hossain: Selim Bhai, how has the pandemic affected your work? Shahiduzzaman Selim: It has affected everyone involved significantly. Eid is one of those times we stay very active since it is also thematically relevant to our plays. The scheduled lockdown starting on August 1 is when a lot of production goes into action and films are released. Regardless, we are trying to continue shooting on a smaller scale while maintaining government rules and regulations.

Rafi Hossain: Rosy Siddiqui, how have your days been during the pandemic? Rosy Siddiqui: It has been difficult. I feel frustrated sitting at home all day even though I have to for the situation to become stable again. This would normally be the time when I would be busy with work, but the pandemic has not only hampered it, but it has also been causing a lot of mental stress. It has caused a lot of problems socially and economically as well. My daughter lives abroad, and neither of us can visit each other due to travel restrictions. The amount of trouble it has caused me is truly indescribable, and I am not sure when things will go back to normal. I pray to God that we are relieved of this situation soon. I think an online counselling system should be set up in each household because I am sure people like me are also under constant stress. I also feel better when I talk to other people over the phone. It is not necessarily that I feel sad about not being able to go outside, but the feeling of being trapped inside my own home, constantly hearing bad news, is unbearable.

Rafi Hossain: How do you think it has affected our arts and culture? Shahiduzzaman Selim: We were going at a certain pace in our journey of artistic endeavours. Now that there is a roadblock in that journey it is hard to start all over. I think it depends on your psychological strength. To explore one's artistic mind and creativity, one needs a calm, peaceful environment. Art cannot be practised when there is constant anxiety and even a fear of death. With the experience we have been gaining for the last few years, we could have seen a lot of great artists being discovered. But again, this roadblock has likely stopped a lot of progress, and I think it is a huge burden on our culture. There are also economic problems caused by the pandemic. If there are no returns, a producer has no incentive to invest in a project. Moreover,

cinema halls are almost always empty nowadays. The producers that already started projects have to worry about when they can get back to them. But because this pace has been ruined, even if things go back to normal, I think it will not be the same.

Rafi Hossain: Do you think there is any way artists can utilize this time? Shahiduzzaman Selim: I believe all aspects of art, whether it's acting or music or anything else, is about enriching yourself. Studying is incredibly important, and the pandemic has given us more than an adequate amount of time to do that. In the case of studying films, an artist could watch local and foreign films. However, it is not as easy as just saying that because with the pandemic comes mental, financial and social struggles, and one has to overcome those first.

Rosy Siddiqui: I agree with Selim. That is why I emphasized how important counselling can be, as counsellors can guide you through these negative times and bring out the positives in you as a person. It is good that I now have time to read, study, and give myself some time. However, our life and our economic situation have changed drastically. Artists require freedom, and I think the pandemic restricts this. Everyone also deals with it differently. Selim, for example, has bought several books throughout the pandemic, and I am glad he found a way to divert himself by reading. I, however, tried reading as





well, but I could not get into the hobby because I constantly worry about the current situation and feel anxious. Everyone deals with it differently, and it is essential to help each other.

Rafi Hossain: What is the secret behind your lovely relationship?

Rosy Siddiqui: I believe in life there is not anything we can count on getting for certain. We have to look towards what is attainable, and if something is not, we have to learn to move on. Obsessing over certain things often causes sadness, frustration and depression. If you think something is attainable, you should try your level best at trying to earn it. If you fail, that is fine too, and you have to accept. I have followed this philosophy in the context of love, and it has worked out for me. also not disregard others when there has been a relatively long gap in conversations. For example, when I talk to my close associates after a long time, we converse like we normally do. I think it is important to hold onto these meaningful relationships.

Rafi Hossain: It often seems like the friendships we build with people nowadays are never as strong as they used to be before. Why do you think that is so?

Shahiduzzaman Selim: When we were younger, we could put in the time and effort to form a better understanding between people. Later, it became increasingly difficult to put in the same amount of time and effort as before, which made it harder to form such real and unbreakable bonds.

Rafi Hossain: When we were younger, the theatre was thriving, and people would often go to watch plays. Why do you think that practice changed?

is interested in such projects, wouldn't you agree? Shahiduzzaman Selim: Definitely! But it is difficult to provide greater preference to this industry as our country still struggles with providing other necessities. Especially in the past two years, the government had to struggle significantly due to the pandemic. After such issues are resolved and become manageable, the focus can be on improving the arts and culture.

Rafi Hossain: OTT platforms are becoming increasingly popular. What changes are you expecting to happen following this? Shahiduzzaman Selim: I don't believe it is important, as to me acting is simply acting, no matter what platform it is being expressed on. For the television industry to do well, certain measures must be taken. For example, international channels should not be allowed to compete with our local ones. Additionally, the license provided to those involved with television projects often goes to people who are not involved with the industry whatsoever. Nowadays, it has become more about business and commercialisation than the art and its quality itself. If this is not improved, we will lose out audience, which is already happening. Here, BTV is succeeding in terms of viewership compared to other non-governmental channels as they cater to a wider variety of people by providing different kinds of shows. As the other television channels only focus on the news and television series, they lose views. It has only pushed the audience to go

I think there is a lot to learn from the childhood tale of The Hare and The Tortoise.

towards international platforms. There needs to be a set of rules and regulations from the

Shahiduzzaman Selim: I think there is a lot to learn from the childhood tale of The Hare and The Tortoise. That is, like Rosy Siddiqui said, that we should never obsess over getting something immediately. If you love someone, you should not give all your love at once. Some of the love should be saved for the next day. We have been together for 28 years, and we hope to be together for the rest of our life. The "race" is long and involves pain, sadness and hardships. I think, by taking love slow and steady, one can win the race.

> Rafi Hossain: Why do you think some partners struggle in their relationships? Shahiduzzaman Selim: I cannot speak for them because everyone has different experiences with love. From my perspective, I think it is important to first love yourself the most before engaging in romantic relationships. Otherwise, it is not possible to love someone else. This advice has been passed down upon us by our elders, and there is a reason for that. Nowadays, a lot of couples may rush into marriage. It is important to make a lot of considerations before making such a huge commitment. People should

Shahiduzzaman Selim: Back then, there was a fight to make it in theatre as an actor. Over time, other factors added to it, such as the popularisation of television. We realised during our career that it was difficult to make a living in theatre, and many of us switched to television. That was because we had a love for acting, and while we would have loved to do so by performing in theatre, it became unfeasible for us. After that, newcomers became interested in television. They looked for a greater chance to become successful, make a living, and become a star. Unlike us, they did not seek a background in theatre and work in it for years. As a result, the theatre only gets mediocre performers, and their productions are unable to thrive. Without the presence of dedicated actors, it is impossible to get back to the previous standard. It can only make a comeback if the government provides adequate subsidies for arts and culture like other countries do. During the pandemic, I did a play in Dhaka Theatre that the government provided some financial support for, and the Shilpakala Academy let us perform it without any cost.

Rafi Hossain: So, it seems that the government

government. That is the only way to resolve this issue.

Rosy Siddiqui: I agree with Selim on this idea that the government needs to set up specific rules to monitor and promote higher quality local content. However, I also wonder if the government is receiving the complaints and solutions we have. I believe that there is a communication gap that we need to bridge. Moreover, journalists and the media also have a role to play here. Often, they praise artists after one small success without judging their skills over some time. I think it's important to promote those who have worked hard to be the best they can be. Only then can the quality we are hoping to see can be achieved.

Rafi Hossain: *Do you have any message for our readers?*

Shahiduzzaman Selim: I hope the discussion today will be fruitful and will reach people.

Rosy Siddiqui: While it is a hard time for us now, we need to find positivity. I hope we will learn from this and be able to utilise it in the future. I wish everyone all the best, and please keep us in your prayers.

Rakaat Sharif

Porimoni back to shooting

IOTO: STAI

Actor Porimoni will start shooting for the film, *Pritilata* on August 10, 2021. Directed by Rashid Palash and written by noted lyricist Golam Rabbani, the film will feature Pori Moni as the lead. Thirtyfive per cent of the shooting has been completed. The latest release of Porimoni's ventures was Tauquir Ahmed's *Sphulingo*. She also finished shooting for the film, *Mukhosh*. Besides, this Eid-ul-Azha Porimoni sacrificed six cows in BFDC for the struggling artists.



GRAPE VINE

SINGER TURNED MODEL

Singer Protic Hasan will show his acting prowess in the music video for Sabrina Bashir's new song, Fu Dile *Baje* . The music video is directed by Soumitra Ghosh. Regarding the song, Sabrina said, "The song name is unique as I kept the new generations thought process in mind. While listening, the audience will find a twist in it. I hope they will enjoy it." Protic said, "The song has a rock genre vibe in it. Sabrina did a wonderful job. Besides, this is the first time I am modelling for someone else's song."





