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SECOND EDITION



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Tigers stroll to maiden T20I win against Kiwis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When Mushfiqur Rahim struck Cole McConchie over midwicket for a boundary in the 15th over, Bangladesh had registered their first-ever T20I victory over New Zealand at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday, less than a month after clinching their maiden T20I series against Australia at home.

The seven-wicket victory was all the more overwhelming for the Tigers as they did it after bundling out New Zealand for a paltry 60 in 16.5 overs -- Kiwis' joint-lowest total ever in T20Is.

The win also saw T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad become the most

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Bangladesh spinner Nasum Ahmed, right, clenches his fist after dismissing New Zealand batsman Colin de Grandhomme, 2nd from left, during the first T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Another wave may roll in soon

Experts fear citing complacency, recent Covid developments in India

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Despite a steady dip in infection and death rates over the last three weeks, experts fear another wave of Covid-19 might be around the corner and say there is no room for complacency.

Their fear is rooted in the lowering of guard by the authorities and general public alike amid an improving coronavirus situation.

It also stems from how things are changing in neighbouring India where a panel of health analysts see a third wave coming any time between September and October.

Since the pandemic hit these shores in March last year, Bangladesh has witnessed a pattern of infection and deaths similar to that in India.

Against this backdrop, health officials in Bangladesh have urged people to

strictly maintain health guidelines while participating in economic activities, which are returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Experts said the infection and death rates are still above the danger level and the withdrawal of restrictions on all economic and social activities, except education institutions, may fuel another spike.

The infection rate on August 31 was 11.95 percent. It was 29.97 percent on August 1, according to the DGHS data. An infection rate above five percent is widely considered to be in the danger level.

If there are no Covid-19 cases and deaths for two to three weeks, then it can be said the situation is under control, according to the DGHS.

"There is no room for complacency since the infection and death rates are still high. As all economic activities are open and people are not caring much

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

PM ON COVID JABS Govt to arrange 1 crore doses every month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that the government has made arrangements to get more than one crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines every month.

The prime minister said this in response to a query from Awami League lawmaker Shahiduzzaman Sarker.



SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

25pc rise in rice output by 2050

Govt sets the target to feed the additional population

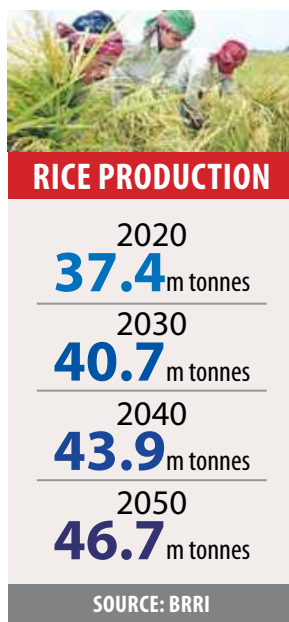
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has targeted a 25 percent increase in rice production by 2050 by combining the efforts of farmers, rice scientists and agricultural officials to feed the additional population.

A group of researchers has prepared the "Rice vision for Bangladesh: 2050" calculating the projected population by 2050, assessing the state of cultivable land, annual rise in rice production and climatic condition.

Production of the staple will be increased by raising genetic gain, cultivating uncultivated land, mechanising agriculture and ensuring

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REMAND FOR PORI Lower courts abused their authority: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that courts "abused" their authorities by placing Pori Moni in remand for multiple times in a drug case.

A High Court bench comprising Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice KM Zahid Sarwar expressed the opinion during the hearing of a petition challenging the legality

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

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Salutations and kudos to our honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina upon successful completion of trial run of Metro-rail.

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BANGLADESH UPDATE

3,062
New cases in 24hrs

15,03,680
Total cases

26,274
Deaths

14,31,984
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE

4,539,682
Deaths

218,913,594
Total cases

BUYING SIMS WITHOUT NID CARD

BTRC decides to cap it to two

SHAHID BAPPY

A mobile phone user will not be able to get more than two SIM cards against his or her passport or driving licence or birth certificate, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has decided.

Also, those SIM cards have to be registered within six months with the mobile operators against their National Identity (NID) cards. Failing to do so will lead to blocking of the cards if there is no valid reason for the delay in providing copies of the cards to the carrier.

The decision was made at a meeting of the telecom regulator recently to check crimes using SIM cards, said meeting sources.

Currently, a mobile phone user can buy 15 SIM cards against his or her NID card.

The BTRC allows those without NID or smart NID cards to get SIM cards against any of their passport or driving licence or birth registration certificate.

However, a mobile phone user can buy up to 15 SIM cards against each of the five identification documents. In this way, the person could purchase maximum 75 SIM cards, said BTRC sources.

The BTRC has already asked operators to prepare, said sources, adding that a directive would be issued.

The operator would send a text message to the user 30 days before the date of registration would be due.

The request for re-registration using the NID or smart card will also be sent via SMS. The phone numbers will be disabled if not re-registered.

Asked, BTRC Chairman Sam Sunder Sikder said the move is aimed at stopping criminal activities which are done by misusing SIM cards.

"It is being brought under one rule. This rule is applicable to all, whether they are Bangladeshi citizens or

foreigners," he said.

According to the commission sources, the meeting decided that the regulator will cancel registration of the additional SIMs within 90 days of issuing a directive in this regard.

The mobile phone operator will take necessary steps to inform customer concerned about this, the sources said.

According to a report of the commission, the number of people who have taken 15 SIMs against one birth registration certificate is 154.

The number of people who have taken 15 SIMs against their driving licence is 26 and the number of people who have taken 15 SIMs against one passport is 84.

The number of people who have taken 3 SIMs against one birth certificate is 4,540, against one driving licence 394, and against one passport 4,373.

As of now, BTRC's Central Biometric Verification Monitoring Platform system does not have data on the same person's passport and birth certificate. The platform has all the data on those documents provided to purchase SIM cards so far in the country.

As there is no way to establish a link between national identity card, smart NID card, passport, driving licence and birth registration certificate, a customer has the opportunity to register a total of 75 SIMs, 15 against each of the five IDs, which is against the government guidelines.

The commission further said that in all cases, SIM registration, verification, re-activation, re-registration, replacement, de-activation etc. must be done only from the respective sales center of the operator concerned. It cannot be done through any retailer.

"We are in the consultation with the regulator, and will comply with any forthcoming instructions in this regard," Hossain Sadat, acting chief corporate affairs officer of Gramenphone Ltd, said.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Even though DSCC has put up a warning sign, inset, and fences around Hajaribagh's Kalunagar canal to prevent waste-dumping, the area's residents keep piling up junk in the water body. This line of behaviour raises the question, why do we keep treating our waterbodies the way we do?

Lower courts abused their authority: HC

FROM PAGE 1

of the remand order of a lower court.

Shamsunnahar Smriti, popularly known as Pori Moni, was released from jail yesterday morning, four weeks after Rab arrested the actress from her Banani home on July 4 allegedly with a stash of drugs and alcohol.

Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam at one point during the proceedings said the magistrate had abused the power by granting a remand order for the police to question Pori Moni for the third time.

"The investigation officer [of the case] appealed and the judge granted remand. What material was present in the investigating officers' petition that this remand was approved?" he questioned.

"This cannot happen in any civilised society," he said.

Ain o Salish Kendra, a human rights and legal assistance group, filed a self-initiated petition to question the repeated remand that allowed the police to interrogate Pori Moni in their custody.

Lawyer ZI Khan Panna and Pori Moni's lawyer Md Mojibur Rahman represented the petitioners at the hearing. They were also accompanied by Syeda Nasrin and Md Shaheenuzzaman.

Deputy Attorney General Abu Yahya Dulal and Assistant Attorney General Mizanur Rahman represented the state.

Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam said the Supreme Court has guidelines on remand, but the magistrates were not following them. Panna then called for an order to follow these guidelines.

The judge then said that the petition would be recorded.

Pori Moni's lawyer Mojibur Rahman told the court that neither Section 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, nor the Appellate Division's guidelines were followed in issuing the remand order.

The justice then said the High Court could examine the decision, call the remand record from the magistrate, and ask them for a satisfactory explanation for their decision.

"If they fail to answer, we can respond that we are unsatisfied and call for an appearance," he said.

A guideline could also be issued on how quickly a hearing date for bail should be set.

When assistant attorney general Mizanur Rahman noted that Pori Moni was no longer in remand, the Justice said: "We want to ask what material led to the granting of remand thrice."

"Why did the magistrate abuse his power? Was there a justification, after a four-day remand, to grant a third remand? We will ask the investigation officer to appear with the case docket," Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam said.

"If the investigation officer, without any material, submits a petition for remand, why did these two magistrates

accept them?" he said. "This must not happen."

Though 2:00pm was set for further hearing, the court ordered "not today" upon a request by the assistant attorney general.

PORI MONI RELEASED

The film actress came out of Kashimpur Central Women's Jail in Gazipur at 9:36am in a white car and waved at the crowd gathered to see her.

Standing through the sunroof of the car, Pori Moni was seen shaking hands with her fans and taking selfies with them.

On Tuesday, a Dhaka court, considering her health, age and reputation in the film industry, granted her ad-interim bail.

The jail authorities could not release her the same day as they did not get the bail order in time.

The bail order will be valid until submission of the police report, the judge said in his order.

After her arrest, the actress was placed on a four-day remand first, and a two-day-remand after that and then again on a one-day remand. Three separate magistrates of the CMM court issued the orders placing her in remands.

Pori Moni had previously made headlines after she filed an attempted rape and murder case against several persons including a businessman centring an incident at the Dhaka Boat Club.

25pc rise in rice output

FROM PAGE 1

fair price of crops, said researchers.

At a seminar yesterday in the capital, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) presented a strategic paper on how to increase rice production. It also unveiled the cover of a book titled "Doubling Rice Productivity (DRP) in Bangladesh". The book is an outcome of two years' work by 40 researchers.

Presenting the research at the seminar, BRRI Director General Shajahan Kabir said the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) would have to play an important role in this regard by promoting rice seeds of high-yielding varieties among the farmers.

The DAE would have to arrange exhibition plots of high-yielding rice varieties and monitor the overall process so that farmers preserve at least 35 percent of their produce as seeds and distribute it among other growers, he added.

The BRRI organised the seminar on the occasion of "Mujib Borsho".

Shajahan said the DRP is a model concept for sustainable rice production for the next 30 years. It is not necessarily a model to double the rice production, but to double labour productivity and increase the production on a piece of land.

Following the model, Bangladesh will fulfil the Sustainable Development Goal by 2030 and become a developed country by 2041, he said.

Researchers said it is possible to raise the country's rice production to 40.7 million tonnes by 2030, 43.9 million tonnes by 2040 and 46.7 million tonnes by 2050.

The country produced 37.4 million tonnes of rice last year, according to BRRI data.

Researchers found 17 ecotypes of rice for different ecosystems in the country.

Bangladesh will have to feed an estimated 215.4 million people in 2050. The current yearly consumption of rice is 148kg per person, which is decreasing by 0.7 percent every year. So, it is expected that the annual consumption of rice would be 133kg per person by 2040.

Currently, the production of rice is increasing by 0.34 percent each year. At this rate, the country's rice production may reach 47.2 million

PER CAPITA ANNUAL RICE CONSUMPTION

1977	180 kg
2020	148 kg
2040	133 kg

POPULATION PROJECTION

2015	160 million
2030	186 million
2050	215 million

SOURCE: BRRI

tonnes in 2050.

As per the model used by the researchers, 44.6 million tonnes of rice would be required for the country in 2050.

Considering all environmental odds, researchers have set a target to produce 9.8 tonnes of Boro per hectare, 6.2 tonnes per hectare in drought infested areas, 7.3 tonnes in flood affected and 8.1 tonnes in salinity affected areas by 2030.

Speaking at the event as chief guest, Agricultural Minister Muhammad Abdur Razaque said the book published by BRRI would work as a guideline to increase rice production in Bangladesh.

Today, Bangladesh ranks third in rice production in the world. The country is now self-sufficient in food production. It only became possible by following the agriculture policy adopted by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Shamsul Alam, state minister for planning, Humanth Bhandari, representative of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Md Asadullah, director general of DAE, and Sheikh Mohammad Bokhtiar, executive chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, addressed the seminar, with agriculture ministry Senior Secretary Mesbahul Islam in the chair.

Yemeni workers in Saudi at risk of forced returns: HRW

AFP, Dubai

Human Rights Watch has called on Saudi Arabia to stop laying off Yemeni employees, warning that this could force them to return to the humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country.

Yemen has been embroiled in conflict between the government, which is backed by a Saudi-led military coalition, and the Iran-allied Huthi rebels since 2014, creating what

the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Saudi authorities in July began "to terminate or not renew contracts of Yemeni professionals", HRW said in a statement on Tuesday.

The rights group cited local Saudi media reports that said new regulations require businesses to limit the percentage of workers from certain nationalities -- including 25 percent for Yemeni citizens.

Another wave may roll in soon

FROM PAGE 1

about maintaining health guidelines, the country might face another wave," Dr Mushtuq Husain, an adviser to the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

Experts also think the government should utilise the improving situation to plug the loopholes in healthcare facilities and so become adequately prepared for a possible third wave. They also suggested that the government ramp up vaccination, which is key to curbing deaths and hospitalisations.

Only around four percent of the country's population of over 160 million have so far received both doses of Covid-19 vaccine.

Talking to The Daily Star recently, Abul Bashar Mohammed Khurshid Alam, director general of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said, "We are keeping an eye on the neighbouring country [India] and also the Covid situation across the world."

"We will act in accordance with the situation. But again, if we fail to maintain health guidelines, things will turn grave in no time."

Experts blame the Delta variant, first detected in India, for the second wave that has so far claimed around 10,000 lives in Bangladesh.

In India, a panel of experts in a report submitted to the country's Prime Minister's Office predicted three scenarios: the third wave could peak in October with 3.2 lakh positive cases per day; five lakh positive cases per day; and two lakh positive cases per day.

After infections and deaths peaked in India in late April and early May, when daily infections shot to 4 lakh, it started declining gradually.

India, a country of over 1.36 billion people, recorded 25,000 new cases on August 22. But daily cases have risen to over 40,000 since then.

Kerala's weekly positivity rate is around 14-19 percent, which impacted the neighbouring states,

according to an NDTV report yesterday.

The third wave will be driven mostly due to mutations of the virus, reported Indian media quoting government experts.

Experts are already looking at the Kappa variant, which was designated a Variant of Interest in April 2021 by the WHO.

Another variant causing concerns is the new Delta plus variant, which is considered highly infectious and has been reported in Maharashtra, Indian media reported, adding that experts have warned that this variant may trigger a third wave of the pandemic in the state.

Besides, the spectre of children being affected in a possible third wave is also rising.

"During the first wave, Covid attacked mainly the elderly and spared the youngsters -- the second wave is attacking a large number of young breadwinners. The third wave is likely to attack children, since most adults are already infected or immunised," Dr Devi Shetty, a cardiac surgeon and head of Karnataka's Covid-19 task force, wrote in an editorial in the Times of India on May 12.

Bangladesh's Covid-19 situation improved significantly early this year as daily infection rates came down to around two percent, but from March it started shooting up again.

Since the first case of the Delta variant was detected in India on May 8, the situation went downhill fast. Due to the dominance of the Delta variant, Bangladesh witnessed record daily infection and death rates. June and July were the worst months.

THINGS THE GOVT SHOULD DO

Former DGHS director (disease control) Dr Be-Nazir Ahmed suggested that the government immediately conduct a serosurveillance in different areas to understand the real Covid-19 situation.

Serosurveillance provides estimates of antibody levels against infectious diseases and is considered the gold standard for measuring

New body to campaign for Hindu laws reform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new organisation was formed yesterday to campaign for necessary reform to the country's "customary Hindu laws" and formulating relevant new laws.

The central committee of the newly formed Bangladesh Hindu Law Reform Council currently comprises 35 members.

Gradually, the number of members will be increased to 101, said a press release of the council.

The council was formed during a virtual meeting held by individuals belonging to different religious communities with various professional backgrounds. Journalist Ajay Dasgupta chaired the meeting.

Mayna Talukdar, associate professor of Dhaka University's Sanskrit department, has been made president of the council, while journalist Pulack Ghatack was named as its general secretary, said the release.

Prof Nirmal Kumar Saha of Chattogram University, journalist Subhash Saha and rights activist Rina Roy have been made vice-presidents of the council.

As part of its campaign, the newly formed council will conduct surveys, organise discussions, create mass opinion and stage demonstrations, the release added.

Primarily, the council will campaign for revoking gender-based discrimination from provisions related to Hindu inheritance and custodianship, gender- and caste-based discrimination from adoption clauses. It will also campaign for formulating divorce law, and making marriage registration mandatory.

Of those, campaigning to establish equal rights in inheritance law will be prioritised, the release added.

Lowest daily Covid deaths in 2 months

10 lakh Pfizer shots arrive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country recorded the deaths of 79 Covid-19 patients yesterday, the lowest in more than two months.

"There has been a downward trend in the transmission of Covid-19 from the last week of July and the first week of August," said Nazmul Alam, director of disease control at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), in an online bulletin yesterday.

According to the DGHS data, both the Covid-19 cases and fatalities in Bangladesh dropped further as the country logged 79 deaths and 3,062 new cases respectively in the 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

The positivity rate also declined to 10.11 percent.

The fresh number pushed the country's total fatalities to 26,274 while the cases reached 1,503, 680, according to the DGHS.

On August 5 and 10, 264 deaths were recorded.

With the latest count, the total number of deaths rose to 26,274 and the total confirmed cases to 1,503,680.

Of the yesterday's deceased, 43 were men and 36 were women.

Meanwhile, health officials received 10 lakh shots of Pfizer vaccines from the United States.

The United States sent those vaccines as gift under global vaccine supply arrangement Covax.

Health Secretary Lokman Hosen Mia and the US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller received the consignment at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Maudul Islam Prodan, senior public relations officer of the health ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The country has so far received 3.81 crore Covid-19 vaccines from different sources. Of those, 2.62 crore jabs have already been administered since the vaccination campaign was started on January 27 this year.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh has received 24 fridges capable of preserving vaccines at minus 70 degrees Celsius or below temperature.


Of all Covid-19 vaccines used in the country, the Pfizer vaccines require minus 70 degrees Celsius temperature for preservation.

Unicef has delivered those fridges on Tuesday under Covax arrangement while two more will arrive tonight, Shamsul Haque, member secretary of the Covid-19 Vaccine Deployment Committee at the health directorate, told The Daily Star this afternoon.

"We will keep those fridges in Dhaka to store vaccines," Shamsul said.

Around 90 lakh Covid-19 vaccine jabs can be preserved in those fridges.

Three more succumb to dengue



Death toll 45
3 died in Sept so far
30 in Aug, **12** in July
295 more hospitalised yesterday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three more people died of dengue, while 295 more dengue patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday. According to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), among the new cases, 45 infections were diagnosed outside Dhaka. A total of 7,698 were diagnosed in August, out of 10,651 infections this year. Of the total infected people, 882 are from

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Jurain regularly wears a dawn-like atmosphere in the afternoon these days. As one of the neighbourhoods hit hardest by dengue, its streets are being fogged heavily by DSCC staffers. However, locals said this tenacity was missing even a week ago, suspecting the continued rise in dengue cases to have set some alarms off for the city authorities. These photos were taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Fire service to get major overhaul

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The government is all set to increase manpower and other capacities of Fire Service and Civil Defense to modernise the service-oriented organisation in the wake of growing demand.

