

## CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

India reports highest daily cases in two months as EU says no urgent need for vaccine boosters

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Your Right to Know

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"If we do not get vaccines [from Serum Institute of India], then we must bring our money back and they have to give it back."

HEALTH MINISTER ZAHID MALEQUE



"Fundamentalism, communalism, and misogynistic attitudes are still deep inside the administration."

SHAHRIAR KABIR OF EKATTORER GHATAK DALAL NIRMUL COMMITTEE



"We don't know what the future of the Taliban is, but I can tell you from personal experience that this is a ruthless group from the past..."

JOINT US CHIEFS OF STAFF CHAIRMAN GENERAL MARK MILLEY

# Schools, colleges to reopen soon

Directives already given, measures being taken, PM tells parliament



- Vaccination of all teachers, students in progress
- Inter-ministerial meeting Sunday to take decision
- In-person classes at medical colleges from Sept 13

RASHIDUL HASAN and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday in parliament said she directed the authorities concerned to reopen all schools and colleges soon and that they were taking measures in this regard.

In another development, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said in-person classes of first, second, and fifth-year medical students (interns) would resume on September 13.

All educational institutions have remained closed for over 17 months now. The government shut them in March last

year to contain the spread of Covid-19 immediately after the virus was detected in the country. The closure led to cancellation of classes and examinations, throwing the academic life of millions of students in disarray.

Meanwhile, top officials of the education and the primary and mass education ministries said they would hold a joint meeting on Sunday to review whether the current situation was conducive to reopening the schools and colleges.

Speaking in parliament yesterday, Hasina said the government had been

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Aerial view of inundated Kuripara and Pakhimara chars of Bogura's Sariakandi upazila. Such low-lying areas in the district have remained flooded for at least a week after the Jamuna swelled. According to the district administration, over 80 villages have been affected by the recent floods. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUI



➤ Surgical masks give more protection than cloth masks

➤ Study conducted among 3,50,000 people in 600 villages

➤ Wearing masks increased 3-fold in the intervened areas

➤ 11.9% decrease in symptomatic Covid after intervention

## Mask a must

Finds largest study of its kind, by Stanford Medicine and Yale researchers

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Wearing masks reduces the chances of contracting Covid-19 up to 34 percent, and the government should act aggressively to force people to wear masks, says a recent study on 3.5 lakh people in rural Bangladesh.

Awareness campaigns can increase the use of masks up to three times, finds the study, considered the largest of its kind.

Titled "The Impact of Community Masking on COVID-19: A Cluster-Randomized Trial in Bangladesh", the study was conducted by researchers from Stanford Medicine School and Yale University between November 2020 and April 2021.

The randomised trial involving nearly 350,000 individuals in 600 villages also found that surgical masks are more effective than fabric ones in preventing transmission.

These findings come at a time when most people appear to be nonchalant about wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.

Also, the state of mass inoculation is quite poor. With a target of vaccinating 80 percent (13.51 crore) of the people of the country, the government started a campaign on February 7. So far, some four percent of the population have got both shots of a vaccine. If the campaign continues at its current pace, it may take around 10 years to reach the target of 80 percent coverage.

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## THE THIRD VIEW



MAHFUZ ANAM

### Who do our 'public servants' serve?

SEE PAGE 8

## PLACING PORI IN REMAND HC asks two judges to explain

CID official supervising probe into her case sent on retirement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday sought explanations from two lower court judges who placed actor Pori Moni on remand for a second and third time in a narcotics case.

The judges concerned have been ordered to submit their explanations to the HC in 10 days.

In another development, the government sent additional deputy inspector general of police (CID), Sheikh Omar Faruque, on retirement in the "public interest".

Omar Faruque was supervising the cases against Pori Moni and models Faria Mahabub Piasha and Moriom Akter Mou.

The Public Security Division of the home ministry issued a notification in this regard yesterday.

Omar Faruque was in charge of Criminal Investigation Department's (CID) Dhaka Metro North zone.

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## Floods to prolong till mid-Sept

STAR REPORT

Flood-hit people will continue to suffer a few more days as the floods in low lying areas of 11 districts will not wane until second week of September, said the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (ffwc).

The water levels of the Jamuna and the Padma will continue to rise for at least two more days before receding, if it does not rain further in the upstream India, it said.

"But the flood water will not recede from all the flood affected areas until the second week of September," Arifuzzaman Bhuiyan, the executive engineer of the ffwc.

The flood situation

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## Good news for expecting mothers

Can receive Covid jab without confirmation SMS after registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expecting and nursing mothers will be able to take the Covid-19 vaccine without confirmation SMS after registration.

In this case, they have to carry antenatal check-up (ANC) cards or prescriptions from registered expert physicians to the respective centres they have selected to get the vaccine, said a circular published yesterday on the official Facebook page of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Earlier on August 9, the DGHS issued a circular allowing expecting and nursing mothers to receive the Covid-19 vaccine after the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group of the health ministry recommended it.

Meanwhile, the health directorate reported 88 deaths of Covid-19 patients till 8:00am yesterday, raising the total number of fatalities so far to 26362, according to the DGHS press release.

In those 24 hours, a total of 3,436 people were tested positive for the virus -- up from 3,062 the previous day.

The positivity rate was 10.4 percent

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A WASTELAND BY THE KARNAPHULI ... Garbage, consisting mainly of polythene bags, collected and piled on the riverside by workers. Such garbage seems to be the main obstacle to dredging the river. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## CONDUCTING MOBILE COURTS Exec magistrates have to be more careful with laws

Observes HC, says they need training

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that the executive magistrates, who conduct mobile courts, must be careful about exercising the relevant laws and they need to be trained properly for this purpose.

