



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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"Mass Covid-19 vaccination campaigns will not be held in the country anymore."
HEALTH MINISTER ZAHID MALEQUE



"We are working diligently to make sure we've increased the ability to get [people] out."
US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN
ON AFGHAN EVACUATIONS



"Delta does raise some big questions that we're going to have to grapple with, you know less than a 24-hour period for someone getting it and passing it on to others..."
NEW ZEALAND MINISTER FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE CHRIS HIPKINS

COVID-19 TREATMENT COST

Families go broke at pvt hospitals

Crisis of ICU beds at public hospitals drives the poor, middle class to despair

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

When Covid patient Rokeya Sultana was fighting for her life in the ICU of a private hospital last week, her son Mamunur Rashid was found frantically talking over the phone with someone trying to convince that person to buy a piece of land from him.

Approached by The Daily Star, he said his mother, 50, had been in the ICU for four days and doctors could not tell him how long she would have to stay there. The family had brought Tk 1.2 lakh for her treatment and all the money was already gone.

"Half the amount was borrowed from our relatives. Now we're selling two decimals of our courtyard for Tk 1.5 lakh, which is much lower than the market price. We need more money. We are even ready to sell our home," Mamunur said, adding that treatment at the private hospital was extremely expensive.

Mamunur and all his brothers are day labourers. Their elderly father is bed-ridden. Selling the little they have seemed the only way for them to get some cash.

Rokeya, however, died on August 20.

The impoverished family of Rokeya Sultana, 50, had to spend over Tk 4 lakh in treatment cost, which included a hefty bill of Tk 3.20 lakh for her six-day stay in a private hospital in the capital.

By that time, the family had spent over Tk 4 lakh for her treatment, which included a hefty bill of Tk 3.20 lakh for her six-day stay in the private hospital.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Mamunur said after her mother was diagnosed with Covid-19, they took her to a local upazila health complex in Cumilla. She then started complaining of breathing difficulties and was rushed to Cumilla Medical College Hospital.

But finding no bed over there, her family admitted her to a private hospital in Cumilla. She was brought to Dhaka when

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Eighty-year-old Sayra Khatun lying on a gurney in an ambulance in front of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital's emergency department as her granddaughter offers her some water around noon yesterday. Residents of Munshiganj, Sayra and her 96-year-old husband Yusuf Ali were infected with dengue and got admitted to Khanpur Hospital in Narayanganj two days ago. There, they tested positive for Covid-19 and were referred to the Covid unit at DMCH. Yusuf, seen behind the granddaughter, and Sayra were taking turns in drawing air from the same oxygen cylinder. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Vaccinate industrial workers, families

PM directs authorities to take up programme for this; no more special mass inoculation drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities concerned to design a separate programme to bring the industrial workers and their families under the Covid-19 vaccination coverage soon.

She also asked to consider whether it would be possible to shorten the existing two-month gap between two shots, reports UINB.

The PM made the directives while chairing the cabinet meeting held virtually, said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam at a press briefing.

Hasina joined the meeting from the Gono Bhaban and the others from the secretariat.

She came up with the directives a week after the government struck a trilateral agreement for bottling, labelling and dispensing six crore shots of China's Sinopharm vaccine at a Bangladeshi pharmaceutical company plant. Health officials at that time said it would need around three months to go for production.



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BARISHAL VIOLENCE

Top bureaucrats disagree with BASA statement

Local admin, BCC, AL decide to settle dispute

STAR REPORT

Secretaries and divisional commissioners do not agree with the statement of Bangladesh Administrative Services Association (BASA) over the recent conflict between Barishal City Corporation authorities and the local administration, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam has said.

"I had a meeting with secretaries yesterday [Sunday]. They disagreed with the statement. The language used in it was not right," he said.

Anwarul further said that even the BASA members present at Sunday's meeting did not endorse the language used in the statement that sought immediate arrest of the BCC Mayor and legal action against him.

"Use of such language was not welcome," he told reporters in reply to a query at a briefing after a cabinet meeting yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Shut down Savar tannery estate

JS body recommends as the industrial zone lacks adequate waste treatment facilities

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body yesterday recommended shutting down the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate in Hemayetpur because the estate does not have adequate facilities to treat all liquid waste generated by the tanners it houses.

The parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change made the recommendations at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"The Tannery Industrial Estate has the capacity to treat around 25,000 cubic metres of liquid waste every day, but the tanners generate around 40,000 cubic metres of liquid waste per day. That means 15,000 cubic metres are dumped into the [Dhaleshwari] river without any treatment, causing severe pollution," Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chief of the parliamentary watchdog, told reporters.

In 2003, the government had taken the initiative to build the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industry Corporation (BSCIC) Tannery Industrial Estate on 200 acres at Hemayetpur after moving all tanneries from the capital's Hazaribagh in order to prevent environmental pollution and to protect the Buriganga.

Also an Awami League MP of Dhaka-9 (Bashabo-Mugda) constituency, Saber said the most alarming matter is that the Tannery Industrial Estate



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HINDU INHERITANCE LAW

Citizens' coalition denounces propaganda

STAR REPORT

The Hindu Ain Pronoyon e Nagorik Udyog Coalition has issued a statement protesting the propaganda against a number of individuals and organisations that are not involved in the formulation of a Hindu inheritance law.

The coalition recently formulated a draft of Hindu inheritance law for equal rights of Hindu citizens to the property of their parents.

It's the Hindu citizens who have demanded formulation of the law. Hindu citizens from various human rights organisations are involved in the process. It involves not only Manusher Jonno Foundation, but also Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), PRIP Trust, Naripokkho, RDRS and Banche Shekha, the coalition said in the statement yesterday.

"We feel ashamed as the name of The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam has been mentioned at a press conference of Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajote over the formulation of the Hindu law."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

AFGHAN EVACUATION

No extension to deadline

Warn Taliban, say no new govt until last US soldier leaves the country

AGENCIES

The Taliban said yesterday they would not extend the August 31 deadline for Nato forces to leave Afghanistan, jeopardising hopes of extending the evacuation of thousands of foreign nationals and vulnerable Afghans.

US President Joe Biden said on Sunday night he would consider extending the deadline for all American troops to leave the country amid growing pressure from allies including Britain.

However, the Taliban said no western government or leader had approached them to request an extension and that they would not agree even if that happened.

"If the US or UK were to seek additional time to continue evacuations -- the answer is no. Or there would be consequences,"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A view of the road surface of the Padma multipurpose bridge. The project reached a milestone yesterday as the last road slab was installed, thereby linking both sides of the river and making it possible to walk across the 6.15km structure. Inset, The country's longest bridge as seen from the Mawa side.

PHOTO: COURTESY/SAJJAD HOSSAIN

It's possible to walk across the Padma now

All 2,917 road slabs in place on Padma bridge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Padma bridge project yesterday moved one step closer to completion after the authority finished the installation of all road slabs linking both sides of the Padma river through the roadway.

Now it is possible to cross the Padma river by walking across the 6.15 kilometre-long bridge.

The last road slab was installed on the span that linked the pillars 12 and 13 of the Padma bridge at 10:12 am yesterday, said project engineers.

The installation of road and rail slabs began more than two years and five months ago. In June, the rail slabs were laid and now all 2,917 road slabs are done.

"We have reached a new milestone. With this, we have moved one more step forward," Project Director Shafiqul Islam told journalists at the project service area yesterday.

The long-cherished bridge, whose physical works started in November 2014, is expected to be open for the public in June next year.

Once in service, the double-decker bridge, which has a roadway on the upper side and rail line on the bottom, will connect the capital with 21 southwestern districts and is expected to boost Bangladesh's gross domestic product by 1.2 percent.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

5,717 New cases in 24hrs

14,67,715 Total cases

25,399 Deaths

13,72,856 Recoveries

4,449,880 Deaths

212,939,216 Total cases

MAJOR SINHA MURDER 'Liaquat shot him at Pradeep's directive'

Sinha's sister testifies in court

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Cox's Bazar

Major (ret'd) Sinha Rashed Khan was shot dead by now suspended police inspector Liaquat Ali as per instructions from Pradeep Kumar Das, former officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, said the victim's elder sister. 'I filed a murder case with a court on August 5, 2020, five days after the incident, after talking to eye witnesses and collecting information from them.' Sinha's elder sister, Sharmin Shahriar Ferdous, made the statement while placing her deposition before the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday. Judge Md Ismail Hossain yesterday started recording the depositions of witnesses in the Sinha murder case. As the plaintiff, Sharmin was the first to place her deposition. The recording of her statement began around 9:45am and continued till around 1:00pm, said the court's Public Prosecutor Advocate Faridul Alam. There are 83 witnesses in this case. The court summoned 15 of them to place their depositions in the first phase between August 23 and August 25. It recorded only Sharmin's deposition yesterday, said Faridul Alam. Two other witnesses, Md Abdul Hamid and Mohammad Yunus,

who are residents of Teknaf upazila's Shamlapur area, yesterday appeared before the court, which decided to record their statements today. Earlier, the dates for recording witness statements were fixed for July 26, 27 and 28. But it was not possible as they followed High Court directives given due to the lockdown, said Faridul Alam. On June 27, the court framed charges against 15 accused. Of them, 12 are policemen, including suspended OC Pradeep Kumar Das, police inspector Liaquat Ali, sub-inspector Md Shahjahan and assistant sub-inspector Liton Mia. The others accused are suspended police sub-inspector Nandadul Rakshit, and suspended constables Sagar Deb, Kamal Hossain, Abdullah Al Mamun, Safanur Karim, Rubel Sharma, Md Abdullah and Md Rajib. The remaining three accused are Nurul Amin, Nezam Uddin and Ayaz Uddin - close aides of the accused policemen. All the accused are now in jail. On December 13, the investigators submitted the charge sheet of the case against the 15, about five months after Sinha was killed in police firing at a check post in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila on July 31 last year.



A huge tailback of buses, trucks and other vehicles leading up to Paturia ferry terminal. A variety of reasons -- strong current on the Padma river slowing ferries' passage, bar on heavy vehicles on the Shimulia-Banglabazar route -- has resulted in heavier than usual traffic towards Paturia. The photo was taken yesterday.

Families go broke at pvt hospitals

FROM PAGE 1 her condition deteriorated further. 'We took her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College, Mugda Medical College Hospital and DNCC hospital, but could not find a vacant bed at those hospitals,' Mamunur said, adding that they had to pay around Tk 30,000 in ambulance fare for carrying her from Cumilla and looking for beds in different hospitals. 'We eventually got a bed at the DNCC hospital, but we were already financially devastated.' Like Rokeya's, many poor and middle class families of Covid-19 patients are going broke and bankrupt as such patients are forced to take treatment at private hospitals due to the unavailability of beds in the subsidised government hospitals. These correspondents visited five prominent private hospitals in Dhaka and talked to over a dozen family members of Covid patients. Most of them said they sold their last belongings and fell into a debt trap to fund the treatment. The family of Monowara Begum, a woman in her 60s, is another family with a similar tale. Monowara was admitted to the ICU of a private hospital in Mirpur on July 28. She was put on life support a few days later. She died on August 20. Her family had to spend around Tk 50,000 every day when she was on life support. They spent the last of their

savings to continue the treatment. There is hardly anyone of their relatives from whom they did not take loans. Her husband, Jahangir Alam, said, 'We completely depended on our only son's income. He is a graphics designer and earns around Tk 25,000 per month. We had to sell all our ancestral land in our village for the treatment.' An acute shortage of space is also widespread in the private hospitals, which has exacerbated the situation for patients with financial limitations. Sania Akhter, 23, mother of a five year old son, desperately needed a Covid bed with uninterrupted oxygen supply at the rate of eight litres per minute. However, the woman from Savar could not get any bed in public hospitals. 'When she was turned away by all the hospitals, I thought my sister would die in the ambulance. At that time, the ambulance driver took us to an under-construction hospital in Shyamoli, which had just installed some ICU beds but did not open its general wards yet,' said her brother, a day labourer. 'Since then, I had to pay for all the ICU services. Seeing my helpless situation, the hospital authorities were kind enough to give us a discount of Tk 50,000,' said her brother Mohammad Ibrahim. Nevertheless, he had to pay Tk 2 lakh for her treatment. 'I am happy that we got our sister back. But I am now totally entangled in debt as I had to borrow money with high interest rates. I do not know how I'll repay these loans,' he said.

A Covid-19 patient receiving treatment at a private hospital has to pay at least double than that in the government hospitals despite the fact that the duration of the stay is much shorter in private hospitals, says a recent study of the health economics unit (HEU) of the health ministry. The average daily cost is Tk 37,128 for a general bed and Tk 68,885 for an ICU bed in private hospitals, the report said. Md Mainul Ahasan, secretary general, Bangladesh Private Clinics and Diagnostic Owners' Association, said, 'Covid treatment is expensive. We can't give patients much discounts as Covid units have high operating costs.' Moreover, the number of non-Covid patient has reduced drastically. Because of the pandemic, people don't come to hospitals and diagnostic centres unless it is an emergency,' he said. 'If we give too many discounts to Covid patients, we won't be able to run our facilities.' Md Nurul Amin, deputy director (deputy secretary) of HEU who led the study, said, 'The cost of treating coronavirus patients is comparatively high all over the world due to the high cost of medicines, elevated expenditure relating to manpower and facility maintenance. But that does not mean that these hospitals will be off limits to patients with financial challenges.' He said that the government can financially assist these people or pay for their treatment if they have to be hospitalised in private clinics.

Citizens' coalition

FROM PAGE 1 'He [Mahfuz Anam] is not connected in any way with the coalition and he has no involvement with the issue,' said the statement. 'Besides, Shaheen Anam is the executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, but she is not connected with the formulation of the law either. 'A propaganda is being spread against them and we are expressing our sadness over this and protesting it.' Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called for the formulation of a Hindu inheritance law while addressing a programme on the occasion of Janmashtami festival in 2016. She also mentioned about equal rights of men and women on Jatiya Aingoto Sohayota Dibos (National Legal Aid Day) in 2019. Later, the

Hindu Ain Pronoyon e Nagorik Udyog Coalition formulated a draft of Hindu inheritance law, aiming to ensure equal rights of Hindu citizens to the property of their parents. Those who signed the statement on behalf of the coalition are Aroma Dutta, MP; Nina Goswami, Ain O Salish Kendra; Dipabali Chakrabarty, Hindu Bouddha Christian Oiky Parishad; Advocate Ramlal Raha, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad; Rina Roy, human rights activist; Arpita Das, Manusher Jonno Foundation; Advocate Tajul Islam, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST); Rita Das Roy, Naripokkhok; Sabrina Sultana, RDRS; Kalpana Basu, human rights activist, Banchte Shekha; Ruma Halder, teacher; and Krishna Chanda and Sanchita Talukder, development activists.

Top bureaucrats disagree

FROM PAGE 1 The development came hours after the local administration, the BCC and leaders of the Awami League at a meeting decided to settle the dispute. At least 50 people were injured on August 18 in a clash between BCC staffers -- reportedly followers of the BCC mayor and members of local AL units --, and police and Ansar members over removal of banners from UNO's office in Barishal Sadar. Later, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Munibur Rahman and police filed two cases over the incident, naming BCC Mayor Semiabat Sadiq Abdullah as the prime accused for instigating the violence. Local AL men were also accused in the cases. On the other hand, two cases were filed against the UNO -- one by Barishal city AL member and Councillor Rafiqul Islam Khokon and the other by BCC Revenue Officer Babul Halder. In a statement on August 19, the BASA demanded immediate arrest of the BCC Mayor and legal action against him. The association also said it thinks the incident took place at the behest of the BCC mayor. Asked, Anwarul said, 'I don't know what had actually happened. We've asked the mayor, [divisional] commissioner and law enforcement

agencies to sit and find out the reason behind it. Why would such an embarrassing incident take place? 'They've sought time to sort it out... 'We're observing the situation closely... In most cases, we find that such untoward incidents occur due to miscommunication. 'The Cabinet Division and the LGRD ministry have already instructed the administration, law enforcement agencies and public representatives in Barishal to stay in touch regularly,' added the cabinet secretary. On Sunday night, top officials of Barisal Division administration, the BCC and AL leaders held a meeting and decided to settle the dispute. Talking to our Barishal correspondent, Divisional Commissioner Saiful Islam Badol said, 'The problem has been resolved in a befitting manner.' In a press release yesterday, the BCC said the unfortunate incident took place due to misunderstanding between the BCC cleaning staffers and the UNO. The misunderstanding has been resolved, and the city administration and the district administration will work unitedly, it mentioned. Contacted, Barishal City AL President AKM Jahangir said the cases would be withdrawn and a settlement over the issue would be reached soon.

Vaccinate industrial workers

FROM PAGE 1 'A special discussion was held over the industrial workers today [in the meeting].... Since Bangladesh would get six crore doses of vaccine from Sinopharm as per an agreement signed by the health ministry, the prime minister gave the instruction to vaccinate the workers quickly bringing them under a separate programme,' said the cabinet secretary. Besides, Hasina said she would herself oversee the matter. 'The prime minister has given instructions to vaccinate not only the workers but also their family members as forerunners,' said Anwarul. Meanwhile, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said there would be no more special campaign for mass Covid-19 vaccination due to the shortage of vaccines. Besides, there will be no on-the-spot registration facility to take Covid-19 vaccines. 'No one will get vaccines without registration,' the minister said while talking to journalists at the secretariat yesterday. He said, 'More than three and a half crore people have registered and [of them] more than two crore have been vaccinated. Registration will be based

on the amount of vaccine available.' On August 15, the health minister said the government was not able to carry out the special vaccination campaign due to shortage of Covid-19 vaccine shots. From August 6-11, the government carried out a special vaccination campaign countrywide under which around 34 people were inoculated through on-the-spot registration. Meanwhile, those waiting for long for the second dose of AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine have been asked to contact the nearest vaccination centres as early as possible for getting the shot. In this regard, Directorate General of Health Services posted an announcement on its verified Facebook page yesterday. Bangladesh received 7,81,440 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from Japan on August 21. From Japan, under the Covax facility, Bangladesh also received 2,45,200 AstraZeneca doses on July 24, and 7,81,320 doses on July 31, and 6,16,780 doses on August 3. At a vaccine handover programme, Japanese Ambassador to Dhaka, ITO Naoki, said they have plans to deliver 6,34,920 more AstraZeneca jabs to Bangladesh on August 28.

It's possible to walk across the Padma now

FROM PAGE 1 So far, the Tk 30,193 crore project has witnessed 87.25 percent overall progress. The main bridge is 94.25 percent complete and river training works 84.25 percent, according to a press release from the road transport and bridges minister's office yesterday. However, some other works including constructing railing, carpeting of the road and installing lighting facilities are yet to be completed. In October, once the rainy season is over, the placing of a 2-millimetre waterproof membrane and then carpeting would begin, said Dewan Md Abdul Quader, project manager (main bridge) of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project. 'We hope we will be able to complete all works before the deadline,' Quader told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, the authorities have started the installation work of the gas pipeline on the low deck of the Padma Bridge at Jajira point in Shariatpur from August 19. The exercise is likely to be completed within January next year, an engineer said. One of the major features of the bridge would be a 169-km rail line connecting the capital with Jashore. That is being done under a separate Tk 39,246 crore project by the Bangladesh Railway. The rail tracks are yet to be laid, and for that, the Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA), which is executing the Padma bridge project, has to hand over the structure to the BR. No date has been set yet by the BBA for the handover, said Afzal Hossain, director of the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project (PBRLP).

