




## NAT'L BUDGET: FY 21-22 Govt-people disconnect writ large

Say speakers at a Citizens' Platform press meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The current national budget for fiscal year 2021-22 reflects a disconnect between the government and the people as enough measures were not taken for the poor and vulnerable people, analysts said yesterday.

They came up with the remark at a press conference organised by the Citizens' Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, where they disclosed a report titled "Delivery of the National Budget 2021 in the Context of the Pandemic: Ensuring Interests of the Disadvantaged People".

The livelihoods of many will become more vulnerable this year as the 2021-22 budget did not address their crisis, they said.

Sultana Kamal, a core member of the platform and also a human rights activist, chaired the event.

She said around three crore people had become poor due to the ongoing economic hardship caused by the pandemic and their woes were not addressed properly by the government in the budget.

"The people who were left behind [in the budget] have remained in the same condition [with no improvement in livelihood]. Rather, the number of such people has increased.

"The budget has given an indication that there has been a disconnect

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Fishermen who went to the Bay return with a very poor catch of hilsa. Many fishing trawlers are seen anchored in Kuakata area of Patuakhali. Inset, a small number of small hilsa that a fishing trawler could net. The photos were taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

## Hilsa catch frustrates fishermen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Fishermen in Patuakhali's Kuakata say they are frustrated for not getting enough hilsa in the sea after the end of a 65-day ban on netting the fish on July 23.

Some of them said they returned from the sea with a very low catch, unable to earn the money they had invested in the job.

The government had imposed the 65-day ban on May 20 to protect hilsa breeding. During the ban, fishermen in different areas of the district, including in Kuakata, Alipur-Mahipur, Rangabali and Char Montaz, passed days just fixing boats and mending nets.

Most of them had to take out loans to do those work and they are now unable to pay the money back.

Fishing trawler, FB Jihad, returned to the Mahipur fish landing station in the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Six die as truck falls into ditch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Six people died and five others were injured after a mini-truck fell into a roadside ditch on the Bonpara-Hatikumrul highway under Natore's Gurudaspur upazila yesterday.

Liton Kumar Saha, superintendent of police in Natore said a Dhaka-bound mini-truck from Kushtia fell into a ditch in Kanchikata area and overturned when it was trying to overtake another truck around 1:40pm.

Five people who were on board the small truck died on the spot, the official said.

The deceased are Afnan

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

## ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

### Indo-Soviet treaty signed

AUGUST 9, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

**SOVIET AND INDIA REACH ACCORD**  
The Soviet Union and India signed a treaty of peace, friendship and nonaggression today. The essence of the treaty was its provision that in the event of attack or the threat of attack there would be immediate mutual consultations. Each side also undertook to refrain from giving assistance to any third party taking part in armed conflict with the other party.

These clauses not only assured the prospect of Soviet assistance and support in the event of war. -- the Indo-Soviet Treaty had a far-reaching consequence for the Bangladesh war. Thereafter, the USSR began to show a clearer pro-Bangladesh tilt.

The agreement was signed by Foreign Minister Andrei A Gromyko of the



The Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko with India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at Parliament House in New Delhi on August 9, 1971.

Soviet Union and Swaran Singh, the Indian minister for external affairs, at a five-minute ceremony. Then, Gromyko met with India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

## COLLEGE GIRL'S DEATH Hearing on final report on abetment on Aug 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A virtual court in Dhaka yesterday set August 17 for hearing whether to accept the probe report of the case filed over abetting the death by suicide of a college student in the capital's Gulshan.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ashek Imam fixed the date, following a petition from barrister Sarwar Hossain on behalf of the complainant, court sources said.

In the petition, Sarwar Hossain, lawyer for the complainant, said a no-

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Machu Picchu older than thought



CNN ONLINE

The Inca citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru was occupied from around 1420-1530 AD, several decades earlier than previously thought, according to a new study.

A team of researchers, led by Richard Burger, a professor of anthropology at Yale University, used radiocarbon dating to reveal that the emperor Pachacuti, who built Machu Picchu, rose to power

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



## Prof Najma Chowdhury passes away

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Najma Chowdhury died yesterday, just a few days after testing positive for Covid-19.

She was 79.

A vital cog in the movement for women's education and rights in Bangladesh and a veteran educationist, Najma passed away while undergoing treatment at a Dhaka hospital.

"Prof Najma breathed her last around 8:00am yesterday due to old-age complications such as Parkinson's disease. She was admitted to hospital after testing positive for Covid-19," said Dr Sanzida Akhter, former chairperson of DU's women and gender studies department, which

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Messi breaks down in tears as he announces his departure from Barcelona.

## Tears, standing ovation mark Messi's farewell

REUTERS, Barcelona

Between trying to compose himself, wiping away tears and facing a long standing ovation, it took Lionel Messi more than a minute to start his farewell news conference on Sunday at FC Barcelona, where the Argentine has spent all of his playing career.

"I don't know if I am going to be able to speak," were his first words, tears running down his cheeks.

"This is without doubt the most difficult moment of my career," he said.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

## UMRAH PILGRIMAGE KSA to reopen borders to vaccinated pilgrims

Malaysia to ease Covid curbs for fully vaccinated in eight states

AGENCIES

Saudi Arabia will begin accepting vaccinated foreigners wanting to make the umrah pilgrimage, authorities said yesterday, a move that will boost an economy hit by the Covid pandemic.

Nearly 18 months after it closed its borders to battle coronavirus, Saudi Arabia will begin "gradually receiving umrah requests from various countries" from today, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

The umrah can be undertaken at any time and usually draws millions from around the globe, unlike the annual hajj, which abled-bodied Muslims who have the means must perform at least once in their lifetime.

The Covid-19 pandemic hugely disrupted both Muslim pilgrimages, which are usually key revenue earners for the kingdom that rake in a combined \$12 billion annually.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



### PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 9

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15  
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Taliban seize 3 more Afghan provincial capitals

Over 200 insurgents killed in airstrikes in Shebergan city

AGENCIES

The Taliban tightened the noose around northern Afghanistan yesterday, capturing three more provincial capitals as they take their fight to the cities after seizing much of the countryside in recent months.

The insurgents have snatched up five provincial capitals in Afghanistan since Friday in a lightning offensive that appears to have overwhelmed government forces.

Kunduz, Sar-e-Pul and Taloqan in the north fell within hours of each other yesterday, lawmakers, security sources and residents in the cities confirmed.

In Kunduz, one resident described

the city as being enveloped in "total chaos".

"After some fierce fighting, the mujahideen, with the grace of God, captured the capital of Kunduz," the Taliban said in a statement yesterday afternoon.

"The mujahideen also captured Sar-e-Pul city, the government buildings and all the installations there."

The insurgents said on Twitter yesterday evening that they had also taken Taloqan, the capital of Takhar province.

Parwina Azimi, a women's rights activist in Sar-e-Pul, told AFP by phone that government officials and the remaining forces had retreated to an army barracks about three

kilometres (two miles) from the city.

The Taliban had the compound "surrounded", said Mohammad Hussein Mujahidzada, a member of the provincial council.

Taloqan was the next to go yesterday, with resident Zabihullah Hamidi telling AFP by phone that he saw security forces and officials leave the city in a convoy of vehicles.

"We retreated from the city this afternoon, after the government failed to send help," a security source told AFP. "The city is unfortunately fully in Taliban hands."

**PERENNIAL TARGET**  
Kunduz is the most significant Taliban gain since the insurgents launched

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