The magistrates cannot conduct mobile court at their offices for holding trial of any offence, the HC said, adding that the magistrates must run the mobile court on the spot for holding trial of any offence.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the observation while hearing a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir.

Manir filed the petition challenging the legality of a mobile court run by Sultana Razia, executive magistrate of Atpara upazila in Netrakona.

The mobile court sentenced two minors to one month's imprisonment for getting married before the legal age.

Razia has offered an unconstitutional apology to the HC for conducting mobile court at her office and sentencing the two minors.

The HC asked the additional district magistrate of Netrakona to dispose of the

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BANGLADESH  
UPDATE



3,436  
New cases in 24hrs



15,07,116  
Total cases



26,362  
Deaths



14,37,885  
Recoveries

GLOBAL  
UPDATE



4,550,576  
Deaths



219,630,888  
Total cases

## DEFRAUDING PEOPLE GOING ABROAD

# Four fraudsters held

### They lured victims promising faster vaccination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

They used to target people travelling abroad and make promise of expediting their Covid-19 vaccination process. By doing so, they have deceived a good number of people.

The Rapid Action Battalion arrested four members of such a fraud gang from the capital's Mugda area on Wednesday.

"The main target of this gang was people travelling abroad. The gang was active in Mugda, Shahbagh, Ramna, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Mirpur, Mohakhali and other areas of the capital. They have so far deceived more than 200 people," said Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing, at a press briefing yesterday.

The arrestees are: Nurul Huq, 47, Saiful Islam, 30, Imran Hossain, 23 and Dulal Mia, 37. They used to tell people that they will receive text messages for vaccination soon in exchange for Tk 2,500-5,000 each, Rab said.

The gang also tried to trap people through the social media and text messages. In the text, they said people, who had their registration done

earlier, will get texts in a day, and those who are new will get it within four days. They also assured them of giving vaccine doses to the applicants' districts.

"Some got the SMS normally or some were cheated," the Rab official said, adding that the gang has been involved in the scam since June.

According to Rab, Nurul is the gang leader. Arrestees -- Saiful and Imran -- waited in front of hospitals and they tempted people to give them money to get texts for vaccination fast.

Nurul used to bargain with the victims. If there was any problem over fixing the amount, they would be taken to Dulal. Depending on the amount, Dulal would tell victims when they would get texts for vaccination.

Rab said Nurul was an expatriate for long, but could not go abroad after he returned home in 2018 due to visa issues.

Imran was working at a travel agency. Saiful is a tea-seller in Ramna area. He was a cleaner at a government organisation. From there, he was fired on allegation of taking bribe. Dulal was a driver at a hospital, according to Rab.

## Indian navy vessel delivers 2 mobile Oxygen generators

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

INS Savitri, an Indian Navy offshore patrol vessel, arrived in Chattogram yesterday to deliver two mobile oxygen plants (MOP) each with a capacity of generating 960 litres of oxygen per minute.

The MOPs developed and manufactured by DRDO in India will be donated to Bangladesh to support Bangladesh's effort to fight the pandemic, according to a statement of the Indian High Commission.

One of the plants will be set up at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and the other at a Bangladesh Navy hospital BNS Patenga in Chattogram.

These fully equipped MOPs generate medical oxygen on-site in a highly cost-effective manner. These can also be used for refilling oxygen cylinders.

This visit by INS Savitri is the

second port call by Indian Navy vessels to Bangladesh in 2021 when Bangladesh and India are jointly commemorating the Golden Jubilee of the 1971 Liberation War.

In March 2021, two Indian Navy ships had made a historic maiden visit to Mongla to jointly celebrate Mujib Borsho.

As part of the Eastern Fleet of India, INS Savitri undertakes fleet support operations, coastal and offshore patrolling, ocean surveillance and monitoring of the sea lanes of communication.

While in Bangladesh, the ship's company would be interacting with their Bangladesh counterparts. On its journey out, Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy ships will be engaging in Passage Exercise in the Bay of Bengal today.

## Mask a must

FROM PAGE 1

The study findings were released on September 1 on the website of Innovations for Poverty Action.

Local NGOs GreenVoice and Innovations for Poverty Action Bangladesh were partners in the study.

"Wearing masks properly reduces symptomatic infection rate by 34 percent among the most vulnerable group, aged 60 and above," Ahmed Mushfiq Mobarak, lead author of the study, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that this was the largest study of its kind anywhere in the world.

Bangladesh-born Mobarak, a professor of economics at Yale, said the study was conducted in two phases: in phase I, the researchers wanted to see how to make people aware of the benefits of wearing masks consistently and in phase II, they sought to see if the intervention reduced Covid-19 transmission.

The researchers distributed free surgical masks, informed people about the importance of face-coverings, reminded people to wear masks when they were found unmasked, and engaged community leaders to persuade people to wear masks continuously in the areas they intervened in and termed them "treatment areas".

Then there were "control areas" where the researchers did not intervene.

"We found that use of masks increased threefold in the treatment areas. In control areas, the rate of mask-wearing was 13 percent while it rose to 42 percent in the treatment areas," he said.

The study also separately examined the rate of mask-wearing inside mosques, markets, and places like tea stalls, entrance to restaurants, and the main roads.

It found a slight increase in physical distancing in public spaces in treatment areas.

The findings included that wearing a surgical face mask covering the mouth and nose is an effective way to cut the occurrence of Covid-19 in community settings.

The intervention led to a 9.3 percent drop in symptomatic Covid and an 11.9 percent drop in the prevalence of Covid-like symptoms.