'We have requested them [BBA] to hand over the bridge to us in December this year. But the date has not been finalised,' he told The Daily Star yesterday. There is a meeting with the BBA and Padma bridge project authority next month. 'We hope to get a timing from the meeting. We hope they may hand over the bridge partially in December.' Vehicles would still be able to operate through the roadway of the bridge if the works for the installation of rail tracks remain incomplete. 'However, it would create a disturbance for our work. So, we want to complete the works simultaneously,' he added. [Our Munshiganj correspondent also contributed to the report]

No extension to deadline

FROM PAGE 1 Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen told Sky News yesterday. Staying beyond the agreed deadline would be "extending occupation", he added. Two Taliban sources meanwhile told AFP the group would not announce the makeup of its government or cabinet until the last US soldier has left the country. The rush to leave Kabul has sparked harrowing scenes and killed at least eight people, some crushed to death while at least one person died after falling from a moving plane. One Afghan was killed and three others were injured in a dawn firefight yesterday that according to the German military erupted between Afghan guards and unknown assailants. German and American troops "participated in further exchange of fire", the German army said in a statement. The Taliban, infamous for an ultra-strict interpretation of sharia law during their initial 1996-2001 rule, have repeatedly vowed a softer version this time. 'PAIN AND LOSS' President Biden has insisted he wants to end the US military presence and the airlifts by August 31. But with the European Union and Britain saying it would be impossible to get everyone out by then, Biden is under pressure to extend the deadline. Speaking at the White House on Sunday, Biden said talks were under way to explore the possibility of extending the deadline. He also acknowledged the tragic

scenes at the airport, which have included babies and children being passed to soldiers over razor-wire fences and men clinging to the outside of departing planes. But he said they were part of the cost of departure. 'There is no way to evacuate this many people without pain and loss and heartbreaking images you see,' he said. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said yesterday that Paris believed it necessary to continue Afghan evacuations beyond Washington's August 31 deadline. 'We are concerned about the deadline set by the United States on August 31. Additional time is needed to complete ongoing operations,' Le Drian told reporters at the UAE's Al-Dhafra air base, where France has set up an air bridge for people evacuated from Kabul. In the streets of the capital, the Taliban have enforced a calm of a kind, with their armed forces patrolling the streets and manning checkpoints. Visually, they have also been looking to stamp their authority, ensuring the tri-coloured national flag is replaced with their white banner. At a roadside in Kabul at the weekend, young men sold Taliban flags, which bear in black text the Muslim proclamation of faith and the regime's formal name: "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan". 'Our goal is to spread the flag of the Islamic Emirate throughout Afghanistan,' said seller Ahmad Shakib, who studies economics at university.

RESISTANCE Outside of Kabul, there have been flickers of resistance against the Taliban. Some ex-government troops have gathered in the Panjshir Valley, north of the capital -- long known as an anti-Taliban bastion. The Taliban said yesterday their fighters had surrounded resistance forces holed up in the valley, but were looking to negotiate rather than take the fight to them. Taliban fighters "are stationed near Panjshir", spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid tweeted, saying they had the area surrounded on three sides. "The Islamic Emirate is trying to resolve this issue peacefully," he added. The announcement follows scattered reports of clashes overnight, with pro-Taliban social media accounts claiming gunmen were massing, and Afghanistan's former vice president Amrullah Saleh saying resistance forces were holding strong. One of the leaders of the movement in Panjshir, named the National Resistance Front (NRF), is the son of famed anti-Taliban commander Ahmad Shah Massoud. The NRF is prepared for a "long-term conflict" but is also still seeking to negotiate with the Taliban about an inclusive government, its spokesman Ali Maisam Nazary told AFP in an interview on the weekend. "The conditions for a peace deal with the Taliban are decentralisation, a system that ensures social justice, equality, rights, and freedom for all," he said.

Lowest single-day Covid deaths reported in 55 days

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh logged 117 more Covid-related deaths in 24 hours till yesterday morning, the lowest in 55 days. The country last saw 115 coronavirus-related deaths on June 30 and the upward curve of the fatalities reached its peak on August 5 and 10 with 264 deaths. Besides, 5,717 more people came out positive for the virus after 26,789 samples were tested during the 24-hour period, according to the Directorate General of Health Services. The fresh number pushed the country's total fatalities to 25,399 while the cases reached 1,467,715. Meanwhile, the daily case positivity rate rose to 15.54 percent from Sunday's 15.16 percent, said the DGHS. The recovery rate rose to 93.54 percent, but the case fatality rate remained unchanged at 1.73 percent compared to the same period. Among the new deaths, 40 died in Dhaka division, 29 in Chattogram, 13 in Sylhet, 11 in Khulna, 10 in Rajshahi, nine in Rangpur, four in Mymensingh and one in Barishal divisions. Of them, 53 were men and 64 women.

5 sent to jail for gang-rape of woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur A Dinajpur court sent five men to jail in a case filed for gang raping a woman after tying her husband to a tree in the district's Bashbaria village on Friday night. Quoting the couple, police said the victims left their home in Dinajpur's Birampur upazila the same night for their relatives' home in nearby Nawabganj upazila for an emergency reason. As a battery-run three-wheeler carrying them reached Bashbaria village around 9:30pm, the five accused ambushed them. The accused beat up the driver, tied up the husband to a tree and forcefully took the woman, 30, to a nearby jungle, where they raped her, said police. The attackers left around 1:00am on Saturday. Later, the woman managed to call 999 and a team from Birampur Police Station rescued the couple. The victims were sent to Birampur Upazila Health Complex. Based on the woman's statement, police later raided different places of the upazila and arrested the accused, said Suman Kumar Mohanta, officer-in-charge of the police station. The woman filed a case with the police station against the arrestees, he said. On Saturday, the accused were produced before a Dinajpur court, which sent them to jail. The victim underwent medical examination at M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur, said police. The arrestees are: Sirajul Islam, 35, of Kanikathal village, Abdur Latif, 36, of Bagharpara village, Shuvo Mia, 20, Abu Raihan, 40, and Moinul Islam, 20, of Babaritolta village of Dinajpur, police sources said.

Covid booster shots should be delayed

Says WHO chief

REUTERS, Budapest WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said yesterday that Covid-19 booster shots should be delayed as priority should be given to raising vaccination rates in countries where only 1% or 2% of the population has been inoculated. If vaccination rates are not raised globally, stronger variants of the coronavirus could develop and vaccines intended as booster shots should be donated to countries where people have not received their first or second doses, he said during a visit to Budapest. 'In addition, there is a debate about whether booster shots are effective at all,' Ghebreyesus told a news conference with Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto. Those whose immune system is compromised should get a booster shot, though they represent only small percentage of the population, he added. The WHO said last week current data does not indicate that Covid-19 booster shots are needed and that the most vulnerable people worldwide should be fully vaccinated before high-income countries deploy a top-up. The Unites States announced last week it plans to make Covid-19 vaccine booster shots widely available starting on September 20 as infectious rise from the coronavirus Delta variant.

Two teens die in Banani fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two teenagers died and a woman was injured after a fire originated at a residential building in Dhaka's Banani area early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Mim (16) and Swapna (14). Both used to work as house helps at a duplex flat -- on the fourth and fifth floors -- of a 10-storey building on Road 3 (Block-F) in Banani.

The fire originated around 1:40am on the fourth floor and four firefighting units doused it around 2:40am, said Rasel Sikder, duty officer of Fire Service and Civil Defence Headquarters.

The bodies were recovered from the fourth floor's bathroom, fire officials said.

The owners were on the fifth floor at the time, they added.

Fire officials rescued the three and rushed them to a nearby hospital where doctors declared Mim and Swapna dead, said Rasel.

Injured Rinta (30), who is a relative of the flat owner, took treatment at the hospital.

The cause behind the fire that damaged the living room, kitchen, and furniture of the flat could not be ascertained immediately, said the fire officer.

Nur-e-Azam Mia, officer-in-charge of Banani Police

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Every dawn, people from all over the capital gather in front of Agargaon passport office and wait for hours to get their passports made or renewed. Why dawn? Because, unless one gets there early, chances are that their visit will be in vain due to people flooding the premises. The offices remained closed for many days due to Covid-19 and were recently reopened, but now, authorities are having a tough time dealing with the endless queues, inset. Although, signs of maintaining health rules are plastered on the walls, with so many people, social distancing is virtually impossible.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

DGHS dedicates six hospitals

Another dies, 276 hospitalised

DENGUE TREATMENT

- Salimullah Medical College Hospital
- Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Tongi
- Railway General Hospital at Kamalapur
- Aminbazar Govt Hospital
- Lalkuthi Hospital in Mirpur
- Kamrangirchar Hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid the rise in dengue cases, the Directorate General of the Health Services (DGHS) yesterday announced six hospitals in Dhaka dedicated to treating the dengue patients.

A notification signed by Dr Mizanur Rahman, DGHS director of Management Information System (MIS), was issued in this regard.

The hospitals are: Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital, Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Tongi; Railway General Hospital at Kamalapur, 20-bed Aminbazar Govt Hospital, Lalkuthi Hospital in Mirpur, and 31-bed Kamrangirchar Hospital.

Meanwhile, one more dengue patient died while at least 276 more dengue patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday. Among the 276 new cases, only 33 are from outside Dhaka.

According to DGHS, dengue fever has claimed 37 lives so far. Of them, 12 people died in July and 25 in August so far.

With the new cases, a total of 5,659 persons were diagnosed during the running month out of the total 8,317 infected. Of them, 511 are from outside Dhaka.

At least 2,286 patients were hospitalised in July, 272 in June while 43 were infected in May, according to DGHS.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,146 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 87 outside the capital, the DGHS data shows.

Over 4,100 polls by Dec!

EC decides in meeting

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission (EC) is going to hold more than 4,100 elections by December. Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) mayoral election, and all district council and union parishad (UP) polls are to be held in this period.

Besides, EC has decided to hold by-polls to Sylhet-3 constituency on September 4. EC Secretary Humayun Kabir Khandaker said yesterday, following a commission meeting. Candidates can start their campaigns at 8am on September 1 and run them for 24 hours.

The Sylhet-3 by-polls, which was scheduled to take place on July 28, was postponed by the High Court on July 26 due to the imposed lockdown at that time. The Sylhet-3 constituency fell vacant after parliamentarian Mahmud Us Samad Chowdhury died of Covid-19 on March 11.

In the first week of next month, the EC will announce dates of by-election to Cumilla-7 constituency, NCC mayoral election, first phase polls for 167 UPs, second phase polls for UPs, and elections for nine municipalities, he said.

He said the commission will need to hold elections for more than 4,000 UPs by December. In March, the EC decided that elections to all UPs will be held in several phases. On March 3, the EC announced the schedule for polls to 371 UPs in the first phase, fixing April 11 as the election day.

But it delayed the election due to Covid-19 and fixed the election date to be June 21.

In early June, the commission decided to postpone elections to 163 union parishads in Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Noakhali, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar due to a surge in Covid-19 cases.



Sylhet-3 by-polls on Sept 4

Dates for more polls in first week of Sept

Many polls delayed due to Covid-19

5-year tenure of NCC, 20 municipal mayors to end soon

Elections to the remaining 204 UPs were held on June 21.

EC officials said elections for 61 district councils will be due by January 2022.

Besides, elections to nine municipalities were postponed due to Covid-19 as well, and the five-year tenure of another 20 municipal mayors will be completed soon.

The five-year tenure of NCC mayor will end on February 7, 2022, as the first meeting of the corporation was held on February 8, 2017. The NCC election was held on December 22, 2016.

The Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009 requires holding city corporation polls 180 days before the tenure of the incumbent mayor ends.

The present EC will also complete its five-year tenure on February 14 next year, as the current commissioners assumed office on February 15, 2017.

NID-wing officials at the meeting proposed registering data of people who were born on or before January 1, 2006, aiming to issue National Identity Cards (NIDs) to all citizens aged 16 and above and include them in the voter list when they become 18.

Those interested to get NID will need to go to the Upazila Election Office and apply, or they can register online. Citizens will be given NIDs only after completing biometric registration.

Humayun said a committee under Election Commissioner Brigadier General (ret) Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury usually observes NID activities. "The committee will review the matter and send their recommendation to the commission regarding the proposal."

'Spend more money on research'

Education minister tells private university authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The private university authorities were yesterday asked to abide by laws and spend their money on research rather than buying luxurious items.

Education Minister Dipu Moni and Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury made the call during a virtual discussion marking the death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The government will continue its support to private universities, they also said at the discussion held by Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB).

Dipu Moni said the problems in education should be identified and resolved. "We should abide by the law and rules. We will work for expansion of education, and development of its quality staying within the law."

The government will never take any decision that can obstruct smooth running of private universities, she added.

Private universities in Bangladesh run as non-profit higher education institutions under the Private University Act 2010.

Mohibul said despite having legal obligation to provide full studentship for certain percentage of students, many private universities are not doing so.

According to law, general funds of any private university should be spent only on necessary expenses of that university, on the research and creation of knowledge and for the betterment of students, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

But what about the trees?

Liberation War ministry's meeting resolution mentions nothing about their preservation

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs yesterday submitted a meeting resolution centring the construction of an independence monument at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan to the High Court. The resolution, however, did not specify any decisions on whether the old and ecologically important trees will be cut.

Environmentalists have been demanding the government refrain from any further tree felling in the historic Suhrawardy Udyan for various projects to save the environment.

The ministry has prepared the resolution of the views-exchange meeting held on June 24. Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque presided over the meeting, where several professionals, including professors of Dhaka University and journalists, attended.

Yesterday, the ministry placed a copy of the resolution to the HC through Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Biswas during hearing of a writ petition over this issue.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice SM Maniruzzaman fixed Wednesday for hearing the matter, as writ petitioners' lawyer Syeda Rizwana Hasan said they will make a reply to the resolution after examining it.

According to the resolution, Minister Mozammel told the meeting that he will take an initiative to form a committee to

recommend which species of trees will be planted at Suhrawardy Udyan, and will think about narrowing its pathways.

The minister said they are trying to properly preserve and protect the history of the Liberation War.

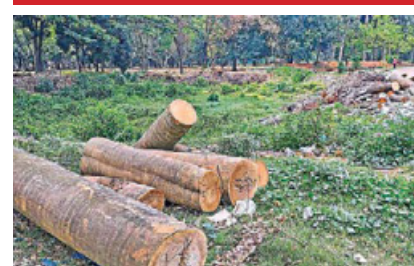
He also said a symbolic structure of the stage where Bangabandhu had delivered his historic March 7 speech has been established, according to the resolution.

Advocate Minhazul Haque Chowdhury, another lawyer for the petitioners, who went through the resolution, told The Daily Star that there is no decision on whether the old and ecologically important trees will be kept intact.

While hearing the petition filed by six rights bodies and an activist, an HC bench on June 29 sought the resolution of the ministry meeting held on June 24.

The petitioners claimed the ministry is sponsoring a project titled "Suhrawardy Udyane Swadhinata Stomvo Nirman -- Threitiya Porjaj (Construction of Independence Monuments at Suhrawardy Udyan -- Third Phase)", which is being implemented by indiscriminately felling hundreds of old and ecologically important trees. Meanwhile on July 23, Minister Mozammel told this correspondent that cutting trees has already been stopped, and construction work will continue keeping the trees intact.

SUHRAWARDY UDYAN



FILE PHOTO

Editors Guild gets full-fledged committee

Mozammel Babu president, Inam Ahmed general secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Editors Guild, Bangladesh has formed its full-fledged committee with Ekattor Television Editor-in-Chief Mozammel Babu as its president and The Business Standard Editor Inam Ahmed as general secretary.

The committee formed during its general meeting on Sunday night will function for the next two years, said a press release of the guild.

Senior journalist Toab Khan, Daily Jagoron Editor Abed Khan, Daily Ajker Patrika Editor Golam Rahman, and Daily Ittefaq Editor Tasmia Hossain have been made its advisory council members.

The presidium members are: Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha Editor-in-Chief Abul Kalam Azad, Daily Sangbad Editor Altamash Kabir, DBC Television Editor-in-Chief Manzurul Islam, Amader Orthoneeti Editor-in-Chief Naimul Islam Khan, DOT magazine Editor Mustapha Khalid Palash, Daily Jugantor Editor Saiful Alam, Bangladesh Journal Editor Shahjahan Sardar, Bhorer Kagoj Editor Shyamal Dutta,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

'Want peace, stability in Afghanistan'

Says Bangladesh permanent representative to OIC

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has called for peace in Afghanistan, security of its people, and quick evacuation of foreigners who got stranded following Taliban's takeover on August 15 after the US withdrew troops.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Permanent Representative to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Javed Patwary, said this at an emergency meeting of OIC on Sunday.

As a responsible member of the international community, Bangladesh believes in peaceful coexistence with neighbouring countries and does not interfere in any country's internal affairs, said Patwary.

Bangladesh's policy for South Asia comes from the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 1972 speech where he said, "We will work together with our neighbours for common development and prosperity of South Asia."

"Bangladesh wants sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan, and as a bridge between South and Central Asia, Afghanistan should utilise its natural resources and geostrategic position properly."

As Afghanistan's political situation normalises, Bangladesh will share its experiences of socio-economic development with the country.

Ambassador Patwary said the international community should continue humanitarian and development assistance for the Afghan people under the current circumstances. The OIC should keenly watch the situation and make necessary recommendations for Afghanistan's peace, security, stability, and development.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Taking full advantage of the care-free spirit of youth, these teens from Sylhet's Khadim Nagar union decided to take a dip into the water on a hot day, jumping right off a culvert's railings. This photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

VACCINATION PROGRAMME AT 2 CCC CENTRES

Red Crescent withdraws volunteers over irregularity

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Allegations are rife over the mishandling of Covid vaccinations at some centres in the port city. The situation has become so convoluted in fact, that Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has withdrawn their volunteers from two vaccination centres run by Chattogram City Corporation (CCC), protesting irregularities in their vaccine programmes.

Sources said the organisation withdrew its members from CCC General Hospital on Wednesday and from Safa Motaleb Maternity Hospital at Mohara area on Thursday.

Contacted, Iftekher Hossain Imu, chief of Youth Red Crescent, Chattogram, said they withdrew their members after coming across irregularities by a section of CCC staffers in these centres. Imu said they have seen various staffers prioritise vaccine-seekers in exchange of Tk 500 to Tk 1,000 for each person.

The same situation prevailed in CCC General Hospital, said Imu. "It got so bad that vaccine-seekers

besieged the centre one day. All CCC staffers fled the centre, but our volunteers stayed and called 999. Police came in later and brought the situation under control."

"Here's the problem. The people might start associating our volunteers with the irregularities. Why will we take the liability of CCC staffers' misdeeds?" Imu asked.

"We do not have any problem with the centres run by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Our issues are with the two CCC-run centres," said Imu.

Contacted, Dr Sheikh Fazle Rabbi, civil surgeon of Chattogram, said, "As the two centres are run by CCC, I have passed it on to their health department, which will look into it."

Despite repeated attempts, CCC chief health officer Dr Selim Akter Chowdhury could not be reached for comments over the phone.

Contacted, CCC Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said he was not aware of the issue.

"I have asked CCC health officials about the allegations on different

occasions. They said the allegations aren't true. It's possible that some people are spreading propaganda."

The mayor said, "I have already instructed our health department to not spare anyone if the allegations turn out to be true."

It is worth mentioning that CCC formed a probe body on August 10 to investigate into a prior incident of vaccine mishandling on August 9. Although the committee was asked to submit a report within two working days, it is yet to start investigation.

CCC executive magistrate Jahanara Ferdous, also a member of the probe committee, said the probe was delayed due to unavoidable reasons, but are hoping to launch it soon.

CCC did suspend Bishu Dey, health staffer at CCC Mostafa Hakim Maternity, after a case was filed against him over misappropriating vaccines from the centre and administering them outside in exchange for money.

Around 600 members of Youth Red Crescent are volunteering in the vaccination centres in the city and upazilas of the district.



Port city residents queue up since morning, waiting for the truck of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh to arrive. According to authorities, the truck has no fixed schedule, and so, residents have no way of knowing when they'll be able to buy their daily produce for cheap. On some days of the week, the truck is nowhere to be seen, and those in line have to return home distraught. This photo was taken yesterday from Andar Killa area.

Spend more

FROM PAGE 3
"But in many cases, we see breach of the law. Money is spent on luxurious items including cars. University funds should be spent on research, not on luxury items," said the junior minister.

Deputy Water Resources Minister and Executive Member of APUB AKM Enamul Hoque Shameem urged the authorities to take action against private universities that are not following the law.

He, however, said, "But do not formulate any law and rule that can create obstacles to flourishing private universities as well as higher education."

APUB Chairman Sheikh Kabir Hossain presided over the discussion, moderated by APUB Secretary General Benajir Ahmed.

EMBEZZLING Tk 1,100Cr

E-orange CEO, two former owners on 5-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed three people, including two former owners of e-commerce platform E-orange, on a five-day remand in a case filed over embezzlement of around Tk 1,100 crore.

The accused are former owners of e-orange -- Sonia Mehjabin and her husband Masukur Rahman -- and chief executive officer Md Amanullah Chowdhury.

Metropolitan Magistrate Morshed Al Mamun Bhuiyan passed the order after Aminul Islam, inspector of Gulshan Police Station and the case's investigation officer, produced them before the bench with a 10-day remand prayer for each.

In the remand prayer, the IO said the accused schemed and misappropriated around Tk 1,100 crore from customers. So the three need to be remanded to find out information on the other accused and to know where they transferred the money.

Defense, however, submitted petitions seeking bail along with the cancellation of the remand prayer, saying that they were implicated in the cases to harass them falsely.