As part of the move, the Fire Service and Civil Defense Directorate has already proposed an organogram to the home ministry for approval, increasing its manpower to 31,169 from existing 13,130.

Construction of a training academy modeled on such institutions in developed countries is underway, while 56 types of

equipment including modern vehicles, pumps and rescue instruments are being purchased at a cost of Tk 223.38 crore, said officials.

"We are working to reshape and modernise the fire service in line with the prime minister's vision 2030 and 2040," Brig Gen Sazzad Hussain, director general of the fire service, told The Daily Star.

The new organogram proposed to upgrade the post of Director General (DG) of fire service to grade-1 and appoint a major general for the post. Now a brigadier general is serving as the DG of the organisation.

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AT A GLANCE

- Number of fire stations at present: **148**; manpower: **13,130**
- Proposed number: **457**; manpower: **31,169**



NEW TRAINING ACADEMY

To be built at Gazaria, Munshiganj Total Land: **100.92** acres Allocated money: **Tk 223.38cr** Tk **248.21cr** worth equipment purchased

Kumudini: A trailblazer in healthcare charity

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

When Covid-19 patients are spending hundreds of thousands of taka to get treatment at hospitals and clinics, a hospital in Mirzapur -- a small town in Tangail district -- has been providing free treatment for all Covid-19 patients since May last year.

All the Covid-19 patients in this hospital can have free bed, free oxygen therapy, free check-up and free food throughout their stay.

This is no other than martyred philanthropist Ranada Prashad Shaha's Kumudini Hospital.

Animesh Bhowmick, assistant general manager of Kumudini Hospital, said, "We do not take any charge for general bed and oxygen therapy from Covid-19 patients. They have to spend Tk 3,000-4,000 per day for ICU beds, whereas in other hospitals the cost is more than Tk 30,000 per day."

"We also do antigen tests for these patients free of cost. And, for RT-PCR test we collect samples and send them to the government designated testing

facilities at a cost of Tk 100 per sample. So, patients can get all the services under one roof," he said.

Thanks to these services, Kumudini Hospital has become one of the most popular healthcare providers in the region.

However, the hospital's name is linked to a tragic incident.

In 1903, seven-year-old Ranada Prasad Shaha saw his mother, Kumudini Devi dying from post-natal tetanus, as she could not be taken to a hospital, which was miles away from Mirzapur, then a remote village.

This tragedy inspired Shaha, who later became one of the wealthiest businessmen in Bengal, to dedicate his life for the welfare of the poor and sick and for empowering women.

He committed all of his property and savings to build Kumudini Welfare Trust of Bengal (KWTB), which is now one of Bangladesh's biggest charitable organisations dedicatedly working for medical services, education and women's empowerment.

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Dr Saleheen Qadri no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dr Syed Saleheen Qadri, scientific coordinator of Institute for Developing Science and Health Initiatives (ideSHi) and husband of renowned scientist Dr Firdausi Qadri, passed away early yesterday.

The retired professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology department of Dhaka University breathed his last around 4:30am at Universal Medical College and Hospital in Dhaka.

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'Beware of fake Covid testing booths'

3 held over forging health ministry's approval to conduct tests across country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested three officials of an organisation that exists only on paper, TKS Healthcare Service, over forging documents that showed the health ministry's approval to collect samples and conduct Covid-19 antigen tests.

They spent Tk 2,500 to create the fake approval document and were planning to set up over 100 booths across the country, take Tk 2 lakh from local representatives in advance, and thus, swindle several crores of taka in the process, detectives said, following the arrest.

TKS Managing Director Abdullah Al Amin, Chairperson Abdul Hasan Tusher and Marketing Manager

Shaheer Mia were held from Dhaka and Jhalakhati districts.

The gang faked the signature of Jakia Parveen, deputy secretary of health ministry, to prepare a fake permission document, Harun-or-Rashid, joint commissioner (DB-North), told a press briefing at DMP media centre yesterday.

DB officials said the arrestees set up a temporary office at Farmgate on July 11 and appealed to the health ministry to get approval for conducting antigen tests.

In the application, they mentioned that they had arrangements to conduct Covid-19 tests at 4,562 unions, with around 5,126 frontline fighters.

In actuality, they had no such arrangements, and they knew their

application would be rejected. Therefore, they made a fake approval document, the DB official said, quoting the arrestees.

They had a plan to swindle around Tk 5 crore in the process, DB officials said.

Having no actual credentials or experience in healthcare, they appointed various people as upazila coordinators and field officers in Dhaka and Jhalakhati districts and defrauded people.

Harun said people should be aware of such fraudulent activities. If anyone notices someone setting up camp in the name of free Covid-19 tests, they should inform police.

A case was filed against the arrestees with Shahbagh Police Station.



Since May last year, Kumudini Hospital in Tangail has been providing free treatment for all Covid-19 patients. Inset, the hospital's parent organisation is aiming to build a global-standard medical research centre and hospital -- Kumudini International Institute of Medical Sciences and Cancer Research -- in Narayanganj. PHOTO: COURTESY

DHAKA UNIVERSITY Students, teachers to undergo drug test

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities have decided that all of its students, teachers and officers shall undergo drug tests, in an effort to identify those who abuse drugs.

On Tuesday, DU syndicate formed a seven-member committee to set a policy for testing, said pro-VC (Academic) Prof ASM Maksud Kamal.

"We took the initiative after getting instructions from the education ministry to identify students and teachers who abuse drugs. The [seven-member] committee will look into how testing will be conducted and what facilities will be needed at the university," he added.

In 2019, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs proposed introducing drug tests at government and educational institutions.

Contacted, VC Prof Md Akhtaruazzam said, "We are trying to uproot drugs from our society. It's not possible to keep everybody in check without an institutional initiative."

Extortionists, victim both arrested!

Arrestees include two 'journos', a wanted accused in Hallmark scam case, says Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Posing as journalists, two people blackmailed a wanted accused in the Hallmark scam case -- they held him hostage at a hotel, and tried to extort money from him.

But their ploy ultimately failed when a team of Rab-1 conducted a raid at the hotel and rescued the victim, Abdul Maleque, before arresting him for being a wanted accused in the scam case.

The incident played out on Wednesday. Along with Maleque, Rab arrested two extortionists -- Ekbal Hosen Chowdhury and Amirul Islam, who introduced themselves as senior staff reporter of Amar Praner Bangladesh and Khilkhet correspondent of Asian

Television respectively.

Abdul Maleque is the managing director of Nakshi Knit Composite.

Rab seized a video camera, two cheques worth Tk 95 lakh, Tk 5.05 lakh cash, and three stamp papers from them, said Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Legal and Media Wing of Rab, at a press briefing at its media centre in Dhaka yesterday.

"The arrestees claimed to work for the so-called newspaper and private TV channel. But when we contacted their authorities, we were told the two had been fired for similar criminal activities," he said.

Replying to a query, Commander Moin said they will investigate whether the employers -- including

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Capt Nawshad to be laid to rest today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Capt Nawshad Ataul Quaiyum, a pilot of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, will be flown to Dhaka from Nagpur, India this morning.

Carrying the body, a flight is scheduled to land at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 8:30am, said Tahera Khondoker, deputy general manager (public relations), Biman. She said a Dhaka-bound flight from Doha will bring the body with a stopover at Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur.

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News portal launched by police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The relationship between police and the media should be institutionalised, said Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed yesterday.

From that prospective, Bangladesh Police has launched a news portal to highlight the law enforcers' achievements in home and abroad, said the IGP.

"In the news portal, police will follow the golden rules of journalism," he said.

The police chief was addressing the inaugural ceremony of their news portal -- news.police.gov.bd -- at the Police Headquarters (PHQ).

In response to a journalist's query regarding whether the portal will cover police personnel's good deeds and bad

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

BNP observes 43rd founding anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday observed its 43rd founding anniversary.

Marking the day, party's secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and other senior leaders -- including Mirza Abbas, Nazrul Islam Khan and Amanullah Aman -- placed floral wreaths at the party founder Ziaur Rahman's grave in the capital's Chandrima Udyan.

Speaking with journalists there, Fakhrul said they will wage movement against the present "undemocratic" government to restore democracy in the country.

"False cases have been filed against 35 lakh people, more than 500 party leaders and activists have been abducted and more than a thousand were killed. Even after that the party is still on strong footing," Fakhrul said.

He said after the assassination of Ziaur Rahman, all thought that the party will cease to exist but his successor Khaleda Zia fought against autocratic regime and established democracy in the country.

"This government came to power illegally and sent our leader to jail in false cases," he said.

He also alleged that party leaders and activists were barred from coming to Zia's graveyard. "It is nothing but fascism."

When asked about the ruling party leaders' statements that Ziaur Rahman's body is not in the graveyard, Fakhrul said it is tough to answer such questions as they have no merit.

The party was founded on September 1, 1978, by late president Ziaur Rahman with a 19-point programme designed to build a "self-reliant" Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir along with party leaders placed a floral wreath at the party founder Ziaur Rahman's grave in the capital's Chandrima Udyan yesterday, marking its 43rd founding anniversary. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Dr Saleheen

FROM PAGE 3

said AKM Tariful Islam, media manager of icddr.b.

He was 73 years old. He was suffering from health complications for several days, Tariful Islam added.

The namaz-e-janaza of the former dean of Faculty of Biological Sciences of DU was held after Zuhr prayers at Azad Mosque of Gulshan.

Later, he was buried at Banani graveyard.

Dr Qadri was a specialist and researcher in industrial microbiology and enzymology. He held several important positions, such as the chairman of DU Department of Biochemistry and the dean of the Biology Faculty.

DU Vice-Chancellor Dr Akhtaruzzaman expressed deep shock at his death and termed him a "good-natured, gentle and humble man".

Dr Saleheen's wife Dr Firdausi Qadri was declared winner of the Ramon Magsaysay Award on Tuesday.



Nearly 18 months away from schools, children are passing their time sitting around indoors. But the situation is slightly better for children who can go outside and engage in creative activities, like these two in Barishal Sadar's Karapur area, who are making rafts out of taro stems. This photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Kumudini

FROM PAGE 3

On May 7, 1971 RP Shaha and his 26-year-old son Bhavani Prasad Shaha were picked up by the Pakistan army, and they never returned. However, this irreparable loss did not stop this philanthropist family from continuing their charitable initiatives.

At present, KWTB runs nine organisations, revenues from all of which are spent for charitable purposes.

KWTB has recently embarked on another humanitarian venture: establishing a global standard medical research centre and hospital. It has been named as "Kumudini International Institute of Medical Sciences and Cancer Research (KIIMSCaRe)".

KIIMSCaRe complex will include a 300-bed general hospital fitted with in-built laboratory for diagnosis, emergency beds and indoor and outdoor services; a 50-bed designated cancer hospital to provide diagnosis, treatment and palliative care; a medical college that will offer MBBS and BDS degrees; a nursing institute to offer BSc degree in nursing; and a

medical technology institute.

According to Rajiv Prasad Shaha, grandson of RP Shaha and managing director of KWTB, around 430 decimals of land of KWTB in Narayanganj have been developed for this massive project.

In keeping with the founder's principles, KIIMSCaRe plans to provide free quality treatment to poor and needy. It'll provide the same quality treatment to all, but how much a patient pays will depend on how much they can afford.

"Planning and land development have already been completed. Now, we are gathering resources, one of our biggest challenges at present. This is our dream project, and we are hopeful that we shall complete it, overcoming all the obstacles," said Rajiv Shaha. "We would also like to conduct fundamental research in the field of medical sciences, particularly cancer treatment, at KIIMSCaRe," stated Rajiv.

The oldest and most prominent of the family's philanthropic ventures is Kumudini Hospital, which is a pioneer in providing high-quality treatment at a

surprisingly low cost.

Formally inaugurated in July 1944 by Lord RG Casey, the then governor of British Bengal, it is now a 1,050-bed general hospital, which provides free treatment to all who cannot afford medical care.

Even for solvent patients, the treatment cost is very low. People can visit specialist doctors for one month continuously by purchasing a Tk 20 ticket from the outdoor section. All kinds of general surgery and gynaecological operation charges range from Tk 300 to 6,000.

Annually, the hospital serves more than 4,50,000 patients through outdoor services and 60,000 through indoor and facilitates more than 25,000 minor and major surgeries.

Rajiv Shaha said, "We only receive nominal treatment cost from the admitted patients. We do not take any bed charge, and we deliver free food to all admitted patients."

"We provide 22 special services at the hospital, and we have a team of highly-dedicated doctors, nurses and technologists equipped with the most modern technology," he added.

Besides these, KWTB founded Kumudini Nursing Institute in 1973, Kumudini Women's Medical College in 2001 and Kumudini Medical Technology Institute in 2019 -- making its hospital complex in Mirzapur self-sufficient and one of the largest healthcare facilities of the country.

Till 2020, 4,582 nurses have graduated from the nursing institute, 1,921 doctors have graduated from the medical college, and in the first year of establishment, 14 medical technologists have graduated from the medical technology institute.

"We provide free education and boarding facilities to students from underprivileged families. The fees we get from solvent students and patients are spent to subsidise educational expenses of poor students and treatment of poor patients. We operate absolutely on a non-profit basis," said Rajiv.

"We try to ensure that students who graduate from our institutions are imbued with ideals of selflessness and altruism. Our motto is to serve people from all walks of life regardless of their caste, class or creed," stated Rajiv.

Fire service

FROM PAGE 3

Besides, posts for an additional DG and seven deputy DGs have been proposed. An official with the rank of brigadier general will be posted as the additional DG.

According to the new organogram, there will be 27 director posts instead of existing three posts, 135 deputy director posts against the current 14 posts, 257 assistant director posts in place of existing 29 posts, and 502 deputy assistant director posts against the existing 77 posts. Several meetings have already been held over the proposed organogram, sent to the ministry around one and a half month ago, said sources in the ministry and fire service.

Lt Col SM Zulfiqar Rahman, director (training, planning & development) of Fire Service, said that with funds from UNDP they will appoint a consultant firm to prepare rules for recruitment and promotion under the new organogram.

About the academy, he said it will have all modern facilities where coordinated trainings will be given to staff through simulations.

Four companies have already participated in DPP (development project proposal) for construction of the academy at Gazaria in Munshiganj, he added. He said now they have only one training centre

on five acres of land in the capital's Mirpur which cannot meet the demands.

To set up the academy, Tk 248.21 crore has been allocated for the acquisition of 100.92 acres of land, and acquisition is being undertaken by the deputy commissioner of the district, officials said.

Lt Col Zulfiqar also said each fire station will have manpower with expertise on rescue operation in case of fire, structural or chemical disasters.

The number of fire stations has been increased to 457 from 148. The director said the prime minister instructed to build fire stations in all upazilas, but they are yet to start operation in 95 upazilas.

Replying to a query, he said the yardstick for fire service is to reach any spot of incident within 8-10 minutes after receiving a call.

In the meantime, 1,137 fire service personnel have been trained abroad and 26,758 have been given internal training, officials said. In 2019, 241 officers and employees have been given training abroad.

Over 6.78 lakh have been trained on fire fighting and disaster management through 16,966 civilian training courses.

As part of preparing 60,000 volunteers, 44,612 have already received training. A project has also been undertaken to increase the number of ambulances, officials said.

BNP observes

FROM PAGE 3

Since then, it formed government four times -- once under the leadership of its founder Ziaur Rahman and thrice under the leadership of his widow Khaleda Zia -- and was in opposition twice. It boycotted the January 5, 2014 election but participated in the 2018 election with Khaleda in jail and got only five seats.

Khaleda landed in jail on February 8, 2017 after being sentenced to five years' imprisonment by a special court in Dhaka in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case. On October 30 the following year, the High Court raised her punishment to 10 years after dismissing her appeal in the case.

The former prime minister was convicted by another special court in Dhaka in the Zia Charitable Trust corruption case on October 29, 2018. She was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment by the court.

She was released from custody for six months on March 25 last year, just a day before the government announced a general holiday to contain Covid-19 transmission.

Extortionists

FROM PAGE 3

the owners and editors -- of the news media in question have any involvement in the crime.

Rab said they received a complaint on August 31 from Maleque's family, who said he was being held hostage in an unknown place, with Tk 1 crore being demanded for his release.

"The two fraudsters collected information on Maleque and approached him when he came to visit his relative's house in Uttarkhan. They threatened to publish news about his involvement in the Hallmark scam."

"They then took him to a hotel in Uttara. From there, they called his relatives and told them to come free him with the money, bank cheques, and stamps," he said.

"We'll hand over Maleque to police," he said.

News portal launched

FROM PAGE 3

conducts, he said if it's a major incident, then it will be published in the news portal.

The portal will have a separate reporting team, all of whom are police members, said Benazir Ahmed.

He further said initially the news portal was launched in Bangla, but it will have an English version too.

RFP Ref. No.: LRPS-BAN-2021-9169676

Request for Proposal (RFP): Establishing new LTA for Data Connectivity Solution for BTCL E1 Telephone Link between BTCL Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Exchange and UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office (BCO) at Agargaon.

UNICEF-Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong record and credibility of providing the above required service. To receive the detailed scope of work and procedure to submit the bid response, please email to "supplybangladesh@unicef.org"

Pre-bid Meeting Date: **Please see the schedule mentioned in the RFP**

The deadline to submit the proposal is **Thursday, 16 September 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs**

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process.

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তারিখঃ ১৭ ভাদ্র, ১৪২৮ বঃ
০১ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২১ খ্রিঃ

বিষয়ঃ একেজো গাড়ি বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জাতীয় মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কাউন্সিলের ০১টি একেজো যানবাহন (মিতসুবিশি জীপ) যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে এবং উহার রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ, ট্যাক্স টোকেন ও ফিটনেস সনদ যে অবস্থায় যে পর্যন্ত নবায়ন আছে ভিত্তিতে নিলামে বিক্রয়ের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিক, অগ্রহী ক্রেতাদের নিকট থেকে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য বাবদ ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা দিয়ে নিম্নবর্ণিত স্থান হতে একেজো গাড়ির দরপত্র সিডিউল গ্রহণ করতে হবে।

২। একেজো ঘোষিত গাড়ির দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রি ও দাখিলের শেষ সময়, দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলার সময় ও স্থান নিম্নরূপঃ

ক্রমিক নং	সিডিউল বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র সিডিউল দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী ও গ্রহণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম, ঠিকানা	দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
১।	বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশিত হবার পর হতে ২২-০৯-২০২১ তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা	২৩-০৯-২০২১ তারিখ সকাল ১১.০০ ঘটিকা	জাতীয় মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কাউন্সিল, জাতীয় স্মার্ট ভবন, কাকরাইল, ঢাকা	২৩-০৯-২০২১ তারিখ সকাল ১১.৩০ ঘটিকা

৩। দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী নিম্নরূপঃ
ক) দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় ব্যতীত কোন দরপত্র/দরপত্র সিডিউলের ফটোকপি গ্রহণযোগ্য হবেনা।
খ) বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ থাকবে।
গ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

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(উপসচিব)

উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ)

ফোনঃ ০২-২২২২২৬৪৩১

ই-মেইলঃ dd.admin@jamuka.gov.bd

GD-1568

Capt Nawshad

FROM PAGE 3

Maharashtra. Capt Nawshad's two sisters who are in Nagpur will also come to Dhaka on the same flight, Biman sources said.