'Brishti Ele' by Mehreen

Pop singer Mehreen recently released a new song *Brishti Ele* under the banner of *Akkhor Records*. The song has been written by Hashibur Reza Kallol and tuned by Muntasir Tushar. Jishan and Shomrat provided the musical arrangement. Taking on a new genre, this is the first time the singer sang besides pop songs. Besides the release, the singer performed for Bangladesh Television's (BTV) program. In tribute to Azam Khan, Mehreen with Alif Alauddin, Armeen Musa performed a five minutes medley. The medley includes the songs *Orey Shakela Orey Makela, Alal O Dulal*, and *Bangladesh*.

EDITORIAL



FOUNDER EDITOR LATE S. M. ALI DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 28, 2021, SRABAN 13, 1428 BS

Cabinet rejects a shameful appeal by the public administration ministry

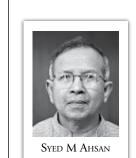
The law's provision invited the scope for such demands

T is unimaginable that the public administration ministry-or anyone else for that matter-would seek any sort of immunity for retired public servants, who have been convicted of committing serious crimes or corruption. Yet that is exactly what the ministry did, according to a report by this newspaper on Tuesday. Fortunately, there was enough sense left for it to be turned down in a recent cabinet meeting. The fact that such exemption was sought, however, is a direct result of this government passing the Sarkari Chakori Ain 2018, which includes a provision that makes it mandatory for the Anti-Corruption Commission to take permission from the authorities concerned before arresting any public servant—or for a court to frame charges against them. This, of course, is in complete contradiction to Bangladesh's constitution, which states that all citizens are equal before the law.

While permission will not be required in case of taking action against ordinary citizens for similar offences, the ACC must take permission from the concerned ministry before arresting any public servant, according to section 41(1) of the Sarkari Chakori Ain 2018. In addition, the 2018 law also allows government servants to be convicted for less than a year, with little more than a slap on the wrist. Moreover, such public servants can be penalised with words of denunciation, temporary demotion or temporarily halting raises, while their jobs remain intact. According to various human rights group, the 2018 law gave government employees a type of impunity and expanded the scope for misuse of power, while creating barriers to observe the professional duties of state institutions and forces involved in curbing crimes and corruption as well as upholding human rights.

Despite granting such unusual privileges to public servants, it seems that was not enough for the public administration ministry which had the audacity to ask for more. And while we are appalled by such a request, we aren't really surprised by it. By passing the 2018 law, the government created this opportunity. And, of course, someone was eventually going to try and take advantage of it and take it further.

While we are pleased that the cabinet had the good sense to turn down the proposal, we must ask again why the government passed a provision that discriminates so heavily in favour of public servants. What was it expecting would happen once such a law was passed? And why should public servants be granted such exemptions at the cost of the ACC's ability to fight corruption and the integrity of the constitution? We believe that there are no good reasons for it—and we have not been given one by the government either—and therefore the government should immediately scrap the provision in question.



innovations in the delivery of healthcare in the developing world. While one may debate the viability of foregoing patents for new life saving therapies (e.g., the Covid-19 vaccines), I reasoned that the general sharing of information and advisories on technologies already on the shelf (but still subject to protection under patents and copyrights) with suitable developing country partners ("destination" countries, from hereon) may still be feasible and thereby hasten the delivery of critical

healthcare in the developing world, in and out of pandemics. While the value of mutual knowledge sharing could be immense under emergency conditions, it would still promote public health under "normal" conditions.

To illustrate the point, take the case of an acute global shortage of basic supplies such as PPEs, medical-grade masks, oxygen concentrators and ventilators in the early phases of the Covid-19 pandemic. One can recall with horror the stories of doctors, nurses and health personnel using the same mask/PPE for days (even weeks). In a situation like this, the immediate value of knowledge sharing about what it takes to produce medical-grade PPEs and masks would have been enormous. Primarily, the partnership we have in

There are three primary participants to the proposed agreement, namely the manufacturers in the country of origin and the destination, and the destination country healthcare delivery institutions.

mind is *informal*, helping destination country manufacturers produce improvised devices and equipment that are functional. Why then should a partnership not be forged between leading manufactures of quality products (say,

Delivery of health services technology in the developing world

HE idea: In a webinar organised by the World University Network last month, the discussion focused on how to expedite the diffusion of evolving medical technology innovations in the of readily improvising indigenous versions of such products? With innate innovations, the latter manufacturers may in due course succeed in turning out world class products themselves. Source country manufacturers should ideally encourage such eventualities prompting them to innovate even faster and, in due course, perhaps move on to specialising in technologically more challenging products instead (like defibrillators). This process may be likened to the Schumpeterian "creative destruction" idea in the modern endogenous growth literature in economics.

The collaboration cited above is independent of the *formal* process whereby the original inventors often license producers in destination countries to manufacture (say labelled 3M) products locally. The latter mechanism (like the Serum Institute of India and the AstraZeneca (UK) vaccine partnership), happens autonomously in the form



of "business as usual" when such a partnership appears both technologically feasible and commercially viable, and promises to be of mutual gain to both parties. Admittedly, both the formal and informal processes cited above would expedite the transfer of knowledge between source and destination countries, and would likely allow faster growth of output per capita, especially in the developing world. However, the formal technology transfer (via licensing, joint ventures, foreign direct investment and the like) is not under focus here for the simple reason that fostering such a mechanism would entail much advance planning. It would possibly be counter-productive to kickstart such an arrangement during a pandemic or a public health emergency while people are dying. The informal "transfer" may eventually blossom into a formal one, but that again is not the raison *d'être* of the proposal on the table here.

Modalities: Under what arrangements would the type of informal sharing of privileged knowledge envisaged above take place in the most effective manner, from

A proposal

arrangement? We can briefly explore the contours of a possible architecture.

There are three primary participants to the proposed agreement, namely the manufacturers in the country of origin and the destination, and the destination country healthcare delivery institutions. While a one-on-one (say between manufacturers in the two locations) liaison may be feasible in some contexts, ideally it would be best if the entire process was mediated by a major non-profit health NGO, an academic institution, or a reputable public health entity in the private sector to both economise on bureaucracy and maximise transparency. Such a competent entity, based in the destination country, may be entrusted to serve as the "gatekeeper/ facilitator" and remain accountable to a board of trustees, nominated by all stakeholders. The gatekeeper would identify both the prospective manufacturers in the country of origin

PHOTO: COLLECTED and in the destination country, as well as the care delivery authority and the latter's need, on an ongoing basis. It would draw up all documentation for mutual assent and thus monitor implementation thereof on an agreed-upon protocol. The articles of the "collaborative agreement" would clearly entail legal and technical aspects, which must be duly vetted at both ends. upon. To the extent the knowledge sharing relates to physical devices and equipment, the primary international agreement will be limited to the producers in the two countries. Inclusion of patented drugs,

even if the originator were to agree to knowledge sharing, would prove difficult on grounds of safety and medical ethics, unless fortuitously partnered with an existing destination country collaborator. Possible export of products arising out of informal knowledge sharing to neighbouring countries may also be permissible if so spelled out under the

out of informal knowledge sharing to neighbouring countries may also be permissible if so spelled out under the agreement (with appropriate disclosures) between the two producers. The destination end-user only comes into the picture in terms of the logistics of how which the gatekeeper can also manage.

While the paragraphs above deal with the generic version of a tripartite agreement, the gatekeeper will also be required to guide the parties in question to produce a specific and unique version of the agreement on a product-by-product (or, service) basis. In terms of details, presumably a first order of business would be to draw up a tentative wish list of "technologies" of value to the healthcare delivery system in a particular public health context, and then identify major source country producers as well as a potential list of destination country manufacturers or knowledge centres who can potentially exploit such a technology with end-users in mind.

The Payfors: The source country manufacturers may dedicate CSR resources to defray out-of-pocket costs, say in the form of time used in securing an agreement to its liking, consultation and managing the dialogue during the implementation and monitoring phases. The destination country manufacturers will have to invest resources to similarly implement the agreement and undertake production or service delivery to endusers by charging fees commensurate with its expenses. Depending on the context, the destination public health/budgetary authorities may come forward with financial assistance as the situation may demand (recall Operation Warp Speed, a public-private partnership initiated by the US government to facilitate and accelerate the development and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines). The regulatory process relevant for such activities would possibly be covered in most cases by existing provisions in the destination country. In cases, the relevant authorities may have to deliberate and develop new regulatory guidelines as to pricing and the like. Were the collaboration as envisaged here to lead to commercial exports to third countries, the source country provider/manufacturer may seek a share of the profit and in that case, the latter contingency may be envisioned in the original agreement or in subsequent amendments mutually agreed

The care delivery system would access the benefits under the proposed knowledge sharing agreement and finance any out-of-pocket costs out of budgetary resources at their disposal in the usual manner. All that is new is that the likely tools at their disposal have expanded by the framework under review here. New funding will, however, be required to secure the services of what we have termed the gatekeeper/facilitator, which will have to continue on a longer-term basis as new agreements become feasible over time. For the sake of transparency and conflict of interest, it would be ideal if funding for such services came from third parties such as global charities.