"We found clear evidence that surgical masks are effective in reducing symptomatic seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 [coronavirus], while cloth masks clearly reduce symptoms, we cannot reject they have zero or only a small impact on symptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections," the summary reads.

Seroprevalence provides estimates of antibody levels against infectious diseases and is considered the gold standard for measuring population immunity due to past infection or vaccination.

"Surgical masks have higher filtration efficiency, are cheaper, are consistently worn, and are better supported by our evidence as tools to reduce Covid-19," the study summary continues.

Wearing of masks by local leaders, mask distribution, and other promotional activities increase mask-wearing and physical distancing among people, leading to lower illness, particularly in older adults, it added.

Co-author of the study Alamgir Kabir told The Daily Star that the researchers found stronger support for the use of surgical masks than fabric masks to prevent Covid-19.

"If we launched the mass awareness campaign in the rural areas engaging local administration, political parties and religious people, the severe surge of Covid-19 in Bangladesh could have been averted," he said.

Kabir, also senior operation manager of Innovations for Poverty Action Bangladesh, said making people aware through a mass campaign could contain the spread of Covid-19.

Abul Bashar Mohammed Khurshid Alam, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services, said, "We have repeatedly said there is no alternative to wearing masks. We launched mass awareness campaigns and such campaigns will be intensified. Everyone must wear a mask, even if they are vaccinated."

## Ukraine's Zelensky seeks Biden's support on Nato

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden assured Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday that the United States opposes "Russian aggression" but he showed no sign of moving on requests to open Nato to the eastern European country.

"The United States remains firmly committed to Ukraine's sovereignty

and territorial integrity in the face of Russian aggression and our support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations," Biden told the Ukrainian president in the Oval Office.

Zelensky, who spent Tuesday at the Pentagon pressing for military assistance to combat Russia and Russian-backed separatists, is only the second European leader to get a White House meeting so far under Biden.



People marching on Moulvibazar Press Club premises protesting what they said are frequent attacks, intimidation and destruction of the farms of Garo and Khasia communities in Doluchhara and Bhelua areas in the name of an afforestation programme by the forest department.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

## Newly wed gang raped in Habiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A group of young men raped a woman while she was on a boat trip with her husband in Habiganj's Lakhai Upazila. RAB has arrested one of the eight accused after a case was filed with the Habiganj Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-2 by her husband yesterday afternoon.

Judge Ziauddin Mahmud took cognizance of the case and directed the officer-in-charge of Lakhai Police Station to file an FIR within 24 hours.

The accused in the case are Musa Mia, 26, Mithu Mia, 21, Hridoy Mia,

22, Sujat Mia, 23, Jewel Mia, 25, Solaiman Rony, 22, Musa Mia, 20, and Shubh Mia, 19.

Even though one was arrested, RAB did not reveal his name.

The plaintiff's lawyer Hafizul Islam said the couple, who got married a month ago, went on a boat trip to a Haor next to their house on August 25.

The newlyweds, a friend of theirs and a boatman were on the boat when around eight men on another boat stopped them. They then beat up the husband and the friend, took the girl on their boat and raped her while videotaping the incident.

The men threatened the victim and her husband by saying they would leak the video if they told anyone about the rape, which is why they kept the matter hidden for so long, the lawyer said.

The husband said, "Four days after the incident, they demanded money from me saying they would leak the video otherwise. As we could not pay, they already spread the video to some people in our area."

Meanwhile, since the incident, the victim's health has been deteriorating. She was admitted to hospital in Wednesday, he added.

## Schools, colleges to reopen soon

FROM PAGE 1

able to contain the Covid situation to a great extent. "I have already directed the authorities to reopen the schools and colleges soon and measures were being taken in this regard," she said.

The PM made the comment participating in a discussion on an obituary reference placed in the House to express grief at the demise of Hasibur Rahman Swapon, who was the ruling Awami League lawmaker in Sirajganj-6.

Hasina, president of the AL, said teachers had already been given the Covid-19 vaccine while the authorities took measures to inoculate school students against the virus in line with the protocols of the World Health Organization.

"There are some WHO guidelines on vaccinating school students, we're following them," she said.

She also said the government was procuring Pfizer vaccines and would bring more of them. "The government is also trying to procure Moderna vaccines.... Other vaccines are also coming."

Since August 20, students aged 18 and above are allowed to register for the vaccination on the government's Surokha app. For others, the minimum age for the vaccination is 25.

According to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 14,19,291 students between 18 and 25 years registered for the vaccination till 8:30pm Wednesday. This is excluding the students of medical colleges.

Of them 2,25,097 received their first dose and 63,666 both the doses.

### MEDICAL COLLEGES REOPEN ON SEP 13

Replying to a query, Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said the government was considering that it would vaccinate students below 18 with Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Answering another question, he said in-person academic activities of first, second, and fifth year students of medical colleges would start from September 13. Those of other years would also resume soon, he said.

"Medical students have to go near patients. Otherwise, all their education will be incomplete. That is why we've decided to reopen in-person classes there," he told reporters after a meeting at the Secretariat.

He also said all teachers and students of the medical colleges had already been vaccinated.

There are around 1.5 lakh students in different medical and dental colleges and technical institutions across the country.

### MEETING ON REOPENING

Secondary and Higher Education Secretary Mahbub Hossain told The Daily Star that they would take a decision on reopening schools and colleges jointly at the inter-ministerial meeting on Sunday and would inform all about it.

A top official of the education ministry said there was a strong possibility that the meeting would make a final decision on the reopening.