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali, top officials of the ministry, Biman and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, leaders of Bangladesh Airlines' Pilot Association -- a platform of pilots of Biman -- among others, will be present at the airport to pay their last respect to him, they said.

From the Dhaka airport, Capt Nawshad's body will be taken to his residence at Uttara, Tahera said.

He will be buried at Banani graveyard today, Capt Sajjad, a pilot of Biman, told this newspaper.

Capt Nawshad, who suffered a massive heart attack in mid-air while commandeering a Muscat-Dhaka flight, died on Monday at a hospital in India. He was 44.

The pilot was in deep coma with ventilation support soon after he was admitted to the Kingsway Hospital in Nagpur following emergency landing of BG-022 on August 27.

Born in 1977, Capt Nawshad Ataul Quaiyum joined Biman as a cadet pilot on November 13, 2000. In 2002, he was promoted to First Officer of F-28 in September 20, 2002 after completing his training.

He became the first officer of the Airbus A-310 on May 14, 2006 and the first officer of Boeing 777 on December 14, 2011. He was last promoted to captain of the Boeing 737 on January 25, 2016, a position he held until his death.

Carrying 124 passengers on board, the Dhaka-bound Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight from Muscat made an emergency landing at the Nagpur Airport on August 27 when pilot Capt Nawshad Quaiyum suffered a massive cardiac arrest in mid-air.

The plane was near Raipur when it contacted Kolkata ATC for an emergency landing and was advised to land at the nearest airport, Nagpur.

Capt Mostakim Pias, who was the co-pilot of that flight, landed at the Nagpur airport safely.

Three more

FROM PAGE 3

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

As per DGHS data, 45 people have died of dengue in the country this year. All of them succumbed to the disease in July, August and September.

Twelve people died in July, 30 passed away in August, and three in September so far.

Among the deaths, 41 died in Dhaka division, two in Chattogram division, and one each in Rajshahi and Khulna divisions.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,156 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 141 outside the capital, DGHS data shows.

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Memo No. 18.15.0000.023.14.051.21-781 Dated: 31 August, 2021

e-Tender Corrigendum Notice

e-Tender has been published through National e-GP System Portal for the Procurement of following works:

Tender ID	Description	Old date & time	New date & time
595927	Document last selling date & time	06/09/2021 13:00	13/09/2021 13:00
	Closing & opening date & time	06/09/2021 14:30	13/09/2021 14:30
	Last date & time for tender/proposal security submission	06/09/2021 13:30	13/09/2021 13:30

All other terms and conditions including Addendum are in e-GP System.

Md. Mostafa Kamal Majumder
Member (Admin & Finance)
&
Project Director (Joint Secretary)
'Construction of Cargo Vehicle Terminal at Benapole Land Port' Project
Phone: 02-55013955

GD-1563

Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka

Memo: 46.207.007.17.02.2021-27

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl. No.	Method of Tender & Tender ID, Ref No.	Procurement item descriptions	Publishing date & time	Last selling date & time	Closing & opening date & time
1.	OTM (NCT) Tender ID. 599299 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2021-09	Supply of tire tubes/ tubeless tires (Group-Ga) for various types of vehicles under the Engineering Department (Mechanical) of DSCC in 2021-2022.	01-Sep-2021 11.00.00	15-Sep-2021 17.00.00	16-Sep-2021 14.00.00
2.	OTM (NCT) Tender ID.600981 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2021-241	Supply of various types of toners and accessories (subject to framework agreement) for computers, printers, photocopy machines for various departments/ branches/offices of DSCC in 2021-2022.	05-Sep-2021 11.00.00	19-Sep-2021 17.00.00	20-Sep-2021 14.00.00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal.

Alim un Razib
Deputy Secretary
Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department
Dhaka South City Corporation
E-mail: cspso@dhakasouthcity.gov.bd

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/৫১/২০২১-২২
জিডি-১৫৬৭



Erosion by the Jamuna river has already devoured almost 70 percent area of Jalalpur village in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

EROSION BY JAMUNA

Jalalpur, a village on verge of disappearance

Over 500 homestead devoured this monsoon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Residents of Jalalpur village in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila have been passing days in constant fear over the last couple of months since the mighty Jamuna river took a serious turn at the start of this monsoon and continued devouring most of the homesteads and vast croplands at the village.

"Seeing water bubbles created due to strong current in the river, we started removing our houses, but failed to save many other valuables. Alongside many other houses of the village, Jamuna engulfed my house within a few hours on Saturday night," Amanat Ali, a resident of Jalalpur village, said when this correspondent visited the erosion-hit village on Monday.

Mohir Uddin, a member of Ward No 1 under Jalalpur union, said more than 300-meter area, including over 50 to 60 houses, of the village have been washed away in the Jamuna since Saturday.

Erosion by the Jamuna continues devouring fresh areas at Jalalpur village, one of the biggest villages under the union, over the last couple of months, he said, adding that the water level started increasing in the river at the beginning of this



monsoon and already devoured over 500 homesteads.

"There were around 650 houses at Jalalpur North and Jalalpur South village at the beginning of this year. The river suddenly took a serious turn couple of months ago and washed away hundreds of houses, croplands and many institutions," Mohir said.

Now there are only 100 to 120 houses existing while over 500 to 550 houses, a school, three mosques already gone into the river, he further said.

Affected villagers said they are living inhuman as the fresh erosion made them homeless.

"Now most of us are depending on relief as we do not have any earning and shelters," said Mohammad Ruhul, an erosion victim.

While talking to this

correspondent, Shahzadpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Shah Mohammad Samsuzzoha said the upazila administration has already started relief distribution work at erosion-hit Jalalpur village.

Five tonnes of rice has been allotted for the erosion-hit victims on Tuesday, the UNO said.

They will help the affected villagers in their rehabilitation as soon the flood water reduces, he added.

Meanwhile, affected villagers fear that the rest of the village may devour in the river at any time as the river continues swelling.

They demanded permanent protection work to save the village from further erosion.

Contacted, Sirajganj Water Development Board (WDB) Sub Divisional Engineer Nasir Uddin said the WDB put sand bags at different places when the erosion started early this monsoon.

But, due to strong current in the river the temporary protection work washed away, devouring vast areas of the village, he said.

Protection work of 6.5-kilometre at a cost of around Tk 650 core has already been approved to protect Shahzadpur upazila from the river erosion.

PATUAKHALI MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL Brokers, medical representatives, pvt ambulance staffers disrupting services

Hospital Superintendent sends letter to the DC to take legal actions

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The services at Patuakhali Medical College Hospital are being hampered due to the misdoings of the hospital brokers, representatives of various pharmaceutical companies and private ambulance staffers.

The superintendent of the hospital sent a letter to the Patuakhali deputy commissioner (DC) on August 27 seeking legal steps in this regard.

In the letter, hospital Super Dr Abdul Matin stated that the incidents of harassment by the brokers and representatives of pharmaceutical companies in the inpatient and outpatient departments of Patuakhali Medical College Hospital are increasing day by day. As a result, patients are being deprived of the desired medical services. The number of medical tests at the hospital is decreasing. As the patients are not getting the desired services here, the government is being deprived of revenue. In this situation, the hospital super has sought the intervention of the DC to conduct mobile court at the hospital to curb the illegal activities of the brokers, representatives of pharmaceutical companies and private ambulance services.

Visiting the hospital on Tuesday, the hyperactivity of brokers, representatives of pharmaceutical companies and private ambulances was seen at different wards of Patuakhali Medical College Hospital.

Sabina from Hajikhali village in Sadar upazila came with her 18-month-old son Mohammad to the hospital for fever and cough. The doctor recommended an X-ray of the baby and told Sabina that it could be done at the hospital at a cost of only Tk 200. But as soon as she got out of the doctor's chamber, a broker took her to a private clinic in front of the hospital for the X-ray saying that it could be done only at Tk 150.

Archana Rani Saha, 35 of Arambagh area of Patuakhali town, just came out of a doctor's chamber when a representative of a pharmaceutical company took a snap of the prescription in her hand.

When asked, the representative said, "We only visit the hospital for 5 to 10 minutes and leave. This does not cause any problem

for the patients or hospital services."

Several private ambulances were seen parked inside the hospital premises.

President of Patuakhali Ambulance Owners' Association Md Nesar Uddin said the hospital has only two ambulances which are very inadequate.

"We transport patients at emergency. This is not disrupting the services of the hospital," he also said.

Md Limon, general secretary of the Patuakhali unit of the Pharmaceutical Representative Association 'Pharia', said he was aware of the letter from the hospital authorities. A meeting of the organisation will be called soon and a decision will be taken in this regard.



Patuakhali Medical College Hospital Campus.

PHOTO: STAR

Hospital super Dr Mohammad Abdul Matin, said that the representatives of the pharmaceutical company enter the doctors' chambers and gather inside. Brokers lure patients into private clinics to conduct medical tests, causing loss of the hospital revenue. Private ambulances obstruct patients to seek the government ambulance services. A letter has been sent to the deputy commissioner requesting him to take necessary steps in this regard.

Contacted, Patuakhali DC Mohammad Kamal Hossain said, it is the job of the hospital authorities. They will manage their activities.

"However, they have written for help and will provide necessary assistance in this regard."

Robbers kill bus driver

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Members of a robbers' gang stabbed a bus driver to death in Rangpur's Pirganj upazila and looted valuables from a passenger bus early yesterday.

The deceased was Monsur Ali, 50, a driver of Hanif Enterprise.

Police said when a Rangpur-bound passenger bus from Dhaka reached Dhaperhat area in Pirganj around 3:00am, robbers in guise of passengers started looting valuables from its passengers.

At one stage, they stabbed the driver of the bus and tried to take control of the vehicle.

Failing to take control of the vehicle, the gang stopped the bus near Champaganj area in Pirganj and fled the scene after beating the supervisor and helper of the bus.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and took the injured to Pirganj Upazila Health Complex.

Monsur died on way to the hospital, police said.

2 to die for murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A Pabna court yesterday sentenced two people to death in connection with a case for killing a man after abduction.

The convicts are Mohammad Robbel, 40, of Char Mirkamari village, and Rubel Hossain, 30, of Mushuria village in Ishwardi upazila.

Pabna District and Session Judge Mohamad Asaduzzaman also acquitted another accused of the case as charges brought against him could not be proved.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Cumilla
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.1900.000.07.002.2021-3081

e-Tender Notice
Tender Notice No. 06/2021-2022

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

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender/ Proposal ID No.	Document last selling/ downloading date and time	Tender/ proposal closing date and time	Method of tender
1.	IRIDP-3/CUM/DW-28	(a) Improvement of Khurua village-Santir Bazar Road via Khurua Ghat Road (Ch. 00-1065m (Road ID. 419904065) (b) Construction of 2 Nos. 0.625mx0.600m Culvert at Ch. 325m & 620m on the same road under Monohorgonj Upazila, District: Cumilla.	600545	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
2.	IRIDP-3/CUM/DW-32	(a) Improvement of Rammohon-Katakhol Road (Ch. 00-1500m (Road ID. 419095182) (b) Construction of 1x1.50mx1.50m RCC Box Culvert of Ch. 400m on the same road (c) Construction of 1x0.625mx0.600m Culvert at Ch. 540m on the same road under Barura Upazila, District: Cumilla.	600546	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
3.	IRIDP-3/CUM/SMW-57	Maintenance of Atharobag-Gobindpur Road (Ch. 00-1977m) (Road ID. 419314099) under Choudagram Upazila, District: Cumilla	600547	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
4.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-103	Widening of Payerkhola High School-Kachania-Narankora Road from Ch. 00m-1500m (Road ID. 419315442) under Choudagram Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601485	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
5.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-65	Periodic Maintenance of Jamtoli-Nagoripara-Seduci Road from Ch. 1225m-4210m (Road ID. 419915041) under Lalmai Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601183	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
6.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-66	Periodic Maintenance of Luter Char River Ghat-Viti Kandi River Ghat via Flood Shelter Road from Ch. 2500m-3500m (Road ID. 419884021) under Meghna Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601184	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
7.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-67	Periodic Maintenance of Lolbaria RHD-Dakshin Bijoypur GC Road from Ch. 00m-2106m (Road ID. 419912015) under Sadar Dakshin Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601185	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
8.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-68	Periodic Maintenance of Mathabanga UPC (Cenaiya bridge RHD)-Monipur Bazaar via Ghamora UPC Road from Ch. 00m-1655m (Road ID. 419543003) under Homna Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601186	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
9.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-69	Periodic Maintenance of Gorashal-Purba Sunaulah Road from Ch. 80m-1200m (Road ID. 419814006) under Muradnagar Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601187	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
10.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-70	Periodic Maintenance of Mokam UP Office-Pachkitta Bazar Road from Ch. 500m-2300m (Road ID. 419183008) under Burichong Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601188	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
11.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-71	Periodic Maintenance of Laximpur Bazar (Dighirpar)-Kailain Bazar Rd. Via Joag UPC Road from Ch. 00m-1000m (Road ID. 419273013) under Chandina Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601189	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
12.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-72	Rehabilitation of Krishnapur R&H-Amdour R&H Road from Ch. 00m-1290m (Road ID. 419724008) under Laksha Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601190	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
13.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-73	Widening of Lakkhanpur Bazar-Compani Bazar Road via Sorospur UP Road at Ch. 5000m-6050m (Road ID. 419903002) under Monogorganj Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601191	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM
14.	e-Tender/LGED/Cum/GOBM/21-22/W-74	Emergency Maintenance of Bizra RHD-Laksam Upazila HQ Road from Ch. 00m-8855m (Road ID. 419722004) under Laksham Upazila, District: Cumilla.	601192	20-09-2021 17:00pm	21-09-2021 12:10pm	LTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited through online at any branches of registered bank. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.lged.gov.bd.

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়

গণগ্রন্থাগার অধিদপ্তর

শাহবাগ, ঢাকা-১০০০

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দেশি পুস্তকের ছক

ক্র. নং	লেখকের নাম	শিরোনাম	প্রকাশনার (প্রতিষ্ঠান) নাম, ঠিকানা ও সেলফোন নম্বর	প্রকাশের তারিখ	সংস্করণ	পৃষ্ঠা সংখ্যা	বিষয়	মূল্য	আইএসবিএন	কাগজের ধরণ	বঁধাইয়ের ধরণ	মন্তব্য
১	২	৩	৪	৫	৬	৭	৮	৯	১০	১১	১২	১৩

বিদেশি পুস্তকের ছক

Sl. No.	Author	Title	Publisher's Address and Website	Date of Publication	Edition	Page Number	Subject	Price	ISBN	Type of Paper	Type of Bindings	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

শর্তাবলীঃ

- পুস্তকের তালিকা উপরে প্রদত্ত ছক অনুযায়ী বাংলায় লেখাগুলো অবশ্যই ইউনিকোড (Nikosh) ফন্টে হতে হবে।
- ছকের কোন ক্ষেত্রে তথ্যের পুনরুল্লেখ করার ক্ষেত্রে সম্পূর্ণ তথ্যটি লিখতে হবে, 'এ' অথবা 'দ' ব্যবহার করা যাবে না।
- ছকের ৫ নং কলামে অর্থাৎ প্রকাশের তারিখের ঘরে মাসের নাম পুরোপুরি ইংরেজিতে লিখতে হবে। মূল্য এবং পৃষ্ঠা সংখ্যা ইংরেজিতে লিখতে হবে। ছকের ৯ নং কলামে মূল্য অংকে লিখতে হবে। মূল্যের ঘরে 'টাকা' বা '৳' চিহ্ন দেয়া যাবে না।
- ছকে প্রদত্ত তথ্যসমূহ সঠিকভাবে উপস্থাপন করতে হবে। কোনক্রমেই ছক পরিবর্তন করা যাবে না। ছক পরিবর্তন করা হলে তালিকা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
- কপিরাইট আইনের পরিপন্থী, পাইরেটেড কোনো বই তালিকায় থাকলে প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে বাছাই তালিকা থেকে বাদ দেয়াসহ আইনগত ব্যবস্থা নেয়া হবে।
- পাঠ্যবই ব্যতিরেকে পুনর্মুদ্রণ এবং সংস্করণের বই জমা নেয়া হবে না।
- গত ২০১৯-২০২০ ও ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থবছরে যেসব পুস্তক ক্রয় করা হয়েছে সেসব পুস্তক তালিকায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা যাবে না।

(মো: আবুবকর সিদ্দিক)

মহাপরিচালক (অতিরিক্ত সচিব)

ফোন: ৯৬৭১২৩৪

Quotes of the day



This is the right decision. A wise decision. And the best decision for America.

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN ON US TROOPS PULL OUT FROM AFGHANISTAN



US forces for 20 years tried ... to civilise the people who live there, to instill their own norms and standards of life in the widest possible sense of this word. ... The result is zero, if not a negative one all round.

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN ON US'S 20-YEAR-LONG AFGHAN WAR



We owe an immense debt to those who worked with the Armed Forces in Afghanistan and I am determined that we give them and their families the support they need to rebuild their lives here in the UK.

UK PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON



A Taliban fighter (C) walks past shoppers along Mandawi market in Kabul yesterday, a day after the US pulled all its troops out of the country to end a brutal 20-year war -- one that started and ended with the hardline Islamist in power. PHOTO: AFP

TALIBAN RULE IN AFGHANISTAN
FIVE KEY CHALLENGES

The Taliban have won the war -- now they have to govern Afghanistan. The transition presents an enormous test for the Islamists in a desperately poor, diplomatically isolated country where deep-seated political, social and ethnic problems have been compounded by more than four decades of war. Here are five challenges facing the Taliban:

LACK OF TRUST: There is widespread suspicion about the Taliban among Afghans, and for good reason. The last time the group was in power from 1996 to 2001, it imposed a harsh interpretation of Islamic law. They banned women from education and public spaces, brutally executed political opponents and massacred religious and ethnic minorities such as the Hazaras. The Taliban have promised a softer system this time around, including rights for women. They have also pledged an inclusive government, holding talks with a variety of movers and shakers in Afghan politics -- including former US-backed president Hamid Karzai. They have even sent representatives to the Shia Hazara minority, which suffered brutal violence at the hands of the Taliban in the 1990s. While there has been relief in some parts of rural Afghanistan where people wanted an end to the violence, many Afghans say that actions, not words, matter. Women, particularly in cities, remain fearful of stepping outside, and there is at least one pocket of armed resistance in the Panjshir valley, a traditional anti-Taliban bastion.

ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE: Afghanistan is one of the poorest nations in the world. After the Taliban were toppled in 2001, huge amounts of foreign aid flowed into the country. International assistance was more than 40 percent of GDP in 2020. Most of it is now suspended, with no guarantees about the rest. The Taliban also do not have access to Afghan central bank funds held in the United States. This crunch could spell disaster, as the Taliban need to figure out how to pay government employees and keep running critical infrastructure such as water, power and communications. The United Nations has also warned of a humanitarian catastrophe, with food stocks running low because of disruptions caused by conflict as well as



Facing uncertainty, people gather outside a bank building in Kabul on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

a severe drought. As insurgents, the Taliban had large revenues -- hundreds of millions of dollars according to estimates by UN monitors. But that is a tiny amount compared with Afghanistan's national requirements, experts have said. The Taliban have gained some sources of income after taking over Afghanistan, such as customs revenue from border crossings, but that too is a fraction of national needs.