Upon hearing both sides, the magistrate turned down their bail pleas and placed them on remand.

On August 17, Sonia and Masukur were sent to jail after the couple surrendered before a Dhaka court, seeking bail in the case while Amanullah was arrested on August 18 from the capital's Gulshan.

A customer filed the case against the five on August 16 over embezzlement of nearly Tk 1,100 crore, alleging that the platform did not deliver products he purchased on April 28, according to police.

In the case statements, the complainant said the products were supposed to be delivered within the agreed period but it did not happen.

Man, nephew killed as truck hits their bike in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A man and his nephew were killed as a truck hit a motorcycle they were riding in Netrakona on Sunday night.

The accident occurred on Netrakona-Mohanganj road in Bori area under Barhatta upazila, said police.

The victims -- identified as Murtaz Ali (58), and his nephew Tanvir Ahmed (26) -- hailed from Mohanpur village in Barhatta.

The goods-laden truck hit the bike while the two were returning home from adjacent Mohanganj upazila, said Barhatta Police Station OC Md Mizanur Rahman.

They died on the spot around 8pm, said the OC.

Police handed over the bodies to the family. The law enforcers seized the truck but its driver managed to flee. A case was filed, the OC added.

Charges framed against 'Golden Monir' in arms case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against Monir Hossain, widely known as "Golden Monir", in a case filed over possessing firearms.

Monir, now in jail, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Special Tribunal-1 of Dhaka read out the charges to him.

The judge set September 8 for starting the case's trial.

On January 26, Md Abdul Malek, an inspector of the Detective Branch of Police and the case's investigation officer, submitted two charge sheets -- one for possessing firearms and the other for possessing narcotics -- against him to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

Both the cases were filed with Badda Police Station.

Produce her before court on Sept 1

HC asks man who allegedly confined daughter to home
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered a man to produce his 22-year-old daughter, whom he allegedly confined to his house in Dhaka's Uttara, before the court on September 1.

Towhidur Rahman Miah has allegedly confined Jeba Tasnia Towshi, a university student, forcibly to his residence since June 1.

The court asked the OC of Uttara Police Station to ensure Jeba's presence before it so that it can hear her statement.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman issued the order following a writ petition filed by Taha Taioba, a friend of Towshi.

Taioba's lawyer Aynunnah Siddiqua told the court that Towshi's father has illegally confined her since June 1. Towshi is an adult and she has the right to freedom of movement, the lawyer said.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust is providing legal assistance to her.

MONEY LAUNDERING SC stays bail of Wanderers Club GS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday stayed for six weeks a High Court verdict that granted bail to Joy Gopal Sarkar, general secretary of Dhaka Wanderers Club, in four separate money laundering cases. He allegedly had links to the illegal casino business.

Justice Obaidul Hassan, a judge of the SC's Appellate Division, passed the order following a petition filed by the state, seeking a stay on the HC verdict.

Additional Attorney General SK Md Morshed told The Daily Star that Joy Gopal's bail order was stayed as other accused of the cases made confessional statements, saying that he was the organiser of the casino business and was involved in money laundering.

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সোহাগাবন্দী-মোমেনা চাকরাদার মহিলা জিহ্বী কলেজ (এমপিও ভুক্ত), হোভিডিং নং- ডি-৯৬, তালবাবা (ধানা রোড), সাভার, ঢাকা -এর জন্য সর্বশেষ সরকারি ও জাতীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী শূন্য পদে অধ্যক্ষ নিয়োগ করা হবে। দক্ষ ও যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন আহ্বায়ী প্রার্থীদের বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ২৮ (আশি) দিনের মধ্যে কলেজ গভর্নিং বডি'র সভাপতি বরাবর আবেদন ও প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র কলেজের ভারপ্রাপ্ত অধ্যক্ষের দপ্তরে সরাসরি, কুরিয়ার অথবা রেজিষ্টার ডাকযোগে পৌঁছাতে হবে।
-অধ্যক্ষ (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)

Editors Guild gets

FROM PAGE 3

New Bangla Editor Swadesh Roy, and bdnews24.com Editor-in-Chief Toufique Imrose Khalidi.

Besides, Gazi Television Editor-in-Chief Syed Istiaque Reza and Desh TV Editor Sukanta Gupta have been made joint secretaries, Bangla Tribune Editor Zulfikar Russell organising secretary, and Asian Age Editorial Board Chairman Shoeb Chowdhury treasurer.

Moreover, Independent TV Editor-in-Chief M Shamsur Rahman, Energy and Power Editor Mollah M Amjad Hossain, ATN News Chief Executive Editor Munni Saha, Amader Noutun Shomoy Editor Nasima Khan Monti, Maasranga Television Chief of News Rejoanul Haq, Bangladesh

Post Chief Editor Sharif Shahab Uddin, and ATN Bangla Chief Executive Editor ZI Mamun have been made members of the executive committee.

The Editors Guild, Bangladesh started its journey in 2018. The organisation is comprised of editors and leaders from news publications and outlets across the media.

Its convening committee was formed on December 21 that year, with Toufique Imrose Khalidi as convener. Khalidi also served as the founding president of the guild since January 4, 2019.

Although Mozammel Babu was announced as the new president in March 2020, it was not possible to form a full-fledged committee back then amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Two teens

FROM PAGE 3

Station, said they suspect that the teenagers died from smoke inhalation. "We are investigating it," he said.

The bodies were sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

But what about

FROM PAGE 3

On May 9, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, Association for Land Reforms and Development, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Ain O Salish Kendra, and architect Mubasshir Hossain collectively filed the petition with the HC, seeking its directive on the government to stop any further tree felling at Suhrawardy Udyan.

In the petition, they prayed for an order that would tell the government to plant three times the number of trees felled in the name of implementing the project.

Want peace, stability

FROM PAGE 3

"We believe the land of Afghanistan will not be allowed for operating terrorist activities against other countries. I believe the OIC countries will agree to this point," he said.

The ambassador said Bangladesh and Afghanistan have historic and deep cultural bonds, and Dhaka is keenly observing the political situation in Afghanistan.

The OIC adopted a joint statement calling for steps on establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan in coordination with all OIC members.

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Tenders are hereby invited from reputed manufacturers for the supply of 25600 MT cement (Portland Composite Cement in accordance with BSEN 197-1 strength grade 42.5N) and 5054 MT of TMT Rebars (Yield strength-500 MPa, conforming to BS 4449). Material will be used in the Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Aminbazar-Kaliakoir 400kV Double Circuit Transmission Line on Turnkey Basis (Package-1, Lot-2), NOA No: 27.21.0000.101.07.300.21.218 dated January 12, 2021, Contract Agreement No: PGC/EXIM BANK/LOC-3/400kV/TL/AMIN-KALI dated Feb 17, 2021. The payment shall be made in USD. The price shall remain firm for a period of 18 months. Tenders shall be received upto 20:00 Hrs of 30-September-2021 at the project office of Larsen & Toubro Limited, Choto Kalampur, Kalampur-1351, Dhamrai, Dhaka, Bangladesh. We reserve the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Kali Chayan Bhattacharjee
Project Manager
Larsen & Toubro Limited
Dhamrai

D-105

বাংলাদেশ টেলিযোগাযোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিশন
আইইবি ভবন, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০

স্মারক নং-১৪.৩২.০০০০.৪০০.৩০.০০২.২১.১৫৯৯ তারিখঃ ০৮ ভাদ্র, ১৪২৮ বঙ্গাব্দ
২৩ আগস্ট, ২০২১ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

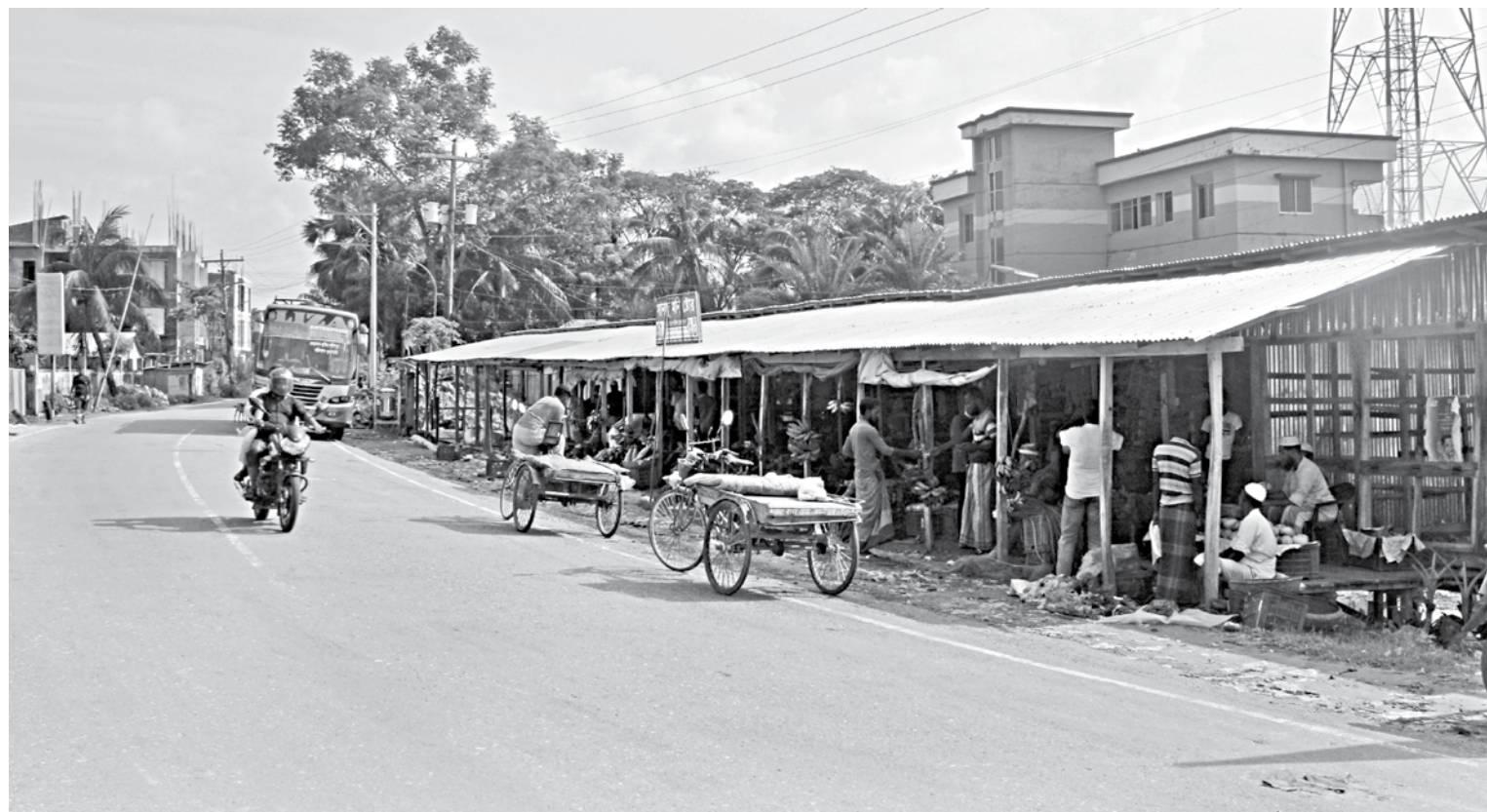
বাংলাদেশ টেলিযোগাযোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিশন (বিটিআরসি)র দাপ্তরিক ক্রয়কার্য সম্পাদনের স্বার্থে নিম্নে উল্লিখিত ক্যাটাগরী (কাজ) ও সময়কাল (মেয়াদ) এর জন্য সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তির নিমিত্তে আহ্বায়ী ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত সরবরাহকারী/মেরামতকারী/ঠিকাদারী/ট্রাভেল এজেন্ট/প্রিন্টিং প্রেস/গ্যারেজ/ইন্স্টল ম্যান/জন্মান্ট/সিএন্ডএফ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে নিজস্ব লেটারহেড প্যাডে সীলমোহরযুক্ত তালিকাভুক্তির প্রস্তাব আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্যাটাগরী	কাজের বিবরণ	সময়কাল	মন্তব্য
ক	অফিস ষ্টেশনারী মালামাল সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান	০১ অক্টোবর ২০২১- ৩০ জুন ২০২৩ পর্যন্ত।	প্রতিটি ক্যাটাগরীর জন্য ভিন্ন ভিন্ন প্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে হবে।
খ	মুদ্রণকাজ সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান (প্রিন্টিং প্রেস)		
গ	কম্পিউটার, প্রিন্টার, সিসি টিভি/এক্সেস কন্ট্রোল সিস্টেম এবং আইটি সংশ্লিষ্ট খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ ক্রয়, সরবরাহ ও মেরামতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান		
ঘ	যানবাহন রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ ও মেরামতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান (গ্যারেজ/ওয়ার্কশপ)		
ঙ	এসি মেরামত ও রক্ষণাবেক্ষণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান		
চ	এয়ার টিকেট সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান (ট্রাভেল এজেন্ট)		
ছ	ইন্ডেন্ট ম্যান/জন্মান্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান	০১ জানুয়ারি ২০২২-৩০ জুন ২০২৩ পর্যন্ত।	
জ	সি এন্ড এফ সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান		

আবেদনকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের অবশ্যই সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের ন্যূনতম ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। আহ্বায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে শর্তসম্মত তালিকাভুক্তির আবেদনপত্র আগামী ২৪ আগস্ট ২০২১ তারিখ হতে ১৩ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে প্রশাসন বিভাগ, বিটিআরসি, আইইবি ভবন (৬ষ্ঠ তলা), রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০ হতে নগদ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) মূল্যে ক্রয় করতে হবে। আবেদনকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের সংগৃহীত আবেদনপত্র সমূহ আগামী ১৪ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২১ তারিখ বেলা ২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে প্রশাসন বিভাগ, বিটিআরসি, আইইবি ভবন (৬ষ্ঠ তলা), রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০ জমা দিতে হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন শর্ত পরিবর্তন/পরিবর্তন/সংশোধন করতে পারে এবং কোন কারণ প্রদর্শন ব্যতিরেকেই সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিক প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে। তালিকাভুক্তির ক্ষেত্রে সকল সরকারি নিয়মাবলী অনুসরণ করা হবে।

মোঃ এয়াকুব আলী ভূঁইয়া
পরিচালক (প্রশাসন)
ফোনঃ ৯৫৫৪৬৮৯

GD-1510



The Kukata mayor's kitchen market on public land, right beside the Kuakata-Dhaka highway in Kuakata town. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO:
SOHRAB HOSSAIN

Mayor's 'private market' on public property

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Amid the rising onslaught on private properties, including a place of worship and cemetery belonging to the minorities by land grabbers in Kuakata, the custodian of the town, the mayor himself, has built a kitchen market on public land right next to the Kuakata-Dhaka highway.

Built on Roads and Highways Department (RHD) land, on the southern end of local BTB office by the highway, the market is built with wood and tin. Out of its 17 stalls, seven were handed over to recipients two months back.

Although Mahmudur Rahman Russell, sub-divisional engineer of RHD in Kuakata, in a notice issued on June 30 asked Mayor Anwar Hossain Hawlader to remove the illegal market, it is still operating at the spot.

During a visit to the market recently, many of the stores at the market -- 120 feet by 30 feet -- were seen selling fresh vegetables while three were selling grocery items.

Only one store in the middle of the market had a sign that read 'Sanju Moni Store -- proprietor: Shakib Hawlader'. Samsul Haque Hawlader, father of the storeowner, said the mayor of Kuakata handed over the stall to them after they paid him Tk 10 thousand.

"We've been selling vegetables here since last couple of months. The monthly rent for the stall has yet to be settled," he also said.

Another shopkeeper, Abdus Salam, said, "I heard that the land belongs to the government."

Although he claimed that the mayor built the market with his "personal funds" to create business opportunities for them, he admitted to have paid the mayor

The market is built with wood and tin, and out of its 17 stalls, seven were handed over to recipients two months back.

some money as "construction cost".

Salam, however, refused to say how much he paid to the mayor.

Vegetable seller Yasin also said that the mayor has built the market so they could make a living by conducting their business there.

A resident of the municipality on condition of anonymity said that the Kuakata mayor collected

advance payments from locals and built the market illegally by encroaching on government land so he could rent it out for his own benefit.

Contacted, Mayor Anwar Hossain Hawlader said that he spent Tk 7 lakh from his personal funds to build the market for residents of the town, as there was no kitchen market in the municipality. "If the department concerned wants the land back, I will remove the market."

Asked about the notice served by the RHD, he said, "I received the letter and I've been having discussions with them [RHD]."

Mir Mohammad Kamrul Hasan, executive engineer of RHD in Patuakhali, said, "We couldn't take any action so far due to the nationwide lockdown. However, steps are being taken to remove that market soon."



People of two villages under Krishnanagar union in Brahmanbaria's Nabinagar upazila form a human chain on the bank of the Titas river, demanding immediate completion of the construction work of Mantala-Sitarampur bridge. Roads and Highways Department (RHD) constructing the 556-meter-long bridge, scheduled to be completed in June this year, at a cost of Tk 70 crore.

PHOTO:
STAR

Remembering Covid warrior: Library named after policeman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Commemorating the death of a police constable who died of Covid-19 while discharging duty as a frontline fighter during the coronavirus outbreak in the country, the Khansama Police Station in Dinajpur has opened a library after his name, providing solace to the grieved family members.

Md Nazmul Islam, who joined Bangladesh police in 2007, died of covid-19 on October 15 last year while undergoing treatment at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH). He played a crucial role as a frontline fighter in Gaibandha district. Khansama upazila of Dinajpur was his birthplace.

After ten months of his death, the Police department has built a single-room library building at the compound of the Khansama Police Station.

Nazmul Islam Smriti Pathagar (Nazmul Islam Memorial Library) has a collection of around 300 books, said Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Khansama Police Station.

Local lawmaker AH Mahmood Ali inaugurated the library virtually on August 17 as chief guest while Khansama Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Ahmed Mahbub-Ul Islam, and OC Kamal Hossain of Khansama Police Station, were present as special guests.



The authorities of Khansama Police Station in Dinajpur built the library at the police station compound commemorating the sacrifice of Covid warrior constable Nazmul Islam.

PHOTO: STAR

Family members of Nazmul Islam were also present on the occasion.

The lawmaker, in his speech, said that the library at the police station will be an excellent place for locals in the Upazila to garner knowledge.

He urged the youths to shun the path of drug addiction and develop reading habit.

Kamal Hossain, the OC of Khansama Police Station, said they

will take initiative to collect more books for the library to enrich the collection.

"It's our little effort to remember Nazmul through the library," he said.

Sharmin Akter Lovely, the widow of Nazmul Islam, said that the pandemic has taken away her husband early.

"But, this effort of Bangladesh Police will provide a little solace to us," she said.

Woman, youth killed under train in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Two people, including a housewife, died under the wheels of two separate trains in Kalihati upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased are Suborna Akter, 22, wife of Mohammad Solaiman of Sadar upazila, Sohel Rana, 27, of Sirajganj of Shahjadpur upazila.

Locals said Suborna jumped under a north-bound train in Rajabari area around 11:00am and died on the spot.

Meanwhile, Dhaka-bound Sundarban Express hit Sohel near Kamakhar Intersection in the upazila while he was crossing the rail tracks around 5:00am, police quoted locals as saying.

Sub Inspector Mohammad Bellal at Tangail Railway Police Outpost said they recovered Sohel's body from the spot and sent it to the hospital for autopsy.



চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম।

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০১/২০২১

তারিখঃ ১৮-০৮-২০২১

নিম্নবর্ণিত বেতন স্কেল এবং রীতি মোতাবেক দেয় অন্যান্য আতায় চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নোক্ত পদে নিয়োগের জন্য বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে নিবারণিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে :-

ক্রমিক	পদের নাম	অফিস	পদের সংখ্যা	বেতন স্কেল
১।	হিসাব নিয়ামক	হিসাব নিয়ামক দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৩য় গ্রেড
২।	পরিচালক (পরিচালনা ও উন্নয়ন)	পরিচালনা ও উন্নয়ন দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৩য় গ্রেড
৩।	প্রধান প্রকৌশলী	প্রকৌশল দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৩য় গ্রেড
৪।	তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী (সিভিল)	প্রকৌশল দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৪র্থ গ্রেড
৫।	নিবাহী প্রকৌশলী (বিদ্যুৎ)	প্রকৌশল দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৫ম গ্রেড
৬।	সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (অটোমোবাইল/মেকানিক্যাল)	পরিবহন দপ্তর	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী	৯ম গ্রেড

প্রয়োজনীয় যোগ্যতা :

১। হিসাব নিয়ামক :

প্রার্থীর ন্যূনতম অনার্সসহ এম.বি.এ ডিগ্রিধারী হতে হবে। অনার্স/মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রির যে কোন একটিতে ১ম শ্রেণিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে। যে কোন সরকারি/আধাসরকারি অথবা স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে উচ্চতর পদে জাতীয় বেতন স্কেলের ন্যূনপক্ষে ৫ম গ্রেডের কর্মকর্তা পদে অন্ততঃ ০৮ (আট) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ কর্মকর্তা হিসেবে ১৫ (পনের) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। স্বীকৃত প্রকল্পশালা শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা যেমন-সি.এ/আই.সি.এম.এ. অর্জিত প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। আবেদনকারীর শিক্ষা জীবনে কোন স্তরে ৩য় শ্রেণি/বিভাগ গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

আবেদনের তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়সসীমা কমপক্ষে ৪৫ (পঁয়তাল্লিশ) বছর হতে হবে। যোগ্যতর প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে শর্ত শিথিল যোগ্য।

২। পরিচালক (পরিচালনা ও উন্নয়ন) :

প্রার্থীর ন্যূনতম অনার্সসহ স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি এবং স্বীকৃত দেশী/বিদেশী প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে প্রকল্প ব্যবস্থাপনা কোর্স সমাপনী ডিপ্লোমা থাকতে হবে। অনার্স/মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রির যে কোন একটিতে ১ম শ্রেণিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। পরিচালনা ও উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তা জাতীয় বেতন স্কেলে ন্যূনপক্ষে ৫ম গ্রেডের কর্মকর্তা পদে অন্ততঃ ০৮ (আট) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ কর্মকর্তা হিসেবে ১৫ (পনের) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। বিভিন্ন ধরনের পরিচালনা প্রণয়ন, মূল্যায়ন, বাস্তবায়ন, অগ্রগতির প্রতিবেদন তৈরী ইত্যাদি কাজে এবং বিভিন্ন পদ্ধতিতে উন্নয়ন পরিচালনার বিশেষ ব্যুৎপত্তিসম্পন্ন হতে হবে। আবেদনকারীর শিক্ষা জীবনে কোন স্তরে ৩য় শ্রেণি/বিভাগ গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

আবেদনের তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়সসীমা কমপক্ষে ৪৫ (পঁয়তাল্লিশ) বছর হতে হবে। যোগ্যতর প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে শর্ত শিথিল যোগ্য।

৩। প্রধান প্রকৌশলী :

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের অথবা বিদেশের কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/ইনস্টিটিউট থেকে স্নাতক ডিগ্রির অধিকারী হতে হবে। প্রার্থীর কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত/ব্যক্তিগত প্রতিষ্ঠান-এ প্রকৌশলের বিভিন্ন শাখার রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত কাজের তদারকি ও ব্যবস্থাপনা এবং উন্নয়ন পরিচালনা প্রণয়ন ও ব্যবস্থাপনার কাজে তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী বা সমমানের পদে ০৬ (ছয়) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মোট ২০ (বিশ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। উপরোক্ত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন উচ্চতর ডিগ্রিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। বয়স অনূর্ধ্ব ৫৫ বছর। এ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল করা যেতে পারে। শিক্ষা জীবনে কোন স্তরে ৩য় শ্রেণি/বিভাগ গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। নিয়োগের শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

৪। তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী (সিভিল) :

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের অথবা বিদেশের কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/ইনস্টিটিউট থেকে পুরকৌশল-এ স্নাতক ডিগ্রির অধিকারী হতে হবে। প্রার্থীর কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত/ব্যক্তিগত প্রতিষ্ঠান-এ প্রকৌশলে বিভিন্ন শাখার রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত কাজের তদারকি ও ব্যবস্থাপনা, উন্নয়ন পরিচালনা প্রণয়ন এবং কোন সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি ও স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে নিবাহী প্রকৌশলী অথবা সমমানের পদে ছয় বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মোট ১২ (বারো) বছরের চাকরি অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। উপরোক্ত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন উচ্চতর ডিগ্রিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। বয়স অনূর্ধ্ব ৫০ বছর। শিক্ষা জীবনে কোন স্তরে ৩য় শ্রেণি/বিভাগ গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। নিয়োগের শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

৫। নিবাহী প্রকৌশলী (বিদ্যুৎ) :

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের অথবা বিদেশের কোন স্বীকৃত পলিটেকনিক বা প্রকৌশল ইনস্টিটিউট থেকে ডিগ্রি কৌশল-এ স্নাতক ডিগ্রির অধিকারী হতে হবে। প্রার্থীর কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত/ব্যক্তিগত প্রতিষ্ঠান-এ বৈদ্যুতিক সংরক্ষণ ও ব্যবস্থাপনা সংক্রান্ত কাজে সহকারী প্রকৌশলী অথবা সমমানের পদে কমপক্ষে ০৬ (ছয়) বছরের চাকরি অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। উপরোক্ত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন উচ্চতর ডিগ্রিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। বয়স অনূর্ধ্ব ৪০ বছর।

অথবা

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের অথবা বিদেশের কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/ইনস্টিটিউট থেকে ডিগ্রি কৌশল-এ ডিপ্লোমাদারী হতে হবে। প্রার্থীর কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্ব শাসিত/ব্যক্তিগত প্রতিষ্ঠান-এ বৈদ্যুতিক সংরক্ষণ ও ব্যবস্থাপনা কাজে মোট ১২ (বারো) বছরের চাকরি অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। প্রার্থীর এস.এস.সি ও ডিপ্লোমা পরীক্ষার কমপক্ষে ২য় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের গ্রেড থাকতে হবে। উপরোক্ত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন উচ্চতর ডিগ্রিধারী প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে। বয়স অনূর্ধ্ব ৪৫ বছর। এ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিলযোগ্য।

নিয়োগের শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

৬। সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (অটোমোবাইল/মেকানিক্যাল) :

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বি.এস.সি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (অটোমোবাইল/ মেকানিক্যাল) পাশ হতে হবে অথবা প্রার্থীকে কমপক্ষে ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ অটোমোবাইল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং-এ ডিপ্লোমা পাশ হতে হবে অথবা কোন এম.টি অথবা ই.এম.ই অথবা ওয়ার্কশপের মেকানিক্যাল সেকশনে ১০ (দশ) বছরের কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন গ্রাজুন্ড ই.এম.ই পাসনেলে হতে হবে। নিয়োগের শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া যেতে পারে।

নিয়োগের শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানের জন্য ৩০% কোটা নিবারণিত থাকবে। এক্ষেত্রে প্রার্থীকে দরখাস্তের উপরে "মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কোটা" উল্লেখ করতে হবে এবং মুক্তিযোদ্ধার বন্যবন সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি দরখাস্তের সাথে সংযোজন করতে হবে।

উক্ত পদসমূহে নিয়োগ পেলে সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্মকর্তাগণকে প্রথম যোগদানের পর অন্ততঃ ০২ (দুই) বছর চাকরি করতে হবে এবং যোগদানের সময় এ মর্মে একটি অঙ্গীকারনামা প্রদান করতে হবে। উক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্মকর্তার কোন চাকরি আবেদন অন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে যত্রোন্নয়ন করা হবে না।

ব্যক্তিগতভাবে বোগাযোগ করে রেজিস্ট্রার অফিস হতে অথবা চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েব সাইট <http://www.cu.ac.bd> থেকে Download করে দরখাস্তের নিবারণিত ফরমে সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্মকর্তার সত্যায়িত কপি দরখাস্তের পদসমূহের জন্য ১০ (দশ) স্টেট দরখাস্ত আগামী ০৯-০৯-২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (সকাল ৯টা হতে বেলা ২.৩০ বি. পর্যন্ত) গৃহীত হবে।

বাংলাদেশের অস্বী/জনতা ব্যাংক লিঃ এর যেকোন শাখা হতে রেজিস্ট্রার, চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এর অনুকূলে অস্বী/জনতা ব্যাংক লিঃ, চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় শাখা, চট্টগ্রাম এর উপর গ্রেসে দরখাস্ত ফি বাবদ ৬ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার (অফেরতযোগ্য) ও প্রার্থীকে সাম্প্রতিক তোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত ফটো দরখাস্তের মূল সেটের সাথে এবং মার্কসশীটসহ সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা ও নাগরিকত্ব সার্টিফিকেটের সত্যায়িত কপি দরখাস্তের প্রত্যেক সেটের সাথে অবশ্যই নিম্নোক্তরকমের নিকট নিবারণিত তারিখের মধ্যে পৌঁছাতে হবে।

ফি ব্যতিরেকে কিংবা উপরে বর্ণিত ব্যাংক ব্যতির অন্য কোন ব্যাংকে দেয় ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারসহ প্রাপ্ত দরখাস্ত, বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত পূরণ না করলে সে দরখাস্ত, বিজ্ঞপ্তির যোগ্যতা অনুযায়ী প্রয়োজনীয় ডিগ্রি পরীক্ষায় Appeared প্রার্থীর পেশকৃত দরখাস্ত, নিবারণিত শেষ তারিখের পরে প্রাপ্ত দরখাস্ত, ডাকযোগে/কুরিয়ার সার্ভিস ইত্যাদির মাধ্যমে প্রেরিত কোন দরখাস্ত নিবারণিত শেষ তারিখের মধ্যে পৌঁছা না গেলে সে দরখাস্ত সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

চাকরিত প্রার্থীগণকে অবশ্যই যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। বিশেষ ক্ষেত্রে অতিরিক্ত পরিপূর্ণ এক সেট দরখাস্ত যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে প্রেরণ করে নিবারণিত সংখ্যক দরখাস্ত(ব্যাংক ড্রাফট ও সংশ্লিষ্ট সকল কাগজপত্রসহ) অগ্রিম হিসেবে বখাসময়ে দাখিল করতে হবে।

নিবারণিত প্রার্থীগণের মালিক মূল বেতন নির্ধারণের ক্ষেত্রে কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানের এম.পি.সি. গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

বিঃ দ্রঃ-পরিচালক (পরিচালনা ও উন্নয়ন), হিসাব নিয়ামক ও সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (অটোমোবাইল/মেকানিক্যাল) পদে নিয়োগের পূর্বের বিজ্ঞপ্তির কার্যক্রম এতদ্বারা বাতিল মর্মে গণ্য হবে।

(গোফেন্স এম.এম. মদিকুল হাসান)
রেজিস্ট্রার
(অফিস)
চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

ফোন নং: পিএবিএক্স-৯২৬০১১-১৪, ২৬০৬০০১-১০, ২৬০৬০১৫-২৭
এক্স-৪২০১

'I am totally lost'

Rising food prices, shuttered banks add to misery for Kabul

REUTERS, Kabul

A week after the Taliban's lightning seizure of Kabul, growing numbers of people in the Afghan capital are facing a daily struggle to get by with their jobs gone, banks still shuttered and food prices soaring.

The thousands crowded outside the airport entry points and fighting for seats on flights out of Kabul have provided the starkest image of the turmoil in the city since the Western-backed government collapsed.

But as the days pass, everyday worries about food and rent are adding to the uncertainty in a country whose fragile economy has been crushed by the disappearance of international support.

"I am totally lost, I don't know what should I think about first, my safety and survival or feeding my kids and family," said a former policeman, now in hiding who has lost the \$260 a month salary that used to support his wife and four children.

Like many lower level government employees, who have often gone long periods without being paid, for the past two months he has not even received that.

"I'm living in a rental apartment, I have not paid the owner for past three months," he said.



General view of the crowds of people near the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday. A firefight involving Western forces erupted at the airport yesterday when Afghan guards exchanged fire with unidentified gunmen, Germany's military said, adding to the evacuation chaos as Washington faces pressure to extend its deadline to withdraw.

PHOTO: REUTERS

AFGHANISTAN POLITICAL CRISIS

ETHNIC DIVERSITY AT THE CENTRE OF CONFLICT

Afghanistan's ethnic diversity has been at the centre of politics and conflict in the country for more than a century, and these divides are expected to play a role in the Taliban's formation of a new government. No single ethnic group has a decisive majority among Afghanistan's 40 million people, and the fissures have been a perennial challenge to political stability. Here is a brief overview of the major ethnic groups in Afghanistan:

PASHTUNS

The Pashtuns are Afghanistan's biggest ethnic group, making up more than 42 percent of the population. The group -- which is predominantly Sunni Muslim and speaks the Pashto language -- has dominated Afghan politics since the 18th century. Many Pashtun leaders over the years have stressed a "right to rule" Afghanistan, which has angered other ethnic groups. The Taliban, in control of Afghanistan for a second time after their 1996-2001 regime, are a Pashtun-dominated group. Even the two presidents under the previous US-backed governments -- Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani -- were Pashtuns. Traditionally based in the south and east of the country, the dominant position of the Pashtuns has often caused resentment among other groups, especially because of political, economic and cultural marginalisation.

TAJIKS

The Tajiks are the second-biggest ethnic group, making up more than a quarter of the Afghan population. The main language among Tajiks is a dialect of Farsi called Dari, also the lingua franca of Afghanistan. The group is mainly distributed in the north and west of the country, with strongholds in the Panjshir Valley, the western city of Herat and some northern provinces. The Panjshir Valley is famed for resisting occupation not only by the Soviet military in the 1980s but also by the first Taliban regime. While not politically dominant, a number of prominent Tajik leaders have emerged in recent decades. The revered



mujahideen leader Ahmad Shah Massoud -- "The Lion of Panjshir" -- who fought the Red Army and the Taliban is at the top of that list among Afghans. Burhanuddin Rabbani, a Tajik from Badakhshan province in the north, served as Afghan president from 1992 to 1996 before Kabul fell to the Taliban.

HAZARA

The Hazara, believed to have origins in Central Asia and Turkic peoples, are around 10 percent of the population and are mainly based in central Afghanistan. They speak a Dari dialect and are predominantly Shia Muslim. The group faced violent oppression and discrimination in Afghanistan over both religion and ethnicity for more than a century. They have also suffered massacres across various Afghan governments in recent decades, but especially under the Taliban -- headline Sunni Muslims who have usually labelled Shias heretics.

UZBEKS

Afghan Uzbeks are also around 10 percent of the population, mainly based in the north of the country close to the border with Uzbekistan. A Turkic people, they are mainly Sunni Muslims. The most famous, and notorious, Afghan Uzbek is the warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, who fought with the Soviets against the mujahideen before changing sides and effectively setting up his own stronghold centred on the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. He was a leading figure in the Northern Alliance that helped end Taliban rule after the US invasion of 2001, and later joined the Ghani administration as a first vice-president. He fled to Uzbekistan when Mazar-i-Sharif fell to the Taliban this month.

SOURCE: AFP

Harris vows 'enduring engagement' in Asia

Reaffirms US commitment to keep South China Sea open

AFP, Singapore

Vice President Kamala Harris vowed "enduring engagement" in Asia yesterday, offering reassurances of Washington's commitment to the region following the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover.

The hardline Islamists' swift return to power a week ago, and desperate scenes of thousands trying to flee, have cast a shadow over the United States' status as a global superpower.

But on a visit to Singapore, her first stop on a trip that will also include Vietnam, Harris repeatedly insisted that Washington could be depended on.

"Our administration is committed to enduring engagement in Singapore, into Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific," Harris told a press conference alongside Singapore's leader.

"The reason I am here is because the United States is a global leader, and we take that role seriously."

But she dodged questions about whether US

credibility had been damaged by the Afghan debacle, saying only her government's focus was on "evacuating American citizens, Afghans who worked with us and vulnerable Afghans, including women and children".

Harris is also facing criticism for being tone-deaf in going ahead with a visit to Vietnam as US forces struggle to evacuate tens of thousands of people.

US officials insist the trip was planned long before the Afghan crisis and is focused on Washington's broader strategic goals in Asia.

Southeast Asia is seen as critically important at a time China is challenging US political sway and naval dominance in the region.

Washington has repeatedly criticised Beijing's expansive claims to almost the entire flashpoint South China Sea, which overlap with claims of several Southeast Asian states and Taiwan.

At yesterday's press conference, Harris reiterated US commitment to "uphold the rules-based international order and freedom of navigation, including in the South China Sea".



Medical supplies stuck at Kabul airport: WHO

REUTERS, Geneva

More than 500 tonnes of medical supplies including surgical equipment and severe malnutrition kits due to be delivered to Afghanistan this week are stuck because of Kabul airport restrictions, the World Health Organization said yesterday.

Aid agencies say it is critical that medical and food supplies reach some 300,000 people displaced in Afghanistan over the past two months amid advances by Islamist Taliban insurgents that culminated in their capture of Kabul on August 15.

Nearly 18.5 million people - half the population - rely on aid and the humanitarian needs are expected to grow due to drought. But the closure of Kabul airport to commercial flights has held up deliveries, WHO regional emergency director Dr. Richard Brennan told Reuters.

"While the eyes of the world now are on the people being evacuated and the planes leaving, we need to get supplies in to help those who are left behind," Brennan said in an emailed statement.

He said the WHO was calling for empty planes to divert to its warehouse in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to collect the supplies on their way to pick up evacuees from Afghanistan.

The United States has enlisted six commercial airlines to help move Afghan evacuees, however Washington and Nato coalition partners have so far indicated that they cannot bring supplies on incoming evacuation planes due to "operational constraints and security concerns", Brennan said.

"The US is using these commercial airlines only for evacuation," he said, adding that the WHO was exploring various options and reaching out to other governments.

'There is no time to waste'

Aid groups warn water crisis, drought threaten 12m people in Syria, Iraq

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

More than 12 million people in Syria and Iraq are losing access to water, food and electricity, 13 aid groups warned in a report as they called for urgent action to combat the severe water crisis.

Rising temperatures, record low levels of rainfall, and drought are depriving people across the region of drinking and agricultural water, said the report, published yesterday. Syria is currently facing its worst drought in 70 years.

Compiled by a group of international organisations, including the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Danish Refugee Council, CARE, Action Against Hunger, and Mercy Corps, among others, the report warned higher temperatures caused by climate change increased the risks and severity of droughts in the region.

The changes in the climate also disrupted electricity as dams ran out of water, which in turn impacted the operation of essential infrastructure including health facilities, they said.

"The total collapse of water and

food production for millions of Syrians and Iraqis is imminent," said Carsten Hansen, regional director for the Norwegian Refugee Council.

"With hundreds of thousands of Iraqis still displaced and many more still fleeing for their lives in Syria, the unfolding water crisis will soon



become an unprecedented catastrophe pushing more into displacement," he added.

CARE's regional director in the Middle East and North Africa, Nirvana Shawky, said the severity of the situation had been compounded by the coronavirus pandemic.

"The situation demands that authorities in the region and donor governments act swiftly to save lives

in this latest crisis that comes on top of conflict, Covid-19, and severe economic decline," said Shawky. "In the longer term, beyond emergency food and water, they need to invest in sustainable solutions to the water crisis."

Since autumn 2020, unseasonably low levels of rainfall across the eastern Mediterranean basin have contributed to drought conditions in Syria and Iraq, according to a UN report in June.

The water crisis was compounded by progressively decreasing water flows into the Euphrates River -- which runs through both countries from Turkey -- over months, falling from 500 cubic metres per second in January to 214 cubic metres per second in June 2020, said the UN.

According to the report, more than five million people in Syria who depend on river water were directly impacted by the burgeoning water crisis as hundreds of kilometres of agricultural land risked total drought.

At the same time, with two dams in northern Syria facing imminent closure, about three million people risked losing access to electricity.

Israeli attack on Gaza strip 'apparently broke law': HRW

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

Israeli air raids that demolished four high-rise buildings in the besieged Gaza Strip during its assault on the enclave in May apparently violated international laws of war, a leading international human rights group said yesterday, calling on the Israeli military to produce evidence justifying the attacks.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted although no one was harmed in the air raids, the attacks damaged neighbouring buildings, left dozens of people homeless, and destroyed scores of businesses.

"The apparently unlawful Israeli strikes on four high-rise towers in Gaza City caused serious, lasting harm for countless Palestinians who lived, worked, shopped or benefited from businesses based there," said Richard Weir, crisis and conflict researcher for the New York-based group.

"The Israeli military should publicly produce the evidence that it says it relies on to carry out these attacks."