The official, wishing not to be named, also said schools and colleges are closed till September 11 as per the latest government announcement and

that the closure might not be extended this time.

On August 26, a joint meeting of the education ministries decided to seek advice on the matter from the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19.

Sunday's meeting is taking place after taking advice from the committee, the official said.

The meeting on August 26 decided that all students of public and private universities would be vaccinated by September and in-person classes at the universities would begin on October 15.

On August 24, both Education Minister Dipu Moni and Primary and Mass Education State Minister Zakir Hossen said necessary preparations had been made for reopening schools and resuming in-person classes in phases.

Officials said students of class-III, IV and V might get to attend schools twice a week after the reopening and students of class-I and II once a week. Students of classes VI to IX will also go to their schools once a week. The number of the class days will be increased depending on the Covid situation.

According to education ministry officials, the schools will be reopened in phases. The ministry plans to start classes of SSC and HSC examinees for 2021 first. There is a possibility that they will attend in-person classes twice a week.

Last week, the authorities asked primary and secondary schools to ensure that their campuses are clean and ready for reopening.

## HC asks two judges to explain

FROM PAGE 1

According to a circular signed by Dhananjay Kumar Das, deputy secretary of Public Security Division, he was sent into retirement from government service in the public interest as per the provisions of section 45 of the Sarkari Chakri Ain, 2018 as he has completed 25 years of service.

Under the provisions, officers will get all the benefits of retirement as per the rules. This order will be effective from the date of issuance, it said.

In connection to Pori Moni's multiple remands in the narcotics case, the HC also summoned the investigation officer to appear before it on September 15 with relevant documents to explain why he sought a second and third remand for Pori Moni, who was released from jail on Wednesday on bail.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice KM Zahid Sarwar issued the orders on a suo moto (voluntary) move following an appeal by rights organisation Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) to question the repeated remands that allowed the police to interrogate Pori Moni in custody.

The HC bench said it will summon the metropolitan magistrates

concerned who granted the second and third remands if their written explanations are not satisfactory. Assistant Attorney General Md Mizanur Rahman told The Daily Star.

During the hearing yesterday, ASK's lawyer ZI Khan Panna told the HC bench that Pori Moni was placed on police remand in three phases in violation of Supreme Court directives and guidelines.

Only arrested accused war criminals had been placed on remand following SC directives and guidelines, he said.

Contacted, ZI Khan Panna said an accused cannot be taken on police remand. He or she should be interrogated at the jail gate if it is felt necessary, according to the SC directives, he said.

The accused person's health must be examined by a registered doctor before and after interrogation and his or her lawyer and relatives must be allowed to be present during the interrogation, but the lower court concerned and police have not followed the apex court directives while placing Pori Moni on remand, ZI Khan Panna added.

Shamsunnahar Smriti, popularly known as Pori Moni, was released

from jail on Wednesday morning, four weeks after Rab arrested her from her Banani home on July 4 allegedly with a stash of drugs and alcohol.

After her arrest, she was first placed on four-day remand, and two-day remand after that and then again on one-day remand. Three magistrates of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court issued the remand orders.

On Wednesday, the HC bench observed that the lower courts "abused" their power by placing Pori Moni on remand multiple times.

"The investigation officer [of the case] appealed and the judge granted the remand prayer. What material was present in the investigating officers' petition that this remand was approved?" Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam had asked.

"This cannot happen in any civilised society," he said on Wednesday, adding that the Supreme Court has guidelines on remand, but the magistrates were not following those.

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

## Exec magistrates

FROM PAGE 1

issue of Razia's offering apology as she has submitted an explanation about her conduct to the additional district magistrate.

The court disposed of the petition submitted by lawyer Shishir Manir challenging the legality of Razia's action.

Earlier, on August 5, the HC bench asked the authorities to submit a copy of the explanation from Razia about her action to this court.

On August 1, Razia, who is also an assistant commissioner (land), conducted a mobile court and sentenced two 15-year-olds to one month's imprisonment for getting married, according to a report published in the daily Prothom Alo on Wednesday.

The executive magistrate conducted the mobile court at her office and ordered police to send the detained minors to the Child Development Centre in Gazipur, according to the newspaper report.

The HC bench included the letter as a writ petition in its hearing list on August 5. During the proceedings on August 5, SM Rezaul Karim, of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, took part in the hearing and told the HC that the executive magistrate's action to sentence any child is illegal and departmental action needs to be taken against Razia.

## Good news

FROM PAGE 1

against a total of 33,025 tests countrywide. The previous day, the positivity rate was 10.11 percent.

Due to the spread of the Delta variant of coronavirus, both the Covid-19 deaths and cases reached the highest in July.

The record highest daily positivity rate was recorded 33 percent on July 24 while the highest ever single-day death -- 264 -- was recorded on August 5 and 10.

The caseload has been declining steadily from the beginning of August and the deaths from the second week of the same month.

Of yesterday's deceased, 44 were male and 42 were female.

## Floods to prolong

FROM PAGE 1

in 11 districts, including Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Bogura, Pabna, Sirajganj, Tangail, Manikganj, Rajbari, Faridpur and Shariatpur, will worsen as the water levels of the two rivers will increase today, said the ffwc bulletin issued yesterday.

However, the water level of the upper Meghna will decrease today, they added.

Out of 109 water-monitoring stations in the country, water levels of 68 stations are increasing while in 19 stations the water is flowing above danger level, the bulletin said.

Since the floods hit a week ago, people have been suffering from crises of food, drinking water and fodder for their cattle, as the local administration is yet to provide any support in most of the affected areas.

