Tigers on verge

Youngsters like Afif Hossain, Shoriful

Islam, newcomer Nasum Ahmed

batsman Nurul Hasan Sohan have

been pivotal in complementing the

efforts of a handful of experienced

players like Shakib Al Hasan, skipper

Mahmudullah Riyad and Mustafizur

Bangladesh would like the same

combo to work in today's game as

well while eyeing to better their

performances with the bat, which

A 131-run total in the first game and a successful chase of a 122-run

target in the second T20I might have

been enough to beat the Aussies, but

the batting display in both the games

left a lot to be desired, especially in a

series considered part of preparations

for the upcoming T20 World Cup.

Rahman in the Tigers' squad.

have been middling till now.

27-year-old wicketkeeper-

500 Indian MPs urge

economic and military aid to the Pakistan government until the situation returned to normal in East Pakistan. NEW YORK TIMES JUSTIFIES BANGALEE ENVOYS' DECISION

In an editorial published today, The New York Times said the resignation of 14 diplomats of Bangalee origin from the Pakistani embassy in Washington and the United Nations mission refuted the charge of Pakistan President Yahya Khan that the Bangalee uprising was merely the work of "mischief mongers, saboteurs

"It also casts doubt on his claim that the resistance has been 'crushed'," added the American daily.

It further commented, "Islamabad's current policies cannot bring stability to East Bengal. In trying to impose law and order by force of arms -- mostly American arms -- instead of through

political accommodation, the military regime is merely fueling the fires of Bengali rebellion.

The New York Times called for immediate suspension of aid to Pakistan, except for emergency relief to the starving, for establishment of genuine stability in the subcontinent. A UN TEAM IN GENEVA TO DIRECT PAKISTANI AID

UN Secretary General Thant reported today that the UN relief effort in Pakistan would be coordinated by a United Nations working group based in Geneva. Thirty-eight people from various countries would be recruited to serve as staff members at the initial stage. All the expenses would be borne by voluntary contributions made in response to the secretary general's

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

Allegations serious if reports FROM PAGE 12 teams in the Olympics) on the other

Guild of India and senior journalist N Ram, to serve the copies of the pleas seeking probe into the Israeli spyware matter to the Indian government so that somebody from the government is present to accept a notice.

The bench posted the matter for hearing on August 10.

The apex court bench was hearing nine petitions, including those filed by the Editors Guild and senior journalists seeking independent probe into the alleged Pegasus snooping

An international media consortium has reported that over 300 Indian mobile phone numbers were on the list of potential targets for surveillance using Pegasus spyware.

As the opposition continued to disrupt parliamentary proceedings of the monsoon session on the Pegasus and other issues, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the opposition of trying to score self-goals and stalling parliament while the country was keen to march

"These parties are trying to stop the transaction of business in Parliament," he said in a no-holds-barred attack on

"On one hand, our country is apparent reference to Indian hockey

ministry, Bangla Academy and

different other government and non-

government institutions and cultural

organisations are holding virtual

Bangla Academy will hold a

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM

Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh

The youngest of 13 children of

Betar and private television and radio

stations will air special programmes

Debendranath Tagore and Sarada

Devi, Tagore, nicknamed "Rabi", was

born on 25th of Baishakh, 1268 (May

7, 1861) at the Jorasanko mansion in

In his endeavors in different genres

programmes to mark the day.

on the occasion.

Kolkata.

teams in the Olympics), on the other, some people, due to political selfinterests, are doing such things which make it seem that they are scoring 'self-goals'," Modi said.

The opposition was not concerned about what the country wants, what it is achieving or how it is changing. "These people are hurting both the spirit and the time of the country for their selfish reasons. They are continuously insulting Parliament of India for their self interests," he added.

"The great people of this country cannot become hostage to such selfish and anti-national politics," he said alleging the sole intention of the opposition parties is to create roadblocks on the path of

On the other hand, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi yesterday attacked Modi over the Pegasus snooping row, saying the Israeli spyware was a tool to "silence people."

Addressing a "Sansad Gehrao" protest in New Delhi by the Indian Youth Congress, he said "your mobile phone is your voice. Narendra Modi has put the idea of Pegasus in the mobile phone of every youth, not just

"This idea is that if you speak the scoring goal after goal of victory (an truth, Narendra Modi and Pegasus are there in your phones.'

enriched the Bangla language and

literature and elevated their positions

dance dramas and essays spoke to

Home and the World) are his best-

and novels were acclaimed for

their lyricism, colloquialism, and

Rabindranath became the first non-

Sometimes referred to as "the Bard

European to win the Nobel Prize in

of Bengal", Tagore's poetic songs were

His compositions were chosen

by two nations as national anthems:

Bangladesh's "Amar Sonar Bangla"

viewed as spiritual and mercurial.

political and personal topics.