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to the report. But at the time it accused Hamas -- the group that governs the enclave -- of using the buildings for military

purposes and turning their occupants into human shields. However, it provided no evidence to back up its claims.

It was HRW's third report on the 11-day Israeli offensive, which was marked by its intensity and the targeting of civilian structures.

It previously accused Israel of apparent war crimes for attacks it said had no clear military targets but killed dozens of civilians. Examining the actions of Palestinian groups out of the Gaza Strip, it also said that they fired rockets indiscriminately at Israeli cities, constituting a war crime.

Both sides denied the accusations. The conflict erupted on May 10 after Hamas fired a barrage of rockets towards Israel in support of Palestinian protests against Israel's heavy-handed policing of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the threatened eviction of dozens of Palestinian families by illegal Jewish settlers in the nearby neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah.

The rockets were launched just minutes after the passing of a Hamas-issued ultimatum for Israel to withdraw its forces from the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound as well as Sheikh Jarrah.

DEVASTATING FLOODS

22 dead in US state of Tennessee


AFP, Washington

Devastating floods after record rainfall in the southern US state of Tennessee have left at least 22 people dead and at least 20 more missing, local officials said Sunday in what they warned was a preliminary toll.

Tennessee was hit Saturday by what meteorologists called historic storms and flooding, dumping as much as 17 inches of rain.

Rural roads, state highways, bridges and hundreds of homes were washed out and widespread power outages affected thousands of people.

In Humphreys County, the downpour broke a 24-hour rainfall record for Tennessee, the National Weather Service said.



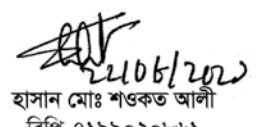
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন) এর কার্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, চট্টগ্রাম

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি-০৩/২০২১-২০২২

নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে "পিপিএ-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮" এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট অন্যান্য আইন অনুযায়ী চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ রেশন স্টোর ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছরে ২য় কোয়ার্টারের জন্য (০১ অক্টোবর/২০২১ খ্রিঃ হতে ৩১শে ডিসেম্বর/২০২১ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত সময়ের) (ক) দেশীয় ছোট দানার উন্নতমানের ১,২০,০০০ (এক লক্ষ বিশ হাজার) কেজি "মস্তর ডাল" ক্রয় এবং (খ) উৎকৃষ্ট মানের প্লাস্টিক কন্টেইনার পত্রের মাধ্যমে ১,১৫,০০০ (এক লক্ষ পনের হাজার) লিটার উন্নত ব্রান্ডের "সয়াবিন তৈল" ক্রয়ের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন সরবরাহকারী/ফার্ম/দরদাতাদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে-

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।		
২.	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।		
৩.	মালামাল ক্রয়কারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	পুলিশ কমিশনার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।		
৪.	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহবান	(ক) উন্নতমানের দেশী ছোট দানার মস্তর ডাল ক্রয় ও (খ) উৎকৃষ্ট মানের প্লাস্টিক কন্টেইনার পত্রের মাধ্যমে সয়াবিন তৈল ক্রয় সংক্রান্তে।		
৫.	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।		
৬.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	১৫/০৯/২০২১ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ১৭.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।		
৭.	দরপত্র গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৬/০৯/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, সময়-দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।		
৮.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৬/০৯/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, সময়-দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।		
৯.	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	২০/০৯/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, সময়-দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা।		
১০.	বাজেট ও অর্ধের উৎস	জিওবি (রাজস্ব)।		
১১.	দরপত্র প্যাকেজ নং	০৩/২০২১-২০২২		
১২.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম ও ঠিকানা	হাসান মোঃ শওকত আলী, উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।		
১৩.	দরপত্র খোলার দপ্তর	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম-এর দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ অফিস কক্ষ।		
১৪.	মালামাল সংগ্রহ অথবা কাজের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ	দরপত্র তফসিল মোতাবেক।		
১৫.	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	দরপত্রের সাথে হালনাগাদ/২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছরের নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজপঞ্জরাদির সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে- ক) ব্যবসায়িক ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, খ) আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র, গ) ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশনসহ পরিশোধের হালনাগাদ সনদপত্র, ঘ) ব্যাংক কর্তৃক আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতার প্রত্যয়নপত্রসহ দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্ববর্তী ০৬ (ছয়) মাসের ব্যাংকের সহিত লেনদেনের স্টেটমেন্ট, ঙ) জাতীয় আইডি নাথারের সনদ/জাতীয়তার সনদপত্র, চ) মস্তর ডালের ক্ষেত্রে এগ্রিকালচারাল লাইসেন্স, ছ) ছবিসহ ফার্মের মালিকানাধীন হালফনামার কপি এবং প্রতিনির্দিষ্ট ক্ষেত্রে ছবিসহ প্রতিকারপত্র।		
১৬.	সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	(ক) সিএমপি রেশন স্টোর, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্, চট্টগ্রাম। (খ) পুলিশ সুপার, চট্টগ্রাম এর কার্যালয়, যোগেশ্বর, চট্টগ্রাম। (গ) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, কোটবিল্ডিং, চট্টগ্রাম।		
১৭.	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	(ক) উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম-এর দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ কার্যালয়। (খ) পুলিশ সুপার, চট্টগ্রাম এর কার্যালয়, যোগেশ্বর, চট্টগ্রাম।		
১৮.	দরপত্র গ্রহণ/মূল্যায়ন	পিপিএ-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট আইন অনুযায়ী।		
১৯.	কাজের বিবরণ			
লট নং	দরপত্রের বিষয়	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফারতযোগ্য)	দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্র জমানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	কাজের সময়সীমা
০১	উন্নতমানের ছোট দানার "মস্তর ডাল"	১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র	৪,০০,০০০/- (চার লক্ষ) টাকা	০১/১০/২০২১ খ্রিঃ হতে ৩১/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (০৩ মাস)
০২	উৎকৃষ্টমানের সয়াবিন তৈল (ব্রান্ডের)	১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র	৫,০০,০০০/- (পাঁচ লক্ষ) টাকা	০১/১০/২০২১ খ্রিঃ হতে ৩১/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (০৩ মাস)

বিদ্রূপ- দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, কোন কারণে দরপত্র উন্মুক্তকরণের দিন অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী অফিস খোলার দিন যথাসময়ে টেন্ডার উন্মুক্ত করা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ প্রয়োজনে চাহিদার পরিমাণ হ্রাস-বৃদ্ধি করতে পারবেন।


হাসান মোঃ শওকত আলী
 বিপি-৭১৯৯০২০৮৬১
 উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন)
 পক্ষে পুলিশ কমিশনার
 চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ
 চট্টগ্রাম

GD-1506

LAW OPINION

Business through Internet: A Quest for Legal Framework

DR. SAYEEDA ANJU

In absence of proper and up-to-date legal framework in place, administrative regulations seem to be governing the digital commerce operations in Bangladesh. Most of the transactions-related rules now in force in the country are derived either from Bangladesh Bank Guidelines or Guidelines of the Ministry of Commerce. On 4 July 2021 the Ministry of Commerce issued the 'The Digital Commerce Operations Guidelines, 2021' (hereinafter referred to as Guidelines, 2021). One of the aims of the Guidelines, 2021 is to ensure transparency and accountability of the mushrooming e-commerce operators. Chapter 3 of the Guidelines, 2021 provides that all the existing concerned laws of the country will apply to the digital commerce operations. As such, it seems that the government has no plans to enact a separate statute any time soon to regulate digital commerce operations. But the existing laws that govern commercial operations in Bangladesh are not sufficient to meet the demand of the current situation.

The Guidelines, 2021 render the responsibility to the marketplace authority to take proper steps against allegation brought by a consumer regarding goods or

contract or for commission of fraudulent act online, the prosecution will have difficulty in proving the ingredients of the offence. This is because provisions of online transactions are yet to be incorporated in the relevant sections of the concerned laws.

Furthermore, Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012 may be used to curb the swindle of money against transactions made via payment gateways platforms. However, the law is not designed in such a way so that it can be applied against defaulters of e-transaction processes. Section 23 of the Digital Security Act, 2018 allows fake ID related offences to be tried in Cyber Tribunals. The government has raised the number of Cyber Tribunals from 1 to 8 this year to try cyber offences at division level. But the fact is that criminal justice system in Bangladesh is a time-consuming, lengthy and tiresome process which often frustrates the victims of online frauds. This coupled with the difficulty of proving online frauds before court eventually demoralises a victim to file a case against the offender or persuade him to opt in for alternative measures e.g. out-of-court settlement with the offender or defaulter, wherever possible. Therefore, it is vital to find out ways for speedy disposal of disputes arising out of digital commerce

As such, it seems that the government has no plans to enact a separate statute any time soon to regulate digital commerce operations. But the existing laws that govern commercial operations in Bangladesh are not sufficient to meet the demand of the current situation.

Bank approved escrow service may be used. The Guidelines, 2021 made provisions for refund of advance payment made by a consumer in e-commerce in cases of non-delivery of goods or services. However, it is pertinent to mention here that paperless payment system has been in operation in Bangladesh under the Bangladesh Bank approvals. The existing legal framework authorises Bangladesh Bank to issue rules, procedures, guidelines, operating directives or specific permissions to introduce online payment systems. Bangladesh Automated Clearing House (BACH) includes Bangladesh Automated Cheque Processing System (BACPS), and Bangladesh Electronic Fund Transfer Network (BEFTN). These modern payment systems have brought significant change in the interbank fund transfer mechanisms of the country. But it is noticeable that these significant and major changes brought about in the payment systems are made only through issuance of directives and guidelines by the Bangladesh Bank. No statutory law consolidating all the rules, regulations and directives regarding payment systems has so far been passed by the Parliament. Though the government once took an initiative to introduce the Payment System Act, 2015, the proposed bill is yet to see the light of the day.

To sum up, it transpires that administrative guidelines and central bank regulations are the only basis of control and management of digital commerce operations these days in Bangladesh. But scattered guidelines and regulations cannot be an alternative to establishment of a well-planned and comprehensive legal framework by the Parliament to regulate and monitor digital commerce operations in the country. It cannot be gainsaid that we will certainly see further acceleration of digital commerce in the days ahead. The urgency of enactment of a statutory law consolidating all the rules, regulations and directives regarding control and management of digital business operations and online payment systems can hardly be ignored these days.

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RIGHTS WATCH

Hindu women's right to inheritance



APURBA MOGUMDER

Dayabhaga and Mitakshara are two schools of Hindu inheritance law. Hindus in India's West Bengal, Assam, and Bangladesh mainly follow the Dayabhaga school. Non-Bengali society, on the other hand, i.e., Mumbai, Madras, Punjab, Benares, Maharashtra, and other locations, follow the Mitakshara doctrine. These two schools were established in response to Hindu scriptures and Samhitas that chronicle the practices that Hindus must follow in their personal lives. In imitation of the Hindu inheritance distribution system, daughters are not usually given a share in the father's property while the sons are still alive. Although it is not explicitly mentioned in the commentary, this practice has been going on for ages. As a result of this social norm, women are usually deprived of their father's wealth.

However, following the landmark case of *Danamma vs. Amar* in 2018, India has amended its Hindu Inheritance Act, 1956. The Supreme Court of India ruled in this case that under the reformed Hindu Succession Act, 2005, a daughter has equal property rights with their male counterparts. Again, the Supreme Court of India reiterated their verdict, stating that a woman can now claim an equivalent portion in the family property as a coparcener under Section 6 of the Hindu Inheritance Act, which was reinstated in 2005 to give women equal inheritance rights.

According to Articles 27 and 28 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, all citizens are equal in the eyes of the law. Even though the Indian Hindu inheritance Act of 1956 was modified in 2005 and 2007 to realise women's rights, the Hindu inheritance law in Bangladesh remains unchanged.

Also, Hindus in our country are usually provided with legal recourse under British Law. One of the reasons for this is that Hindu Dayabhaga law is not well-represented in our country, and most Hindus are unaware of the Dayabhaga law of Hindu schools, which has less practical implications. Even though Bangladesh has a Hindu Inheritance Act of 1929, it only applies to Mitakshara practitioners, where most people in Bangladesh follow the Dayabhaga school of Law. So, it is regrettable for the policymakers of Bangladesh that they have not yet been able to ensure law which is applicable for the larger Hindu population.

The Law Commission has recommended amendments to the Hindu Inheritance Act in order to provide Hindu women in Bangladesh equal rights to their father's property. In 2012, it proposed a new law to revamp the Hindu Inheritance Act which

included nine provisions emphasising equal property rights for women. However, the government was unable to take any further action due to the resistance of some Hindu scholars. The national alliance Hindu Ain Pronoyoney Nagorik Udyog has proposed the Hindu Inheritance Act 2020 containing 17 sections.

Some arguments against reform include the perception that the social system of Bangladesh is not conducive to Hindu law reform because Bangladesh is a predominantly Muslim country. On top of that, scholars argue because neighboring India and Nepal are Hindu-majority countries, Hindu law in these countries has been changed long ago to meet the needs of the time. Moreover, the democratic systems of India and Bangladesh are not analogous, and law reform will exacerbate the complexity of Hindu property distribution. Scholars also contend that if such legislation is enacted, no one will agree to marry a girl who does not own property, and dowry will become more common. Besides this, as is frequently seen in numerous family court cases, such property allotment will increase the level of violence against women.

In general, Hindu women receive *Stridhana* as a gift from their father during their marriage. Since Hindu marriages do not require registration, when a woman divorces, she is usually unable to file a claim for maintenance and other benefits. As per the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1937, women did not inherit any property. The 1943 Act later amended it, and after 83 long years, in 2020, the High Court Division ruled in the case of *Jyotindranath Mandal vs. Gouri Dasi* that Hindu women would get an allotment in their husband's property. Reviewing the history of Hinduism, it is seen that during the Vedic period, women were in a very respectable and high position, but their rights began to erode over time. Later, after the Vedic period, there were many changes in various treatise where women's property rights were utterly abolished. Indisputably, this is not acceptable in today's socio-economic context because women are now leading worldwide. Women's inheritance includes more than simply a property and economic rights. Women's positions in the family, society, and state are strengthened by legacy. In conclusion, there is no alternative to give equal rights to women to build a modern social system. In this context, Hindu scholars and policymakers must come forward to reform the Hindu law so that equal rights for women are established in society.

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services. It states that each digital commerce establishment shall appoint a compliance officer whose duty will be to communicate and coordinate with the Directorate of Consumer Rights Protection and other concerned organisations. But without bringing about necessary amendment in this connection to the Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009 this provision will be ineffective. The Guidelines 2021 manifest that consumer can also lodge complaints in concerned regular courts.

Cases of fraud, misrepresentation etc. may be remedied with recourse to the punitive laws like – the Penal Code, 1860, the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012, the Digital Security Act, 2018 etc. But existing provisions enunciated in these laws may not suffice to deal with offences relating to e-commerce operations. For example, if an e-commerce operator is charged with cheating under the Penal Code, 1860 for breach of online

operations. Moreover, in addition to ensuring punishment of the offenders, the government should put more emphasis on the redressal of victims of online fraud through adequate compensation.

The Guidelines, 2021 do not contain any express provision for the protection of the rights of the sellers. However, they can seek remedy under the provision of Contract Act, 1872 or through the Sale of Goods Act, 1930 - neither law has been updated in a long time. Therefore, for expeditious disposal of commercial disputes raised both by buyer and seller, the government may mull over enacting separate legislation and establishment of separate specialised courts in the country.

The Guidelines, 2021 acknowledge advance payment and refund of advance money through debit card, credit card, bank transfer, mobile banking etc. It provides that for digital commerce transactions Bangladesh

REVIEWING THE VIEWS

Citizenship of the Rohingya in Myanmar: A historical account

MID KHALID RAHMAN

While the international stakeholders and the Government of Bangladesh have tried for their safe and dignified voluntary return of the Rohingya refugees as per the agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar, the citizenship issue became one of the crucial contesting conditions. Unfortunately, no government of Myanmar, after the mischievous power-grabbing of the then Burma by the military government led by General Ne Win has responded positively to the citizenship issue of the Rohingya. The present article argues that the citizenship crisis is rooted in the British colonial era that consequently gained momentum through the political demarcation and marginalisation of different ethnicity including Rohingya.

It is believed that, during post-colonial periods, the Rohingya Muslims and the Rakhine/Arakan Buddhists lived harmoniously. After the colonisation by the British and the First Anglo-Burmese War in 1825, there was a paradigm shift in the politics and thus change the notion of the people of these two groups which silently created division and distance. This situation further extended during the Second World War, when the Rohingya declared their loyalty to the British while the Arakanese/Rakhine sided with the Japanese. In response, the Rohingya population was targeted jointly by both the Rakhine

Buddhists and the Burma Independence Army, killing 100,000 Rohingya and exiling a further 50,000 towards the border to the then East Bengal. The situation worsened in 1947 when some Rohingya had been negotiating with West Pakistan about incorporating Maungdaw and Buthidaung of the northern Arakan region into East Pakistan which subsequently failed due to strong objections from Aung San and Nehru.

The structure of the 1948 Burmese Constitution stands on the foundation of federal polity based on the Panglong Agreement signed by General Aung San, the chief architect of Burma's independence, on behalf of the majority Burmese with Shan, Kachin, and Chin ethnic nationalities who considered Burma as their home. However, the unfortunate assassination of Aung San settled the Burmese Constitution in favor of the Buddhist beliefs repudiating the tolerant integration of different ethnicity including Rohingya Muslims as it became deeply associated with "Burmese-ness".

After the independence of Burma from the British in 1948, the 'Constitution of the Union of Burma and the Union Citizenship Act' together deemed as legal document encompasses guidelines for Rohingya towards Burmese citizenship. Harmonious reading of these two documents contended the constitution's intention of making citizenship inclusive rather than limiting access to citizenship rights for both



Buddhists and Muslims. U Nu, the longest-serving civilian Prime minister of Burma, declared Rohingya as one of the ethnic races and acknowledged nationality of Rohingya with Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Burma's first president, Sao Shwe Thaik, and independent Burma's second prime minister, U Ba Swe, reiterated similar attitudes about the Rohingya's equal status of nationality.

Unfortunately, after the *coup d'état* in 1962, all the process of implementing citizenship rights of Rohingya have been deferred, even the government rejected official documents that had recognised Rohingya citizenship – effectively making them stateless. The five decades that

followed saw the military in continual conflict with the country's ethnic minorities and these ongoing domestic conflicts have been labeled the world's longest-running civil war. In Ne Win's regime, the citizenship standing of the military government was practiced differently, especially by denying citizenship rights, forced official exercise, and silent changes in the contemporary domestic understandings about *Taingyintha* or "sons of the soil" ideology of ethnicity.

In the 1974 Burmese Constitution, which has been adopted based on a socialist manifesto by the military-led government, the ethnic groups had lost their special recognition. In 1978 the first military

campaign, codenamed "Dragon King", was carried out forcing about 200,000 Rohingya to cross the border into Bangladesh refuting Rohingya as a citizen of Burma. However, the government of Myanmar took back the Rohingya under pressure from UNHCR and Muslim countries in 1979.

With the enactment of the Citizenship Law in 1982, the Rohingya were denied all forms of citizenship i.e., full, associate, and naturalised though they had strong proof of their existence in Burma before 1823.

From 1978 to 2017, there were several expulsions of Rohingya in different consecutive years. There was a nationwide campaign in April 2013 carried out by Buddhist monks that demanded anti-Muslim legislation. However, the 2008 constitution was very delicate in denying the Rohingya citizenship by drastically narrowing down the grounds of acquiring citizenship by the Rohingya. Moreover, the Thein Sein government repetitively address Rohingya as "illegal migrants of Bangladesh" and Suu Kyi-led government stands on the same footing make the situation worse. Therefore, all these systematic incidents in these years could be narrowed down to one arguable conclusion - structuring the denial mechanism of Rohingya citizenship by making the Rohingya stateless in their own country.

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Let's take the fight to Aedes

After 19 hotspots identified in Dhaka, authorities must ramp up dengue response

IT is heartening to know that the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has recently identified 19 Aedes hotspots in Dhaka—areas that are extremely vulnerable to dengue due to the widespread presence of Aedes mosquito, the carrier of the virus. Of them, 10 are in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and nine in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC). The survey, conducted from July 29 to August 7 in 100 areas of 98 wards of the two city corporations, is the first known quantitative risk assessment of this year's dengue season in the capital, where most of the dengue cases have been reported. If followed with quick and coordinated interventions, it will be quite helpful in containing the spread of the virus. It can help narrow down the focus in our fight against an "enemy" which, until recently, was largely ignored because of its significantly more infectious and dangerous counterpart—the coronavirus.