BRAIN DRAIN: Beyond the cash crunch, the Taliban face another critical shortage: skilled Afghans. As US-led forces began to withdraw and the previous government started to lose control, Afghans with skills, experience and resources headed for the exits. They included bureaucrats, bankers, doctors, engineers, professors and university graduates, all terrified of life under the Islamists. The Taliban appear aware of the impact such a brain drain could have on the Afghan economy. Their spokesman has urged skilled Afghans not to leave, saying the country needed "experts" such as doctors and engineers.

DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION: The Taliban's first regime was largely a pariah on the global stage. This time, they appear keen on wide international recognition, even as most nations have suspended or closed their diplomatic missions in Kabul. The group has contacts with regional powers such as Pakistan, Iran, Russia and China, as well as Qatar -- which hosted the Taliban's political office for years. But none have recognised them yet, and the United States has said any legitimacy "will have to be earned". In an apparent sign of the divide on how to handle the Taliban, China and Russia abstained from a UN Security Council resolution requiring the group to let Afghans leave. Moscow and Beijing did not use their veto after language related to the Taliban was softened, experts said.

IS TERROR THREAT: The Taliban may have taken control of Afghanistan but the threat of terror attacks in the country has not ended with their insurgency. Their jihadist rival, the regional chapter of the Islamic State group, has already carried out a deadly suicide attack in Kabul, killing more than 100 people at the airport during the evacuation operation. The Taliban and IS are both headline Sunni extremists, but the latter has an even harsher and brutal interpretation of Islamic law. IS has said it will continue to fight in Afghanistan, and its statements have described the Taliban as apostates. The Taliban now face a sharp role reversal: they have to defend the Afghan people from the kind of attacks their own fighters carried out for years.

SOURCE: AFP

Turning from Afghanistan, the US sets focus on China

AFP, Washington

After two decades of focus on Afghanistan, the United States' withdrawal this week allows the country to shift its concentration to the east, where superpower rival China is now the number-one priority.

In an indication of Washington's strategic turn, Vice President Kamala Harris was in Southeast Asia last week even as the US pullout from Afghanistan moved into its turbulent final days, hoping to strengthen US allies' pushback against the region's giant.

Harris accused Beijing of "actions that... threaten the rules-based international order," particularly its aggressive claims of territory in the South China Sea.

Her tour of Singapore and Vietnam was seen as an effort by the administration of President Joe Biden to reassure Asian allies, who were left somewhat disquieted by the US pullout from Kabul after the sudden fall of the Afghan government that Washington had propped up for nearly 20 years.

Ryan Hass, a foreign policy specialist at

the Brookings Institution, said the debacle of the US pullout from Afghanistan will not have a lasting impact on Washington's credibility in Asia.

Derek Grossman, a former Pentagon official and now a defense expert at the Rand Corporation think tank, said China could seek advantage in fostering good relations with the Taliban.

Beijing could decide quickly to recognize the Taliban government, even as Washington and other Western governments hold off as they hope to convince Afghanistan's new rulers to moderate their hardline policies.

"China, as a new great power in competition with the United States, probably wants to demonstrate its unique way of handling world events, which tends to be -- often reflexively -- the opposite of Washington's approach," Grossman said.

"Recognizing Taliban-run Afghanistan would contribute to the perception that it is Beijing, and no longer Washington, that is now setting the agenda and shaping the future regional order," he said.

Pakistan frets over security threats Says influence on Taliban waning

REUTERS, Islamabad

There is growing concern among Pakistani officials about security in neighbouring Afghanistan, as the Taliban tries to form a government and stabilise the country following the departure of US and other foreign forces.

Islamabad is particularly worried about militant fighters from a separate, Pakistani Taliban group crossing from Afghanistan and launching lethal attacks on its territory. Thousands of Pakistanis have been killed in jihadist violence in the last two decades.

US officials have repeatedly accused Pakistan of supporting the Afghan Taliban. Islamabad, one of the few capitals to recognise the Taliban government that was toppled in 2001, denies the charge.

Pakistan's government has said that its influence over the movement has waned, particularly since the Taliban grew in confidence once Washington announced the date for the complete withdrawal of US and other foreign troops.

The official, who has direct knowledge of the country's security decisions, said Pakistan planned to send security and intelligence officials, possibly even the head of the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, to Kabul to help the Taliban reorganise the Afghan military.

UN sees fivefold surge in 50 yrs Warns extreme events becoming more frequent and costly

REUTERS, Geneva

The number of disasters, such as floods and heatwaves, driven by climate change have increased fivefold over the past 50 years, killing more than 2 million people and costing \$3.64 trillion in total losses, a UN agency said yesterday.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) says its "Atlas" is the most comprehensive review of mortality and economic losses from weather, water and climate extremes ever produced.

It surveys some 11,000 disasters occurring between 1970-2019, including major catastrophes such as Ethiopia's 1983 drought, which was the single most fatal event with 300,000 deaths, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 that was the most costly, with losses of \$163.6 billion.

"Thanks to our early warning service improvement we have been able to have a decrease of the casualties at these kind of events, but the bad news is that the economic losses have been growing very rapidly and this growth is supposed to continue," WMO Secretary-General Petteri



CLIMATE DISASTERS

- Costs amount to \$3.64 trillion since 1979
- Most of 2m deaths occurred in poorer countries

Taalas told a press conference.

"We are going to see more climatic extreme because of climate change and this negative trend in climate will continue for the coming decades," he said.

The report showed an accelerating trend, with the number of disasters increasing nearly fivefold from the 1970s to the most recent decade, adding to signs that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent due to global warming.

Costs from the events also surged from \$175.4 billion in the 1970s to \$1.38

trillion in the 2010s when storms such as Harvey, Maria and Irma ripped through the United States.

But while hazards became more costly and frequent, the annual death toll has fallen from more than 50,000 in the 1970s to around 18,000 in the 2010s, suggesting that better planning was paying off.

More than 91 percent of the 2 million deaths occurred in developing countries, the report said, noting that only half of the WMO's 193 members have multi-hazard early warning systems.



SEPTEMBER 02

1945 - Japanese leaders aboard the US battleship Missouri signed an unconditional surrender, ending World War Two.

1945 - The Democratic Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed with Ho Chi Minh as president.

1992 - The US and Russia agree to a joint venture to build a space station.

2002 - Some 103 world leaders gathered in Johannesburg for a formal UN meeting about a plan to help the poor and the environment at the Earth Summit.

SOURCE: REUTERS

4.1b living without any social safety nets: UN

AFP, Geneva

Over half of all people in the world have no social protections, the United Nations said yesterday, even after the pandemic spurred countries to offer more services to their populations.

In a report on the state of social protection globally, the UN's International Labour Organization said that 4.1 billion people were living without any social safety net of any kind.

Social protection includes access to health care and income security measures related especially to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity or the loss of the main breadwinner in a family, as well as extra support for families with children.

In 2020, only 46.9 percent of the global population benefited from at least one such protection, according to the report -- ILOs first on the subject since 2017.

That low rate came even as access to healthcare, sickness and unemployment benefits have more than ever proved their relevance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

ILO chief Guy Ryder urged countries to centre their recovery efforts around boosting social protections. "Countries are at a crossroads," he said in a statement, stressing that "this is a pivotal moment to harness the pandemic response to build a new generation of rights-based social protection systems."

Countries on average spend 12.8 percent of their gross domestic product on social protections, excluding health care, but such spending also varies dramatically.

While wealthy nations dish out 16.4 percent of their GDP for such protections, low-income countries spend just 1.1 percent, the report found.

Low-income countries would meanwhile need to invest another \$77.9 billion -- equivalent to 15.9 percent of their GDP.

MORE NEWS

China gets new route to Indian Ocean through Myanmar

China's special envoy for Asian Affairs Sun Guoxiang visited Myanmar last week for talks with its military rulers, as a new route spanning the Southeast Asian nation opened up connecting Chinese trade flows to the Indian Ocean. Separately, China's embassy in Myanmar announced the opening of the new trade route linking Yangon's port on the Indian Ocean to the Chinese border province of Yunnan and by rail onwards to Chengdu in the southwestern province of Sichuan.

Defamation case: Singapore PM awarded \$275,000

Singapore's prime minister was awarded more than a quarter of a million dollars in damages yesterday after winning defamation suits against a news website editor and writer, the latest libel cases brought by the leader. Critics say such lawsuits are among a range of tactics employed by the tightly regulated city-state to silence dissent. Terry Xu, chief editor of the Online Citizen Asia, and a writer for the site were accused of defaming Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in two separate lawsuits. The writer, Rubaashini Shunmuganathan, had penned an article in 2019 about a bitter feud that has rocked the premier's family.

Pollution likely to cut 9 years of life expectancy of 40% of Indians

Air pollution is likely to reduce the life expectancy of about 40% of Indians by more than nine years, according to a report released by a US research group yesterday. More than 480 million people living in the vast swathes of central, eastern and northern India, including the capital, New Delhi, endure significantly high pollution levels, said the report prepared by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPI). Launching India's National Clean Air Program (NCAP), launched in 2019 to rein in dangerous pollution levels, the EPI report said "achieving and sustaining" the NCAP goals would raise the country's overall life expectancy by 1.7 years and that of New Delhi 3.1 years.

Number of female journo in Kabul has plunged: watchdog

The number of female journalists working in Kabul has dwindled to below 100 since the Taliban took power, compared with 700 before, a media watchdog said yesterday. Reporters Without Borders said that as Taliban forces took over Kabul, women journalists were increasingly told to stay home, harassed, prevented from going on reporting assignments, or even beaten. Last year, RSF said it had counted 108 media operating in the Afghan capital, employing 700 female journalists.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD
Barishal Zone, Barishal
Phone & Fax No. 64651/2175022
Email: acebar@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.0651.015.07.009.20-1852 Dated: 29/8/2021

Tender Notice

e-Tender Notice [One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method (OSTETM)]

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the following works mentioned in the table below:

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time for tender/ proposal	Tender closing date & time	Tender/ proposal opening date and time
600933	02/e-GP/PMP-Road Major/BZ/Pir/ 2021-2022	Maintenance work by (i) Aggregate Base type-1 with DBS-Wearing Course From Ch 22+313 (Kunlary Sawrukathi) to 42+155 (Naikathi) (Kunlary km of Goriarpar-Banaripara-Sarsinha-Sawrukathi-Naikathi Road (Z-8053)) (ii) DBS - Wearing Course from Ch. 39+460m (Mohishpura) to 42+802m (C.O Office Mor) km of Noapara-Bagherat-Pirojpur Regional Highways (R-770) (Pirojpur Portion) and (iii) Aggregate Base type-1 with DBS Wearing Course Ch: 8+587 (Shealkhaki) to 10+670 (Naton Bazar) km & Ch. 12+900 (Kumirmara) to 14+650 (Ranipur Mor of Rajapur-Naikati-Bekuti-Pirojpur Road (Z-8702)) (Pirojpur Portion) under Pirojpur Road Division, during the year 2021-2022.	28-Sep-2021 at 17:00	29-Sep-2021 at 13:15	29-Sep-2021 at 13:15

0 This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline hard copies will be accepted.
0 To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
0 The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branch.
0 Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Abu Hena Md. Tareq Iqbal
ID No. 001500
Additional Chief Engineer (C.C), RHD
Barishal Zone, Barishal

GD-1561

FRESH OFF THE PRESS: FICTION

Fragments of an uprooted people

SHOUNAK REZA

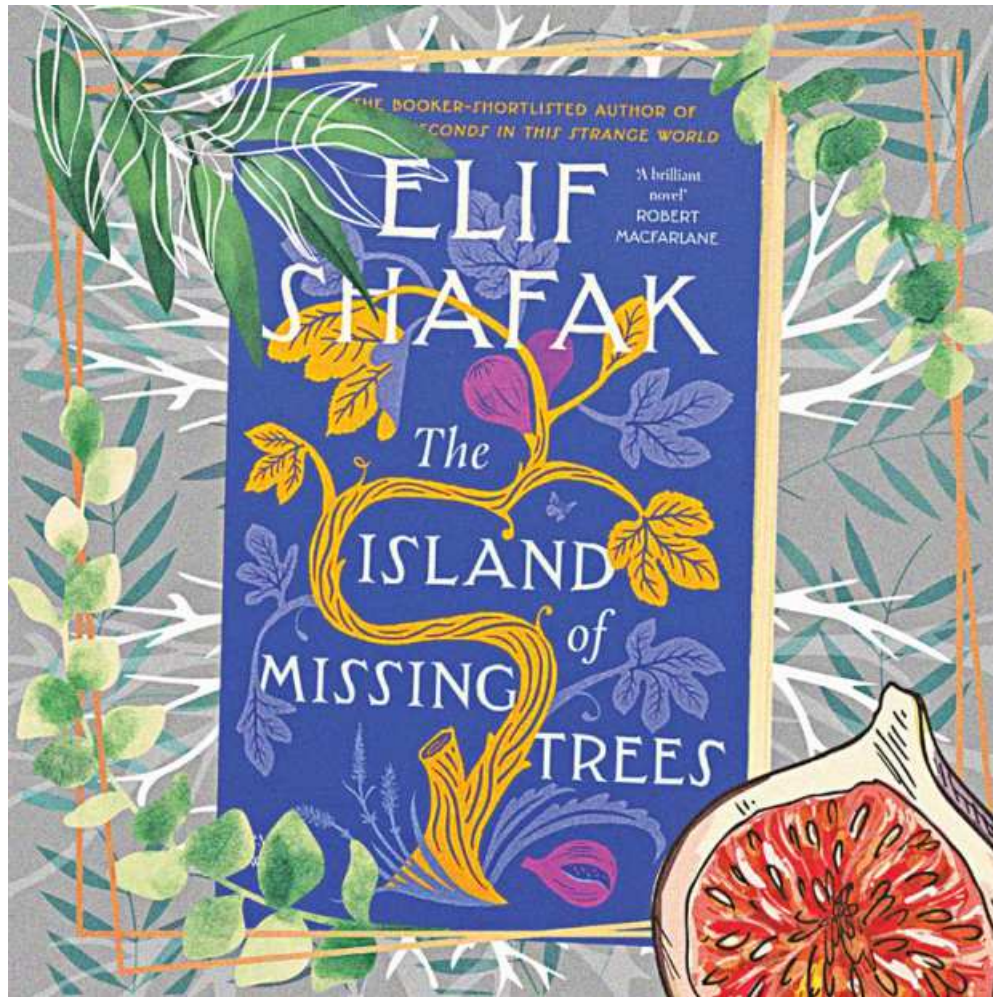
The people we meet in Elif Shafak's *The Island of Missing Trees* (Viking, 2021) are haunted by terrible tragedies from several years past, by a beautiful island divided into two. To them, their story is broken, spread out over multiple places and decades. Shafak takes us on this journey and, through deft plot devices, helps us piece them together.

The first (human) character we meet is Ada Kazantzakis, a teenager living with her recently widowed father in London. Ada knows little about her parents' past lives, about the island they came from, and the pain they brought with them. When Aunt Meryem, her mother's sister, steps into their lives, Ada, though initially resentful of her aunt's not being in touch, starts asking questions about a past rarely talked about in the family.

Ada's father, Kostas, comes from a Greek Cypriot background, and her mother, Defne, was from a Turkish Cypriot family. When they were growing up in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, it was still an undivided city, even though tensions between the Greek and Turkish communities were rapidly on the rise. As a result, theirs was in many ways a Romeo-and-Julietesque love—a forbidden love aided in secret by a few.

The relationship between Kostas and Defne, like their island, like the people around them, was fragmented by conflicts and time. Along with Ada, we start delving deeper into a story filled with interruptions. What happened all those years ago in Cyprus, when neighbours turned on neighbours, when the harmony that had existed on that island for centuries was disrupted, when the place of colourful myths and history was marked by death and violence, when the city her parents always held so close to their hearts was divided?

In the unfolding of this tale, a fig tree plays an important role. As we go back and forth between decades, the tree, an occasional narrator, fills in gaps, as she bore witness and heard things several human characters have not. She gathers fragments from creatures, like ants and bees, that communicate with her, connecting dots in the sprawling narrative. Her life, too, has been an existence of interruptions spread over two countries, like that of Kostas and Defne. Like them, she carries wounds and



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

nostalgia, longing for the island she originally is from.

In her interviews, Elif Shafak talks often about the dangers of ultranationalism, of tribalism, of identity politics. How these dangers fracture places and lives is one of the issues explored in *The Island of Missing Trees*. We witness small, inspiring acts of resistance throughout the novel. Defne, for example, repeatedly refuses to put labels like 'Turk' or 'Greek' on people. She refers to both the victims and perpetrators, like herself and Kostas, as children of the island who turned on, or suffered at the hands of, each other.

Time and time again we have seen, both in

reality and fiction, how generations are shaped by disasters, by wars, no matter how much older generations try to hide their traumas. Memories and secrets persist in unrecognisable forms, ever present in the background.

Years ago, Shafak explored the concepts of generational trauma and the long-lasting effects of old tragedies in her celebrated *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2006). In her latest novel, she explores these concepts once again, but this time, with a poetic touch so sublime that even I, a devoted admirer of her work, was surprised. In *The Island of Missing Trees*, Elif Shafak is at her finest.

Shounak Reza is a contributor.

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

The forgotten ones of the Great War

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

As of December 31, 1919, a total of 1.4 million Indians were recruited to various theatres of the First World War. Among them, approximately 563,369 were "followers or non-combatants". Even though they did not belong to the "martial classes" (soldiers, constables), the Indian government pushed them under the military rug so that it could boast of its military contributions in the War. As such, the non-combatant classes—more commonly referred to as "Coolies" or simply "menial followers"—became a subjugated figure; although, in the grand scheme of things, the British empire's military regime during the War had been built on these subjugated figures' backs. Radhika Singha explores this startling irony in *The Coolie's Great War* (HarperCollins India, 2020), and in doing so, brings forth an essential story from the chasm of obscurity, one that is primarily about the casteism that enables military power.

In one of the earlier chapters, we see a "low-caste" sweeper's body being refused by authorities for burial in the designated burial ground. One Reverend, Mr Chambers, chose to bury him in his Churchyard in Brockenhurst. "Surely Bigha Khan has died for England. I will bury him in the Churchyard", the man said. This event sets in motion the more common reality of casteism that the non-combatant followers had to grapple with even beyond the borders of their motherland.

"Caste norms tended to hem powerless communities into the hardest and most stigmatized sectors of work regimes", Singha writes. Those belonging to low-castes were assigned tasks like sweeping, latrine-cleaning, washing, and leather-crafting.

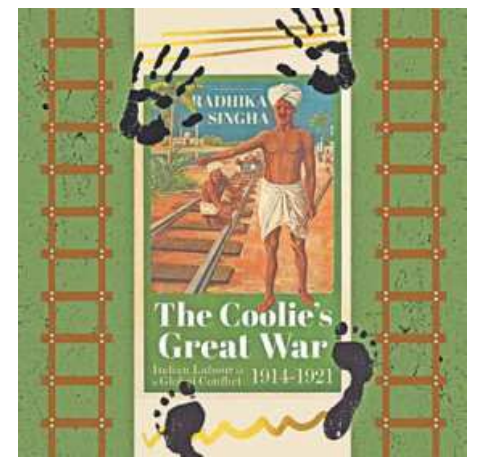
A chart chillingly portrays the heights of privilege that the Indian officers serving in the First World War enjoyed while their menial followers languished behind the scenes. For instance, by the end of the War, we see that the mortality rate of the officers against the followers in France was 176 and 2,218. In other frontier operations, it was 17 as opposed to 1,621.