Time to review the DSA

No law should be iniquitous

HE Digital Security Act, 2018 has proved to be even more contentious than the controversial Section 57 of the ICT Act, 2006 (as amended in 2013) it purportedly replaced, it being more draconian, illiberal, harsh and, more dangerously, a more randomly applied law. That such a law would not only be tolerated, let alone enacted, by the ruling party, with long credentials of struggle for freedom of speech and dissent, is unfathomable.

Concerns have once again been raised, justifiably so, by the international rights watchdogs, including Amnesty International, who have echoed the fears and reiterated the demands of the majority of the people of the country-revoke the law or incorporate wide ranging comprehensive changes in it. The law, as it is today, stands as an odious testimony of the ruling party's blatant disregard for the basic rights of the people. Sadly, it has been weaponised to stifle dissent. And even more dangerously, it has been applied against the media in the harshest manner for reporting facts. Reportedly, in the last year only, 75 journalists have been arrested/tried under this law. And in the four months between January and May this year, the Cyber Tribunal has received 199 cases under this Act. The most detestable aspect of the law is that defamation has been made a criminal offence, which allows little respite from immediate arrest or bail. And even more conflictive with the dreams of the founding fathers is the way the law has been used to silence the critics of the administration and those close to the corridors of power, as the cases of Ahmed Kabir Kishore and Mushtaq Ahmed expose.

No one can take issue with the need for ensuring cyber security. It is a matter of national security—we all agree. But too often, national security has been exploited to provide the administration with security against criticism, disapproval and reproach. The gross difference between the government and the state has been blurred to the extent that the two have become synonymous. It should not be lost upon the rulers that "in democracy, dissent is an act of faith" and to remain silent when one must express dissent is an unpatriotic act. Abbott or 3M) sharing knowledge, on a digital platform, with manufacturers, say in Bangladesh and India, capable the perspective of maximum benefit for care recipients in a destination country? Can patented drugs be brought under this

best the former can gain access to the object of collaboration in an equitable manner. The latter is a domestic issue, Syed M Ahsan is Professor Emeritus, Department of Economics at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada). He is grateful to Adriana Saraceni (Maastricht U) and Mike Raxworthy (U Leeds) for helpful discussions.

Killing of the Boral River

What can we be doing to stop the endless encroachment of rivers?

Brig Gen Tushar Kanti Chakma psc, ndc (Retd)

attended a training course at the US Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky in 1989 where I learnt something interesting about US Army engineers. Like the engineering corps of other armies, including Bangladesh's, they perform the traditional role of combat engineering, barring the enemy's movement while enhancing their own mobility. They were involved in the construction of many landmarks in the US, like the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and the Pentagon. But they also perform a different role which was not known to me-they are responsible for the inland waters of the US. The army engineering corps thus protect the nation's aquatic environmentsoceans, rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, and wetlands.

Over the years, we are also seeing Bangladesh Army engineers being involved in large infrastructure projects like national highways and the Padma Bridge. The corps have gained public confidence in managing and successfully commissioning the projects. They are doing a praiseworthy job in handling these. I often hear my friends saying that the projects will surely be done since the army is involved. They also cite the projects that are lingering in development due to mismanagement.

An editorial in *The Daily Star* on July 24 titled "Killing of Boral River: Government's apathy to encroachment, pollution is the main factor" caught my attention. It describes how the Boral river in Natore is being destroyed through illegal encroachment and pollution, with the newspaper finding "an entire housing society that has occupied a large chunk of the Boral river—built under the noses of the local administration." I think it is not only the government's apathy; there is an apathy in all of us. We are all to be blamed for what is happening to the beautiful rivers we have.



The image of the Boral River that comes up when you search online is of a beautiful small river with clean blue water. Anyone seeing the picture will cry out, "Are we going to kill this river? Can we not do something about it?" We have all been reading about such encroachment and illegal constructions blocking the waterways of Lakhya River and others.

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and other government agencies are responsible for checking illegal encroachment and pollution of our rivers. We saw that these agencies have surveyed and placed marker pillars but yielded no positive results with regard to these problems. Most of the perpetrators are in sociopolitical leadership positions and have enough clout to take on government agencies. We saw some of such demonstrations of power over the Lakhya River by a late lawmaker. These are just the tip of the iceberg—if we look around, we see them displaying their signboards deep in the *khals, beels* and rivers.

Bangladesh Army engineers have a unique organisation of riverine engineers as well, or as we call them— RE Battalions. These were trained to guard riverine approaches into the country against any military incursion or invasion. Their organisation and equipment are drawn up in such a way that they are capable of defending any riverine approach. The battalions have small armed watercrafts besides large landing crafts for transporting tanks, PHOTO: STAR

artillery guns, and logistics along the riverine routes. The cantonment at Postagola is the home of a few of these battalions, and two other battalions are located in the Jamuna and Padma Bridges. There is also a company in Kaptai that provides riverine support at Kaptai Lake.

I would like to propose that Bangladesh Army engineers be given the responsibility of protecting our rivers from these heartless, greedy, short-sighted grabbers immediately. I call upon none other than our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also the Defence Minister, to look into the matter immediately and save our rivers, waters, and our future.

The author is a retired Brigadier General of the Bangladesh Army.

OPINION

Delivery of climate finance will be the key to COP26

countries to support adaptation in the

most vulnerable communities there.

It has proven very difficult to even

track this, as information on where

the money went has been very non-

transparent. Nevertheless, analysis of

available figures by researchers at the

and Development (IIED) traced these

went for adaptation, while 80 percent

went for mitigation.

International Institute for Environment

amounts and found that only 20 percent

An even worse finding was that, of

the amount delivered for adaptation in

only 10 percent of that actually reached

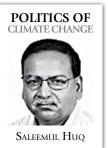
the most vulnerable communities in

those countries. Hence, the developed

countries have a very big hill to climb

if they wish to regain any of their

the vulnerable developing countries,



upcoming 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

If the finance ministers of the developed *countries fail* to deliver the full USD 100 billion before COP26, then it would hardly be worth going to Glasgow for the vulnerable developing countries.

(UNFCCC) is to be held in Glasgow, Scotland in November, with the United Kingdom as the host. The incoming COP26 President designate Alok Sharma has rightly said that the delivery of the "totemic 100 billion US Dollar" in climate finance from developed countries to developing ones to tackle climate change is going to be the key to whether COP26 succeeds or fails

As with most things, the devil is always in the details. The first thing to note about the USD 100 billion figure is that it was first offered in COP16 in Copenhagen, Denmark back in 2010 by then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on behalf of all developed countries. It was again pledged at COP21 in Paris in 2015 and became enshrined as part of the Paris Agreement-a promise from the rich countries to provide USD 100 billion every year from 2020 onwards to help poorer countries tackle climate change, through both mitigation as well as adaptation activities.

However, the year 2020 has already come and gone but this amount was certainly not delivered. It is quite difficult to the most vulnerable developing

to know how much was really delivered, as no one has the responsibility for keeping count.

The nearest to an official account is from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), comprised of Western donor countries, who collect and report data on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). They have recently added two "Rio Markers" to their list of ODA related items for climate change, one for mitigation and one for adaptation. According to the OECD, the total amount of climate finance was nearly USD 80 billion, which is well short of USD 100 billion.

However, the figures reported by the OECD are based entirely on what each developed country tells them has been spent on climate change and there is no scrutiny of these figures by the OECD itself. An independent evaluation of the thousands of projects in their database by Oxfam found that only USD 20 billion out of the USD 80 billion could be reliably counted as climate finance, which is different from ODA. Hence, the majority of the USD 80 billion claimed to have been given for climate change was, in fact, double counted as development assistance as well as climate change finance. This was clearly contrary to the agreement that climate finance would be new and additional to development finance.

A second detail of this climate finance promise was the demand by the developing countries that at least 50 percent of it should go



lost credibility going into COP26 in November.