According to the survey, Basabo and Goran are at the top of the list of risky areas in DSCC with 73.3 points on the Breteau Index, whereas in DNCC, Moghbazar and New Eskaton are the riskiest areas with 56.7 points. The Breteau Index reflects the number of containers with Aedes larvae per 100 houses inspected. As well as the 19 hotspots, there are 26 other areas in DNCC and 30 in DSCC that got 20 points, meaning those are at risk as well. There are more insights to be drawn from this survey: in the areas identified as risky, the highest 18.5 percent of Aedes larvae was found on flooded floors, 12.1 percent in plastic drums, 9.4 percent in plastic buckets, 7.5 percent in flower tubs, 6.9 percent in discarded tyres and 3.2 percent in pots.

While there can be still places having escaped the radar of the DGHS team—who visited about 3,000 houses as part of the survey—what we have now should give the authorities of two city corporations ample ammunition to take the fight to dengue, rather than groping in the dark for a solution, passing the buck for failure on to each other, or the public in general, or randomly spraying larvicides/insecticides without a plan or target.

The latest revelations come at a time when the dengue situation shows no signs of abetting. At least 291 dengue patients were hospitalised in 24 hours till Sunday morning. Of them, only 32 are from outside Dhaka. This takes the total number of infected since January 2021 to at least 8,041 people, of whom 5,383 got infected in the last 22 days. Twelve people died last month and 24 in the previous 22 days. The rising trend is a serious cause for concern, coming as it does against a backdrop of still-very-high coronavirus infections, overwhelming the entire healthcare system. We can't handle another major crisis lurking in our backyard. The authorities must ramp up their efforts to tackle the dengue crisis by undertaking an inclusive, well-coordinated response plan, not just in Dhaka but across the country.

Remove all confusion regarding flights to India

Focus on getting them started

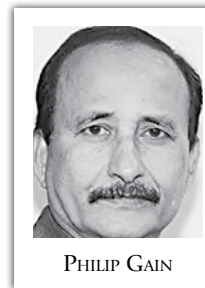
STATEMENTS made by the foreign minister and Biman on August 17 and 22, respectively, have led to another bout of confusion for air passengers wishing to travel to India from Bangladesh and vice versa. On August 17, the foreign minister said that flight operations to India will resume from August 20, but later he said his statement was not definitive, and what he meant to say was that flights between the two countries might resume at that time. However, following his earlier statement, Biman issued a press release saying that flights to Delhi and Kolkata will resume on August 22.

Despite these statements and the issuance of the press release, air travel between the two countries are still to start and, according to a report published by this newspaper on Monday, the Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (CAAB) is yet to receive a response from India about resuming flights after they, on August 4, sent a letter to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of India, seeking its approval for flight resumption under the air bubble agreement. This means that all the previous statements were issued without the approval of the CAAB. After Biman's announcement, many passengers bought their tickets to India and those currently in India bought their tickets to return home. And these passengers are now stuck in limbo.

It is extremely unprofessional of Biman to have issued such a press release without verifying through official channels whether flights between India and Bangladesh were to resume and when. Just because the foreign minister issued a public statement does not give Biman a legitimate excuse for not following up with the CAAB for approval before going ahead and announcing its flight schedule to the public. This is the second time within a span of two weeks that Biman has placed its passengers in a difficult position. Earlier on August 10, a row between Biman and its online ticket sales partner led to all Biman ticket sales online being suspended. That led to untold sufferings for the public, who had to physically go and collect their tickets, risking themselves unnecessarily during a time of pandemic.

We expect much better from our national flag carrier. Such mismanagement on the part of Biman officials is nothing but humiliating. Biman should immediately offer an apology to all its passengers and, more importantly, try to help them sort out the inconvenience that it has caused. In the meantime, what is also essential for the authorities to do is to remove all confusion regarding the matter and focus on taking the necessary steps to resume flights.

Tea workers routinely ignored during the Covid-19 pandemic



PHILIP GAIN

PABAN Paul, 38, a tea worker of Rampur Tea Garden in Bahubal upazila (Habiganj district), died of Covid-19 on July 6. Rampur Tea Garden is a *furi* (division) of Rashidpur Tea Estate, owned by Finlay Tea Co. Ltd. Paban had fever from June 27. On July 1, he started having difficulties in breathing. The following day, he developed severe breathing problems and was taken to Bahubal Upazila Health Complex. According to Paban's family, the upazila health complex could not treat him. It referred him to Habiganj district hospital. However, the Sheikh Hasina Medical College in Habiganj also failed to treat him. He was then admitted to MAG Osmani Medical College in Sylhet the same day (July 2). He got a bed in the general ward. On July 3, he was moved to ICU.

Paban was treated at ICU up to July 6—his condition turned critical and he died at 3:22 pm. His Covid-19 test sample was collected as soon as he was admitted to Osmani. At 4:30 pm on the day he died, it was confirmed that he was Covid positive. A healthy man without any known underlying conditions, Paban Paul is known to be the first reported casualty of Covid-19 in the tea gardens in Habiganj district.

After Paban's death, his family members got tested for Covid-19 too, but none of them were positive. According to Ajoy Singh (24), a nephew of Paban's who accompanied him to hospitals, he checked with the tea garden dispensary regarding Covid-19 tests, but he was told that he should make his own arrangements. The only immediate step taken by the garden management was to offer firewood for Paban's cremation and the funeral meal on August 5 for the family and a few others. The next thing the management is likely to do is recruit Paban's wife, mostly likely as a tea leaf picker in his place. And period! The company has done its duty to Paban's family.

Is it really so simple?

Nripen Paul, joint general secretary of Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union (BCSU), the only trade union for around 100,000 registered workers in Sylhet and Chattogram divisions, believes tea gardens must do more. According to the Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015, the owner of tea gardens must provide "indoor" and "outdoor" treatment to its workers

and their family members. Purabi Paul, wife of Paban, reports the family spent Tk 85,000 (including a bribe of Tk 30,000 to secure a ICU bed) for his treatment. Will the owner refund, in full or part, the cost of his treatment? "We do not know how to approach the owner for this," says Purabi, who is now the only breadwinner of the four-member family.

Their ordeal demonstrates just how helpless tea workers are when infected with Covid-19. Most tea workers will testify that the management in any tea garden is least interested in carrying out Covid-19 tests of their workers. Why? According to different sources, owners fear that if tests are carried out, many cases

and upazila health complexes."

Covid-19 tests in government facilities may not sound expensive. At a district or upazila health complex booth, it costs Tk 100. But for a tea worker whose daily cash pay is Tk 120, this is expensive. Also, getting these tests requires travel costs and at least a day off work. Then, if one tests positive, the resulting treatment cost can be far too high for a tea worker to bear.

As a result, those in the tea gardens testing on their own and testing positive are having a very hard time. Hari Das (60) of Rajnagar Tea Estate in Rajnagar upazila (Moulvibazar district) is one such worker, who was a registered worker for 10 years and a casual worker for five years

implemented by the government to control the spread of the coronavirus, the tea gardens have continued operations throughout, including during the current wave of Covid-19 and the most recent lockdown. With a week off for Eid, a strict lockdown began on July 23, when all industries, including garments factories, remained closed. However, the tea gardens were the only exception. The Bangladesh Tea Board in a circular classified tea as "foodstuff", and its production and sale was exempted from the lockdown.

During this period, many started to believe that the tea gardens are a safe haven from the coronavirus. They have been proven wrong. There are allegations that tea workers have been wilfully exposed to Covid-19, given that tea gardens remained fully operational even though safety equipment for tea workers are miserably short in supply and Covid-19 tests for workers and their families are just inadequate. On the one hand, the owners are reluctant about providing tests, and on the other, the workers have a tendency to hide illness unless the symptoms become too explicit due to a fear of losing their daily wages.

We are yet to get a clear picture of the pandemic in the tea gardens, which remain largely isolated. The fear is that the Delta variant has spread into the communities in labour lines. The tea gardens in Assam, close to Sylhet, became a hotbed for Covid-19 related deaths during the second wave of the virus. According to a report in *Northeast Today*, 105 deaths were reported between April 1 and June 28, 2021 from the tea estates. In the first wave of Covid-19 last year, deaths in the tea gardens of both Assam and Bangladesh were few. However, in the current wave, Covid-19 deaths have dramatically increased.

Against this backdrop, the tea workers and their communities require urgent attention from the state and owners of tea gardens. Massive awareness campaigns, garden level tests for coronavirus, distribution of mask and sanitiser in adequate quantities and proper physical distancing at all stages of tea leaf picking, depositing and processing are some urgent needs in the tea gardens. Tea workers have brought huge profit and comfort to their owners, which includes state agencies that own 17 tea gardens. Now, at this time of crisis, they should treat the tea workers as a priority group for tests and vaccination.

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Tea workers at a collection point during the pandemic.

PHOTO: PHILIP GAIN

of the coronavirus will be detected, and Covid positive workers will have to be sent into quarantine for at least 14 days with pay. They recognise the risks of Covid-19 in the tea gardens, but are unwilling to bear the associated financial costs.

According to Rambhajan Kairi, an executive adviser of BCSU, the management has, on the other hand, shown interest in vaccination, and in helping workers and their families to register for it. However, on the issue of testing for Covid-19 in the tea gardens, the civil surgeon of Sylhet district, Dr Chowdhury Jalal Uddin Murshed, said, "I wanted to initiate testing booths in the tea gardens, but the expert committee in Dhaka advised me not to do so, because there is a risk that Covid-19 will spread when collecting samples. Like others, the tea workers have to come to sample collection booths at district sadar hospital

at the manager's bungalow. His family took him to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital with breathing problems, and he tested positive on July 7. However, because he is no longer a registered worker, he had to face even greater struggles, since he lost his wages for every day he was absent from work.

His family, already in hardship, reportedly spent Tk 13,000 for his treatment, including on oxygen, which he needed for one night. His son Babul Das (22) shared how difficult it was for the family to meet treatment costs, adding "the management has not contributed anything for my father's treatment." The owners very often do not provide medical expenses even to registered workers—an allegation that is widespread in the tea gardens.

Regardless of the many general holidays and lockdowns that have been

We must urgently prioritise adaptation to address the climate emergency

MIZAN R KHAN and SALEEMUL HUQ

THE recently-published report of Working Group-I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a renewed wakeup call on the urgency of taking action at the global level to address climate change. It has, with more accuracy and confidence, confirmed that at least one degree Celsius of temperature rise compared to pre-industrial level can be attributed to human activities. The recent climate events in North America, Europe and Asia, such as heat stress, wildfires and floods, are ample evidence of runaway climate change.

Against this, what is urgently needed is exponentially enhanced adaptation actions, particularly in the most vulnerable low-income countries. Obviously, COP26 to be held in Glasgow in just three months is expected to negotiate an ambitious programme on adaptation. The July ministerial meeting held in London reached an understanding on putting adaptation on a higher political plane while moving forward. It may be mentioned that for the last few years, framing of adaptation has been expanded by multidisciplinary thinking from the national to global levels, requiring global cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement. Accordingly, this norm of globalising responsibility for adaptation is recognised in the Paris Agreement, as a "global goal" and a "global challenge" (Articles 7.1 and 7.2).

Although six years have passed since the adoption of the Agreement, not much progress has been made in operationalising the Global Center on Adaptation (GGA), nor is there any concrete roadmap to address this challenge. So, COP26 is expected to establish a clear process of defining the GGA going forward. Some agencies, including the Green Climate Fund, adopted the potential of transformational adaptation as a criteria for approving projects/programmes for funding. The challenge is how to achieve the transformational adaptation under the existing global socioeconomic order.

Transformational adaptation is often contrasted with incremental adaptation, as a continuum, beginning with reactive, coping strategies. The former calls for a system-wide change, a restructuring

of human and ecological systems as an integrated whole, with a focus on sustainability of natural resources and man-made artefacts. This grounds human actions in spaces/places in the natural world and questions the effectiveness of existing systems, social injustices and power imbalances. But incremental adaptation happens within the existing socioeconomic structure, which works with the dominant actors without conflicts with prevailing interests and values. The proponents of this model argue for a slow process to effect change while working within the system, as the national or global dynamics do not support a radical change in the system, which is founded on the neoliberal paradigm that values market justice more than procedural and distributive justice.

Therefore, it can be argued that as a pragmatic approach, incremental

We may recall that the now-defunct Global Commission on Adaptation had suggested embracing the LLA track for all the right reasons.

adaptation can be a vehicle for transformational adaptation (despite being a slow process), but only if it proceeds as part of a well-planned, long term strategy under current and future climate change. However, the process must be dynamic, without being locked into the inertia against change. For this to happen, there must be a few fundamental elements.

The first is locally-led adaptation (LLA). We may recall that the now-defunct Global Commission on Adaptation had suggested embracing the LLA track for all the right reasons. A rich body of evidence already establishes the efficacy of LLA beyond contestation, as adaptation is inherently local or regional, because climate impacts differ spatially, across regions and across socioeconomic groups in any country. So, adaptation actions

must remain bottom-up, with national governments providing for a facilitative policy-institutional framework.

In fact, LLA can be regarded as a shift in adaptation paradigm, meaning a shift in fundamental approaches and assumptions in existing practices. If we really mean it as a paradigm shift, we must ask upfront the questions of Who, What, How, etc. in adaptation policy domain. It may be mentioned that adaptation is viewed often from a "technocratic" perspective, for investment decisions, to build climate-proof resilient infrastructure. But this view does not address power and political dynamics, which is needed for a holistic perspective of adaptation that addresses the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as poverty, marginalisation, structural inequalities, economic, political and social disempowerment, etc. This latter lens is about transformational adaptation. However, available literature shows that even now, overwhelming practices in adaptation are driven not by local actors, but by those living far away from the locales or places increasingly pounded by extreme climate events as part of the new normal. Without a fundamental shift from hitherto centralised approaches to LLA, even incremental adaptation cannot be achieved sustainably.

In this effort, adequate funding for gradual implementation of LLA can make a difference. However, only three percent of the least developed countries' (LDCs) adaptation finance needs are now met with global support. Therefore, the following need to be agreed upon at COP26: First, scaling-up of adaptation funding to 50 percent of climate finance from the current level of only 20 percent globally. This had been pledged more than a decade ago by the developed countries and global funding agencies. Second, as pledged by the LDC Vision 2050, at least 70 percent of climate finance needs to be delivered to local communities, as opposed to the less than 10 percent that is currently reaching them. Third, COP26 must agree on a programme to improve access to adaptation finance, particularly for low-income nations, which includes reducing procedural complexities. Fourth, poor communities must get adaptation funding only on a grant basis, against the increasing trend of loan provision. Fifth, COP26 must agree that the five

percent share of funds generated from market mechanism activities under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement is channeled to the Adaptation Fund. Finally, the expedited direct access modalities (EDA) initiated earlier by the Adaptation Fund and now the Green Climate Fund must scale devolution of funding to sub-national and local community levels so that programmes can be designed and implemented directly by local actors, with resources under their direct control. This internationally-supported funding must be complemented by national and local resources.

The successful implementation of LLA requires a change in capacity building at all levels, focusing particularly on local actors including elected local representatives, local government officials, local entrepreneurs and community leaders. There should also be a focus on building local youth and women leadership. We may recall that earlier, supply-driven, short-term project-based, foreign consultancy-led capacity building under donor-supported Technical Assistance programmes did not work well. So, we must shift towards a demand-driven mode in capacity building. What we really need is a transformative capacity building model for transformational adaptation. This is the collective local agency to initiate social and economic transformation that gradually moves away from unsustainable and disempowering trajectories, towards a new social-ecological trajectory that grounds adaptation actions within the assimilative and regenerative capacities of both man-made and natural capital.

Finally, as experience in adaptation interventions is relatively new, a learning-by-doing approach has to be taken. This is where action research is extremely important, which integrates local/indigenous and scientific knowledge and methods. In this process, big data will not do, as national and global aggregate data mask spatial, socioeconomic and gender differentiation. The use of sub-national and local level data for measuring the process of monitoring, evaluation and learning would be the most appropriate when it comes to locally-led adaptation.

Mizan R Khan is Deputy Director and Saleemul Huq is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at Independent University, Bangladesh, (IUB).

School closures have wreaked havoc on children. We must bounce back.



C OVID-19 is wreaking havoc in Bangladesh, like in the rest of the world, for the last 18 months. There was always a concern that the pandemic would disproportionately affect poorer countries. That is how it is in times of crisis: the

fragility of public institutions becomes more evident, and their shortcomings are laid bare. Amidst the grim struggle between lives and livelihoods, one group in the country has practically fallen off the policy radar: schoolchildren. While public health and hunger are rightfully the most urgent concerns during a pandemic, the current state of education is causing irreversible harm to our country's human capital, damage that will take decades to bounce back from—a ticking bomb, in other words.

All educational institutions have been closed since March of last year. This means, in a few months, children will pass two full grades without having attended a day of school. Of course, school closures do not automatically mean a complete break in learning. Parents and students together have found ways to cope with the crisis, as one would expect. Common alternatives to school learning adopted by families have ranged from the somewhat effective private tutoring and distance learning tools, to the more dubious unsupervised self-studying and help from family members.

A number of problems leap out. First, despite said coping measures, the substantial reduction in time spent on learning activities and the attempt to study outside the learning environment provided by schools are unlikely to compensate for lost school time. Second, all the above mentioned methods mean additional cost burdens for families, be it out-of-pocket costs for distance learning and private tutoring, or the opportunity cost of time spent by parents in teaching. With

mouths to feed during a raging pandemic, poorer families will understandably prioritise earning activities over children's education.

The third issue is the most obvious, and one that we should have foreseen. The notion that alternatives like distance learning tools would miraculously replace mainstream schooling is a pipe dream. Even before the Covid-19 crisis, one in five children of school-going age were out of school. The quality of education the rest were receiving was discouraging. Over half of children aged seven to 14 years did not demonstrate foundational reading skills before the pandemic, and almost three-fourths were found similarly lacking in numeracy skills, according to a 2019 survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in collaboration with UNICEF Bangladesh. The ongoing school closure has only compounded the problem: at least one in four children are at risk of serious learning losses due to the prolonged disruption in education, as found by a recent study by the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

The government appeared to be concerned

The notion that alternatives like distance learning tools would miraculously replace mainstream schooling is a pipe dream. Even before the Covid-19 crisis, one in five children of school-going age were out of school.



Amidst the grim struggle between lives and livelihoods, one group in the country has practically fallen off the policy radar: schoolchildren.

PHOTO: RASHED SUMON

about the potential catastrophe. Immediately after the school closure, the authorities started broadcasting classes for primary and secondary students on national television—a commendable initiative on the surface. The problem, however, was the obvious absence of groundwork needed to properly execute such a measure. Over a third of rural families did not have access to a television. But even among those who had access, very few took those classes, and many who did found the content boring or difficult to follow. As a result, only two and three percent of primary and secondary school students, respectively, were reportedly using the medium.

Thus far, the multiple studies on education in Bangladesh carried out by BIGD over the course of the pandemic indicate three major consequences of school closures: worsening of the existing learning crisis, increasing out-of-pocket costs, and the very real possibility of widening social and economic inequality

in the country. What can we do about it?

To draw attention to this silent learning crisis and to nudge public discourse towards effective, feasible interventions, BIGD brought together some leading international experts in a workshop in July this year. The task at hand was to find satisfactory answers to the following: how do we deliver catchup education to recoup learning losses? How do we ensure last-mile delivery of education without further exacerbating inequality? And finally, how do we minimise dropouts and also provide life opportunities to children who may drop out due to the economic fallout of the pandemic?

First, the government and NGOs alike must consider the stark digital divide when designing technology-based education interventions. To reach the greatest number of children, both advanced and simple technologies are necessary. It might be pre-recorded or live classes over the internet

in some cases; in others, it might be as rudimentary as a text message that delivers and follows up on homework and math problems.

Second, since learning losses are unavoidable during school closure, we should, at the least, be able to identify and measure the learning gaps, so that when children return to school, we can tailor instructions to their appropriate learning level. Third, it is time we delinked learning from schooling. Remedial education during school hours will be unhelpful; students may fall back in their current grade. Thus, after-school remedial classes will be necessary to help students catch up and be on track. The challenge is to make the supplementary content engaging—and not overwhelming—for children. We also need to find creative solutions by exploring all possible delivery methods and by involving the entire education ecosystem, for example, by engaging community volunteers to provide supplementary education.