Most of the labourers were recruited from the tribal areas (especially the Northeast, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa). Considered primitive and ignorant of the ways of the world, they were baited by incentives of getting a better chance at life, especially the jail recruits ("convict sweepers") who served as followers in the Indian Labor and Porter Corps in Iraq from 1916-1921. However, the reality of inequality, subjugation, and poor standards of life despite their backbreaking contributions soon disillusioned them. As such, desertion and gradual imprisonment became commonplace. Owing to starvation and exposure

to harsh weather, many of the deserters even embraced death.

For the followers, especially the tribal recruits, homecoming also became a kind of blockade towards seaming into their regular lives. "The returnee could also materialize in very undesirable avatars", she writes, "in the form of the deserter, the prisoner of war... or one of the 'maimed' beings". The tribal recruits had to bear more brunt than the others because their return was anticipated with the possibility of them joining the insurgents along the Assam-Burma border or the Afridi insurgents around the North-West frontiers.

As for the disabled returnees, a man using crutches, for instance, was more likely to receive benefits than a man who had gone blind owing to injuries during the service. The former would be a more easily marketable image of the War's aftermath.



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

Furthermore, while the Viceroy Commissioned Officers (VCOs) were able to bask in rewards in line with a 'gentlemanly' status, "[t]he martial classes' would return to the ranks of the substantial peasantry, and followers to the stratum of the *kamin*, low-caste village artisans and labourers."

The Coolie's Great War is a tough read; not only because of its subject matter but also because of the extensive research and details pulsating through its pages. Bloated with archival accounts and evidence, the book does a commendable service in honouring the ones whose blood, sweat, and tears slid into the unknown. This working-class dimension to a popular story of war reiterates that the subjugation of certain kinds of labour and the pervasiveness of unfair hierarchy are deeply rooted in history.

Shah Tazrian Ashrafi is a contributor. Radhika Singha's *The Coolie's Great War* (HarperCollins India, 2020) is available at Omni Books, Dhanmondi.

46TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM

Radio, ghazals, and "Islami gaan": What Nazrul's shift to music said about his syncretism

AHONA PANDA

A turbulent political time had emerged by the mid-1920s within the Indian national movement and in Bengal. Poet, writer, and musician Kazi Nazrul Islam was pained at the time by the widening rift between Hindus and Muslims. In August of 1926, he had raised the communal question in a letter to the editor sent to the conservative *Atmashakti* journal, which had criticised Muzaffar Ahmed's group, Ganabani, for spreading Marxist ideas amongst the rural peasantry. Nazrul responded by saying that only Marxist politics and not identitarian/communal politics could bring about change to the miserable condition of the working classes. Though he lived in Krishnanagar at the time, Nazrul decided to contest an election in Dhaka for one of two Muslim seats in the Central Legislative Assembly against an influential Muslim zamindar. Nazrul lost not just the seat, but also his security deposit.

This period thus marked a turn away from the world of journalism and active legislative/electoral politics for Nazrul. He embraced a more lucrative profession—music.

Having initially joined the Gramophone Company (HMV) in 1929, Nazrul eventually started to freelance, composing and arranging music for other private companies like Hindustan Records, Megaphone, Senolo, Pioneer, and others. In this capacity, he trained and composed for singers such as SD Burman, Suprobha Ghosh, Indubala, Angurbala, Girin Chakrabarti, Abbasuddin Ahmed, and Maude Costello. The new technologies themselves led to interesting innovations in both Nazrul's poetic and compositional career and to Hindustani classical music. Kamal Dasgupta recollected two unique programs on the radio that Nazrul had organised, the papers of which are now lost. One was on the idea of the wireless itself, for which Nazrul wrote a song that punned on the word *vina*—"Tomar vina tarer giti bajuk amar vinar tare" ("May wireless song resound on the strings of my vina") and another song, "Akase aj chadiye dilam priya amar kathar phul go, amar ganer mala go kudiye niyo tumi" ("I spread the flowers of my words in the sky, gather the garlands of my songs"). Both songs, Dasgupta averred, would have no literal meaning but would only make sense if the listener figured out that the wordplay referred to a new mode of communication enabled by wireless technology.

Nazrul's move to music was also a good commercial decision. Of the many songs Nazrul had been composing in the 1930s,

the most lucrative was the Bangla "Islami gaan", a genre he would develop after his new professional relationships with the classical singer and *thumri* specialist Ustad Jamiruddin Khan and the folk singer Abbasuddin. In Abbasuddin's memoirs, the genesis of Nazrul's "islami" compositions could be found in the seed of his own idea that the *qawwali* form, so popular in Urdu, could be adapted to Bangla. Abbasuddin would offer this idea to the then-rehearsal officer-in-charge at the Gramophone Company, Bhagavati Bhattacharya, who shot down the idea



COLLAGE: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

immediately. Abbasuddin then asked "Kazida" to consider the idea, who composed the song "O Heart at the end of the fast on Ramzan comes the moon of happiness." Bhagavati-babu would come around, and they would release songs that became immensely popular.

Nazrul's past political associations would come back in the years of his commercial artistic production. In 1935, for example, he would compose the music for his friend Shailajananda Mukherjee's musical film, *Patalpuri* (City of Hell), based on the coal mines of his birth-district, the Rarh region. Here, he would introduce a further musical improvisation and use the tribal folk music

or *jhumur gaan* of the Santals. A prolific music-composer for films in the late 1930s, he would compose songs using the melodies and genres of *dhrupad*, *kheyal*, *tappa*, *thumri*, *ghazal*, *bhajan*, *baul*, *bhantiyali*, *jhumur*, and *qawwali*.

A number of critics, however, have opined that Nazrul's greatest poetic and musical gift to Bangla music was the form of the *ghazal* that he took from a different tradition and translated into a completely different part of the world, to a different language. While Atulprasad Sen was the first composer of *ghazal* in the Bangla language, for Nazrul the genre perhaps meant something personally and politically. It leads one to ask what the form of the *ghazal* would mean for an act of cultural translation in the late 1930s.

Nazrul had been attracted to this genre since 1917, during his army days in Karachi, where he had been taking Persian lessons from an unnamed Punjabi *maulvi*. This early philological interest was a lifelong literary preoccupation, and he translated extensively from the Persian ghazals of Rumi, Hafez, and Omar Khayyam. He also eventually started a translation of the genre, writing original *ghazals* in Bangla. A common trope in his *ghazal* was the idea of loss and exile, of *viccheda* (separation) that would gather urgency in the 1930s when the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity became ever more distant.

Nazrul, suffering from a motor degenerative disease, lost his voice and cognitive capacities in 1942. Though he lived through the Partition of 1947 and the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971, he would not write or sing again. With his literal silencing, a generation of Bengali Muslim and Hindu voices also passed into the realms of oblivion.

The adoption of the *ghazal* by Nazrul, in that sense, with renewed fervor in the late '20s and '30s, signaled an understanding that his earlier literary and linguistic world was an impermanent one, as was a politics in which the unity of Hindus and Muslims was achieved through an appeal to a shared culture and language. The *ghazal*, then, became a way of translating the political reality of separatism and of the rift between two communities into a lament, an elegiac language of loss and the desire for a world and a vision that was disappearing, never to return.

Ahona Panda is Visiting Assistant Professor of History at Claremont McKenna College, California.

123rd BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF ABUL MANSUR AHMAD



COLLAGE: MEHRUL BARI

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of author, journalist, and politician Abul Mansur Ahmad (1898-1979) on September 3, 2021, we publish an excerpt from his essay, "Our Language and Our Literature", first published in *The Concept* magazine in 1965.

However shocking and painful it may sound the hard fact and the plain truth is that in long eighteen years of political independence, thirteen years after the February Revolution and nine years after the constitutional recognition of our language, we have not advanced to any appreciable degree in laying the foundation of our national literature through which we are supposed to realize our national identity. To our

great shame we have not moved one step towards rediscovery of East Pakistan. We still remain the literary dominion, linguistic colony and cultural hinterland of Calcutta as before.

Read the full essay on Friday, September 3 on *The Daily Star* website or on *Daily Star Books'* Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2021, BHADRA 18, 1428 BS

What are road digging guidelines for, really?

Authorities must make the contractors follow rules

IT'S worth re-posing the question that town planners raised at a recent virtual press conference organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Planners on "Contemporary Planning and Development Management". The rueful query as to why road digging guidelines are not being followed merits an answer from all the ministries and service providers concerned. Two important issues came up at the press conference: the timing and duration of road digging, and the disregard for the guidelines by contractors.

Indeed, we would like to ask: Why are most of the road diggings done during the rainy season in violation of the existing rules and procedures? In fact, our experience as residents of Dhaka is that a good number of the city roads remain excavated for months on end. As per an estimate cited by a local daily, over 700 kilometres of roads and footpaths in Dhaka alone had reportedly remained excavated for several months last year. Needless to say, such a situation has a direct impact on the commuters as well as residents during monsoon. Apart from affecting the flow of traffic and hampering pedestrian movements, roads under repair may cause accidents and deaths; they are also breeding grounds for mosquitoes. It is also quite strange that 30 percent of Dhaka roads are damaged and have remained in that condition for a long time, due to unplanned excavation and development work of the service agencies, as one report informs us.

This is an issue which has been flagged by the media ad nauseum, without any visible effect, regrettably. We have constantly pointed out that there is hardly any coordination amongst the agencies. Roads in Dhaka are dug by individual service providers whenever they feel the need to do so. The roads are excavated for laying electrical cables, sewer lines, water pipelines, gas pipelines, etc. throughout the year. And this is bound to happen when there is no nodal ministry or agency to ensure coordination among the 52 agencies of 19 ministries.

The Metropolitan Road Excavation Policy, 2019 clearly states that development work in Dhaka should remain suspended between June and October. However, for the authorities to only say that contractors do not follow guidelines is just a fig leaf intended to cover their own failures. Why can't they be made to follow the rules to the letter? We are all for development, but that must not impose extra hardship on the people. And it is up to the ministries and agencies to ensure that the discomfort that any development work entails is not exacerbated by the negligence of the service providers or their failure to comply with the regulations.

What Afghanistan does with its 'freedom' is critical

The crisis there is clearly far from over

AFTER two decades of foreign occupation—by the US and NATO forces—Afghanistan is finally and unequivocally a "free" nation, after the last US troops officially left Afghan soil meeting the August 31 deadline. This, in a way, should be a proud moment for Afghans, as no nation should have to bend to the wishes of others or live by the dictates of outside forces. Therefore, despite justifiable concerns about the aftermath of Taliban takeover, we are happy to see Afghanistan once again retake its destiny into its own hands. However, as is often the case after a nation gains its freedom, there are plenty of challenges as well.

The situation there right now is extremely chaotic. The Taliban have yet to form a government, and many are still unconvinced that they will not rule with the same iron fist that they did between 1996 and 2001—many Afghans themselves fall into this category. In order to become a well-functioning, rights-respecting and equitable state, the Taliban will have to make many changes to how it previously ruled—for example, it has to allow women full participation in education, the labour market and in the functioning of the state. Without making these changes, the Taliban will never be able to steer Afghanistan towards a bright and prosperous future.

Meanwhile, the US withdrawal over the last days and weeks was chaotic in its own right. Many people who had helped the US and its allies have been left high and dry by their foreign friends, and it would be unwise for the Taliban to persecute them at this historic time for the country. Instead of resorting to more violence, the Taliban should seek to make peace with everyone, especially rival groups and ideological opponents. And in the formation of a new government, it should try and include people from all groups, regions and backgrounds so that Afghanistan can mend its own internal divisions—which, as history tells us, have been exploited by foreign forces for too long.

The international community, which has so often failed the Afghan people, also has a big responsibility. According to UN officials, Afghanistan is presently standing on the brink of a "humanitarian catastrophe". There is a deep economic crisis brewing inside the country. People are suffering from a lack of basic services and essential items. Here, the international community must provide Afghanistan with the necessary aid—and foreign players should not, as a face-saving bid, look to mount economic pressure on the country. The Taliban must also allow the UN and other aid agencies to operate in a way that suits all parties, especially the Afghan people.

At the end of the day, freedom is a most precious thing, one which should be deeply cherished. However, freedom for a country might not mean much unless the people themselves get a taste of it. It is with that in mind that the Taliban should rule. We wish Afghans the best of luck for the days ahead.

What should be our development strategies during Covid?

The virus is here to stay, and it should be reflected in our policies



SELIM RAIHAN

SEEING the varying degrees of Covid that the world has experienced over the last one and a half years, we can safely assume that this pandemic is here to stay.

The experiences of different countries as well as data from scientific research also support this idea. Since we are seeing different variants of the coronavirus as well—such as the widespread and more lethal Delta variant—there is no guarantee that even more lethal variants would not emerge in the future. In the earlier days of the pandemic, we thought it would be gone within a year or two, and we would probably be able to go back to what we call the "pre-Covid situation", and we would have something like a "post-Covid situation".

Given the circumstances, however, it seems there will probably be no post-Covid situation, at least not in the way we had expected. The disease will likely continue to exist at varying degrees across the world. Therefore, we need to be prepared to cope with the situation keeping that in mind. We also need to revisit our development strategies accordingly.

But what steps should be considered to achieve that?

We can start with developing some protocols for running economic activities amid Covid. These protocols should involve two major segments. One is sector-specific—how different sectors can function in the middle of a pandemic. The sector-specific protocol would demonstrate that the set of guidelines that is applicable for a manufacturing company might not be equally effective for a service-oriented firm. For example, the protocol for running a restaurant would be different from that of running a ready-made garment factory.

The other segment of protocols should be area-specific—depending on population size and the types and intensity of economic activities. For example, the protocols for Dhaka would be different from the ones for Rangpur, because the type and intensity of economic activities are different in these

two regions.

In order to develop sector-specific and area-specific development strategies, the government should involve the major stakeholders—especially the private sector—representatives from different economic fields, the sectors' experts, and the experts on public health. Those responsible for developing these protocols should also take into account the global experience.

much so that a number of micro and small enterprises had to shut down permanently, and many more may follow. At the same time, we have also observed some deep social losses in terms of poverty and labour market turmoil. We are witnessing large-scale disruptions in the education and healthcare sectors.

In the case of economic recovery, two areas need urgent attention. One of them is vaccination. Without an effective

mechanism for the implementation of these stimulus packages.

Since the onset of Covid, educational institutions have remained closed, and we have not seen any effective work plan to be able to reopen them in the midst of Covid. A somewhat functional online education system and some distance learning processes have been in place. But due to various reasons—especially the high poverty rate, low access to the online learning platforms, and many other challenges—many students have not been able to participate in the online education or distant learning processes effectively. As a result, there are high chances of a significant part of the young generation falling out of the education system, as dropout rates at primary and secondary levels and the incidence of early marriage of girls have escalated during the crisis. Findings from some recent surveys by Sanem and other research organisations confirm these situations. Therefore, there is a need for an effective recovery plan for the education sector. The recovery plan must consider running the education system while keeping in mind that Covid is here to stay for long.

The healthcare sector was in deep trouble even before Covid-19 struck Bangladesh, because of the abysmally low public spending on the sector amid widespread institutional deficiencies in terms of corruption and poor management. Covid intensified these problems. Therefore, the health sector needs major overhauling and institutional reform to combat the long-lasting challenges.

As we acknowledge and understand that there is no getting rid of Covid anytime soon, we can re-think different planning processes for economic and social recoveries. We must move away from the conventional planning processes to confront new challenges and situations. The new planning process will require innovative approaches, a lot of effort from the government, and critical institutional reforms, especially addressing the corruption and institutional deficiencies in a more rigorous way. As this planning process must involve the major stakeholders, we need to move away from the top-down approach and adopt a bottom-up approach to combat the crises.

Selim Raihan is executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem).



Specific protocols are needed to safely and smoothly run the country's development activities during the pandemic.

ILLUSTRATION: COLLECTED

Unfortunately, we have yet to see any initiative from the government to develop such protocols. Over the last one and a half years, we have seen both deterioration and improvement of the Covid situation. The initiatives or steps taken so far to tackle the pandemic have been on an ad hoc basis. We saw that the government was sometimes forced to impose lockdown measures. However, due to weak enforcement capacity, the restrictions were far from effectively executed. The poor implementation of lockdown measures also generated large-scale economic and social losses. A proper assessment of the management of the Covid situation is, therefore, needed to develop the protocols for the coming days.

Covid has caused some profound economic and social shocks and losses. The major sectors of the economy, in particular the micro, small and medium enterprises, have suffered quite a lot—so

vaccination programme, we can't keep Covid under control. The vaccination campaign needs to be stronger, and the uncertainties related to it must be dealt with. The second issue is stimulus packages. There has been no proper assessment of the effectiveness of stimulus packages. Whether these packages reached the affected industries properly or not must be evaluated. Some analyses done by the South Asian Network for Economic Remodeling (Sanem), through quarterly surveys of business firms, reveal that although micro and small enterprises are the most affected sectors, a large part of them have remained outside of the benefit of the stimulus packages. Also, there are widespread systemic challenges in terms of implementing the stimulus packages. The management of these packages has to be effective and transparent, and the institutional deficiencies need to be removed. There should also be a proper monitoring

PROJECT SYNDICATE

The case for a food systems stability board

SANDRINE DIXSON-DECLÈVE, JOSÉ ANTONIO OCAMPO, and FELIA SALIM

THE Covid-19 pandemic, rising rates of global poverty and inequality, persistent conflict, and the escalating climate and biodiversity crises are shocks and stresses that together contribute to increasing hunger, as well as growing food and nutrition insecurity. To help tackle this urgent problem more effectively, and make the global food system more stable and resilient, governments should consider establishing a new, multilateral, United Nations-led Food Systems Stability Board (FSSB).



'Ensuring the long-term resilience of the global food system will require a significant multilateral collaborative effort.'

PHOTO: REUTERS

Today, between 720 million and 811 million people—about 10 percent of the world's population—go to bed hungry every night, and at least 2.4 billion lack access to a healthy and nutritious diet. Absent major international action, these trends are likely to persist. The latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change demonstrates that global warming's effects have left no region untouched, with significant implications for the food system over the coming decades.

Food systems underpin the security of the global economy, as well as national

security in many countries: hunger and lack of access to food have historically driven civil unrest. These systems are also among the principal drivers of ecosystem loss and climate change, with agriculture and land-use change responsible for a quarter of global greenhouse-gas emissions. At the same time, ecosystems such as forests, mangroves, and the ocean are central to humanity's efforts to adapt to the climatic changes already underway.

Ensuring the long-term resilience of the global food system will require a significant multilateral collaborative effort. This should build on existing

Japanese government in December—offer a rare opportunity to focus international attention on the hunger and food-security crisis, and its links to the changing climate. Each of these gatherings could pave the way for the creation of an FSSB of national governments and international organisations working to address this issue. This could be part of a broader global effort to enhance food governance and achieve—in the words of the government of Indonesia, which will hold the G20 presidency in 2022—a "just and affordable transition toward net zero."