The main issue is not so much the amounts delivered, as even USD 100 billion is a trivial amount compared to actual needs. Rather, it is a question of whether developed countries can be deemed to be negotiating in good faith or bad. If it is the latter, then there is simply no point in going to Glasgow in November, only for the vulnerable developing countries to be given another round of empty promises. The onus is on the developed countries to actually deliver, not just promise again, the USD 100 billion that was due for 2020 and another USD 100 billion that is now also due for 2021

In fact, the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) countries at their recent Climate

Finance Summit demanded that the developed countries provide details of how they plan to deliver the USD 500 billion over the next five years that they had previously pledged.

An important point to clarify on this issue is that decisions on providing finance are not the domain of the environment ministers who will be attending the COP, but of finance ministers who control the purse-strings of nations and who meet at the annual G7 and G20 leaders' meetings every year. The G7 finance ministers met in the UK in June and failed to deliver enough, and the G20 finance ministers met in Italy in July and also failed to deliver. If the finance ministers of the developed countries fail to deliver the full USD 100 billion before COP26, then it would hardly be worth going to Glasgow for the vulnerable developing countries.

So even though the COP26 President designate Alok Sharma has admitted this is a make or break issue for the success of COP26, he needs the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the UK, Rishi Sunak, to deliver the money, which he has not done. In fact, the Chancellor has actually cut the development assistance budget of the UK instead.

So going into COP26, the UK government under Prime Minister Boris Johnson has a steep hill to climb if they are to keep their word. They have only a few months to deliver the money to regain any semblance of credibility.

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

Pegasus spyware row and Indian democracy



Sustained antigovernment protests by the opposition on the floor of the House paralysed

HE

Pegasus

spyware

almost the entire first week of the monsoon session of Parliament from July 19. Trinamool Congress member of the Rajya Sabha Shantanu Sen was suspended for the rest of the monthlong session for snatching papers from the hands of India's IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who wanted to articulate the government's stand on the row, and flinging them in the air.

A network of global media organisations, along with a consortium of global civil society organisations, came together to bring out a list of potential targets of Pegasus spywareincluding Indian opposition politicians Rahul Gandhi, at least two serving federal ministers, a former Election Commissioner, journalists, business tycoons, and a Supreme Court judgefor surveillance worldwide last week. By most accounts, the list is only of potential targets as only a few devices have been subjected to forensic test and analysis, of which just some of them were found to be infected or hacked. No information is available about the source of the leaked list. Indian IT Minister Vaishnaw, in a statement in Parliament on July 22, said that "In the past, similar claims were made regarding the use of Pegasus on WhatsApp. Those reports had no factual basis and were categorically denied by all parties, including in the Supreme Court. On press reports on the Pegasus issue on July 18, he said these "also appear to be an attempt to malign the Indian democracy and its well established institutions".

themselves: (1) the presence of a phone number in the leaked data does not reveal whether a device was infected with Pegasus or subject to an attempted hack, (2) without subjecting a phone to technical analysis, it is not possible to conclusively state whether it witnessed an attack attempt or was successfully compromised, (3) the report itself clarifies that presence of a number on the list does not amount to spying, and

attached to the IT ministry is enough to do the work.

Across the world, intelligencegathering has over the centuries been a key component of statecraft under all political systems of government, ranging from dictators to the most open democratic societies. There is no disputing the fact that governments in all countries use intelligence organisations for foreign policy and national security



two policemen in plainclothes were apprehended for allegedly keeping vigil outside Rajiv Gandhi's house. In 2011, when the Congress under the then PM Manmohan Singh was in power, a confidential letter written by then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee to Manmohan, that he suspected a bugging device was planted in his office, was leaked. Two years down the line, audio tapes-recorded allegedly at the behest of Amit Shah (now India's Home Minister) of Gujarat-of purported conversations of a female architect, were

Then, there was the leak of the BlackBerry Messenger messages recovered by income tax officials from the laptop of meat exporter Moin Qureshi. The spying controversy also hit the business sector when conversations of industrialists Ratan Tata, Nusli Wadia and Keshub Mahindra came out. The then Prime Minister I K Gujral had ordered a CBI probe into the audio tape leaks but the inquiry was closed for want of evidence", leaving the question of who or which agency ordered the telephone taps on the industrialists unanswered.

against persons charged with terrorism and major economic offences, and certainly do not include anyone else.

It is impractical and futile to expect complete transparency in the covert operations of the intelligence agencies like the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) or the Intelligence Bureau, particularly when it comes to national security because secrecy is the essence of their activities. But the suggestion that their oversight may be expanded from the bureaucracy to include a small legislative committee merits consideration. Such oversight mechanisms are in place in the US, Australia and Canada

What makes the current Pegasus row stand out from earlier phone-tapping rows is the much bigger number of potential targets. Two unmistakable developments are to be noted in this context: the coming together of media houses and civil society and rights groups, and efforts, in which the opposition has joined in full strength, to show that media freedom and democracy have taken a big hit in India under the Narendra Modi dispensation and that an ambience of fear is all around. The Modi government has come out with its own counter-mobilisation. But the Pegasus row has implications beyond the political slugfest. It raises important issues of citizens' privacy and liberty that need to be debated. The Indian constitution already subjects individuals rights and liberties to reasonable restrictions when it comes to external and internal emergencies. Then why are journalists, politicians and other citizens also being spied upon? India should not get distracted by the noise emanating from Western countries about the country's "flawed" democracy. Many of these countries were once imperialist powers and some of them had, during the Cold War decades, collaborated with the most brutal regimes across the world that annihilated their own citizens and sought to crush national liberation movements. However, for its own sake, India needs to get to the bottom of the issues raised by the Pegasus episode in the country.

The Pegasus issue has once again brought to the fore the demand for bringing intelligence agencies under

Countering the allegation that individuals linked to the Pegasus spyware row were being spied on, Vaishnaw pointed to four aspects contained in the press reports



Sustained anti-government protests by the opposition on the floor of the House paralysed almost the entire first week of the monsoon session of Parliament in India, pictured here. PHOTO: REUTERS

(4) Pegasus services are openly available to anyone, anywhere and anytime and are commonly used by governmental agencies as well as by private companies worldwide.

Questions have been raised if Pegasus has been procured by the government and deployed against Indian citizens. If not, then who procured and used the spyware? Only a fair probe can bring out the facts. Views are divided as to how the whole Pegasus episode will be probed. Should it be a Supreme Court-monitored investigation (a public interest litigation is already at the top court)? Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram pitched for a joint parliamentary committee probe but his party colleague Shashi Tharoor said there was no need for that and the parliamentary committee

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

objectives.

Since the late 1980s, India has witnessed spying incidents from time to time that led to the resignation of Karnataka Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde and Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. Hegde quit on "moral grounds" in 1988 after information came out of wire-taps on 50 individuals, including journalists and dissidents, within his ruling Janata Party. Subsequently, the fact that permission was given to the police for the phone-tapping was made public too, which made Hegde's continuance untenable.

In 1991, the then Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's Samajwadi Janata Party government, backed by the Congress, had to go after Congress withdrew support when it emerged that

That is not all. In 2008, conversations of corporate lobbyist Niira Radia were leaked in what became infamous as the Radia tapes. The conversations pertained to allocation of 2G telecom spectrum for mobile phone services companies. There was, however, a major difference about the Radia tapes case—the tapping was authorised in connection with the 2G allocation scam that also hit several big names in Indian journalism who were in conversation over phone with the lobbvist.

The Pegasus issue has once again brought to the fore the demand for bringing intelligence agencies under legislative or judicial oversight, something no political executive, irrespective of affiliation, has done so far. At present, that job is done by the bureaucracy at the central and state levels under clearly-defined rules and three to four categories of persons whose phones can be tapped after due authorisation. According to former senior bureaucrats in the Home Ministry, those rules and categories allow phone-tapping only

Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent for The Daily Star.





VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882 - 1941)**English writer**

The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more *interesting perhaps* than the story of that emancipation itself,

ACROSS	31 Fitting	9 Fire starter
1 Tug-of-war need	32 Audition	11 Great weights
5 Way out	34 Flies high	15 Become less
9 Scholarship basis	37 Get up	dense
10 Intolerant sort	38 Cars	19"— Around"
12 Deal maker	39 Worker with a	(Beach Boys hit)
13 Game with	pick	20 Completely
numbered cards	40 Circus structure	22 One of a bear
14 Catch stealing,	41 Hangs low	trio
say	-	23 – de deux
16 Charged particle	DOWN	24 Beat, as a
17 Artery problem	1 Entertain lavishly	rhythm
18 Temporary break	2 Mount Hood	25 Subject of a w
21 Egg layer	setting	26 Fan disapprov
22 Friend of	3 Wine grape	27 Entertains
Winnie-the-Pooh	4 Words from	28 Hinder
23 Comic strip unit	caesar	29 "Apollo 13" or
24 Brewing vessel	5 Flow out	30 Mideast natio
26 Naughty	6 Noon, on a clock	33 Ewes' mates
	7 Set afire	35 Director Howa
29 Bahamas capital		

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Α	R	E	S			С	Н	Ι	R	Р
Ν	Α	М	E	D		L	U	Ν	Α	R
Т	н	Ι	Ν	Е		А	М	Α	Ζ	E
Ο	R	G		S	Р	Y		J	0	E
Ζ	Α	R	Ζ	Ι	А		D	Α	R	Ν
	Н	E	Ι	R	L	Ο	Ο	М	S	
			Т	Е	Е	Ν	S			
	А	Ι	R	S	Т	R	E	Α	М	
L	υ	Ν	0		Т	Α	S	Т	E	S
Α	R	Т		D	Е	М		н	Α	Т
С	Ο	υ	Р	Е		Р	R	Е	G	Ο
0	R	Ι	0	Ζ		S	Ι	Ν	E	W
В	Α	Т	Т	Υ			в	Α	R	E



legislative or judicial oversight, something *no political* executive, *irrespective* of affiliation, has done so far.

The Paily Star MARIE STOPES BANGLADESH





WORLD POPULATION DAY

ENSURING CHOICES AND RIGHTS

The Daily Star in association with Team Associates and Marie Stopes Bangladesh organised an online discussion titled "World Population Day: Ensuring Choices and Rights" on July 8, 2021. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.



MONJUN NAHAR, Lead, Advocacy and Communication, Marie Stopes Bangladesh

This year, the World Population Day focuses on comprehensive rights and choices on sexual and reproductive health. The theme itself refers to the global consensus that reproductive health rights are integral and indivisible parts of human rights. Particularly for women reproductive rights are deeply connected with their life and livelihood. The ability to take decisions about their sexual and reproductive health is a key indicator that women are in control of their own lives.

However, we are talking about rights and choices in a context where women have very little independence to take decision by herself. A woman's education, marriage, profession are mostly dependent on her family members.

The government has taken a series of initiatives and programs to increase access of women and girls to reproductive health services. Significant achievements have been made by the government of Bangladesh in reducing the gender gap in primary education, maternal and child mortality and the total fertility rate. However, there is much work to be done on this front in order to achieve the related sustainable development goals, along with other national and international commitments.

Additionally, the pandemic has overburdened our healthcare system with COVID-19 patients, and as a result, other health issues such as sexual and reproductive health, have been put on the back burner. Gender-based violence, child marriage, unsafe abortion and unwanted pregnancies have been on the rise during the pandemic.

To mitigate the collective challenges, and ensure access to these services, the government should focus on task-sharing, increasing the participation of private organisations and hospitals, encouraging male participation, and framing policies and programs with a commitment to women's rights.



DR ABU SAYED MOHAMMAD HASAN, Programme Specialist, Sexual and Reproductive Health, UNFPA Bangladesh

(SRHR), we often ignore the sexual part from this concept. Social taboos are a barrier to work on this issue. We need to encourage these conversations to take place freely.

To me, family planning program is not only about contraception, rather it is about the wellbeing and rights of people. It must be addressed that mental health issues are also a part of this. Moreover, the existing program primarily targets women instead of couples. This traditional approach needs to change and must include male participation.

From a policy perspective, we must review all our existing policies and address any shortcomings. Simultaneously, we also need to ensure we follow international guidelines on family planning and SRHR to promote women rights.



Medical College Hospital The global commitment is around achieving zero unmet need for family planning information and services, zero preventable maternal death, zero sexual and gender-based violence, and harmful practices against women and girls by 2030. Accordingly, our government has also set its program, but the programmatic

approach must focus on women's right issues. I also emphasize on sexual violence that women face. Sexual violence towards women has increased recently, with workplace sexual violence also increasing, so we must work on workplace safety for women as well. This is particularly important for garment factories, which are very unsafe workplaces for women and girls. Female garment workers are afraid to speak up against harassment for fear of losing their jobs. I recommend starting a #MeToo movement in our country to demand safer workspaces for women and girls.



Former Chairman, Department of Population Sciences, University of Dhaka

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the total fertility rate (TFR) in Bangladesh is 2.04 births per woman. However, according to data from Bangladesh rarely performed. Going forward, men must also become a part of the process by ensuring they are taking contraceptive measures instead of leaving the full responsibility on their partners. Contraception must be made available through door-to-door services, especially in rural areas. Our monitoring system must be strengthened to ensure the quality service. There should also be a dedicated research cell to conduct needs assessment surveys, so we can work and plan accordingly.



S M SHAIKAT. Executive Director, Socio-Economic Rural Advancement Committee Bangladesh

According to a Population Reference Bureau policy brief, the failure rate of contraceptives is the highest among Bangladeshi youth aged 15 to 19. This group often discontinues using contraceptives for various reasons, even though they are not planning to conceive. As a result, most of them opt for abortions.

A considerable percentage of Bangladeshi youth depend on emergency contraceptive pills They believe that the morning-after pill is an easy method to avoid pregnancies. However, they are unaware of the adverse side effects of these pills because the pharmacy salesperson does not provide any information about the side effects and complications. Contraceptive counselling support should be made available to the youth and adolescents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

> Everyone, irrespective of their gender and sexual orientation, should have access to proper SRH services

> Child marriage must be stopped. Provide incentives to families that are vulnerable to child marriage

> Focus on telemedicine and online services during the pandemic. Make telemedicine services more accessible to people living in rural areas

Create policies to promote task sharing in order to mitigate the shortage of human resources in the Family Planning programs

> Increase the participation of men in the family planning programs

> Raise awareness about the health risks related to early pregnancies

Ensure access to SRHR services and information for the youth and adolescents irrespective of marital status

> Implement the EMIS system in all districts to digitally monitor patients

> Establish fertility clinics for women suffering from infertility

> Ensure that the family planning programs are operating with the required human resources

in this regard, nurses are potential resources to provide family planning services. We should consider that and must take a plan to build their skills on family planning service.



MASRURUL ISLAM, Country Director, Marie Stopes Bangladesh

Violation of women's rights start with child marriage, and it is said that approximately 50 percent of marriages in Bangladesh are child marriages. At this age, young girls are unaware of their rights, and they are also unable to express their opinions. During this pandemic, child marriage has increased even more. If we want to reduce this, we need a comprehensive plan. The government can offer financial assistance to the families of adolescent girls, which will help prevent families from marrying their daughters off forcefully to mitigate their financial problems. We need to incentivise raising and educating girls till they are adults and allowing them to get married when they choose to.

Marie Stopes Bangladesh has been working with a mission that "Children by choice not Chance". Therefore, these rights are our key concern in providing SRH services. To design and implement our program, we always consider, women's participation in the decisionmaking process as these are the fundamental to the empowerment of women.

this, we have developed infection prevention guideline for family planning, maternal and adolescent health services. We are providing virtual orientation to the service providers, introducing digital supportive supervision, assigning Depo-holders at the community level to continue expanding access to SRH services. DGFP also formed taskforce at the Ministry of Heath and Family Welfare level, as well as the divisional, district, and sub-district level to continue the field level implementation. We have increased the distribution of pills and condoms to the users for an extended duration of two to four months.

We have been implementing a nationwide campaign to provide information on family planning, reproductive health, adolescent health, etc. However, there is no doubt that like other programs, family planning programs have also been disrupted. Restricted physical mobility, fear of Covid-19, limited awareness about Covid-19, are key challenges to the implementation of our plan and programs. Simultaneously, we are also facing challenges due to shortage of human resources.



DR MOHAMMED SHARIF, Director (Maternal and Child *Health-Services*) and Line Director (Maternal, Child, Reproductive and Adolescent Health), Directorate General of Family Planning

During this pandemic, contraceptives and other commodities have been made available in each clinic. We have successfully facilitated the Electronic Management Information System (EMIS) in 36 districts. But we must implement the EMIS in all the districts of the country. I also recommend that the ministry provides an ambulance service dedicated to pregnant women in each upazila to increase the number of institutional deliveries.

We are providing medical menstrual regulation services, but women are opting to buy unprescribed contraceptive medication from local pharmacies, as it is easier to access. Without the consultation of a doctor, these unprescribed contraceptives sometimes fail to work, as most people are not told how often they need to consume these contraceptives, or about the possible adverse effects on their health.

At the same time, we need to help infertile women, as they are often the ones who face the most violence due to infertility which society views negatively. We will try our best to set up fertility clinics in every division to help women facing infertility.