His novels, short stories, songs,

Gitanjali (Song Offerings), Gora

in the global arena.



Police use water cannon to disperse supporters of India's main opposition Congress party during a protest against what they say inflation, farm laws, unemployment and Pegasus snooping, in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Global Covid cases cross 200m mark

its sixth lockdown.

Little more than a week after Melbourne's last lockdown ended, Victoria premier Daniel Andrews said he had "no choice" to lock down the city and the rest of the state.

Around two thousand protesters took to the streets chanting "no more lockdown", and the police responded in huge numbers, making arrests and using pepper spray to disperse the crowd.

NATIONS STICK TO MAJOR VACCINE BOOSTER PLANS

France yesterday became the latest country to announce it would rollout a third booster shot of a Covid vaccine from September, joining Israel and Germany.

President Emmanuel Macron's statement came just a day after the World Health Organization called on all nations to halt booster shots until at least the end of September to help ease the drastic inequity in dose distribution between rich and poor

However Washington swiftly shot down the WHO's proposal.

"We definitely feel that it's a false choice and we can do both," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said. SOUTHEAST ASIA RAVAGED

The Delta variant has been running rampant in Southeast Asia, with Thailand recording 20,000 new daily cases for the first time on Wednesday

and again yesterday. The country also announced 160 deaths in 24 hours, as exhausted morgue workers struggle to cope with the mounting bodies.

Indonesia's total Covid death

toll passed 100,000 on Wednesday to visitors from abroad in a "safe and after it recorded 1,739 of the 10,245 fatalities registered worldwide, the global toll rising past 4.25 million.

Japan's capital Tokyo had a new record number of daily cases with 5,042, just three days before the end of the Olympics. INDIA BATS FOR LOCAL CURBS

Meanwhile, the Indian government has asked state authorities to impose restrictions ahead of festivals across the country, warning that overcrowding could lead to "super spreader" events and a new surge in

India has reported an average of 30,000 to 40,000 new coronavirus cases every day since July, and the federal government has warned that although cases have dipped from a high of 400,000 daily at the peak of the deadly second wave, the danger has not abated yet.

India's busy festival season begins this month, with several celebrations dotting the calendar until November, when the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali, celebrated by millions, takes

Yesterday, India reported 42,982 new cases of COVID-19 and 533 deaths in the last 24 hours, the federal government said, taking its total caseload to 31.8 million. US INFECTIONS AT 6-MONTH

The United States remains the country with the highest number of deaths and infections. However, it said that it plans eventually to begin allowing

fully vaccinated foreigners back in.

sustainable manner," though without specifying a timeframe. The country on Wednesday posted

six-month high for new Covid cases with over 100,000 infections reported, according to a Reuters tally, as the Delta variant ravages areas where people did not get vaccinated.

In the coming weeks, cases could double to 200,000 per day due to the highly contagious Delta variant, said top US infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci on Wednesday.

XI PROMISES 2B VACCINE DOSES On the other end of the spectrum China, where the virus first emerged in December 2019, was tightening its borders after recording its most new cases in six months.

China's immigration authority announced it would stop issuing ordinary passports and other documents needed for exiting the country in "non-essential and nonemergency" cases -- but stopped short of issuing a blanket ban on overseas

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday said China will strive to provide 2 billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines to other countries in 2021, state broadcaster CCTV reported. In his written message to an

international Covid-19 vaccine cooperation forum, Xi also said China would donate \$100 million to the COVAX global vaccine distribution scheme, according to the CCTV report. Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao

Lijian said in late July that China had A White House official said that the supplied over 700 million vaccine US administration wants to reopen doses to other countries.

FROM PAGE 12

India builds

of that.

"The road at Umlingla Pass constructed at an altitude of 19,300 ft betters previous record of a road in Bolivia at 18,953 ft. Umlingla Pass is now connected with a black top road to enhance socio-economic condition and promote tourism in Ladakh," the government said in a statement on Wednesday.

Infrastructure development in such harsh and tough terrain is extremely challenging. In winter, the temperature falls to -40 degree Celsius and the oxygen level at this altitude is almost 50 percent less than at normal

"The Border Roads Organisation or BRO achieved the feat due to the grit and resilience of its personnel who work in treacherous terrain and extreme weather conditions," the government said.

In making the record, the BRO constructed a 52-km-long tarmac road through Umlingla Pass, bettering the previous record of a road in Bolivia connecting to its volcano Uturuncu at 18,953 feet.