Moreover, there is an encouraging precedent for such a body. The Financial Stability Board (FSB), established by G20 finance ministers in April 2009 with the aim of preventing a repeat of the 2008 global financial crisis, has positively contributed to global macroeconomic stability and is now an authoritative, independent, and well-respected body. Its findings directly influence the decision-making of G20 finance ministers, as well as that of the heads of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the regional development banks.

In a similar fashion, an FSSB, if established, would be charged with promoting the health and resilience of the global food system, including by addressing issues such as price stability, trade, strategic reserves, and the effects of climate change on production. The board would fully respect national sovereignty, and not issue legally binding recommendations. Rather, it would give credible advice to governments on how to build a food system that is better prepared to withstand future shocks and ensure greater global access to nutritious food.

While governments would decide the precise scope, structure, and composition of an FSSB, we believe the body could play a helpful role in several ways. For example, it could analyse early-warning systems and risk-modelling data on hunger, agriculture, and climate, including from the existing Agricultural Market Information System Database. It could also advise the World Trade Organization and national governments on food-related trade policies, while helping countries respond to changing market dynamics and a volatile climate.

Additionally, the FSSB could support and enable countries to submit voluntary five-year food system risk assessments and resilience plans. It could also gather and share knowledge about global food-trade vulnerabilities, such as those relating to climate change, conflict, lack of crop diversity, pollinator loss, and other threats, and identify and review the regulatory, supervisory, and voluntary measures needed to address them.

The FSSB could support contingency planning for cross-border crisis management, especially with regard to systemically important food crops or areas particularly affected by climate vulnerability, biodiversity loss, and/or future pandemics. Lastly, the board could collaborate with the IMF to include more consideration of risks related to climate, biodiversity, and food and land-use systems in the Fund's regular Article IV consultations with member countries.

The FSSB could comprise relevant national representatives from ministries of agriculture and rural affairs, trade and commerce, health, environment, and finance, as well as international standard-setters and leading scientists in the field of global food-system risks. As with the FSB, the institution's audience would be member states, including heads of government, finance ministers, and other portfolios.

The current absence of an FSSB is a notable gap in the international governance architecture required to bolster the sustainability, equity, and resilience of the global food system in the twenty-first century and beyond. At the UN General Assembly and UN Food Systems Summit—both taking place in September—governments could agree to initiate a one-year consultation process to explore the creation of such a body. By doing so, they could contribute to a better future for hundreds of millions of vulnerable people, and ensure access to food and security for all.

Sandrine Dixon-Declève is Co-President of the Club of Rome. José Antonio Ocampo, a former finance minister of Colombia and United Nations under-secretary general, is a professor at Columbia University and an ambassador of the Food and Land Use Coalition. Felia Salim, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Partnership for Governance Reform, is an ambassador of the Food and Land Use Coalition.

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(Exclusive to The Daily Star)

What Bangladesh can learn from the reopening of US schools



MANZOOR AHMED

ABOUT 56 million children in 130,000 primary and secondary schools in the United States, including about six million students in 30,000 private schools, are returning to a second school year this autumn under the spell of the pandemic, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. About 13,000 autonomous school districts in the US manage the public schools under guidelines from the state and federal governments. The schools' funding also comes from the state and federal governments and local level taxation. An average of USD 13,000 is spent per public school student every year—and a total of over USD 700 billion or 6 percent of GDP—in the US.

By comparison, Bangladesh has half of the population of the US and about 30 million school students. Proportionately, Bangladesh has a larger child population. Its budget allocation for education for FY2021-22 is Tk 71,592 crore (USD 8.5 billion), which amounts to roughly USD 300 per student. The annual public education spending in the US is more than double the total GDP of Bangladesh.

Most schools in the US had suspended in-person schooling for various periods in the last school year, which ended this June. The large majority of students relied partially or fully on school-organised distant learning. The expectation now is for resumption of a large measure of normal school activities in the new academic year. By the end of August, 52 percent of adults were fully vaccinated in the US, while 61 percent received at least one jab. A project is underway to vaccinate children of age 12 and above. But the pandemic's sway, particularly the highly infectious Delta variant, continues quite severely in several states. The barriers to effective application of the protection measures—some of them politically driven—

cast a shadow on the expectations about normal school operations. There may be useful lessons for Bangladesh from their experience.

Questions that loom large now: Should children attend in-person classes at all? Beyond vaccinating all adults and now children over 12, should children be required to wear masks? What other measures should be taken?

Paediatrics experts Kanecia Zimmerman and Danny Benjamin, Jr, who tracked one million students in North Carolina through the last academic year, recently said that vaccination is the best way to prevent Covid-19, universal masking is a close second, and with vaccination and masking in place, in-school learning is safe and more effective than remote learning, regardless of community rates of infection.

The two researchers also insist that results can be achieved only by mandatory mask-wearing (*The New York Times*, August 10, 2021). They go on to suggest that once vaccination is available for all children and universal masking is enforced, it's reasonable for schools not to require quarantining or testing after exposure for asymptomatic children and adults. But school districts should keep using ventilation and social distancing and continue to perform routine testing for unvaccinated students.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a report on August 27 (cited in the *Los Angeles Times*) mentioned the case of an unvaccinated, unmasked California elementary school teacher who came to school in May with symptoms, which she dismissed as allergy, and infected a dozen students, half her class, with the coronavirus. These children were all too young to be immunised. Altogether, 27 children and adults including four parents of the children were infected in the outbreak, which involved the Delta variant.

"A multipronged prevention strategy, including masking, physical distancing, testing, and most recently vaccination of children and adolescents [aged 12 years or older] will remain critical to reducing

transmission as more students return to the classroom," the report concluded.

An issue that is much in discussion is: With many students falling behind in learning, especially the underprivileged ones, how can they be helped to recover? Two main approaches are: a) Remediation or repeating what students have missed or did not learn; and b) Acceleration by focusing on what students need to know to participate in the class they will begin this year. Amy

that would focus on core learning content—Bangla and maths at the primary level, and Bangla, English, maths and science at the secondary level. This focus would apply both in classroom instruction and in public examinations.

The education authorities, especially the curriculum board, however, appear to be unwilling to stray from the trodden path. The board's plan is to teach as many lessons in all the subjects as the number of days

examinations on the non-core subjects in the streams of Humanities, Science and Commerce. At the primary level, the authorities plan to conduct the full Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE) when school reopens, though educationists consider it as well as the JSC examination (at the end of Class 8) unnecessary and counterproductive.

Successful "acceleration" of students requires support and resources. Teachers need technical advice, guidance and time for planning and assessing students to determine where they need help. They also need to learn about using ed-tech material to help their students.

The scale of resources that may be provided to schools in Bangladesh, of course, will be modest compared to the US, but extra resources have to be made available. As I argued in a previous column (on August 8), the current school year should be extended to June of 2022. Opportunistically, the school year should be changed permanently to September-June starting from this year. The current school year, if necessary, can be extended to July or August next year, foregoing summer vacation as part of the recovery plan.

The measures on school calendar, focus on core learning content in instruction and public exams, and additional resources to support schools and teachers are a must-do as essential elements of the learning recovery plan in an unforeseen emergency fraught with uncertainty.

The recommendations made by the Education Watch group and others regarding school re-opening will still apply. These include a step-by-step approach; ensuring safety measures in all schools with financial support from the government; health and education sector collaboration at the local level to protect and keep children, teachers and families safe; and involving local stakeholders—NGOs, parents and local government—in implementing and monitoring the learning loss recovery plan.

The Ministry of Education proposes to conduct the public SSC and HSC

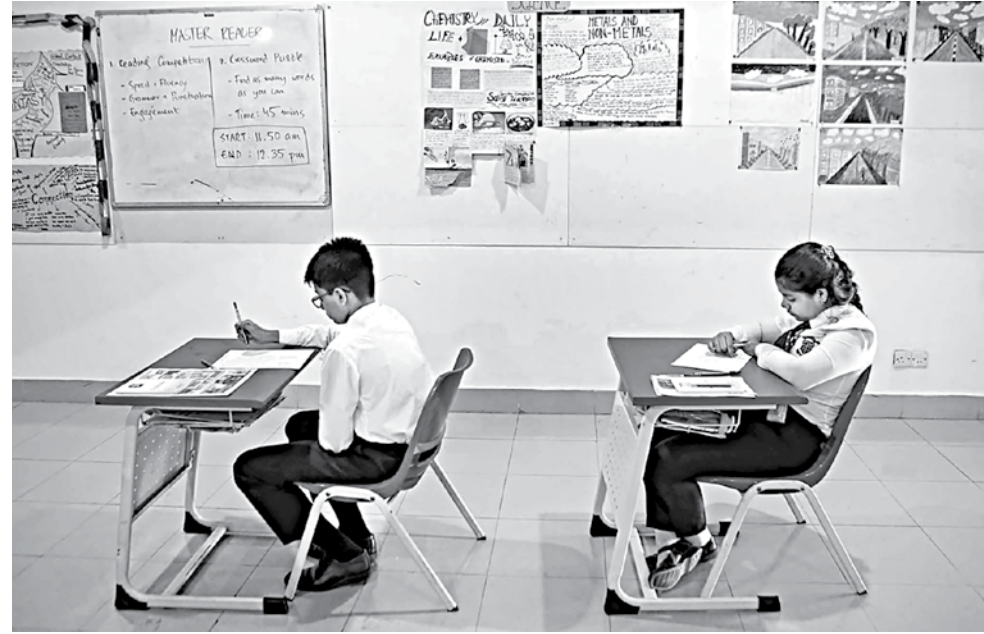


PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Takabori of Carnegie Learning, a Pittsburgh-based education technology support company, says, "Remediation is entrenched in the past: what students missed last year and what they need to redo. On the other hand, acceleration focuses on the present... moving students forward on grade level and setting them up for success with just-in-time training on required foundational skills."

The acceleration approach to overcoming learning loss is akin to suggestions made in Bangladesh about a learning recovery plan

will allow when schools reopen. What the students may learn, or if they will, does not seem to be the authorities' concern. They seem to be sticking to the present school calendar, though there may be very few instruction days left, if and when schools open. They have not responded to the suggestion for changing the school year to a September-June calendar as part of the recovery logistics.

The Ministry of Education proposes to conduct the public SSC and HSC

Escaping the empires' graveyard



MOSTOFA SARWAR

NOW that the United States' destructive 20-year war in Afghanistan has ended, Afghans tremble at the last laugh of the Taliban. The world waits for the country's plunge back into the darkness of the Middle Ages under

the rule of extreme religious zealots. Many observers were shocked to see this outcome emerge from the deadly, two-decade nation-building effort of the United States. But this terrible fate was obvious to many, including me.

After receiving my East Pakistan runner-up trophy in the All-Pakistan Television General Knowledge Quiz competition at a national celebration event in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, I had the opportunity to visit several cities of Pakistan as a guest, sponsored by the government. My itinerary included Peshawar, the Khyber Pass, Jamrud Fort, and Landi Kotal—areas which are all inhabited by the ethnic Pashtun. That same culture constitutes the dominant majority of neighbouring Afghanistan.

At the end of a festival in Peshawar, I saw Pashtun children jumping on trucks and ox carts with guns hanging from their shoulders and belts of ammunition across their chests. While I was travelling through the Khyber Pass, I noticed children armed with rifles herding sheep in meadows. They appeared from and disappeared into caves and the many mountain passes that dot the sprawling landscape of the Hindukush mountain range. In the bazaar at Landi Kotal, guns were openly made and sold. Even to my young, non-military eyes, this did not seem like the place for anyone to wage a war.

Afghanistan is known as the "Empires' Graveyard," perhaps because in its more

recent history, after earlier conquests by the Achaemenid Persian, Greek Seleucid, Indian Maurya, and Turkic Timurid empires, Afghans have shown stubborn resistance to attempts by external forces and their proxies—the Safavid, Russian and British empires, and now the United States—to rule their land. Afghanistan is at the crossroads of famed conquerors, and is a roundabout of ancient Silk Road trade routes for commerce and conquest. Its inhabitants include conservative

America's Afghan war was initiated by the heinous 9/11 attacks perpetrated by al Qaida terrorists. On September 11, 2001, suicide bombers commandeered four commercial airplanes and used them as deadly projectiles, destroying the iconic Twin Towers in Manhattan, and damaging the Pentagon in Virginia. Al Qaida was sheltered by Afghanistan's Taliban government, who refused to hand over the 9/11 attack's masterminds to the United States. President



File photo of a US soldier keeping watch at an Afghan National Army (ANA) base in Logar province, Afghanistan.

PHOTO: REUTERS

and independent-minded warrior tribes living in a hostile geography—a lethal recipe for waging guerrilla warfare. It is not surprising when external attempts to transform the country's population in any fashion prove futile. It took more than 200 years to convert Afghans to Islam.

George W Bush declared war on October 7, 2001. The Taliban, together with al Qaida, ran for their lives, leaving Afghanistan and taking refuge in Pakistan.

After a quick military victory, the United States started a nation-building programme in Afghanistan with a huge occupying force. The

Taliban simultaneously waged a protracted guerrilla campaign from its sanctuaries inside Pakistan. With active American involvement, a democratic constitution was installed guaranteeing universal human rights for men and women. Billions of US dollars were spent to build infrastructure, schools, colleges, and hospitals, in addition to a massive Afghan army and police force. Two elected Afghan governments—the first headed by Hamid Karzai and the second by Ashraf Ghani—governed. The Taliban insurgency continued, becoming increasingly intense. The United States, with the token help of NATO forces, did the heavy lifting. Afghan government forces also fought, but rarely as an independent entity, as we have seen.

The United States paid a hefty price for trying to rebuild Afghanistan in the image of Western norm and polity, and the effort ends in resounding debacle. The 20-year project failed after spending over USD 2 trillion, sacrificing the lives of over 2,400 American service members, and bringing back more than 20,000 injured. Eight hundred thousand military personnel completed a tour of duty in the battlefields of Afghanistan.

The devastation for Afghan citizens has been similar. Half-a-million Afghans, mostly civilians, were killed or injured by American fire. Two million Afghans were forced to flee to neighbouring countries as refugees.

For all of this, "Operation Enduring Freedom" wrested power away from the Taliban for 20 years, only to give it back.

Both US President Joe Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump played a vital role in negotiating the final settlement with the Taliban. Trump concluded the Doha Agreement with the Taliban, agreeing to withdraw troops in exchange for a pledge to prevent al-Qaida from operating in Afghan regions controlled by the Taliban. The agreement was negotiated without Ashraf Ghani's administration, striking a devastating blow to the elected government's legitimacy,

and granting de facto legitimacy to the Taliban. And Biden's rapid withdrawal has caused immense suffering to friends of the United States. It did not go as planned.

Given the history, geography, ethnicity, and culture of Afghanistan, the United States' plan was probably doomed from the start. A unitary central government in Afghanistan is probably not a viable solution, and the Taliban government is destined to fall apart if it tries to put such a system into place. The Taliban's extreme Sunni Islam grip will not be able to resist the centrifugal force of various freedom-minded ethnicities that make up the rest of Afghanistan. The Mujahideen governments in the 1990s learned this lesson the hard way. Various ethnic players within those failed governments shared politico-religious understandings from the teachings of Sunni Islamic theologians. But when they took power after defeating the atheist USSR and its proxies, their religious glue fell apart under the tremendous pressure of anti-central tribal forces. A loose confederation of autonomous states of various ethnic groups could be a better choice. We will see.

At the end of the day, did the United States learn anything? I hope so. America should better evaluate the risks, rewards, and costs—blood, money, resources—before embarking on another nation-building adventure. It should look to lessons from the collapse of older empires stretched thin due to unnecessary wars. Perhaps in the future, it should focus on using surgical military operations to capture the perpetrators of attacks on its soil—with less blood of its brave soldiers spilled and less of its children's money spent. And the United States should redouble its efforts to keep better, sharper watch for future attacks by deranged monsters.

Dr Mostofa Sarwar is professor emeritus at the University of New Orleans, dean and former vice-chancellor of Delgado Community College, and commissioner of the governing board of Regional Transit Authority of New Orleans.

QUOTABLE Quote

KIMBERLE WILLIAMS CRENSHAW
(born May 4, 1959)
American lawyer

When feminism does not explicitly oppose racism, and when anti-racism does not incorporate opposition to patriarchy, race and gender politics often end up being antagonistic to each other, and both interests lose.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Fleet unit
- 5 Location
- 9 Suggestions
- 11 City on the Loire
- 13 Available
- 14 Belly button type
- 15 Sense of self
- 16 U-235, for one
- 18 Made a home
- 20 Dandy
- 21 Slate source
- 22 High-elev. places
- 23 Print units
- 24 "Zip-A-Dee-Doo—"
- 25 Price holders
- 27 Clan symbol

DOWN

- 1 Pumps, e.g.
- 2 Door parts
- 3 Madonna song
- 4 School org.
- 5 Arose
- 6 Sullen look
- 7 No longer in danger

- 29 Hockey's Bobby
- 30 D.C. cirler
- 32 Zoologist Jane
- 35 Love affair
- 36 African lilies
- 38 Was frugal
- 39 "The Kiss" creator
- 40 Collections
- 41 Regarding

- 8 Stumble over
- 10 Kitchen goofs
- 12 Percolates
- 17 Notice
- 19 Works leather
- 22 Swimmer
- Biondi
- 24 Buck
- 25 Frat party costumes
- 26 Kitchen come-ons
- 27 Bus. card no.
- 28 Succeeded
- 30 Old poets
- 31 Like some questions
- 33 Love song, often
- 37 Mauna -

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TUESDAY'S ANSWERS

C	H	E	F	A	P	A	R	T
R	E	V	E	P	C	A	N	E
E	N	E	R	O	A	N	O	D
E	R	R	W	R	I	T	T	E
K	I	T	T	E	N	H	A	D
A	R	G	O	A	I	R	S	
F	L	A	N	A	T	S		
O	L	D	B	I	T	T	E	N
S	M	I	T	T	E	N	A	M
T	I	A	R	A	L	L	E	N
E	N	T	E	R	S	E	I	N
R	E	E	K	S	D	A	D	S

BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ROHINGYA ISSUE

Dhaka reminds int'l community of their duties

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has stressed on the international community's responsibility towards establishing accountability and justice for the massive human rights violations perpetrated against Rohingyas in Myanmar.

The minister raised the issue at a meeting with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet Jeria in Geneva on Tuesday.

He reiterated Bangladesh's strong commitment to promoting safe, dignified and voluntary return of Rohingyas to Myanmar in a conducive environment.

Momen conveyed Bangladesh's readiness to work with Myanmar, UNHCR, OHCHR and other parties concerned to bring about a sustainable and durable solution.

Bangladesh continues to bear the burden of over 1.1 million Rohingyas as no repatriation took place over the last four years amid "lack of initiative" from the Myanmar side and "inadequate steps" by the international community.

Four years ago, Myanmar's military carried out a horrific "ethnic cleansing" against the Rohingya in northern Rakhine State. The brutality of the military's atrocities shocked the conscience of the international community.

The last exodus of Rohingyas began on August 25, 2017 when violence broke out in Rakhine, forcing thousands of Rohingyas to seek shelter in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh had handed over a list of 840,000 Rohingyas to Myanmar for verification, but the verification process by the Myanmar side was very slow, Dhaka says.