Finally, there is the looming danger of pandemic-induced dropouts among primary and secondary schoolchildren. Any and all measures that encourage children to stay in school—and parents to send their kids to school—should be explored. This includes incentives like free school meal plans and nutrition programmes. Also, the role of peers in promoting positive learning behaviour among students cannot be overstated. Interventions that emphasise the communal aspect of schools and promote cooperation and help-seeking behaviour among children have been proven effective against rising dropouts.

Rather than being proactive, policies and interventions in poorer countries have historically been reactive. But the Covid-19 crisis has exposed the pitfalls of this approach. Maybe this time, the pandemic will serve as the necessary impetus towards building more resilient institutions for the future.

Eradul Kabir is an Officer of Communications and Knowledge Management at BIGD, BRAC University.

Afghan debacle potentially puts UAE on the spot



AFGHANISTAN is showing the United Arab Emirates the downside of being a haven for deposed leaders and exiled politicians whose wealth is reportedly parked without question in Emirati financial institutions.

The latest arrival in the UAE, former Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, denied allegations by Afghanistan's ambassador to Tajikistan, Zahir Aghbar, that he had stolen USD 169 million from state coffers, and an assertion by the Russian embassy in Kabul that he had fled with four cars and a helicopter full of cash. There was no independent confirmation of the allegations.

Ashraf Ghani said that after the UAE announced that it was hosting him for "humanitarian" reasons, he had left his country "with one set of traditional clothes, a vest and the sandals" he was wearing. "I was expelled from Afghanistan in such a way that I didn't even get the chance to take my slippers off my feet and pull on my boots." Ghani, a former World Bank official who co-authored a book titled *Fixing Failed States*, said he arrived in the UAE "empty-handed." He was reported to have first gone to Tajikistan before landing in the UAE. Aghbar has denounced the Taliban takeover and pledged allegiance to Ghani's first vice president, Amrullah Saleh. Saleh insists that he remains in office as the legitimate caretaker president and has criticised Ghani for abandoning Afghanistan.

Ashraf Ghani joined a long list of high-profile figures who have sought refuge in the UAE over the years after having either headed governments that were perceived to be corrupt and/or faced charges of corruption themselves. They include siblings Thaksin Shinawatra and Yingluck Shinawatra, who both served as Thai prime ministers until they were toppled by the military, former Pakistani

president Pervez Musharraf, former Spanish King Juan Carlos, ex-Palestinian security chief Mohammed Dahlan and Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the eldest son of a longtime Yemeni leader who was toppled in the 2011 popular Arab revolts and assassinated several years later.

"For almost two decades now, billions of dollars in corruption proceeds have been funnelled from Afghanistan, a country devastated by four decades of conflict, to Dubai. These outflows have played a part in stunting Afghanistan's economic and political development, facilitating the resurgence of the Taliban, and exacerbating regional

candidate, Ahmad Wali Massoud, whose brother was reported to have flown to the UAE with more than USD 50 million in cash; a senior intelligence official, Adib Ahmad Fahim, whose father was implicated in involvement with the transfer of large sums of money from Afghanistan, and various members of parliament. Fahim's uncle, Haseen, and Karzai's brother were shareholders in Kabul Bank, which was at the centre of a billion-dollar fraud in 2010, much of which was parked in Dubai banks.

The Bureau was careful to emphasise that ownership did not constitute evidence of corruption. The Bureau noted, however, that

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism documented in 2019 ownership of luxury properties in Dubai by a host of prominent Afghans or their relatives.

the UAE's *Al Bayan* newspaper.

To be sure, the Taliban have never sought to export their vision of an Islamic state but their victory encourages militants who do, many of which, like Al Qaeda and the Islamic State, are present in Afghanistan.

In addition to the fact that the Afghanistan debacle highlights the need for stricter implementation of anti-money laundering laws, the UAE may feel the need to review its policies as Western nations consider tightening their approach towards aid and cooperation with Middle Eastern, African and Asian countries in the wake of the return of the Taliban.

"The governments and populations we support need to assume ownership and responsibility for the well-being of their country. We need to apply conditionality much more than we have done in the past... If a host government does not play ball—if it is not ready to build strong independent institutions, promote democracy, fight corruption, and respect national and international law—in future, German leaders and their allies should think twice about entering into massive engagements," said Christoph Heusgen, chairman of the Munich Security Conference Foundation Circle. He was Germany's ambassador to the United Nations until June of this year.

Heusgen, as well as Jean-Marie Guéhenno, a member of a board that advises UN Secretary-General António Guterres on mediation, have suggested that Europe should review its involvement in other conflict zones such as the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia.

The UAE has focused on Somalia and the breakaway republic of Somaliland with the creation of military bases and management of ports as part of its bid to project influence in the Horn of Africa and counter Turkey, Iran, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Dr James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a senior fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.



Ashraf Ghani, pictured on August 4.

PHOTO: AFP

instability," a report published last year by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace concluded.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism documented in 2019 ownership of luxury properties in Dubai by a host of prominent Afghans or their relatives. Among those identified by the Bureau were family members of former presidents Hamid Karzai and Burhanuddin Rabbani; a presidential

"concerns have been mounting generally about alleged corruption among some senior Afghan officials. Few, if any, of the properties appear to have been declared on official registers, as is required by Afghanistan's often ignored and broadly ineffective anti-corruption rules."

Maira Matini of Transparency International concurred at the time. "This doesn't mean that those officials are corrupt. However, it does

raise red flags and needs to be investigated by the authorities," she said.

While in office, Ghani ordered an investigation into allegations of embezzlement by Ghulam Farooq Wardak, when he was education minister. Wardak was identified by the Bureau as owning, together with his wife, two luxury properties in Dubai. The investigation, conducted by the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), reportedly found evidence of embezzlement and inaccurate data records on the number of schools that enabled diversion of donor funds. Wardak denied the allegations.

Of all the exiles in the UAE, Ashraf Ghani most represents the risks of facilitating the movement of funds that potentially may have been acquired through corruption. Massive corruption in Afghanistan is what partly returned the Taliban to power. If so, looking the other way at the influx of corrupt funds has helped empower the kind of group against which the UAE has been on the warpath for more than a decade: Islamists who reject a separation of politics and religion.

"Terrorist groups may use (Afghanistan) as a base if global powers cannot negotiate with the Taliban on (the transition of power) quickly," warned columnist Yousef al-Sharif in

QUOTABLE Quote

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
(1818 – 1895)
American abolitionist and writer

To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Scout's base
- 5 Insurance agent's number
- 10 Lewd look
- 11 Dawn goddess
- 12 Yen
- 13 Nursery item
- 14 Old West cemetery
- 16 Flashy 1940s attire
- 20 Hardens
- 23 CEO's deg.
- 24 Tom's aunt
- 25 Had aspirations
- 27 Money machine
- 28 Forces out of bed
- 29 Tug sound
- 32 Float ingredient

DOWN

- 1 Iron, for one
- 2 Flying: Prefix
- 3 "Never Let—" (Kazuo Ishiguro novel)
- 4 Knotty snack
- 5 Bee product
- 6 Russian range
- 7 Alley —
- 8 Number after due
- 9 Lobed organ
- 11 Baja "Bye!"
- 15 Sacred

17 Diamond workers

18 Sceptic's comment

19 Young ones

20 Petty fight

21 Dog in a 1939 film

22 Sailors' saint

25 Owl call

26 Beats at the auction

28 Spacious

30 Court event

31 Sightseeing trips

33 Fix text

34 Singer Fitzgerald

35 Depend

36 Grammys category

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

BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

S	A	G	E	C	O	P	A
C	R	A	T	E	C	O	N
R	E	L	A	X	A	L	E
U	N	O	P	I	R	A	T
M	A	R	L	I	N	S	W
S	E	A	R	S	L	O	S
D	E	U	C	E			
S	H	Y	L	E	A	D	S
A	H	A	Y	A	N	K	E
R	A	N	G	E	R	S	B
O	R	G	A	N	O	S	A
S	E	E	M	S	R	A	T
E	R	R	S		P	E	R

Lightning strikes kill 7 in Dinajpur

4 teens among dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least seven people, including four teenaged boys, were killed and two others injured as lightnings struck in Dinajpur town and Chirirbandar upazila yesterday afternoon.

Mozaffar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Sadar Police Station, said some boys took shelter in a tin-roofed house in the town's Newtown area when rain began. The boys were playing games on their mobile phones.

Around 3:00pm, the thunderbolt hit, killing two boys on the spot.

The injured were rushed to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital while two others died on the way to the hospital, said the OC.

Conditions of two others were critical, said Kazi Shamim Hossain,

director of the hospital.

In Chirirbandar upazila, several people were catching fish in a pond in Dhakkhin Sukdebpur village when the lightning struck around 4:00pm, leaving two people dead, said Moinuddin Shah, chairman of Abdulpur Union Parishad.

Locals took the injured to Chirirbandar Upazila Health Complex where another breathed his last.

The deceased were Sazzad Hossain, 13, son of Aynul Islam, Apon Islam, 14, son of Babul Hossain, Hasan Ali, 12, son of late Siddique Hossain, and Mim, 13, son of Sazu Mondal, who were from Newtown area under Dinajpur municipality, while Nur Islam, 24, son of Mokshed Ali, Abdur Razzak, 23, son of Samu Mia, and Abbas Ali, 25, son of Altaf Ali, who were from Dhakkhin Sukdebpur village.

3rd Covid wave imminent

FROM PAGE 12

been vaccinated has been discussed, with most experts of the view they are not prone to severe infections though it can pass the virus to others. Other estimates have said the third wave, seen to be the result of renewed mobility, may prove to be less severe than the second.

The study: "Third Wave Preparedness: Children Vulnerability and Recovery," has looked into the possibility of Covid-affecting children and the required strategies to deal with the pandemic.

The recommendations made by the committee has suggested "a holistic home care model, immediate increase in paediatric medical capacities and prioritising mental health issues among children".

It has mooted structuring of Covid wards in a way that allows children's attendants or parents to safely stay with them through their recovery, reports TNN.

Experts have expressed concern about 82% shortage of paediatricians in primary health centres and 63% vacancies in community health centres (the data cited from a parliamentary standing committee).

"The situation is already dire, and might worsen due to lack of adherence to Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB), insufficient medical facilities and lagging vaccination," the report said.

It pointed out how during the second wave, about 60%-70% children hospitalised due to Covid had comorbidities and their low immunity was the primary cause behind many developing MIS-C (Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome), a "rare but serious condition" developed post-Covid recovery.

"Preparedness is the key, learning from the past two waves. We need to take proactive actions now in anticipation of the third wave. States may start enhancing paediatric Covid care facilities for treatment, ICU, paediatric ambulance, medicine, including paediatricians," said Santosh Kumar, coordinator of the committee of experts and professor head of governance and public policy at NIDM.

The coronavirus has killed at least 4,430,846 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP yesterday.

The Philippines health ministry

Breathing exercises

FROM PAGE 12

rate can be deemed beneficial. Cycling can be useful, as it requires your whole body to be in motion. It will lead you to breath faster, causing your diaphragm to do double the work.

But if you are not going outdoors, or don't have a cycle, home breathing exercises are a good start. There are many tutorials on YouTube that can help you out. The breathe-store-exhale three times a day is a good idea.

The drill is to breathe in through the nose, and let the air sit inside your lungs for 5-10 seconds. Then exhale

with ease. Repeating this exercise a few times a day can help clear your nasal pathways. To take this exercise a bit further, you might consider lying face down on your bed, with a pillow pressed against your diaphragm. This way, your lungs can accommodate the most amount of oxygen and that strengthens the capacity to pump in, store, and pump out the air.

Breathing exercises will not prevent Covid-19 transmission, but these can provide the body a fighting chance. And in these trying times, any fighting chance is worth considering.

Ukraine blocks access to popular Russian news sites

AFP, Kiev

Ukraine yesterday blocked the websites of several prominent Russian media outlets in its latest round of sanctions against neighbouring Russia which it has accused of spreading propaganda.

Ties between the ex-Soviet countries have deteriorated sharply since Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula in 2014 and threw its weight behind armed separatists in eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine and its Western allies have accused the Kremlin of sending troops and weapons to reinforce the separatists and also say Russia is leveraging media as a propaganda tool to stoke the conflict.

A decree from President Volodymyr Zelensky published Sunday ordered

the websites of 12 Russian media organisations to be blocked in Ukraine.

They include the Vedomosti business daily, which was recently taken over by Kremlin-friendly editors, and the Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper, among others.

The decree also ordered the organisations' local bank accounts to be frozen.

The Kremlin criticised the move, describing Ukraine as being on a path towards "strangling freedom of speech" and limiting "unwanted and uncomfortable" information.

Vladimir Soloviev, the head of the Russian Union of Journalists, described the move as the "final cleansing" of Russian media in Ukraine.



People hold signs as they protest outside the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office to urge the international community to help Afghan refugees, in New Delhi, India yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Woman claims SI stole Tk 2.5 lakh

FROM PAGE 12

woman, also a ruling party activist, filed separate complaints against the SI and five others with the complaint cell of the Inspector General of Police.

According to the complaints, the SI and his team went to the woman's home in the Rupnagar area around 11:30 pm on Thursday. They claimed she was a member of a mobile phone stealing gang and that they had information that there are 30-35 stolen devices at the property.

In the name of searching, they ransacked the rooms and took Tk 2.5 lakh, she alleged.

"The SI threatened to implicate me in a drugs case by showing recovery of 50 pieces of yaba if I disclosed the incident to anyone," the woman told The Daily Star, adding that police showed her arrested under DMP Ordinance.

She claimed the two women arrested with her were her tenants.

Contacted, SI Rahman said the allegation of taking money is baseless

and said they carried out the raid based on a specific allegation of prostitution at the address.

However, the woman said she is not involved in any "anti-social activities" and claimed she earned Tk 2.02 lakh by selling three cattle on August 13 and the rest of the money from renting out her rooms and autorickshaws and from the sale of clothes.

"On August 14, a police source named Apu wanted Tk 10,000 after I sold the cattle. As I did not pay the money, he, with the help of police, framed us," the woman said and demanded her money back.

The woman said she was taken in a motorcycle and was kept in front of a shop before the police station.

"There, the police source Apu came and demanded another Tk 2 lakh to settle the matter. I said that I have no more money. After one hour, they took me to the police station," she said.

During a visit to her house yesterday, the two women who were arrested along with the house owner said they

were not involved in any "anti-social activities".

One of them came from her village home in Faridpur on August 17 with her husband and rented the house. Her husband is a vendor who sells crockeries. She said that she would join a garment factory next month.

The other woman, aged 17, is a printing-press worker from Barisal. She said she has been living at the property with her parents and siblings for the last four months. Because of illness, her parents could not come to Dhaka from their village home after Eid.

"They came to the house and asked why we were living alone. They made an indecent proposal and searched our bodies indecently," she alleged.

They said the team had six men -- including two in uniform -- and no woman cop was present during the search, they said.

The allegation against the SI is not true, said Arifur Rahman, the officer-in-charge of Rupnagar Police Station.

Victims still stranded in India

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh police then began an investigation and found a transnational racket, involving some Bangladeshis, trafficking young female TikTok users and forcing them into sex work in India.

Tejgaon police have so far interrogated at least four victims, who managed to return to Bangladesh.

Till date, Indian police have arrested 12 members of the racket, including 11 Bangladeshis, in a case filed with Bengaluru's Ramamurthy Nagar Police Station.

In Bangladesh, law enforcers arrested 20 members of the gang.

Of them, 11 have given confessional statements before magistrates.

Meanwhile, six cases were filed with Hatirjheel Police Station under the human trafficking and the pornography control acts.

Tejgaon police found that one of the arrestees in India -- Sabuj, 30, -- is the kingpin of this racket. Its network stretches to Dubai, UAE and some other Middle Eastern countries.

Hafiz Al Faruq, additional deputy commissioner of Tejgaon police, said Sabuj and others kept the trafficked women in five or six houses in Bengaluru's Anandapur area and used to send them to different hotels, massage parlours and spa centres in Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kerala and Tamil Nadu for sex work.

Nodi Akter Eri, is the coordinator of this racket. In her Indian Aadhar card, however, her name is Zoya Akter Jannat, while in Dubai, she is known as Laila. She has travelled to Malaysia, Dubai and India, legally and illegally, according to police.

Police said the gang members targeted female TikTok users and trafficked them in the name of providing well-paid jobs there at shopping malls and beauty parlours.

They carried out the trafficking to India through Satkhira and Jashore borders. The racket also has several houses along the border on both sides.

"The trafficked women were given new names once they crossed the

border and were given Aadhar cards. Then, they were sent to different states," added the police official.

About Ridoy, the investigator said he had been using TikTok to traffic women. Police identified at least 500 TikTok groups and IDs, Whatsapp groups and IDs, and Facebook accounts which were linked to Ridoy.

Law enforcers further said Indian police sent the identities of 12 arrestees to Tejgaon police for verification. The four victims, who were lucky enough to escape the clutches of the traffickers, were able to identify them.

Besides, Tejgaon police sent details of seven absconding members of the racket to Bengaluru city police.

In the case filed with Hatirjheel Police Station, the father of a victim said that he was yet to get any trace of his 15-year-old daughter, who was trafficked to India by Ridoy's racket in March this year.

Police said they are trying to find the whereabouts of the untraced victims in India.

Accused asks for death by firing squad

FROM PAGE 12

wanted his execution by the firing squad.

Ahamedul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of police, who investigated Ansar al Islam for a long time, said the members believe that execution of death by the firing squad is a glorious.

The accused must have asked for such an execution for this reason, he added.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Golam Sharuar Khan told The Daily Star that 24 prosecution witnesses gave their depositions during the trial of the case.

During yesterday's closing arguments, the prosecutors told the court that the charges against the

accused had been proven and sought capital punishment for them.

Lawyers representing the accused sought acquittal for their clients.

Besides Sium, Mozammel Hossain Saimon, Sheikh Abdullah alias Jubair, and Asadullah alias Foyjul were at the court yesterday.

The other accused, (sacked) Major Zia who goes by the alias of Syed Mohammad Ziaul Haque, Akram Hossain, and Sabirul Haque Chowdhury, and Junaid Ahmed are still on the run.

On April 25, 2016, former USAID official Xulhaz Mannan and his friend Mahbub Rabbi Tonoy were hacked to death at Xulhaz's Kalabagan flat.

Minhaz Mannan Emon, elder brother of Xulhaz, filed a case accusing

unidentified assailants with Kalabagan Police Station that day.

Inspector Muhammad Monirul Islam of CTTC on July 23, 2019, pressed charges against the eight accused at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court of Dhaka.

On November 19 last year, the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal framed charges against them.

On February 10 this year, the same tribunal sentenced Zia, Akram, Mozammel and Abdullah to death for murdering Jagriti Prokashoni publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan.

On February 16, Zia, Akram, Mozammel and Sium were sentenced to death for killing writer-blogger Avijit Roy near the TSC of Dhaka University.

estate and witnessed the sorry state of waste treatment.

Members of the JS committee had also visited the area and witnessed a similar picture.

Briefing reporters, Saber said the DoE could have fined the estate for polluting the environment.

"But the parliamentary committee opined that imposing fines is not working. The department concerned fined the estate several times for polluting the environment, but they used to appeal against the fine," added Saber.

The committee chief also said according to the law, Tk 50 can be fined for dumping of each cubic metre of waste.

"In the last three years, the estate has dumped around 1.60 lakh cubic metres of waste into the river," Saber said.

"What was the point in relocating the tannery industry from Hazaribagh to Savar if this industry pollutes the environment," added the committee chief.

Mustaq Hossain, chairman of

BSCIC, said they will take the next course of action after going through the recommendations of the parliamentary body.

There are around 160 tanneries at present in the leather industrial park, sources at the meeting said. Tanneries and backward and forward linkage industries related to leather goods were accommodated in the new industrial park after it was moved from Hazaribagh in 2003.

5,000 ACRES OF FOREST LAND RECOVERED IN 9 MONTHS

Officials of the forest department yesterday informed the parliamentary committee that they have recovered around 5,000 acres of forest land from grabbers in nine months between October last year and June this year.

Grabbers have taken around 2.57 lakh acres of forest in different parts of the country.

The committee has asked the forest department to set a target of recovering around 50,000 acres of forest land from grabbers in the next two years, Saber said.

Bodies of 398

FROM PAGE 12

seven lakh Bangladeshis live in different cities in the Jeddah region. The consulate general covers seven of the 13 provinces in the Kingdom.

According to the Bangladesh Embassy in Riyadh, around 22.8 lakh Bangladeshis are currently employed in Saudi Arabia.