The road now connects the important towns in Chumar sector of eastern Ladakh. "It will prove to be a boon to the local population as it offers an alternate direct route connecting Chisumle and Demchok from Leh. It will enhance the socioeconomic condition and promote tourism in Ladakh," the government

Khardung La Pass in Ladakh is also one of the world's highest roads at nearly 17,600 feet.

Rohingya 'robber'

FROM PAGE 12

declared him dead, the Rab official

The elite force claimed to have recovered two firearms and four bullets from the spot. The Rab claimed two of its members also sustained injuries during the incident.

The body was sent to Cox's Bazar

Bangladeshi youth

president of Beanibazar Social and Association Pennsylvania Inc, said Saju was with friends on the streets of South Philadelphia on Tuesday night when a masked gunman tried to rob them.

A scuffle took place between the two sides and the gunman shot Saju, leaving him seriously injured.

He was rushed to Jefferson University Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Philadelphia police have not yet arrested anyone in connecting with

the killing. Police said the gunman was

wearing a black dress and covered his face with a mask.

Bosnia's new top envoy to use 'tools' to help divided nation

AFP, Sarajevo

Bosnia's new top international envoy Christian Schmidt said Wednesday he would use the tools at his disposal to make the ethnically-divided country more functional, even as Bosnian Serb leaders rejected his legitimacy.

The former German agriculture minister took over earlier this week as the international community's high representative who oversees civilian aspects of the peace deal that ended Bosnia's 1992-1995 war.

Since the end of the war Bosnia has been split into two semi-autonomous halves -- the Serbs' Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croatia Federation.

The two are linked by weak central institutions while Bosnia's highly complex system of overlapping administrations often leads to

Schmidt, who has various executive powers including to impose laws and sack elected officials, told reporters on Wednesday that "we want to help Bosnia and Herzegovina to be... a normal country, a reliable partner".

He added that he wanted to assist it "on the way towards European integration". Bosnia aspires to join the EU but has yet to obtain official candidate status

Now a trial run tomorrow

the duration of the special vaccination drive from six days to one day due to a shortage of jabs.

Professor Dr Be-Nazir Ahmed, a former DGHS director, said, "The lastminute change in decision exposed the government's poor planning. If it [the government] had done its homework, it would not have retreated from the decision.

Ahmed, also a member of the National Immunisation Technical Advisory Group (NITAG), said such abrupt changes in decisions will call the credibility of the government into

"Vaccination is a serious issue and any sort of decision in this regard should be well thought out."

Prof Muzaherul Huq, a former adviser to WHO South-East Asia region, said a strategic plan must be framed to achieve any target.

"But it seems the government lacked proper planning and preparation before coming up with the announcement of vaccinating one crore in six days.

"Since the government has one crore vaccines in hand, if it inoculates the whole doses then the regular vaccine campaign will be hampered.

Besides, the second dose of that one crore people will be uncertain." He, however, said the one-day trial

run will help the government gather experience before launching the The country has so far vaccinated around 1.44 crore people. And only

around 44 lakh of them received both According to the World Health Organization, at least 80 percent of the population has to be inoculated to contain the spread of coronavirus. In Bangladesh's context, around 12

crore people must be vaccinated in this regard. Bangladesh so far has 2.55 crore vaccine doses of different brands --1.19 crore Oxford-AstraZeneca, 81 lakh Sinopharm, 55 lakh Moderna

and 1.06 lakh Pfizer. Currently, China's Sinopharm vaccine doses are being administered in rural areas and district towns while the Moderna vaccine is being used in city corporation areas.

Contacted, Health Minister Zahid Malegue said trial run will allow the government to identify the problems and fix those accordingly before the

rural areas before August 14 if we get enough vaccines in hand." The minister said they will not

"We will resume vaccination in the

administer all the shots at the same time and will keep half of them for second doses. "As the supply of Sinopharm is smooth, we may use more than half

of what we have in hand. By that time,

we will receive more vaccines from

He said the special vaccination campaign was to raise awareness about vaccination among people, especially those living in rural areas.

"We are, to some extent, successful in raising awareness. Already more than 30 lakh people have taken vaccines in the last 10 days. This was thanks to our campaign."

The health minister said one of the challenges was manpower.

"Four types of vaccines were administered in the existing centres and that required huge manpower. To launch it in rural areas, we will need more, but we have constraints. So, we have to keep that in mind."

Bangladesh, till yesterday, recorded 13,22,654 Covid-19 cases and 21,902 deaths. Over 79 percent of those who died were over 50.

present in the arbitration in 2017, told The Daily Star recently. Wadud Mahmudh, chairman of used the phone.