Repatriation attempts failed twice in November 2018 and August 2019 amid Rohingyas' lack of trust in the Myanmar government.

Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a repatriation deal on November 23, 2017. On January 16 the following year, the two countries inked a document on "Physical Arrangement", which was supposed to facilitate the return of Rohingyas to their homeland.

Pakistan asks

FROM PAGE 12
appointment of Dr Malik as the governor of the occupied territory of Bangladesh as an acceptance of defeat by the so-called military junta of Islamabad.

"It is evident that Tikka Khan's awful rule of ruthless killing, looting, burning and raping have been turned into ignominious nullity on the soil of Bangladesh. The killer has fallen. His chivalrous glory is crumbled into pieces. He is to get out as a disgraced man with head low and vanity lower. There is a clear message in this for General Yahya Khan also," added Moshtaque.

He further said, "The appointment of Mr Malik is yet another attempt to throw a handful of dust in the eyes of the world to create confusion. People of Bangladesh know the designs behind this sort of restoration of civil administration. They witnessed this same 'restoration' once after Ayub [Khan] staged a coup in 1958, again after Yahya ascended the throne of Pakistan in 1969. When colonial rule by a military governor becomes pungent and embarrassing, the military rulers go for transplanting a civilian quisling as the Subedar of Bangladesh. This time also the military colonialists have exercised their ground rule of colonial administration. This known game is not going to pay any dividend this time in an attempt to convince foreign powers to give aid and assistance."

NURUL AMIN REFUSES TO LEAD PAKISTAN TEAM TO UN
Former East Pakistan chief minister Nurul Amin declined to lead Pakistan's delegation to the forthcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly. Nurul Amin, leader of the Pakistan Democratic Party, was the lone non-Awami League member to win the election to the National Assembly in December, 1970. He turned down the request of President Yahya Khan's regime to lead the delegation due to "health reasons".

IPU TO DISCUSS BANGLADESH ISSUE
The Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) unanimously decided to enter the question of "international cooperation in favour of the East Pakistani people and refugees" on the agenda of the 59th IPU session which was formally opened today at Versailles by French President Georges Pompidou.

PAKISTAN LIFTS PRESS CENSORSHIP
The Pakistan government lifted press censorship throughout Pakistan, an official spokesman announced today. *Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com*

Govt to arrange 1 crore doses every month

FROM PAGE 1

It was the 14th session of the eleventh Jatiya Sangsad which began around 5:00pm, presided over by Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury.

In the scripted answer, PM said: "Steps have been taken to ensure more than one crore vaccine doses every month."

According to the schedule received from Sinopharm, two crore shots will be available every month from October onwards and six crore shots by December, she added.

So far, 1,82,89,018 people have got the first Covid dose and 78,40,169 people have been vaccinated with the second dose. In total, 2,61,29,187 doses of Covid-19 vaccine have been administered, the PM told parliament.

Hasina said the country has a stock of 1,18,96,343 doses of Covid vaccine right now.

She said the government has established communications with all vaccine producing organisations. "Of them, we [first] got response from

Tigers stroll to maiden T20I

FROM PAGE 1

successful captain for Bangladesh in the format. Mahmudullah now has led Bangladesh to 11 victories in 23 T20Is, surpassing the previous best of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, who led the Tigers to 10 victories in 28 T20Is.

It was once again Shakib Al Hasan who played the pivotal role in such a dominating win. Shakib, who was adjudged the player-of-the-series against Australia last month, continued his good run of form with yet another all-round performance.

The premier all-rounder picked up two wickets giving away just 10 runs in

Indian Serum Institute and booked three crore doses of vaccines with advance payment."

There was no response from any other vaccine producing companies then, she said.

"Afterwards, Sinopharm from China and Sputnik-V also responded and we took initiatives immediately; we have inked an agreement with Sinopharm and also signed a memorandum of understanding for local production."

Till August 30, the prime minister said, her government has already taken measures to collect 24,54,52,700 doses of Covid-19 vaccine as part of the initiative to inoculate all the people.

She said the process to purchase three crore doses Sinopharm vaccine and 7.50 crore dose Sinovac vaccine through Covax is at the final stage.

The PM said the government has sent formal proposal to purchase 70 million doses of Johnson and Johnson vaccine, 30 million dose

Sinopharm vaccine, and 73 million Sinovac vaccine from Covax with the finance of Asian Development Bank.

DELTA PLAN 2100
Responding to a question from Shameem Haider Patwari from Jatiya Party, Hasina informed the House that every year, about 6,000 hectares of coastal land is lost to erosion. As a result, about 50,000 people became homeless, she said.

She said the government has taken a move for a permanent solution to the river erosion problem.

The project Delta Plan 2100 has been undertaken for overall river management, water supply in urban and rural areas, waste management, flood control, river erosion control, river training, and to maintain navigability.

She mentioned that in this plan the whole country has been divided into seven river basins and survey is going on. The surveys on Karnaphuli, Sangu and Matamuhiri rivers have been completed.

four for nine runs in four overs after Kiwi skipper Tom Latham had elected to bat.

Latham and Henry Nicholls then began rebuilding, but always looked shaky and indecisive against Bangladesh bowlers who already had their tail up and were looking unplayable on a slow, low and gripping Mirpur pitch, tailor-made for enhancing their abilities.

Latham's 34-run stand with Nicholls eventually came to an end when the former mistimed a pull-shot off all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin in the 11th over.

his four overs before playing a crucial role with the bat, scoring a team-high of 25 off 33 deliveries that stabilised the innings after Bangladesh had lost two early wickets.

Coming into the series on the back of a historic 4-1 series victory against the Aussies, Bangladesh were clear favourites against an inexperienced New Zealand side, who are on the tour without a single player from their squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup.

Mahmudullah's troops did play like favourites as they began the rout by reducing the clueless visitors to

Frustration grows in BNP grassroots

FROM PAGE 12

moving forward with the election in mind, not a movement. It's not lost on the high-ups that the organisation still lacks the strength to pull off a movement.

The BNP boycotted the January 5, 2014, election, demanding polls under a non-partisan interim government. It waged a countrywide movement but could not force the government to concede its demand; rather it was criticised for destructive politics.

Then in 2018, it formed a greater alliance with Jatiya Oikyafront and participated in 11th parliamentary election. But it managed only nine seats including one reserved seat for women. The party boycotted the election results alleging massive rigging but eventually joined parliament.

Fast forward three years, the BNP is still in a shambles.

A district leader wishing not to be named said the party should hold a council immediately to draw up

a long-term vision and a roadmap regarding the months leading up to the polls. This would give party activists some kind of hope.

"The central leadership is out of touch with the grassroots. The gap should be bridged immediately and top leadership should issue specific directives. Grassroots leaders are frustrated, they need hope ...," he added.

Central leaders claim that with an eye on the next election, the party has started stepping up its organisational activities including forming committees for associated and front organisations. It has already formed convening committees for Dhaka North and South city units.

Although the party has been making this claim since 2009, the revamp process is yet to be completed.

BNP insiders said personal rivalries and intra-party feuds are the main barriers to completing the process. They said although the success of any movement depends largely on

how it goes in Dhaka, the party is not in a good shape here in terms of organisational strength.

BNP's Publicity Affairs Secretary Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annie said that since outdoor programmes are suspended for around two years on account of the pandemic, they are focusing on reorganising the party.

"Our initial target is to revamp the party and complete it by this year. We have to force the government to hold the election under a non-partisan interim government and for this we need strength. We are now gaining strength," he added.

Annie, also a former student leader, said the revamping process was hampered because of the government's repression on the BNP men.

Party leaders said their biggest achievement is the party has been able to keep its leaders and activists united even in these most trying times.

Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, party's secretary general, said, "The government is bent on splitting the

Their 2-week long nightmare finally ends

FROM PAGE 12

with the Taliban's seizing of control before the final withdrawal of the US and other Nato forces by August 31.

Razib said they all had decided to return home as the Western forces were withdrawing and that formation of a new government was likely, but it was beyond imagination that the Taliban would take control so fast.

They had flights on August 16, but with the Taliban's seizing control of Kabul the day before, the flights were cancelled, leaving them in trouble because no commercial flights were available.

"We were secure in our company residences in Kabul, but as all the foreigners were leaving, we were trying to get into the airport," he told this correspondent at his Dhaka home yesterday.

They, along with nine other Bangladeshis, made attempts to enter the airport five times but failed as they were not allowed in on security grounds.

After avoiding the bomb blasts on August 26 that killed about 100 people, including 13 US troops, they took shelter in a place that is about eight minutes' drive from the airport. The Bangladeshis and about 150 Afghan students of Asian University for Women (AUW) in Chattogram stayed in seven buses on the streets for nearly 40 hours from noon of August 25.

"There was panic indeed. Our relatives were all worried. We were getting calls from journalists. Bombs were going off and people were killed. There were security concerns," he said.

He said Foreign Ministry Secretary [East] Mashrafe Binte Shams and Bangladesh Ambassador to Uzbekistan, Zahangir Alam, regularly

called them, asking what they could do.

Razib, who has been working in Afghanistan for 14 years, said they were desperately trying to enter the airport in anyway before August 30 as the US was scheduled to complete its troop withdrawal by August 31.

He added that if they could not leave Kabul by that time, they feared of getting stranded there for a long time.

"With frantic efforts, finally six of us entered the airport braving huge crowds and requested the US forces to put us on any flight and evacuate us in anywhere outside Afghanistan," said Razib.

In a few hours, they were put onboard a flight of the US to Doha. With instructions from the foreign ministry in Dhaka, the Bangladesh embassy in Qatar called them and arranged Covid tests and

Around 30pc of country to be flood affected

FROM PAGE 12

hardships in those districts, they said.

In Kurigram, around 50,000 flood victims on the banks of the Brahmaputra, Dharla and Dudhkumar rivers are facing crises of food and pure drinking water. Many of the flood victims have left their homes and taken shelter along with their furniture and livestock on government roads and WDB dykes.

Mahu Miah, 58, of Char Parbati in Jatrapur union on the bank of the Brahmaputra in Kurigram Sadar upazila, told The Daily Star that he had moved with his family to a government road as his house is inundated with flood water.

So far, no government assistance has been provided to them, he said.

Ayub Ali, chairman of Jatrapur union parishad, said the amount of relief materials he has received is low when compared to that which is required.

The District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO) has allocated 280 tonnes of rice and Tk 12 lakh for flood victims in nine upazilas of Kurigram.

However, due to the delay in preparing the list of flood-hit people, the government relief aid has not yet reached the victims, said Ayub Ali.

In Bogura, around 70,000 people of three upazilas are suffering from shortages of drinking water and dry foods.

Visiting the Shonpacha char under Bogura's Sariakandi upazila, our local correspondent found around 500-600 people (165 families) were affected by flood a month ago, but they were yet

to receive any relief goods.

Asma Begum, 45, said, "Flood water entered our village around 15 days ago. We are suffering much because we have no work, no food. We are even collecting drinking water from 5km away by boats. People who do not have boats cannot go outside."

On the other hand, on August 29, around 200 houses in Noapara char under Bogura's Sariakandi upazila was devoured by the Jamuna due to erosion and flooding, said Shawkat Ali, chairman of Chaluabari union parishad.

Over one lakh people of 25 unions of five upazilas have been marooned, but a flood loss report has still not come to the district administration, said Md Abdur Rahim, district relief and rehabilitation officer.

In Tangail, over one lakh people

OBITUARY MOTION FOR PROF ALI ASHRAF

The House yesterday unanimously adopted an obituary motion expressing profound condolence on the demise of Prof Ali Ashraf, a veteran lawmaker of ruling Awami League from Cumilla-7.

A freedom fight and former deputy speaker of parliament, Ali Ashraf died on July 30 at the age of 74.

"We have lost an experienced parliamentarian," the prime minister said while participating on the obituary reference.

She noted that Ali Ashraf had written 15 books on contemporary politics and economics.

Among others, Jatiya Party Chairman and Deputy Leader of the Opposition GM Quader, Law Minister Anisul Haq, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque, LGRD Minister Tajul Islam, and AL lawmakers Matia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim participated in the discussion.

None of the Kiwi partnerships after that crossed double-figure mark as left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman rattled the tail, picking up three wickets for just 13 runs in 2.5 overs.

Coming in to chase a low total, Bangladesh were left in the lurch by openers Mohammad Naim and Liton Das as both exited after scoring just a solitary run each.

However, a fruitful contribution from Shakib followed by unbeaten scores of 16 and 14 from Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah respectively saw the Tigers eventually register an easy victory with 30 balls to spare.

BNP, but all its attempts fell flat. Our unity is our strength. The BNP is not solely responsible for restoring democracy in the country, rather people from other strata also need to come forward."

He added that "since the incumbent government is autocratic", it is tough for any political party even to wage a democratic and systematic movement.

"Despite that, we are trying. We will continue to fight for democracy," he said.

Al Masud Hasanuzzaman, professor of government and politics at Jahangirnagar University, said if the party can plug its loopholes, then it could get a positive result in the next electoral politics.

Nurul Amin Bepari, former chairman of Dhaka University's political science department, said the BNP must introduce more people-oriented programmes so that people can feel ownership. This ownership will help the BNP pile up pressure on the government to hold a free and fair election, he added.

accommodation for two nights there through the Qatar government.

During their stay in Doha, they learnt that six other Bangladeshis and 150 Afghan students of AUW also flew to Riyadh later that day by another US special flight.

Razib said while in Doha, their company arranged tickets and they flew to Dubai by an Emirates flight and flew to Dhaka on Tuesday night.

"What has happened to us in the last two weeks was just nightmare. It's now over. The worries of our families, friends and the countrymen are also over," he said.

Razib thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, all the government officials in Dhaka, Uzbekistan and Qatar, and journalists for their help in the times of trouble.

"I would say they all made 100 percent efforts to help us," he said.

of several hundred villages at Sadar, Kalihati, Bhanpur, Gopalpur, Nagarpur, Basail, Delduar and Mirzapur upazilas along the Jamuna river were marooned, sources at Water Development Board (WDB) said.

In Manikganj, water of the Jamuna was flowing 17 centimetres above the danger mark at Aricha around 3:00pm yesterday, said Faruk Hossain, gauge reader of Manikganj WDB.

Several thousand people of Daulatpur, Shibalay, Harirampur and other upazilas have been stranded by floodwater.

Rakibul Islam, sub-divisional engineer at Munshiganj WDB, said more than 50 villages in three upazilas were at risk of erosion due to the rise in water levels of the Padma river for several weeks.

Country's first

FROM PAGE 12

according to officials.

Md Asaduzzaman, chief of CTTC unit, told The Daily Star yesterday that the data centre will help speeding up explosives related cases investigation as it already has all types of IED's history and who used those IED's.

"The centre will also keep communication with a developed country and take information if any new IED's found anywhere in the world," he said.

The CTTC chief said that people got panicked when they found an IED.

"We have earlier seen that due to mishandled and not having proper knowledge, people often got hurt. The data centre will help create awareness. People will get knowledge and notify local police so that action can be taken immediately," said the CTTC chief.

During a visit yesterday, five separate sections were found in the data centre.

"Bomb Archive", in where, IED and Bomb replica used in political program and militants' attacks like Holey Artisan café attack, Tazia Possession, Narayanganj police outpost attack, Moulvibazar and Ashkona militant hideout was kept.

The second section is "IED Research Centre", where the officials preserved the worlds latest IED related research, analysis and books.

There is a Data Fusion Corner in the centre, from where, officials will be on duty round the clock and give feedback, advice and input to all other police units.

There is also "Technical Intelligence" corner to keep data about how to diffuse IED, collect biometric and collect evidence to submit in court.

And finally, there is "Chemical Exploitation" corner to check and analyse different types of chemicals used in IED.

Rahmat Ullah Chowdhury, in-charge of BDU unit, told The Daily Star that the bomb data centre will be a centre of excellence for Bangladesh police to provide knowledge on IED.

"BDU is the only trained team in police and it has to respond to bomb calls across the country. We have to respond to around 10 calls on an average every day. Due to continuous analysis, the centre will be able to help officials to diffuse IED safely and it will also reduce the risk factor," he said.

A team of Bangladesh Army and US Central Intelligence Agency (FBI) have already visited the data centre and praised the initiatives, according to officials.

Regarding the use of IED by militant outfits, BDU officials said three homegrown militant outfits – Huji, JMB and Neo JMB – were mainly found to use the IED and bombs.

But all of the IED's were prepared by the militant outfit watching different tutorials and videos and the elements were also collected from a local source, they said.

For this reason, the data centre is also keeping the updated data of the country's chemical traders and which type of chemicals they are selling so that it did not goes to any wrong hands.

Abdul Mannan, deputy commissioner of special action group of CTTC unit, told The Daily Star that they are working to turn these bomb data centre into an institute, from where the officials working in law enforcement agencies can receive training.

"We have also plan to share intelligence and dataset with developed countries so that the people from the abroad can also get the scope to have training from the centre," he added.

World's biggest

FROM PAGE 12

Drouot auction house in Paris, where it will be offered by the specialist auctioneers Giquello on October 21.

It is estimated that it will sell at 1.2 to 1.5 million euros (\$1.4-\$1.8 million), though dinosaur auction sales have proved very unpredictable in the past.

The dinosaur has an export licence and there are a dozen possible buyers, said Alexandre Giquello of the Giquello house.

The two-metre-wide skull, some 200 bones and large horns of the animal were being assembled Tuesday behind the windows of a Drouot exhibition gallery in central Paris.

A unique specimen with the skeleton more than 60-percent complete -- including 75 percent for the skull -- Big John was discovered in 2014 in the US state of South Dakota by geologist Walter W. Stein Bill. Its restoration was carried out in Trieste in Italy.

This sale comes amid continued enthusiasm for dinosaur skeletons, with prices often reaching records that leave public museums and research centres unable to outbid private buyers.

WHO worried

FROM PAGE 12

stressed that further studies were needed to better understand it.

"The Mu variant has a constellation of mutations that indicate potential properties of immune escape," the bulletin said.

There is widespread concern over the emergence of new virus mutations as infection rates are ticking up globally again, with the highly transmissible Delta variant taking hold -- especially among the unvaccinated -- and in regions where anti-virus measures have been relaxed.

allies evacuate more than 122,000 in just over two weeks, also said the US would continue the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and other countries, and warned the Islamic State group: "We are not done with you yet."

Russian President Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, said the US' 20-year campaign in Afghanistan ended in "only tragedies, only losses."

It is "impossible to impose anything from outside", he said.

nation.

For America, Biden argued, the only choice was "leaving or escalating", and called the evacuation as an "extraordinary success."

"No nation has ever done anything like it in all of history; only the United States had the capacity and the will and ability to do it," he said.

Biden, who has been savaged by critics for his handling of the withdrawal which saw the US and its

The United Nations warned, meanwhile, of a looming "humanitarian catastrophe", underscoring the daunting challenges that the Taliban face as they transform from insurgent group to governing power.

'EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS'
US President Joe Biden was nonetheless defiant. "This is the right decision. A wise decision. And the best decision for America," Biden said in an address to the

SPORT

What to WATCH

SONY SIX
England vs India
Fourth Test (Day 1)
Live from 4:00 pm
T SPORTS
South Africa vs Sri Lanka
First ODI

Live from 3:30 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & 2
US Open
Second Round
Live from 9:00 pm & 4:30 am
(Friday)
TEN 1

World Cup Qualifiers
Italy vs Bulgaria
Live from 12:45 am (Friday)
TEN 2
World Cup Qualifiers
Hungary vs England
Live from 12:45 am (Friday)



Mahmudullah Riyad (R) and Mushfiqur Rahim (C) wear broad grins on their faces as they talk with New Zealand captain Tom Latham after guiding Bangladesh to a seven-wicket win against the visitors in the first T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Tamim's class act sets an example

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI



Just a few hours before the first T20I between Bangladesh and New Zealand began yesterday, Tamim Iqbal, who had been missing in action from the T20I line-up for the past 17 months, went live from his Facebook page and announced that he will not be available for the upcoming T20 World Cup in UAE.

Tamim termed it as a 'small announcement' but it was anything but that. Since making his T20I debut in 2007, the dashing left-hander has held the position as Tigers' opener in all formats through dominating displays.

He has played in all six T20 World Cups for the Tigers till date and is also Bangladesh's only centurion in not only T20I World Cups but also in the format itself. Given his stature in Bangladesh cricket, Tamim not playing a World Cup was still pretty unthinkable given how he has led the side through his mentality and his ability throughout.

Tamim however, had his reasons. He cited that a key factor was his absence in the format for such an extended period of time, also adding that while injury issues have played a part in making up his mind, he expected to be fit in time before the mega event. The biggest reason was based on how Tamim felt about being an automatic choice in the format, thus setting a big example of professionalism and big-heartedness.

"I haven't played in the last 15-16 T20s and I don't think it would be fair to take the place of someone who was playing during this time period," he said. Tamim knew that he was going to be included in the World Cup side but he felt it would have been unjust. He also made it quite clear that he was not retiring from T20s yet, rather opting out

from the upcoming World Cup. "I think the young players who are playing should get the chance and their preparation will be better than mine," he reiterated.

The 32-year-old last played a T20I in March 2020 and while the performances of his T20 career did not always match his calibre, he would have been a valuable asset nonetheless, due to his experience. But Tamim was also in the right frame of mind to take a difficult decision, which from his perspective was the best for the team.

The selectors had perhaps hung back, waiting to make a decision on Tamim or for him to take one for



them. As a senior player and one of the stalwarts in the side, Tamim had set the Tigers free ahead of a crucial tournament.

Usually in Bangladesh cricket's history, such matters often have bitter ends, but Tamim's announcement sets an example of a senior player taking a decision through his own realizations. What Tamim's decision essentially means is a show of confidence towards the younger players from a senior member and it remains to be seen if that confidence can reap rewards in the upcoming World Cup.

Winning momentum 'most important thing'

SPORTS REPORTER



New Zealand were welcomed by Bangladesh with the template that undid the Aussies as a slow and low Mirpur surface played its part behind the hosts registering their maiden T20I win over the Kiwis by seven wickets yesterday.

In fact, Bangladesh did it some style, bundling New Zealand out for 60 after Tom Latham elected to bat in the first of the five-match T20I series.

Shakib Al Hasan, the poster-boy of Bangladesh cricket, was instrumental. He first bagged two wickets while conceding just ten runs from four overs and then scored 25 in chase of a paltry 61 runs.

Questions may still linger about whether the Mirpur surface was ideal in terms of preparations for the batsmen ahead of the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup in the middle

Mahmudullah has become the most successful T20I captain for Bangladesh registering his 11th win from 23 matches. Former captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza won 10 of his 28 matches while leading the side.

The Kiwis folded for 60; their joint-lowest total in men's T20Is, following a similar collapse against Sri Lanka in the 2014 T20 World Cup.

east next month, but Shakib believed the winning momentum would help them going into the World Cup.

"The most important thing is that we won the game, which is very good leading up to the World Cup. I can still remember when we did well in the 2007 World Cup. We won quite a few matches on the trot before the tournament in the fifty-over format. That helped us do well in the 2007 World Cup. So, I think this win will take us to a good position from where we will be able to do well in the World Cup," the man of the match told media after the game.

The 34-year-old requires four further wickets to surpass Sri Lanka pacer Lasith Malinga as the highest wicket-taker in T20Is. Although he said he does not think about such milestone, he enjoyed such feats when they came his way.

Meanwhile, skipper Mahmudullah praised his bowlers for the clinical showing and added that Bangladesh needed to make a statement after thrashings from New Zealand earlier this year.

"It's a good feeling after having lost a few matches against them. We need to come back again and do it again. The main thing was that the bowlers were hungry

and disciplined with their skills. They were not trying too much and that was important. I'd have batted first but it's always a tricky wicket," Mahmudullah said during the post-match presentation ceremony.

For Tom Latham and the inexperienced New Zealand side, it was always going to be a tough task to adapt and adjust to the alien Mirpur surface. That proved to be the case as the visitors were bundled out for joint-lowest total in the shortest format.

"Obviously, I was slightly disappointed with the start. We knew it was going to be tough but we kept losing wickets at crucial times. For us, it's about finding a way in these conditions and to try to assess what a good score is. With runs on the board, it isn't easy. As I said, it's about working [out] what a good score is and trying and working our way around it. Proud of the effort the guys put in with the ball," said Latham.

Root urges England to be 'ruthless'

AFP, LONDON



England captain Joe Root has urged his team to produce a "ruthless" display in the fourth Test against India at the Oval starting Thursday. England's innings and 76-run victory at Headingley last week has left the five-match series all square at 1-1.

"Now is when the hard work starts," said England captain Root. "We've got to look to go even further, dig deeper and really start to go through the gears," added Root, who replaced New Zealand counterpart Kane Williamson as the top-ranked Test batsman on Wednesday, riding his



red-hot form in the ongoing five-Test series against India. "A world-class side like India, led by Virat Kohli, I expect nothing less than a response. It would be naive to think otherwise. We've just got ourselves back to level and, if we find ourselves ahead of the game at any stage, we must get ruthless again."

A see-saw series -- a rain-affected draw in Nottingham was followed by India's 151-run win at Lord's before they collapsed to 78 all out at Leeds -- has left Kohli adamant his side will not be "demoralised" by last week's loss. "If what happens in one game guarantees you the same thing in the next game, we should have smashed England again," the India captain added.

India were dismissed for just 36 while losing the first Test against Australia in Adelaide in December only for an injury-hit squad to claim a memorable 2-1 series win.

"We like to be in this situation where people start coming at us with doubts and really start questioning the ability of our team," said Kohli. "That is the situation we love best."

With wicketkeeper-batsman Jos Buttler absent to attend the birth of his second child and concerns about the impact a gruelling schedule of three Tests in three weeks will have on their fast bowlers, England could still make as many as three changes to a winning side.

Jonny Bairstow will replace Buttler behind the stumps, with either Dan Lawrence or Ollie Pope filling the vacancy in the middle order.

The more awkward issue for England is whether they should rest either or both James Anderson and Ollie Robinson after the new-ball duo starred at Headingley.

Faced with an Oval pitch known to take turn, India must decide if they can continue to omit off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin.

Tigers capitalise on unforgiving Mirpur

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh thrashed New Zealand by seven wickets in the first T20I yesterday as the in-form Tigers made the most of the conditions against a Kiwi side that found it hard to adapt on an alien surface at Mirpur.

The pitch had been one of the focal points leading up to the Tigers' five-match T20I series against New Zealand and, after the inexperienced Kiwi side were bundled out for their joint-lowest T20I total of 60, the pitch was once again in the limelight.

The Australia series had been a unique feat for the Tigers, ending in a 4-1 humbling for the visitors. Bangladesh's score of 131 for seven was the highest total in that series and it was tough going for batsmen on both sides, who found the slowness and the irregular bounce hard to deal with.

With the New Zealand series being the Tigers' last opportunity to gauge their strengths and weaknesses ahead of the T20 World Cup in two months' time, coach Russell Domingo had hoped for wickets that offered around 150-160 runs in order to get a better understanding of his squad's batting abilities.



While T20 cricket is usually played on wickets that produces runs, the pitches at Mirpur deviated from that trend. It would not be unusual for the home sides' batters to fare better on such wickets but it was still tough going and very difficult to judge their performances.

Replying to a question about the wicket

SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND:
60 all out in 16.5 overs (Latham 18, Nicholls 18; Mahedi 1-15, Nasum 2-5, Shakib 2-10, Mustafizur 3-13, Saifuddin 2-7)

BANGLADESH:
63 for 3 in 15.0 overs (Shakib 25, Mushfiqur 16 not out, Mahmudullah 14 not out; Patel 1-7, McConchie 1-19, Ravindra 1-21)
RESULT: Bangladesh won by 7 wickets.

PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH:
Shakib Al Hasan.

feature in the upcoming T20 World Cup, was clear to see. Often, they played their shots early, chipping it to fielders or struggled to adjust to the low bounce.

"New Zealand didn't have much experience of playing in these conditions so naturally they struggled a lot," Shakib reminded.

T20s may be viewed as a game of smash-and-grab shot-making, but Shakib emphasised the struggle of batting in these conditions further, saying: "The more you can focus on singles and put pressure with your running between the wickets here, the better it is. Hitting boundaries is very difficult so you have to be in a positive frame of mind to take singles and doubles. If you can get set and then capitalise on one or two bad deliveries, it will maybe be it is possible to score runs here," Shakib, who scored a team-high 33-ball 25, said.

"Very tough conditions, and the batsmen are going through a very challenging time, especially on such surfaces," Shakib said, driving his point home.

Ahead of the T20 World Cup, it remains to be seen how such surfaces can help prepare the team for conditions where runs will be abundant.

Six newcomers in expanded list

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 24-member list of centrally-contracted cricketers for the 2021 season following a board meeting yesterday, introducing a format-specific contract system to replace the previous white-ball and red-ball distinction.

Nurul Hasan, Shamim Hossain, Mahedi Hasan and Nasum Ahmed were the new additions to the list that were included for the T20 format while the Test format only added the fresh face of batsman Saif Hasan.

Mohammad Mithun and Nayeem Hasan, part of the 17 that featured in the previous list, missed out this time around while Mosaddek Hossain, Rubel Hossain, and Aminul Islam were also not considered.

Shakib Al Hasan returned after missing out last time due to a one-year ban levied on him by the ICC after he failed to report corrupt approaches from a bookie. He was one of five players named across all formats alongside Mushfiqur Rahim, Liton Das, Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam.

Shoriful was a surprise inclusion for all three formats as the left-arm seamer only made his international debut across the formats this year, although he impressed many with his potential.

ODI captain Tamim Iqbal was left out of the T20 format while T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad, who has not confirmed his future in the

longest format of the game, was not named in the Test side.

A-plus category players will receive up to Tk 7.95 lac per month while a rookie can expect a monthly salary of Tk 75,000 under the latest contract.

"I think it's a good opportunity for youngsters who were named for the first time. We actually increased the number of players from 17 to 24 for the latest central contract and I think that will help encourage them and provide financial support as well," BCB cricket operations committee chairman Akram Khan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Among other major outcomes from the board meeting yesterday, a five-member election commission was formed to oversee the upcoming BCB Board of Directors' Election later this year.

Former President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB) Farhad Hussain was named as the chief election commissioner. Former joint secretary of the Bangladesh government Omar Faruque, BCB's legal advisor Barrister Muddasir Hossain, former deputy attorney general Ekramul Hoque and BCB CEO Nizam Uddin Chowdhury were named election commissioners.

The board has also approved the list of associations, clubs, and different organisations for the formation of the BCB general council in line with the requirements of the BCB constitution.



Shoriful was a surprise inclusion for all three formats as the left-arm seamer only made his international debut across the formats this year, although he impressed many with his potential.

Test, ODI & T20I: Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Liton Das, Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam.

Test & ODI: Tamim Iqbal, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam.

Test: Mominul Haque, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Abu Jayed, Shadman Islam, Saif Hasan and Ebadot Hossain.

ODI & T20I: Mahmudullah Riyad, Mustafizur Rahman, Mohammad Saifuddin and Aff Hossain.

T20I: Soumya Sarkar, Naim Sheikh, Sheikh Mahedi Hasan, Nurul Hasan Sohan, Nasum Ahmed and Shamim Hossain.

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is being built with BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM**
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Country's first bomb archive goes online

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The country's first-ever "Bomb Data Centre" is now ready and to provide details of any bomb-like object within moments just analysing its picture.

Officials, who are on duty round the clock, will not only help to identify the explosive object but also give advice on how to detonate it.

The Bomb Disposal Unit (BDU) of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit has set up the data centre with a cost of Tk 50 lakh.

The data centre has become operational since yesterday. Inside the centre, there have an archive of all types of explosives and Improvised Explosives Device (IED) used by militant outfits, political parties or industrial explosions since the year 2000.

The archive so far has around 61 slots and the officials preserved all the IED's replicas found so far in different attacks and blasts in these slots with a bar code.

You just need to scan the bar-code and the details of the IED or bomb will be displayed on a monitor with a description of which criminal group used it, type of IED, elements used inside, source and how many were arrested

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Around 30pc of country to be flood affected

Padma, Jamuna to keep rising for 3 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 30 percent of the country's area is set to be inundated as the water level of the Jamuna and Padma is forecast to continue rising over the next three days.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said the overall flood situation will worsen in 11 districts -- Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Bogura, Tangail, Sirajganj, Pabna, Tangail, Manikganj, Faridpur and Shariatpur -- by today morning.

"The water level will increase for the next three days and by then around 30 percent of the country would be flooded," Arifuzzaman Bhuiyan, executive engineer of FFWC flood forecasting and warning centre, told The Daily Star.

Of 109 water measuring points in different rivers, water is flowing above the danger level at 16 points while water levels at another 50 points are increasing, the FFWC bulletin said.

Our correspondents from the flood affected districts reported that people of those districts have been forced to leave their homes due to their houses being flooded and a lack of food and drinking water. A few lakh people are enduring

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

TO USE QR CODE ON YOUR SMARTPHONE, INSTALL FREE QR READER SOFTWARE FROM GOOGLE PLAYSTORE OR APPLE STORE. TURN ON THE SOFTWARE AND HOLD THE PHONE CAMERA OVER THE QR CODE TO GET THE VIDEO LINK.



With her child on a bamboo structure, a mother washes clothes in floodwater in her house while another person enters a room to take out her belongings and move to a safe place in Shonpancha char of Bogura's Sariakandi yesterday. *Inset*, structures of a house being moved elsewhere on a boat as Padma erosion has taken a serious turn in Munshiganj's Tongibari upazila.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ, PALASH KHAN

Their 2-week long nightmare finally ends

Six engineers stranded in Kabul come home



PORIMOL PALMA

The evacuation process of the six Bangladeshi engineers from Kabul could only be described as a nightmare in which they saw horrific events, including bomb blasts and killings.

On August 26, they were at the Kabul International Airport gate just half an hour before the bombs went off there.

"We were approaching the gate, but were alerted to move away by our company security. Around half an hour after leaving the gate, the bombs

exploded," said Razib Bin Islam, one of the six engineers who works for Afghan Wireless Communication Company, a US-Afghan joint venture mobile carrier.

He and five others -- Md Kamruzzaman, Mohammad Nazrul Islam, Imran Hossain, Abu Zafar Md Masud Karim and Shek Farid Uddin -- returned home midnight Tuesday after more than two weeks of desperate attempts to come home.

Foreigners and thousands of Afghans were fleeing the South Asian country

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Frustration grows in BNP grassroots

They wait for top leaders' decision on way forward

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP, out of power for the longest period since its inception four decades ago, is now in a quandary over whether to run in the next election after a movement or without one.

Some top leaders, like the grassroots, believe there is no alternative to launching a fierce movement to force the government to hold a free and fair election.

Some others, however, think that might not be plausible given the waning strength of the organisation. The party should rather focus on talks with the government and other stakeholders on how to ensure a level-playing field for all parties for the polls.

Meanwhile, the grassroots are frustrated because they have no clue about what the party is thinking even though the election is only around two years away -- in 2023.

"A free and fair election is not possible under this government and it is now clear to the world. So, in my view, there is no way but to launch a movement," Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, BNP organising secretary, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Wishing anonymity, a senior leader said the party is

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World's biggest triceratops on sale in Paris



AFP, Paris

A Paris auction house will seek to sell in October the world's biggest known example of the dinosaur triceratops, known as "Big John", with the spectacular skeleton on show to the public beforehand, organisers said Tuesday.

The triceratops is among the most distinctive of dinosaurs due to the three horns on its head -- one at the nose and two on the forehead -- that give the dinosaur its Latin name.

"Big John" is the largest known surviving example, 66 million years old and with a skeleton some eight metres long.

It will be on display starting October 18 at the

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Pakistan asks diplomats to surrender passports

SEPTEMBER 2, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

AN UNPRECEDENTED STEP Evidently panic-stricken at the large-scale defection of Bangalee members of its mission staff, the Pakistan government today took an unprecedented step to seize passports of all its diplomatic staff abroad.

The government called upon its diplomats and other employees in the missions and their families to surrender their passports to heads of respective missions by September 7, 1971.

In a vain effort to make the measure appear non-discriminatory, the Pakistan high commission in London said, "This measure is applied to all Pakistani employees in all embassies, high commissions and missions everywhere. It doesn't discriminate against any person from any particular province of Pakistan."

'ACCEPTANCE OF DEFEAT' Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khandaker Moshtaque Ahmed, in a press release issued today, termed the

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WHO worried about 'Mu' variant

Says it 'indicates potential properties of immune escape'

AGENCIES

The World Health Organization has said it is monitoring a new coronavirus variant known as "Mu", which was first identified in Colombia in January.

Mu, known scientifically as B.1.621, has been classified as a "variant of interest", the global health body said Tuesday in its weekly pandemic bulletin.

The WHO said the variant has mutations that indicate a risk of resistance to vaccines and

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PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 2

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:30	12:45	4:45	6:23	7:45
JAMAT	5:05	1:15	5:00	6:26
				8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Several iron rod-laden rickshaw-vans go against the traffic on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway. The rickshaw-van pullers ignore the risk of accidents even though vehicles on the highway are at speed. The photo was captured from Matuail area recently.

PHOTO: PRABR DAS

Formation of new govt in final stages

Say Taliban as Biden vehemently defends US pullout

AGENCIES

The Taliban said the formation of Afghanistan's new government is in its final stages, as US President Joe Biden vehemently defended his decision to end the two-decade war amid growing criticism.

"The government will take shape in the following few days," Anas Haqqani, a senior Taliban leader, told Al Jazeera. He added that it was still too early to say who will be part of the new cabinet.

"We have covered about 90 to 95 percent and we will announce the final outcome in the following few days," Haqqani said.

The Islamist group said it wants to form an "inclusive" government and that it has been talking to members of former governments to encourage them to join a new administration. It has also pledged to respect human rights and women's freedoms "within Islamic law".

The foreign minister of neighbouring Pakistan, which has close ties to the Taliban, said on Tuesday he expected Afghanistan to have a new "consensus government" within days.

The Taliban yesterday paraded some of the military hardware they captured during their takeover of Afghanistan.

A long line of green Humvees idled in single file on a highway outside Kandahar, the spiritual birthplace of the militant movement, many with white-and-black Taliban flags attached to aerials, an AFP journalist saw.

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