We have a quality assurance team in each district, but we have lack of human resources, we have posted 1,450 doctors but only 736 doctors are employed. I am asking for support from the development partners to provide volunteers in ensuring the service to our people.



Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) are essential, lifesaving interventions. The lack of proper information and access to reproductive healthcare leads to unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions. In Bangladesh, every year, around 1.7 million abortions take place, which may further increase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Improved access to SRH services could prevent unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions; thereby reducing the risk of maternal mortality.

We must identify more systematically why our healthcare facilities are failing to provide these services to women; especially those who are underprivileged. Increasing the number of telemedicine services can possibly help increase the accessibility to these services. However, we should keep in mind that these services are hard to access for people in rural areas, so telemedicine services should be designed taking into consideration the rural context. Additionally, the number of family welfare assistants has not increased for years now, while the population in their working areas has significantly increased. We must increase the number of family welfare assistants.

There are over 4,000 Union Health and Family Welfare Centres in Bangladesh, and through these centres, we can increase the access to SRH services for rural women. But to ensure quality services, government must take initiative to deploy skilled midwives in these union level facilities.



PROF. DR **AINOON NAHAR**, Jahangirnagar University

I want to highlight that the concept of reproductive rights does not apply only for women and men. So, we need to think of it from a broader perspective by including people from all genders and sexual orientations.

To ensure rights and choices, the term consent is key to understand and practice. However, there is a lack of understanding about consent in relationships or in the household decision-making process, particularly for women, as our social and cultural norms consider men to be the decision makers. Women should be able to choose when they want to be sexually active or get pregnant, and men should be taught to respect women's consent. A lot of work must be done to ensure this, but we can start by raising awareness at the school level.

Another point is that, even though it is about sexual and reproductive health rights

Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) spanning 2011 to 2018 and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019 conducted by BBS and UNICEF, the TFR is stagnant at 2.3 births per woman. There hasn't been any improvement in the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) either.

We are have failed to achieve the goals set by the Bangladesh Population Policy 2012. We targeted a CPR of 72 percent and TFR of 2.1 by 2015, but our CPR is now close to only 62 percent. If we cannot increase the CPR soon, it will be difficult for healthcare services to accommodate the rising number of unwanted pregnancies during this pandemic. As a result, a lot of women might have to resort to unsafe abortions

We need to train programme managers and service providers on how to run the program during the pandemic. Transport and communication allowances can be provided to incentivise fieldworkers to continue their work even during the lockdown.

There should be routine analysis of service data, which will help us better understand where family planning services are lacking in terms of accessibility, and thereby helping to revise our existing programs.



PROF. DR SEHEREEN F SIDDIQUA, Professor and Head of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Anwer Khan Modern

Medical College Hospital During the pandemic, the number of child marriages increased significantly. We must ensure family planning services and information to these young women to reduce unwanted and early pregnancies. We have failed to increase the usage of both short-

term and long-term contraceptives. There has been a 20 percent reduction in the use of oral contraceptives, even though telemedicine services are operational, and pharmacies are all open. The user rate has reduced significantly in Chattogram, Kishoreganj, Narail, Netrokona and Rangpur.

We also found that number of unsafe abortions have been increasing day by day, which is in turn increasing the number of maternal deaths. Therefore, we must prioritise on safe abortion services to protect women from infections and further health risk issues caused by unsafe abortions.

We still put all the responsibilities on women for contraception. Men and women should both be a part of the process, as contraceptives are available for both. Yet, procedures such as non-scalpel vasectomies are Contraceptive counselling support should be made available > Population programs should consider the geographical diversity

Moreover, adolescents do not have the access to the proper services in the case of short-term contraceptive failure. Moreover, there is no accountability from manufacturers in case of product failure. Those whose rights are violated do not have the choice to hold the company or industry accountable for contraceptive failure.

There is a significant gap in service provision due to services being provided based on marital status. SRHR cannot be conditional for only those who are married. It is a human right.



Senior Associate, Department of International Health, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Recent research studies found that most deaths during pregnancy are caused due to a lack of information and proper services. We should provide information to pregnant women and their families about how to save their life in case of complications. 53 percent of deliveries are still done at home. Among them, only 3 percent is carried out by trained midwives. The rest are carried out by untrained midwives, which oftentimes results in death.

In addition, 60 percent of adolescent girls are getting married, and they are the ones that need counselling on SRH. They are at a high risk of death from pregnancy, but adequate and proper counselling, information and awareness are not provided to these young girls.

Many young women are denied contraceptives at clinics and pharmacies unless they can provide a marriage certificate. This is discriminatory, as contraceptives should be provided irrespective of marital status.

Marriage itself can be violent from time to time. Most women get pregnant three to four months after getting married because they are not educated on contraceptives. Sometimes, women are forced to continuously bear children, as otherwise they are considered "unproductive" or "infertile"

We must ensure that women are informed where they can avail the services by the trained midwives. A sufficient number of midwives must also be made available for women at the upazila level so that all women can seek their services if they want.

To mitigate the shortage of skilled human resources, we must focus on task sharing and,

During the pandemic, we are trying to open our clinics so that women have proper access to our services. All of us working in healthcare in the country need to re-evaluate our strategies to ensure that they are feasible given the current conditions posed by the pandemic.



QUAZI A K M MOHIUL **ISLAM**, Former Director General, Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP)

The pandemic threatens our progress in health and family planning. To overcome this, we need transformational family planning programs. The organisations working on family planning need to replicate the proven innovations to monitor their clients digitally. We should enable our field workers to move faster by providing them with transport such as cycles or motorcycles. We need to identify the vulnerable families that are susceptible to child marriage and provide them with incentives and education to discourage this practice. Child marriage is the underlying cause of around 20 percent of deaths in maternal mortality. The parents should be made aware of the dire consequences of child marriage, as well as the importance of SRH. The ideas of youth, for better access to SRH services during pandemic, should be included in our planning.

Due to geographical diversity, different regions suffer differently. Due to uniqueness of region-specific challenges, we should develop region specific strategies to achieve national and global goals.



DR NURUN NAHAR BEGUM, Line Director, DGFP

Considering the Covid-19 situations, our family planning directorate established a telemedicine and information centre for 24-hour service, which can be reached through 16767. Besides



MOHAMMAD ABDUS SALAM KHAN, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

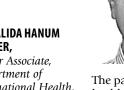
The theme of the World Population Day this year is set as 'Rights and choices are the answer: Whether baby boom or bust, the solution lies in prioritizing the reproductive health and rights of all people' which is extremely relevant to our context. SRHR include a girl's choice to choose when she will get married, when she wants to get pregnant, and how many babies she wants to take. This right does not and should not depend on her financial status and education level. Unfortunately, neither the adolescents nor the people around them are aware of the rights, let alone implementing them

Child marriage is one of contributing factors to unplanned pregnancies. Unplanned pregnancy leads to unsafe abortion and eventually to maternal death. Pregnancy is not a disease, but mothers die due to pregnancy related complications. We cannot let this continue to happens anymore. Our commitment is to make sure every pregnancy is expected and planned.

Although, the issue of child marriage is beyond our jurisdiction, we are working collectively for building awareness by implementing nation wide campaigns through print and electronic media on the consequence of child marriage and risks associated with early pregnancy, as well as awareness around SRHR.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is implementing Fourth Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program to ensure that all citizens of Bangladesh enjoy health and well-being by expanding access to quality and equitable healthcare in a healthy and safe living environment.

Ensuring SRH is a key commitment to ensure we meet the targets set by our SDGs and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). However, it is not possible for the government to implement these rights by themselves. We need to approach this together as a society. In this regard, I am requesting all, especially the print and electronic media, development organisations, UN agencies, NGOs and INGOs to come forward to proactively participate in the campaign to ensure the SRHR of women and girls are realised.



DR HALIDA HANUM AKHTER,

e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 28, 2021, SRABAN 13, 1428 BS

Ruman bows out in second round after last-shot thriller

ANISUR RAHMAN



After being eliminated from the second round of the men's individual recurve event at the Tokyo Olympics, Bangladesh's top archer Ruman Sana felt the urge to smash his bow shortly before returning to his senses and setting his sights on a gold medal at the 2028 Olympics.

Bangladesh's dream of winning an elusive medal at the Olympics this time hinged on Ruman, especially as the 26-year-old became the nation's second athlete to earn a direct ticket for the Olympics.

However, Ruman's journey ended in the second round as he suffered a 4-6 set points loss to Canada's Duenas Crispin, ranked 36th in the world.

Ruman, 25th in the world rankings, enjoyed a good start with a 7-3 set points win over Tom Hall of Great Britain in the first round, but the archer from Bangladesh Ansar crumbled in the second round despite getting off to a winning start.