Tale of an upazila in throes

of Bangla literature, the great poet and India's "Jana Gana Mana".

Tagore's 80th death anniv

discussion and cultural event virtually. (Fair-Faced) and Ghare-Baire (The

Khalid will join the programme as the known works. His short stories

naturalism.

Literature in 1913.

Shatgram Union Parishad, who was also present during the arbitration, said, "No one thought they would become extremists.

Bari Khan, one of the village elders

The story came to light after July 11 this year when the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of police raided two hideouts of the IS-inspired militant outfit Neo JMB in Araihazar upazila and arrested

two suspects. Seven others were arrested in the following days and police are looking for other suspects, said Rahmat Ullah Chowdhury, in-charge of the bomb

disposal division of CTTC. collecting now are

information," he added. CTTC sources say the officers are looking for at least 25 to 30 youths, who appear to have left their houses

to join militant outfits. Some villagers in Shatgram said the number of traceless young men

would not be less than 40. Chairman Wadud told this newspaper that the union parishad started collecting information about the missing youths.

Anichur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Araihazar Police Station, however, said local police have yet to get any specific information about any missing youth.

During a visit to Shatgram Union Wednesday afternoon, this correspondent found Hafiz's house locked. Neighbours said His brother Akram Ali and father Kari Akram Ali have been traceless.

A CTTC official said that during a raid in the upazila, they came across a suspect's mother who, noticing the

police team, dug a hole in the floor and buried her phone.

She later told officers that she tried to hide the phone because her son

Family members of the suspects did not talk to this correspondent. "Our son was doing good for

Islam," said the mother of a suspect. Faizul Bari Khan, a village elder, said people of the communities were also trying to identify the militants.

In Araihazar, there were Ahle

Hadith followers in at least 65 villages. Investigators learnt that Neo JMB and ABT, and JMB leader Shaikh Abdur Rahman wanted to set up a

safe house in the upazila. father Mawalna Rahman's Abdullah Ibne Fazal, who is from Jamalpur, was an Ahle Hadith scholar who used to give sermons in the villages, say locals.

Fazal had a very good relationship with an influential local named Mia Shaheb. The grandfather of Faizul. In 2003 and 2004, Abdur Rahman, who was hanged in 2007, used to send Jihadi Books to the a group of enthusiastic readers in the villages,

they added. Rahman managed to create JMB

followers in the villages, say locals. Faizul Khan said in 2005, Rahman visited their house and wanted to set up a shelter home.

"But we refused to accept his proposal and asked him to leave," he He was later found involved in

bank robberies and a series of bomb blasts, said Faizul. CTTC Chief Asaduzzaman told The Daily Star that his unit has information about the missing youths. "We will raid after analysing

Laxmipur Sadar Hospital. As his physical condition kept deteriorating, he was rushed to

Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died early yesterday. Contacted, local AL lawmaker Nuruddin Chowdhury Nayan (Laxmipur-2 constituency) and AL's Bashikpur union unit President Amir

cadres might have killed Harun. The victim's son filed a murder case against six to seven unnamed persons yesterday. Police are trying to arrest the criminals, said AKM Fazlul Haque, officer-in-charge of Chandraganj Police Station.

In Gaibandha, a Jubo League

activist was killed allegedly by a

fruit vender and his associates in the

Hossain alleged that BNP-Jamaat

district town.

The deceased, Monjurul Hasan Likhon, 38, was a resident of the town's Pashchimpara area. Although he did not have any post

in the incumbent committee, he was a potential candidate to secure a vital post in Jubo League's district unit next committee, said local AL and Jubo League men.

Quoting witnesses and family members, police said Likhon went to buy fruits in Hawkers' Market area on Wednesday afternoon. At that time, he had an altercation with fruit vendor Sharif Miah, 25, over price. But the issue was settled with the interference of others.

Later, around 8:00pm, Likhon went to Circular Road area. At that time, the fruit vendor, along with four to

and beat him up indiscriminately, leaving him severely wounded.

where he passed away yesterday. Meanwhile, agitating AL men set fire to some fruit shops in the

evening, said locals. The fruit vendor, Sharif, went into hiding after the incident. Police detained four people for interrogation, said Masudur Rahman, OC of Gaibandha Sadar Police Station.

[Our Noakhali and Bogura correspondents contributed to this

2 AL men killed in Laxmipur, Gaibandha five of his associates, attacked Likhon

Locals rushed him to the district's Sadar Hospital. Later, he was shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital

Hawkers' Market area yesterday

No case was filed till filing of the report around 6:00pm.