In a report published last month, the consulate general mentioned that at least 3,437 Bangladeshis died in Saudi Arabia between July 2019 and June 2021.

Of them, 2,448 were buried in the Gulf country with the consent of their families back home.

New Delhi opens

FROM PAGE 12

"Today is a big day for Delhi in its fight for clean air against pollution," Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said after the inauguration near the busy shopping area of Connaught Place.

The installation "is being looked at in an experimental way. We will analyse the data and if it's effective, more towers will be built across Delhi," Kejriwal added.

The tower cost \$2 million and critics say erecting a sufficient number to clean the air substantially across the city would cost huge amounts of public money, and that efforts would be better directed at the sources of the smog.

These include vehicle exhaust, heavy and small-scale industry, construction activity, the combustion of waste and fuel, and in winter the burning of crops in neighbouring regions.

"Let's just be clear that this is futile, an absolute waste," Karthik Ganesan from the Council on Energy, Environment and Water told AFP.

"Now that taxpayers' money has been spent, let Delhi be the test case for all other Indian cities... to ensure no other city spends on such ideas which we can't afford," he added.

India has 14 of the world's 15 most polluted cities, according to the World Health Organization.

A 2020 study in the Lancet found there were 1.67 million deaths in the country attributable to air pollution in 2019 including almost 17,500 in Delhi.

In 2018 China built a much larger 60-metre smog tower in the polluted city of Xian, but the experiment has not spread to other cities so far.

Indira writes

FROM PAGE 12

Bahini spokesman said the Mukti Bahini was fully prepared to meet any fresh offensive by the Pakistani forces after the monsoon. The spokesman estimated the Pakistani toll of dead and injured in all sectors of Bangladesh at about 30,000.

He pointed out that the Martial Law regime had no civil administration anywhere in Bangladesh except a puppet show in Dhaka.

BANGLADESH YOUTH CAMP INAUGURATED

A Bangladeshi youth camp jointly sponsored by Gandhi Peace Foundation and Bangladesh Volunteer Service Corps was inaugurated in Calcutta.

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

They'll to be

FROM PAGE 12

M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order during the hearing of the mother's writ petition and an application submitted by the father Imran Sharif, seeking its directive to hand over the children to their custody.

The court ordered the authorities of the Victim Support Centre in Tejgaon to produce the children -- Nakano Jasmine Malika, 11, and Nakano Laila Lina, 10, before it on August 31, as per an earlier directive.

It also directed the authorities to allow the mother to visit them from 8:00am to 1:00pm and the father from 3:00pm to 8:00pm every day until further orders.

The Criminal Investigation Department of Police took the children into their custody yesterday (Sunday). Eriko's lawyer Shishir Manir told The Daily Star.

The HC also asked Shishir and Imran's lawyer Fawzia Karim Firoze to play effective roles in resolving the matter.

On August 19, the bench directed Imran to produce his daughters before it on August 31 after Eriko filed the writ petition for the custody of their children.

Eriko, 46, a doctor based in Tokyo, came to Bangladesh on July 18 this year and filed the writ with the HC, seeking a directive on Imran, 58, to hand over the children to her.

She said she and Imran got married on July 11, 2008. Imran submitted a divorce notice to a Japanese court on January 18 this year. However, he did not appear before the court on scheduled dates for the hearings.

On January 21, Imran picked up the children from their school in Tokyo and came to Bangladesh on February 21.

She added that Imran also harassed her by preventing her from seeing or contacting the children.



Kiwis set to land today

SPORTS REPORTER



The New Zealand team is all set to arrive today at the Hazrat Shahjalal International airport in Dhaka at 12 pm to take part in the bilateral five-match T20I series against Bangladesh starting from September 1.

The Black Caps will then spend three days at the Intercontinental hotel for the mandatory room quarantine before hitting the field. The Tigers too, along with their batting consultant Ashwell Prince, will begin training on August 27.

As the visitors are coming on a commercial flight the Kiwis will have to undergo the immigration process at the airport, unlike the Australian team last month who were spared the immigration formality as part of their health protocol.

However, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has ensured that the New Zealand team will also receive similar hospitality as Australia did, in terms of providing health safety.

The New Zealand Cricket had earlier announced the squad for the tour of Bangladesh where none of the members from their World Cup squad were named for the tour. Tom Latham will lead an inexperienced New Zealand side this time around and it will be a huge challenge for the visitors against the high-flying hosts at home who registered a thrashing 4-1 series win over the Aussies.

The BCB had earlier offered the visitors to play a warm-up game in BKSP ahead of the five-match T20I series which the New Zealand team had declined to maintain a rather strict health protocol from their part.

Earlier Finn Allen and Colin de Grandhomme, after participating in The Hundred, arrived in Dhaka from England on August 20, four days ahead of the scheduled arrival of the Kiwis and both are already in room quarantine.

This will be New Zealand's first tour to Bangladesh since 2013 where the Tigers whitewashed the visitors in the three-match ODI series. However, Bangladesh are yet to register a win against the Kiwis on their ten T20I outings and will look to rewrite history this time.

Meanwhile, after a brief window of family time following the series against the Aussies, members of the Bangladesh team will also check into the hotel today where some of them have already checked in while a few are expected to join by tomorrow.

Star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who returned to the United States to spend time with his family after the Australia series, is also expected to join the team today.

All the matches will take place at the home of cricket in Mirpur and the games are scheduled to start from 4 pm.

Kings' toughest test yet

Face ATK Mohun Bagan in do-or-die clash today

SPORTS REPORTER



Bashundhara Kings have won it all in domestic football. The new powerhouse of Bangladesh football have two Bangladesh Premier League titles, one Bangladesh Championship League title, two Federation Cup titles and one Independence Cup title in their bag in four years' journey. With a star-studded cast, they have hardly been tested on domestic front, however, today they are up against ISL runners-up ATK Mohun Bagan in what has turned out to be a winner-takes-all clash in Group D of the AFC Cup.

The penultimate match of the South Zone will kick off at 5:00pm (Bangladesh time) at the Male National Stadium in Maldives.

The Bangladesh champions started the campaign with a 2-0 win over Maziya S&RC but a goalless draw against Bengaluru FC has seen them drop to second position in the group with four points, giving the Kolkata-based outfit, who have won both their matches in the group, a definite edge going into the crucial fixture. Only a win will hand Kings the lone qualifying spot into the Inter-Zone semifinals, a stage only one Bangladeshi club - Dhaka Abahani in 2019 - managed to reach previously.

Kings' coach Oscar Bruzon, who previously coached Indian sides and knows his compatriot Mohun Bagan coach Antonio Lopez Habas very well, conceded



that his opposite number has the advantage in today's match during a pre-match press conference.

"ATK Mohun Bagan, apart from being a historical club, have a very well-defined game model. They are a team that are very confident when they need to defend a result. Tomorrow is completely opposite to the game against Bengaluru. In that game we were the team that needed to hold a result and tomorrow this condition has changed. Mohun Bagan are starting the

game with slight advantage. So tomorrow we need to push a little bit more if we want to win," the Spaniard said.

Bruzon would be relieved with the fact that Mohun Bagan's inspirational attacking midfielder Hugo Boumous will be unavailable due to suspension, but they will be better served not to be complacent with the likes of Roy Krishna, Liston Colaco, David Williams and Lenny Rodrigues.

While Bashundhara's defence has been rock-solid so far helping the team keep a

clean sheet in both matches, it will be a test for them to prize out a goal as the others except for Robson Robinho have been less than impressive. The centre-forward Raul Becerra has been carrying an injury while there are not many options up front in absence of Martin Miah, Towhidul Alam Sabuz and Eleta Kingsley - all of whom missing out for various reasons.

Bruzon admitted that he would make changes in his starting eleven and change his strategy from the previous matches.

"As a coach I feel that I am more comfortable making changes when we need to attack. So the attacking substitutions are more fruitful than when you need to hold a result. Making a substitution when holding a result like last game has the risk of destabilising the team. But tomorrow we will have our plan for 90 minutes. There are going to be changes in the first 11 and the last stages of the game. We have a very well-defined plan and I hope it clicks," the Spaniard said, alluding to just one substitution he made during the match against Bengaluru FC.

Kings' captain Topu Barman said they were confident of overcoming the Mohun Bagan test and that they had specific plans for their opponents.

"Coach will tell us how to stop Roy Krishna. We will try our best to stop him," Barman said. "Mohun Bagan are very strong from set-pieces. The coach told us not to concede fouls and throw-ins near the danger zone."

Sk Russel thrash Baridhara

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC consolidated the seventh spot in the Bangladesh Premier League table with a 5-1 thrashing of Uttar Baridhara Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian striker Obi Moneke and Kyrgyz midfielder Bakhtiyar Duyshobekov bagged a brace each while local midfielder Rumon Hossain scored the other for Saiful Bari Titu's charges.

Sheikh Russel raced to a 4-0 lead in the first half before Moneke netted the fifth goal 12 minutes after the break. National team's striker Sumon Reza reduced the margin for Uttar Baridhara with a spot-kick in the 80th minute.

The win, which snapped a two-match losing streak for Sheikh Russel, lifted them to 33 points from 22 matches. Baridhara, meanwhile, remained in 11th position with 19 points from 23 matches.

The 25th round of matches will conclude today with four matches taking place at three different venues of Dhaka.



'Try everyday with sports'

AFP, Tokyo

The first female member of the Paralympic refugee team said Monday it was an "honour" to be at the Tokyo Games, urging other women with disabilities to get involved in sport.

Alia Issa will be one of two flagbearers for the six-person refugee team at Tuesday's opening ceremony for the Paralympics, which were delayed a year by the pandemic.

The 20-year-old, who was born in Greece and whose family are from Syria, will compete in the club throw event in Tokyo -- and she hopes others will follow her lead. "I want to say to other women who have disabilities not to stay at home, try everyday with sports, to be outside in the world. I hope I'm the first example to follow," she

said at a press conference. "I never believed I would be in the Paralympic Games once in my life, and that I would be the first woman refugee in Paralympic Games here in Tokyo. It's a big honour for me."

When she was four, Issa caught smallpox, which damaged her nervous system. She now uses a wheelchair and has some difficulty speaking.

She started para sports three years ago, and has been training in club throw for the past two years.

She will carry the flag for the refugee team on Tuesday with swimmer Abbas Karimi, who grew up in Afghanistan.

It is just the second time a refugee team has competed in the Paralympics, after Rio in 2016. On Tuesday, the team's chef de mission Ileana Rodriguez said the

six Paralympians represent "82 million people who are displaced around the world" and want to send a message of hope. "We're very grateful for the countries that home refugees and we encourage countries that can support refugees to do it," Rodriguez said.

"We hope that that's a strong message that we can leave to the people of Japan as well. "Japan, the world's third largest economy, granted refugee status to 47 people in 2020, a little over one percent of asylum requests received that year, according to official data.

Rodriguez added that "our hearts go to all the people in Afghanistan".

Afghans trying to flee the Taliban have overwhelmed the US-led military operation at Kabul airport, leading to tragic scenes in which at least seven people have died.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Motivated by dad'

Fawad Alam struck a century before Pakistan declared on 302 for nine in their first innings and had West Indies struggling at 39-3 in reply before bad light brought a premature end to the third day of the second Test at Sabina Park on Sunday. The 35-year-old left-hander stayed focused



during his unbeaten 124. "You always feel proud when you score a century for your country so I am very happy right now. My dad has always been my motivation. He told me to keep on trying and my time will come and now it has and I am trying to make the most of it."

England's Wood misses Headingley Test

England fast bowler Mark Wood has been ruled out of the third Test against India with a shoulder injury, the home side said on Monday. Wood took five wickets in the second Test at Lord's but jarred his right shoulder as India went on to win by 151 runs to go 1-0 up in the five-Test series.

Barty enjoys 'awesome' U.S. Open tune-up

World number one Ash Barty will head to the U.S. Open in peak form after ending Swiss wildcard Jil Teichmann's brave run with a 6-3, 6-1 defeat to claim the Western and Southern Open title in Cincinnati on Sunday. Wimbledon champion Barty will now bid for her third Grand Slam crown and first on hardcourt at New York. "It's been an awesome week. I think we're just excited that we've got matches under our belt in tough conditions here in Cincy, and that's put us in really good stead going into New York."



Vinicius Jr came on as a substitute on the hour mark and stole the show, levelling the score twice for Real Madrid, as Carlo Ancelotti's side managed to grab a 3-3 draw at Levante in a game that was full of suspense.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Lukaku hails 'best of the lot'

AGENCIES

Chelsea striker Romelu Lukaku said his goal in Sunday's 2-0 win at Arsenal, the Belgium international's first match back with the European champions, was his favourite of the 114 he has scored in the Premier League.

An almost unstoppable Lukaku needed only 15 minutes to get off the mark for Chelsea following his reported 97.5 million pound (\$133.08 million) transfer from Inter Milan, tapping in a cross played into his path by Reece James, who bagged the second goal.

The goal was Lukaku's first for Chelsea, with the 28-year-old having failed to find the net during his first period at the club that ended seven years ago.

"That was the best one for me, the best of the lot," said Lukaku.



RONALDO'S FUTILE CELEBRATION

With just seconds left, Cristiano Ronaldo, who came on as a substitute on the hour mark, wheeled away after meeting Federico Chiesa's pinpoint cross with a trademark header, celebrating in a typical fashion with his jubilant teammates who thought he had saved their skins against Udinese. However, Ronaldo could only watch on in desperation as his winner was chalked off by VAR while the referee showed him a yellow for removing his shirt as the game ended in a 2-2 draw. Ronaldo started on the bench at the Dacia Arena in Udine amid rumours he is looking for a way out of the Italian giants. After the match returning coach Massimiliano Allegri played down the controversy, saying that he was always planning to bring on Ronaldo.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Bangabandhu Tunnel
is being built with BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM**
building a safer nation

Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant

Work in progress
using Shah Cement

SHAH CEMENT

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Victims still stranded in India

Police want to visit there to bring them back; some remain traceless

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Some of the girls trafficked to India and forced into prostitution by a transnational racket are still stranded in the neighbouring country, while a few, including a minor, are yet to be traced.

A police team now wants to visit India to rescue and bring back the Bangladeshi victims, and interrogate those arrested in connection with the trafficking.

At least 10 victims, mostly TikTok users, were trafficked by the racket recently, according to police.

The Daily Star learnt names of the six victims, including a minor, who are still stranded or untraceable in India.

Md Shohidullah, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division, wrote a letter to the inspector general of police, seeking permission to send a three-member investigation team to India.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, the Tejgaon DC said the matter is still under process.

After a video clip of a 22-year-old woman being tortured and sexually assaulted went viral on social media, Indian police, in May, arrested Rifadul Islam Ridoy, 26, along with five other Bangladeshis from Bengaluru.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Students of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College take a happy selfie on their first day back on the Shiddeswari campus after a break of more than a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They radiated excitement as they went back to school to submit their recent assignments yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Bodies of 398 migrants sent home from Jeddah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 398 bodies of Bangladeshi migrants were sent from Saudi Arabia's Jeddah region in the 2020-2021 fiscal year following efforts taken by the Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah.

Employers of 391 of the workers paid for the expenditure of sending the bodies, which saved almost Tk 9 crore, the consulate general said in a recent letter to the expatriates' welfare ministry.

The seven other bodies were flown home with the expenditures borne by the Bangladesh government.

Talking to this correspondent on a messaging app, Aminul Islam, labour counsellor at the Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah, yesterday said in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 591 bodies of Bangladeshi expatriates arrived in the country.

As per the consulate general data, about

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

3rd Covid wave imminent

Warns India's home ministry panel, seeks better medical preparedness for children

AGENCIES

A committee of experts constituted under the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) of India's home ministry has warned of an imminent third wave of Covid that could peak around October.

It also sought better medical preparedness for children who might be at similar risk as adults.

The report of the committee has noted that "paediatric facilities — doctors, staff, equipment like ventilators, ambulances, etc are nowhere close to what may be required in case a large number of children become infected".

It has called for prioritising vaccination among children with co-morbidities and a special focus on those with disability. The report has been submitted to the PMO.

Even with "strict interventions", the peak of the third wave is expected to arrive by late October, the experts have concurred with earlier assessments of different institutions. Several studies have spoken of the likelihood of a third wave but these are estimates.

The vulnerability of kids as they haven't

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Indira writes to Chou on Bangladesh

AUGUST 24, 1971
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

INDIRA'S LETTER TO CHOU
Indira Gandhi made yet another important breakthrough by writing directly to her counterpart in China, Premier Chou En-lai, on Bangladesh affairs. This is the first time an Indian prime minister had sent a communication to China since the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. Indira Gandhi's communication was said to have been on the line of the one addressed to the heads of states or government of many countries in June and July, highlighting the humanitarian aspect of refugees from East Pakistan, the financial burden imposed on India because of 8 million refugees and the need for the creation of conditions for their return home.

\$200M CHINESE LOAN FOR PAKISTANI PROJECTS
Pakistan had submitted to China a list of projects to be financed from the \$200 million loan offered in November, 1970. Pakistan President Yahya Khan's economic adviser MM Ahmed told the Associated Press of Pakistan today that China had sent a team to Pakistan for the study and investigation of these projects. Ahmed said 33 percent of the loan was in the form of commodity under which various items had been brought including three coasters which had already arrived in Chittagong. China would also supply one lakh tonnes of rice for East Pakistan, he added.

MUKTI BAHINI READY TO MEET FRESH OFFENSIVE
Five months after the Martial Law regime's crackdown in Bangladesh the Mukti Bahini emerged as a fiery force and fought the Pakistani army of occupation to a near standstill. A Mukti

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Woman claims SI stole Tk 2.5 lakh during raid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman has alleged that a sub-inspector "took Tk 2.5 lakh" from her home in Dhaka's Rupnagar area during a drive on Thursday.

The woman, aged around 55, alleged that SI Masudur Rahman of Rupnagar Police Station took the money she earned by selling cattle and asked her to keep mum. If she does not, he threatened to implicate her in a narcotics case otherwise.

The SI, however, denied taking any money from her.

During the drive, police picked up the woman, who is also the owner of the property, along with two others and later showed them arrested under section 74 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance.

The next day, the women were freed upon paying a fine at the court.

On Saturday, the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

New Delhi opens first 'smog tower'

AFP, New Delhi

India's capital New Delhi opened its first "smog tower" yesterday aimed at reducing the air pollution blamed for thousands of premature deaths every year, but experts were sceptical.

Concentrations of tiny deadly particles in Delhi's air regularly exceed safe limits by up to 20 times, particularly in winter when its 20 million people are enveloped in a noxious grey blanket of smog.

Forty giant fans on the 25-metre (82-foot) tower will pump 1,000 cubic metres of air per second through filters that halve the amount of harmful particulates in a radius of one square kilometre (0.4 square miles), according to engineers.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Eriko, Sharif's kids They'll to be in the DMP's support centre

Parents get visiting rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After hearing the writ petition filed by Nakano Eriko, a Japanese national who came to Bangladesh to fight for legal custody of her two daughters, a High Court rule yesterday said the children will remain at Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Victim Support Centre until August 31.

They were taken from the custody of their father on Sunday.

The HC bench of Justice

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 24

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36
				8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

XULHAZ MURDER Accused asks for death by firing squad

Court sets Aug 31 for verdict delivery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accused in the Xulhaz-Tonoy murder case told a judge that he would prefer death by the firing squad in public, if the court was to give him the death penalty.

At the end of yesterday's closing arguments of the proceeding, Arafat Rahman Siam, member of militant outfit Ansar al Islam, said, "Sir, if I get the death penalty in the case as a militant, please order for my execution by the firing squad."

Siam was given the death penalty in another case in February.

He repeated the sentence twice before Judge Majibur Rahman of the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal set August 31 to deliver the verdict in the case.

Siam is one of the eight members of Ansar al Islam accused in the case.

He did not say why he

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Scores of people surround an official of Barishal General Hospital, who is handing out tokens for the first dose of the Sinopharm vaccine. As only a 100 tokens were being handed out, people rushed to the hospital to collect theirs as soon as possible. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Star HEALTHLINE

Breathing exercises won't prevent Covid, BUT CAN CERTAINLY HELP

STAR HEALTH DESK

While Covid-19 presents mild symptoms in many, some cases become severe as respiratory symptoms start to appear. For protection, getting vaccinated is necessary. But if you still cannot get the vaccine, besides wearing masks and following other health guidelines, investing time in breathing exercises that strengthen your lung capacity can help.

Any form of exercise that may lead to you requiring more oxygen than your resting breathing

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Hyginex spray
Instant hand sanitizer with moisturizer

BEACON Pharmaceuticals Limited