The water level of the Brahmaputra increased by 5cm and it was flowing 49cm above danger level (23m 70cm) at Chilmari point in Kurigram yesterday at 9:00am.

Fresh areas of the river basin spanning seven upazilas of Kurigram continue to be flooded as the water level keeps rising.

Milon Islam, chairman of Thanahat Union Parishad in Chilmari upazila, told The Daily Star that water from the Brahmaputra started flowing into new areas of the union since Wednesday night.

Soleiman Muni, 65, said he has been marooned for the past seven days, adding that he and others have been facing a crisis of food and drinking water.

"We are more worried about our cattle and poultry. Some of my poultry has even washed away. And as the grassland has been submerged, we are struggling to raise and feed our cattle."

In Tangail, the overall flood situation deteriorated as the Jamuna was flowing 57cm above the danger mark at Porabari point yesterday.

Waters on Jhenai, Dhaleswari, Bangsi and Louhajang were also flowing above the danger levels, said officials of Water Development Board.

Over one lakh people, who lived on riversides and in low-lying areas, have been suffering as six out of 12 upazilas in the district were flooded, district administration sources said.

Different crops, including transplanted aman paddies, on 920 hectares of land in eight upazilas of the district were inundated, officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension said.

Shahidul Islam of Bhuapur upazila said, "We are suffering immensely but we haven't gotten any support from anyone so far."


Asked, Dilip Kumar Saha, district relief and rehabilitation officer in Tangail, said 20 tonnes of rice were allocated for people at the four worst-affected upazilas till Wednesday. The local administration will distribute the rice among the listed victims.

In Manikganj, the water of all the internal rivers of the district, including Dhaleswari, Kaliganga, Ichhamati, Gazikhali, Kantaboti, is increasing.

At least 50 thousand people of Daulatpur, Shiblalay, Hariampur and other upazilas have been marooned. Croplands, business establishments, schools and roads are at the risk of being engulfed by the Padma, Jamuna, Kaliganga, Dhaleswari as erosion has taken a serious turn in the upazilas.

(Our correspondents from Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Tangail and Manikganj contributed to the report.)





Abul Mansur Ahmad’s 123rd birth anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the 123rd birth anniversary of renowned litterateur, journalist and politician Abul Mansur Ahmad. He was born in Dhanikhola village of Mymensingh on this day in 1898.

He is one of the leading satirical writers of Bangla literature and had an illustrious career as a journalist and a politician.

In 1946, he was the founding editor of The Daily Ittehad [in Kolkata]. He earlier worked at daily newspapers Krishak and Navajug and many other periodicals.

He was a pioneer of modern and progressive journalism.

An immensely successful politician, Ahmad was the provincial education minister of Sher-e-Bangla

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A little bit of relief came to the hustle and bustle of city life in the last couple of days, as spells of rainfall brought serenity to the city’s punishing demands. But life is so busy, and the weather so fickle, that this tranquility doesn’t take long to get swept away. But where we fail, nature thrives. As rainwater clings on to leaves for hours after the drizzle, the least we can do is take a look and feel rejuvenated for a bit longer. This photo was taken from the capital’s Jatiya Press Club area yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Keep your homes, surroundings clean

PM urges all to take precautionary measures against dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all to keep their houses and surroundings clean to prevent the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes that spread the dengue virus.

The premier while speaking at the parliament said the city corporation authorities and the government are taking all the necessary steps, but people should remain careful in this regard.

Hasina, also leader of the House, said this while participating in a discussion on an obituary reference placed in the Jatiya Sangsad to express grief at the demise of Awami League’s sitting MP Hasibur Rahman Swapon from Sirajganj-6 (Shahjadpur).

“People are now suffering from dengue (fever). So, I would like to urge everyone to keep their houses, gardens and surroundings clean so that the water doesn’t remain stagnant anywhere and (Aedes) mosquitoes cannot breed,” she said.

Hasina said the city corporation authorities and the government are taking all necessary measures, but people should remain careful in this regard.

Hasina, also AL president, asked all to use mosquito nets while sleeping as part of precautionary measures against dengue.

The premier also said there is no problem regarding vaccines in the country. “We are bringing vaccines from anywhere by any means.”

She said her government has already booked six crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine and money has been paid in advance.

In a bid to contain Covid-19, the prime minister requested people to maintain health safety guidelines including wearing masks, washing hands and avoiding

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## Capt Nawshad laid to rest



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Fellow pilots stood in a line to receive Capt Nawshad’s body after it arrived at Dhaka airport yesterday morning. His colleagues carried the coffin on their shoulders while others paid their last salute to the reputed aviator.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In tears and with profound grief, pilots and representatives from all airlines and operators of the country paid their last respects to Captain Nawshad Ataul Quaiyum in Dhaka yesterday.

A Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight carrying the body of the Biman pilot landed at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 9:12am.

The flight came to the HSIA from Doha, landing at Nagpur Airport on the way to pick up Nawshad’s body.

His fellow pilots stood in a line and paid their respects by removing their caps to receive him. They paid their last salute to the reputed aviator and carried the coffin on their shoulders.

Mahbub Ali, state minister for civil aviation, and Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur

Rahman, chairperson of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, placed wreaths at Nawshad’s coffin.

State Minister Mahbub Ali told reporters, “We are deeply saddened by the untimely death of pilot Nawshad. His death is an irreparable loss for Biman.”

Flanked by Biman officials, Biman Managing Director and CEO Dr Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal also paid tribute to Capt Nawshad.

From the airport, the coffin was taken to his Uttara residence in the capital.

Later around 3:50pm, Capt Nawshad was laid to eternal rest at Banani graveyard.