He beat Crispin in the first set 26-25 before losing two straight sets to fall behind 2-4. The lad from Khulna bounced back to level things at 4-4 ahead of the fifth and final set, which went down to the final shot.

Ruman needed to hit the bullseye and score 10 to win the game and advance to the third round or square things up and force a tiebreaker by hitting a nine, but he could only manage eight and was eliminated.

"I can't forgive myself because I had a lot of opportunities to win the match. I felt like destroving my bows and arrows and leaving archery. I tried to put up my natural performance without any pressure but luck wasn't with me because the shots which hit 9s were supposed to hit 10," a frustrated Ruman told The Daily Star over the phone.

"There were many chances to win the match but I couldn't capitalise on any of them. I could have even taken the match into a tiebreak had I hit nine on the last shot, but I could only hit eight," said Ruman, who had targeted winning the first two rounds before possibly fighting it out against top-seed Kim Je Deok of South Korea, who was surprisingly beaten by 33rd-ranked Florian Unruh of Germany in the third round.

Before departing for Japan, Ruman had told The Daily Star that Bangladesh should not think of winning medals at the Olympics at the moment because even qualifying was a struggle. He added that when a lot of archers would qualify for the





FERREIRA, MOORE SECURE HISTORIC GOLD MEDALS

Brazil's Italo Ferreira and American Carissa Moore overcame challenging conditions in brilliant style to win historic first Olympic surfing gold medals at the Tsurigasaki Surfing Beach on Tuesday. Ferreira, who learned to surf standing on the foam box his father sold fish from, beat Japan's Kanoa Igarashi in the final. Ferreira snapped his board on the first wave and had to wait in the sea for a replacement. But he recovered to score 15.14 to Igarashi's 6.60 at Tsurigasaki Beach, around 100km (60 miles) east of Tokyo. Moore out-classed South African outsider Briana Buitendag to secure victory in the women's event. PHOTO: REUTERS

'I can feel his presence'

REUTERS, Tokyo

Kaylee McKeown powered to her first Olympic gold on Tuesday and a third win in three days for a triumphant Australian TOKYO 2020 women's team, launching a thrilling fightback in the 100m

backstroke to go within a fingertip of her own world record. Canada's Kylie Masse took a good lead

from the start and held it at the halfway mark but McKeown switched gears out of the turn and clawed back to win in 57.47, with Masse taking silver and American Reagan Smith the bronze.

McKeown's victory put Australia's swimmers on equal terms with the United States in the gold medal race with three



each, turning up the heat in the latest round of one of the most enduring Olympic rivalries. The win comes during an impressive

run in which McKeown ranked top in three Tokyo events, driven by the memory of her father, who died of cancer last year. "One hundred percent I know it's stupid of me to say it but I can feel his presence,

certain things pop up on my phone, only things he'd say to me," she said. "He was with me that entire race not just last 10 metres so its kind of a little

superpower that I have within myself.' The win followed a similar gritty display on Monday from compatriot Ariarne Titmus, who came from behind to snatch gold from dominant American Katie Ledecky in the 400m freestyle. "I never thought I would be in Olympics let alone an Olympic final then to stand on the podium with a gold medal around my neck, it's something that a lot of people dream of,' McKeown said. "I'm still soaking it all up."

The Olympics medal was also the second for the McKeown family following elder sister Taylor's medley relay silver at the 2016 Rio Olympics. "She'll push herself until she vomits. She's an absolute animal," Taylor told Australian television.



Teen divers Chen Yuxi and Zhang Jiagi blew their opponents away in the women's 10 metre synchronised platform on Tuesday, extending China's winning streak in the event to six Olympic Games. Aged 15 and 17, the duo who hugged each other at the podium after receiving their gold medals - were in a league of their own at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre. They finished on 363.78 points, more than 52 ahead of second-placed Jessica Parratto and Delanev Schnell of the United States. "We do have an advantage in our age. We are short and light, and this means that our (water) entry is better than the others," said Zhang. PHOTO: REUTERS

Naomi Osaka

No room for dysfunction

TOKYO WINDOW



Olympics directly, then the dream of winning a medal would come true.

Replying to a query, Ruman said: "The people of country might have dreamt of me winning a medal in the Olympics because they saw my ability to win silver and bronze medals in the World Archery Championships and World Cup. But it is really naïve to think of an Olympic medal because it is a really hard job."

He also lamented the drop in form brought about by the pandemic.

"If I could have finished among the 10 archers in the Ranking round on the back of the form that I had in 2019, then I could have done something at the Olympics. However, my target is gold in the 2028 Olympics, so I'm going to play for the 2024 Olympics. From now, I have to toil harder, play more international tournaments and Games and improve my ability to realise my target."

The 26-year-old also urged the concerned authorities to increase facilities and incentives for archers so that the next generation is attracted and delivers their best on big stages like the Olympics.

against Australia

NABID YEASIN



A series sweep across the formats in Harare against Zimbabwe is what was expected of Bangladesh and the

Tigers certainly lived up to their billing. With the collection of all 30 ICC ODI Super League Points from the three ODIs, the series was more than just a morale booster for a group on the back of a string of losses, especially while playing away from home.

However, aside from clear on-field dominance, barring a 23-run defeat in the second T20I which was the sole hitch along the way, one other thing that came to the fore vividly during this Zimbabwe tour was the lack of trust and communication between the players and team management.

Despite a convincing 220run victory in the one-off Test, Mahmudullah Riyad's sudden retirement from the format hogged all the spotlight. The way this news broke -- with players giving Mahmudullah a guard of honour and writing farewell messages on social media but refusing to acknowledge anything in front of the media as there was no official

announcement -- only demonstrated the gap in communication between players and the management.

With the Mahmudullah issue being doused by a dominant showing in the three-match ODI series, another issue involving ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal emerged. Although the cricketer denied any such issue, there were reports that Tamim was on the verge of quitting his role as ODI captain after his dedication towards the team had been brought into question following his decision to opt out of the T20I series due to a knee injury.

Meanwhile, the epitome of miscommunication on the part of the management was when two sets of messages were relayed, one from chief selector Minhajul Abedin and another from cricket operations committee chairman Akram Khan, regarding Bangladesh opener Liton Das' availability for the upcoming series against Australia.

Only hours after initiating the confusion, the BCB issued a press release mentioning that Liton had been ruled out of the upcoming T20I series against Australia at home after the batsman left the team bubble in Zimbabwe to return to Bangladesh for a family emergency on Monday.

However, despite all these offfield issues, the severely injury-hit Bangladesh still managed to come out with trophies in all three formats. While it is the players' performance and determination that ensured offfield issues had no impact on their demeanor, it cannot be denied that the hurdle was easier to cross as it was against a low-ranked Zimbabwe side.

That will not be the case against the formidable Australians, who are slated to play five T20Is in the space of just seven days.

As much as the tight schedule will be an issue for a Bangladesh side who are already missing multiple key players like Tamim, Mushfiqur Rahim and Liton Das due to injury or personal tragedies, their ability will be put to a stern test against Aaron Finch's side in a format considered the Achilles heel of the Bangladesh men's cricket team.

The series is being considered as part of preparations for the upcoming T20 World Cup and only a fully coherent Bangladesh side -- with performance on the field resonating with sound off-field management -- can make a statement about how they will approach the upcoming T20 World Cup.



Flora Duffy

**Flora Duffy achieved instant national hero status when she won Bermuda's first Olympic gold medal on Tuesday after delivering a dominant run leg for an emphatic victory in the women's triathlon on a stormy Tokyo course.

**Taiwan's Kuo Hsing-Chun won the gold medal in the women's 59kg weightlifting event at the Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday, breaking Olympic records in all three categories. Kuo, who holds the world record with a total lift of 247kg, lifted 236kg to win gold on Tuesday, an Olympic record. Her lifts in the snatch -- 103kg -- and clean and jerk -- 133kg -- were also new Olympic marks.

*Weightlifter Polina Guryeva made history on Tuesday as Turkmenistan's first Olympic medallist and, as the shock sank in, began wondering how she might cope with the hero's welcome she is anticipating back home. A former gymnast and a first-time Olympian, Guryeva won silver in the -59kg class, behind her idol, Taiwan's Kuo Hsing-Chun, who broke Olympic records in all three of the event's categories.

Japanese medal hopeful Naomi Osaka was eliminated from the women's event following a surprise defeat on Centre Court on Tuesday. The women's draw was thrown wide open after fourtime Grand Slam champion and world number two Osaka was downed 6-1, 6-4 by Marketa Vondrousova in one of the biggest upsets of the Games. Men's world number four Stefanos Tsitsipas avenged his straight-sets loss to Frances Tiafoe at Wimbledon last month, taking out the American 6-3 6-4 to book a place in the third round.

Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Live from 7:15 am, 8:15 am, 10:10 am, 12:20 pm, 3:10 pm & 5:35 pm Sri Lanka vs India TEN 2, TEN 3 & SONY SIX Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Live from 8:30 pm

Live from 8:00 pm & 4:00 am (Thursday) T SPORTS, TEN 1, TEN 2 & **SONY SIX** Second T20I



TEA MEANS A FULL LIFE

TEA MEANS

ISPAHANI

MIRZAPORE



Jamuna to

inject up to

Tk 1,000cr

into Evaly

MAHMUDUL HASAN and KHONDOKER MD SHOYEB

Industrial giant Jamuna Group is going to invest up to Tk 1,000 crore in

beleaguered e-commerce

Initially, Jamuna will

invest Tk 200 crore and the

rest in phases, Evaly said in a statement yesterday.

"We, as a local venture, are really pleased to have another local company by our side," said Mohammad

Rassel, founder and CEO

investment, Jamuna has

investments coming into

Evaly. The business group

invest in the next phase as

The disclosure comes

carrying out investigations

AI statement

'motivated'

Says info minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information and

has the opportunity to

at a time when several

agencies, including

the Anti-Corruption Commission, have been

into the alleged

on DSA

well, he said.

become part of the ongoing

Through this

platform Evaly.

of Evaly.



City

Tunisia's biggest party urges polls

Warns against 'autocratic regime'

AFP, Tunis

Opponents of Tunisia's President Kais Saied, who sparked a crisis by ousting the premier and suspending parliament, yesterday challenged him to hold new elections instead of building an "autocratic regime".

The moderate Islamist Ennahdha

party, which was the strongest group in the coalition government,

US, EU and other powers have also voiced strong concern. Ennahdha yesterday challenged the president to call new legislative and presidential elections, warning against any delay that would be "a pretext to maintain an autocratic

regime". The party also accused Saied of having "worked with undemocratic forces to overturn the constitutional rights of elected officials, and replace them with members of his own chosen cabal".

After violent clashes Monday, it claimed "organised thugs" were being used to "provoke bloodshed and chaos", and urged its supporters "to go home in the interests of maintaining the peace and security of our nation"

The young North African democracy of 12 million people, the cradle of the Arab Spring uprisings a decade SEE PAGE 5 COL 3



Maintaining no physical distancing, people standing in long queues in front of Delduar Upazila Health Complex in Tangail to receive coronavirus vaccines. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

embezzlement or transfer SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Humayun Ahmed's family serves legal notice on GP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Writer and director Humavun Ahmed's family members sent a legal notice to Grameenphone, the country's largest mobile phone operator, for infringing on intellectual property rights.

Grameenphone used four popular characters created by Humayun -- Baker Bhai from Kothao Keu Nei, Elachi Begum from Ayomoy, Sobhan Saheb from Bohubrihi and Taiyab Ali from Ure Jay Bok Pokkhi -- commercially without

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Yahya will commit suicide: Nixon

JULY 28, 1971

Shamsuddoza Sajen

CONVERSATION AMONG NIXON, KISSINGER AND FARLAND

American President Richard Nixon, his security adviser Henry Kissinger and the US

Ambassador to Pakistan Joseph Farland held a discussion today on issues surrounding Bangladesh War.

Ambassador Farland presented a grim picture and said, "If we push [Pakistan President] Yahya [Khan] to the point where he reacts, the reaction will be such that the entire subcontinent will be

[in turmoil]." Nixon commented on this point, "He [Yahya] will commit

NSO 'should be sanctioned'

4 US Democrats suggest action against Israeli cyberfirms over **Pegasus revelations**

Agencies

Four Democratic lawmakers in Washington on Monday suggested blacklisting or imposing sanctions against the Israeli firm NSO Group that licensed spyware used by governments to hack the smartphones of journalists, human rights activists and business executives.

They also said recent revelations of misuse reinforced their conviction that the "hacking-for-hire industry must be brought under control".

Huge comet heading close enough to us to become visible



CNN ONLINE

Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday rejected Amnesty International's statement over the Digital Security Act (DSA), saying that the statement was "motivated" Talking to reporters at

his residence in the capital, the minister also said Amnesty International has

lost its acceptability. "Amnesty Interna

President Kais Saied has labelled Sunday's power grab a "coup d'etat" while the

permission.

Barrister Hamidul Mizbah sent a legal notice to Grameenphone on behalf of Humayun's wife Meher Afroz Shaon, daughters Nova Ahmed, Sheela Ahmed and Bipasha Ahmed, son Nuhash Humayun, and brother Zafar Iqbal.

The mobile operator launched a series of promotional programmes in July 2020, under a campaign titled "Kemon Achen Tara", which was released on Grameenphone's official Facebook page and YouTube channel, for which no permission or licence was obtained from family members or heirs.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Kissinger added, "They [Indians] think that by, well, if they can undermine East Pakistan then in West Pakistan so many forces would be, will unloosen, will be turned loose that the whole Pakistan issue will disappear. The Indians and West Pakistanis they hate each other."

As to the future course of action, Nixon advised, "Let's not aggravate the problem; let's try to help on the problem -- East Pakistan. And the main thing ... let's not stir it up. It's stirred up too much. Inevitably it will be a bloodbath down there."

Ambassador Farland shared that since March 25, 1971 the US had sent over 2,200 rounds of .22 ammunition for survival rifles. He added that 40 to 50 percent of what is in the pipeline was for spare parts for trucks and for communication equipment without which the "starving refugees could not be fed".

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

The Democrats' statement was in response to an investigation by The Washington Post and 16 media partners into a list of phone numbers that included surveillance targets and that appeared to be concentrated in countries thought to have been clients of the NSO Group. SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Astronomers have discovered the largest known comet, and it's about a thousand times more massive than others.

Comet Bernardinelli-Bernstein, so named because it was found by University of Pennsylvania department of physics and astronomy graduate student Pedro Bernardinelli and Professor Gary Bernstein, is between 62 to 124 miles (100 to 200 kilometres) across.

The team announced the discovery in June. This unusual comet will make its closest approach to our sun in 2031, but you'll likely need a large amateur telescope to see it.

The giant comet, also known as C/2014 SEE PAGE 5 COL 3 has been issuing statements against Bangladesh and its government one after another," said Hasan, also ruling Awami League joint general secretary.

In a statement on Sunday, the rights body said it has found a concerning pattern in which the Bangladeshi authorities are weaponising sections 25, 29 and 31 of the DSA to target and harass critical voices. SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Low over the Bay triggers caution at ports

UNB, Dhaka

The maritime ports of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Mongla and Payra have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three as a low pressure area has been formed over the north Bay and adjoining areas.

"Under its influence, deep convection is taking place and steep pressure gradient lies over the north Bay and adjoining areas," said a Met office bulletin yesterday.

Squally weather may affect the areas of the maritime ports, north Bay and adjoining coasts, it said. SEE PAGE 5 COL 3



PRAYER TIMING JULY 28 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-50 8-15 JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



The man being rescued had jumped into the Buriganga off the Babu Bazar Bridge in the capital after allegedly snatching a mobile phone from a pedestrian. Stuck in dense layer of water hyacinth, he floated on the water for around two hours. Rescuers later handed him over to police.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

CAVID VACCINATION WB to finance extra jabs for poorer nations

> Indonesia records 2,069 deaths in a day

Agencies

A new World Bank financing mechanism will allow developing countries to purchase Covid-19 vaccines collectively through the Covax facility, it was announced Monday.

Covax was set up to ensure 92 developing territories could access coronavirus vaccines to fight the pandemic, with the cost covered by donors.

The new mechanism will allow those countries to buy additional doses on top of the subsidised ones they will already receive via Covax.

Using money from the World Bank and other development banks, the facility says it will make advanced purchases from vaccine manufacturers based on aggregated demand across countries.

The financing mechanism builds on the existing Covax cost-sharing arrangement which aims to provide 430 million additional doses, or enough doses to fully vaccinate 250 million people, for delivery between late 2021 and mid-2022 for the 92 countries.

Those doses could be purchased through new financing arrangement. Countries should also have some flexibility in selecting to buy particular vaccines that align with their preferences.

Covax is co-led by the World Health Organization SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

EDITOR & PUBLISHER : MAHFUZ ANAM. Printed by him from Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215, Tel: 09610222222, 9144330 & 9117796, Fax: 58156306, GPO Box No: 3257, for Advertisement: 01711623910, e-mail: editor@thedailystar.net, reporting@thedailystar.net, advertisement@thedailystar.net