On August 27, Capt Nawshad had suffered a massive heart attack mid-air while commandeering a Muscat-Dhaka flight with 124 passengers on board.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Dengue claims three more lives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three more people died of dengue, while 330 more dengue patients were admitted to hospitals in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, among the new cases, 46 are from outside Dhaka.

As per DGHS data, 48 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 in August while six have died in September so far.

Among the deaths, 38 persons have died in Dhaka, two in Chattogram, and one each in Rajshahi and Khulna divisions.

With the new cases, a total of 625 people were diagnosed only in two days during the running month out of the total 10,981 infected. Of the total infected, 928 are from outside Dhaka.

At least 7,698 patients were hospitalised in August, 2,286 in July, 272 in June, while 43 were infected in May.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,262 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 131 outside the capital, the DGHS data shows.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Reform DSA to stop harassment of women

Speakers tell Mahila Parishad webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the Digital Security Act was enacted in 2018, the law is yet to play a significant role in curbing cyber harassment and bullying of women, said speakers at a webinar yesterday.

The law must be reformed and enforced properly in order to prevent all crimes in the digital space, including violence against women, rather than used arbitrarily to suppress dissent, they highlighted.

human rights of all citizens,” she stated.

Rekha Chowdhury, vice president of BMP, pointed out in her keynote that although the law ministry at the time of implementation of the DSA had assured rights groups that the law would not be misused to harass anyone, in reality the number of such cases are increasing day by day.

Meanwhile, the law is failing to address women’s concerns, she added.

“One might ask why women don’t

of the law in recent times.

“It is possible to make necessary amendments to the law. But law enforcement needs to be vigilant in applying the law, in order to stop crimes in cyberspace, including stopping violence against women,” he said.

He added that there should be a separate law to monitor social media.

Deputy Secretary (District Judge) of the Law and Justice Division, Begum Maksuda Parveen said cyber violence

One might ask why women don’t file cases under the DSA. According to data from Cyber Awareness Foundation, 30 percent of female victims don’t know where and how legal action can be taken, and another 25 percent believe that no action will be taken if they file complaints with law enforcers.

REKHA CHOWDHURY,  
VICE PRESIDENT OF MAHILA PARISHAD

There are a total of eight cyber tribunals in Bangladesh. In order to establish women’s human rights through the Digital Security Act, it is necessary to ensure proper investigation and proper enforcement of the law.

BEGUM MAKSUDA PARVEEN,  
DEPUTY SECRETARY (DISTRICT JUDGE) OF  
LAW AND JUSTICE DIVISION

The Digital Security Act 2018 could not play an important role to curb crimes due to some limitations and misapplication of the law in recent times.

MUSTAFA JABBAR,  
POSTS AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

They made these observations at a webinar titled, “Digital Security Act: Women’s Human Rights,” organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP).

BMP general secretary Maleka Banu said there is gender inequality in cyberspace. With the increasing use of digital technology, women in the cyber world are being subjected to various forms of violence.

“We hope that the existing digital security act will be reformed and implemented properly to ensure the safety of women and protect the

file cases under the DSA. According to data from Cyber Awareness Foundation, 30 percent of female victims don’t know where and how legal action can be taken, and another 25 percent believe that no action will be taken if they file complaints with law enforcers,” she said.

Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar, who was the chief guest of the event, said the Digital Security Act 2018 could not play an important role to curb crimes due to some limitations and misapplication

against women is increasing at an alarming rate.

She cited a survey by Plan International Bangladesh which found that 53 percent of women are victims of some form of cyber violence.

“There are a total of eight cyber tribunals in Bangladesh. In order to establish women’s human rights through the Digital Security Act, it is necessary to ensure proper investigation and proper enforcement of the law,” she added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## Tk 1,100Cr SCAM E-orange CEO, former owners sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected bail of four former and incumbent officials of E-orange and sent them to jail on expiry of their remand in a case filed over embezzlement of around Tk 1,100 crore.

The accused are former owners of the e-commerce platform -- Sonia Mehjabin and her husband Masukur Rahman, Chief Executive Officer Md Amanullah Chowdhury, and former Chief Operating Officer Md Nazmul Alam Russel, court sources said.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Baki Billah passed the order after Gulshan Police Station Inspector Aminul Islam, the investigation officer, produced them and appealed to the court to confine them to jail until the investigation is completed.

A customer -- Md Taherul Islam -- filed the case on August 16 over embezzlement of nearly Tk 1,100 crore, according to police.

## ‘He sold over 200 firearms illegally’

Jashore BCL leader among five arrested in the capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday claimed to have arrested a member of Bangladesh Chhatra League, along with four others, over smuggling and illegally selling firearms.

Akul Hossain, incumbent secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League’s (BCL) Sharsha Upazila unit in Jashore, used to smuggle firearms through Benapole border and supplied them in different districts, claimed law enforcers.

According to local political leaders and police, Akul has sold around 200 firearms in the last seven years. While doing so, he used his image of a politician to evade the eyes of law enforcers.

Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) arrested the five from the capital’s Darussalam area. The four others are Ilias Hossain, Abdul Azim, Faruk Hossain, and Fazlur Rahman.

On information that members of a transnational arms smuggling racket are entering Dhaka, police conducted a raid around 3:15am and made the arrest, said AKM Hafiz Akhter, additional commissioner (DB) of DMP.

Eight foreign pistols, eight rounds of bullets, 16 magazines and one private car were seized from their possession.

The arrestees are involved in smuggling arms, snake venom, gold, and narcotics including yaba and meth, said investigators.

Akul is a listed criminal in Jashore’s Benapole. He has been accused in at least eight cases, said Hafiz, while addressing a briefing at DMP media centre.

Satkhira, Jashore and Chapainawabganj are the three key points for smuggling firearms. Robbers, thieves and land grabbers are mostly the buyers, the DB official said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



This rider could be penalised for at least a couple of traffic rule violations: 1. There are four people on the bike, 2. no one is wearing a helmet, 3. no one is wearing facemasks. What’s worse, this kind of journeying is especially bad for children. While the child at the front is directly exposed to fumes and dust the bike is cutting through, the one at the back is being cradled by only one hand, which is also holding a juice pack. This photo was taken from Bosila at the capital’s Mohammadpur around 11am yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



HOSPITAL PROJECT AT CTG CRB

AL leaders divided over initiative

ARJUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Awami League (AL) leaders in Chattogram are divided over the government's initiative of building a hospital at the port city's Central Railway Building (CRB) area.

Although many leaders are demanding relocation of the hospital project from CRB, known as the city's oxygen centre, many others are supporting the government's decision.

Sources said the president of AL's Chattogram city unit, Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury, in an internal meeting of the unit's working committee on Tuesday, warned party leaders who are opposing the project.

He told leaders to resign from their party posts, if they wanted to oppose the decision of government high-ups, they said.

AL Chattogram city unit vice presidents Khorshed Alam Sujan and Ibrahim Hossain Chowdhury Babul, Chattogram south district unit general secretary Mofizur Rahman, and the city unit's law affairs secretary Iftekher Saimul Chowdhury, among others, have been demanding for the project's relocation.

Babul is also member secretary of Nagarik Samaj, Chattogram, a platform created to put forth their demands. Premier University Vice Chancellor Prof Anupam Sen, also a member of AL's central advisory council, is the platform's convener.

Sujan, also a former administrator of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC), is the chief advisor of Nagarik Udyog, Chattogram, another platform created for the cause.

AL Chattogram city unit general secretary AJM Nasir Uddin and Chattogram south district unit president Moslem Uddin Ahmed, among others, are in support of the



PHOTO: COLLECTED

In a symbolic display of environmental protection, Nagarik Udyog on Wednesday hung birds' nests to trees at CRB area. The platform has been waging a movement against the decision to build a hospital at the location.

initiative.

On Saturday, Moslem, also a lawmaker, while addressing a programme in Chattogram, said there is no scope for any AL leader to oppose the project, as it is a decision by government high-ups.

He said those who are opposing the project area are being "influenced" by authorities of some private hospitals.

On Sunday, Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, deputy minister for education, while talking to journalists during a programme at Chattogram General Hospital, said as the hospital project was initiated following the government's executive order, he is bound to support it because he is part of the government.

Nasir, also a former CCC mayor, has been opposing the movement for relocation since its beginning in July, saying that the project would do no harm to the environment.

Despite Mahtab's warning, AL leaders opposing the project are continuing to hold programmes, demanding relocation.

Nagarik Udyog organised a programme at CRB on Wednesday afternoon, where they hung birds' nests to trees. "We want the area to remain an environmental hub and an ideal habitat for flora and fauna," said Sujan.

About Mahtab's warning, he said, "The president [Mahtab] did not say this during a formal meeting. The meeting was over when he said it, when the leaders

were discussing informally."

Bangladesh Railway signed an agreement with a private company on March 18 last year to establish a 500-bed hospital, a medical college and a nursing institute at CRB on a public-private partnership basis.

CRB is surrounded by hills, hillocks, valleys and a number of century-old trees. People visit the area daily for morning and evening walks, or just to take in a breath of fresh air.

Different socio-political and cultural organisations as well as individuals have been demanding the government relocate the project, fearing that building a hospital there would adversely impact the environment and harm of the area.

Abul Mansur Ahmad

FROM PAGE 3

AK Falzul Haq's United Front government, and in 1957, served as the commerce and industries minister of the central government led by Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy. His contribution to the development of East Bengal is undeniable.

Among his famous satirical novels, "Aina", "Asmani Parda", "Gulliver Safarnama" and "Food Conference" are notable.

Two of his autobiographies are "Atma Katha" and "Amar Dekha Rajniti Panchash Bachhar", which while bringing out his own personal struggles depict the historical and social challenges faced by the common people of that period.

His role in the initial days of Pakistan was extremely important in highlighting issues of the economic and cultural rights of the people of East Pakistan.

He was one of the earliest proponents of Bangla being the national language. He wrote extensively about the issues of national language since the beginning of the '40s and also contributed actively to the Language Movement as the editor of Ittehad.

Abul Mansur Ahmad was the author of the famous 21-point manifesto for the United Front in the 1954 election, which saw the demise of Muslim League from power and from the politics of East Pakistan. The manifesto was a historic document

that first portrayed the political, economic, and cultural aspirations of the suppressed Bangalees.

As a result of his political activities in the late '50s and early '60s, Abul Mansur Ahmad was jailed several times by the military administration of Ayub Khan.

Bangla Academy has published three volumes of Abul Mansur Ahmad's collected works. Prothoma has published a collection of memorial books on the renowned personality, while the Star Books published "Abul Mansur Ahmader Shreshtho Golpo".

On the occasion of his 123rd birthday, Abul Mansur Ahmad Smriti Parishad has organised a discussion titled "Originality of Abul Mansur Ahmad's thoughts". The names of the winners of an essay competition will also be announced from the virtual event to be held at 8:00pm today.

Mohammad Nurul Huda, a renowned poet and novelist and Bangla Academy director general, will be the chief guest at the programme.

It will also be attended by Rajshahi University Professor Dr Md Abul Kashem, Kolkata University Associate Professor Rafiqul Hasan, journalist and researcher Kazal Rashid Shaheen and essayist and researcher Quadrat-E-Huda.

Rabindra University former vice chancellor Prof Bishwajit Ghosh will preside over the discussion.

CMCH's one stop emergency centre to open tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) is set to launch a "One Stop Emergency Centre" initiative to treat emergency patients.

Dr Aftabul Islam, deputy director of CMCH, said the centre is expected to open on September 4.

Reform DSA to stop

FROM PAGE 3

Speaking as a special guest, Shahriar Kabir, president of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, highlighted that no one had been arrested under the DSA after making violent, obscene and derogatory remarks against women in various digital platforms.

Referring to the recent communal incidents that were spurred by social media posts, he said fundamentalism, communalism and misogynistic attitudes run deep within the administration.

National Human Rights Commission Chairperson Nasima Begum NDC, in her speech as guest of honour, said the ongoing cybercrime and bullying against women should be monitored and controlled on social media.

The programme was presided over by BMP president Fauzia Moslem, and moderated by BMP advocacy and lobby director Jana Goswami.

Dengue claims three

FROM PAGE 3

Amid the rise in dengue cases, Directorate General of Health Services on August 23 announced six hospitals in Dhaka dedicated to treating dengue patients.

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

Health ministry hosts blood donation event

CITY DESK

A blood donation event was held at Chief Accounts and Finance Officer's office of the health ministry on Tuesday in Dhaka, facilitated by Quantum Foundation.

Controller General of Accounts Md Nurul Islam and Chief Accounts and Finance Officer Sayeed Mohammad Asaduzzaman were present at the event.

He sold over 200

FROM PAGE 3

Regarding names of the arms buyers, Hafiz said, "We got names of some of the buyers and are investigating into it. Akul used to supply arms in different districts including Jashore, Khulna, Bagerhat and Dhaka."

In reply to a query, he said Akul used to buy illegal weapons from India for Tk 28,000 to 50,000 and sold it for Tk 80,000 to 90,000.

Sources said Akul has been holding the BCL post since 2012. In 2019, police seized a large quantity of weapons, magazines and drugs from Akul's house, but he managed to escape, officials said.

Abdur Rahim Sarder, president of BCL's Sharsha unit, however, claimed, "Akul managed to get the BCL post as he once had good relations with the former secretary of Jashore district's BCL unit."

"Although Akul is secretary, we have never held a programme together. We always used to avoid him, as we knew he was involved in narcotics and arms smuggling," Rahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

When asked why no organisational action was taken, Rahim said they have already informed the district and central committees about the arrest, and they will take a decision regarding this matter.

Keep your homes

FROM PAGE 3

mass gatherings despite ongoing downtrend of the coronavirus infection rate.

In a note of caution, the premier reminded all about the nature of the Covid-19, saying, "We are seeing across the globe that coronavirus is showing a downward trend and again it is coming back with stronger. So everyone should follow the health guidelines strictly," she said.

Regarding the demise of Hasibur Rahman Swapon, the prime minister in an emotion-choked voice said, "We have lost many colleagues in this parliament. We have adopted an obituary reference yesterday (Wednesday) at the death of a veteran parliamentarian (Prof Ali Ashraf). Today (yesterday) we have lost another parliamentarian (Swapon)."

Describing Swapon as a dedicated political leader, she said his death is a huge loss for the country and people of Shahjampur.

Different MPs from AL, Jatiya Party and BNP also participated in the discussion.

The condolence motion was placed soon after the House went into yesterday's sitting around 11am with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury in the chair.

The obituary reference was later adopted unanimously. Swapon passed away yesterday morning while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Turkey. He was 67.

Capt Nawshad

FROM PAGE 3

He was admitted to Nagpur's Kingsway Hospital, where he laid in deep coma with ventilation support, following emergency landing of the BG-022. He later died on August 30.

Born in 1977, Capt Nawshad Ataul Quayyum joined Biman as a cadet pilot on November 13, 2000. In September 2002, he was promoted to first officer of F-28 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.

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**Marie Stopes Bangladesh gets new "Country Director"**  
Kishwar Imdad has joined Marie Stopes Bangladesh as Country Director from September 2021. He brings more than 25 years of corporate experience both local and international market environment including 12 years in Hospital operations and healthcare management. Prior to joining Marie Stopes he was the Managing Director of Grameen Healthcare Services and Chief Operating Officer of Samajik Health Science Institute and Research Center Ltd.  
Mr. Imdad obtained his MBA from IBA, Dhaka University in Marketing and master's in management (M. Com) from Dhaka University and post-graduation in Business Marketing Analysis from George Brown College, Toronto, Canada.  
His illustrious career track includes managing operations, customer relationship management (CRM), sales administration, market research and business development. Kishwar worked for multinational companies like Nestle, Itochu Corporation, Orascom Telecom, Apollo Hospitals etc. Kishwar Imdad is a business professional, management consultant and corporate trainer. He has participated as speaker in various international seminars, workshops and symposiums on healthcare and social business in Europe, North America and Asia. Besides his professional life, he is a contributor in newspaper and business magazines. He published several books on various topics.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Superintending Engineer  
Dinajpur PWD Circle, Dinajpur  
Phone: 0531-67034 Web: [www.pwd.gov.bd](http://www.pwd.gov.bd)  
E-mail: [se\\_dinaj@pwd.gov.bd](mailto:se_dinaj@pwd.gov.bd)  
Memo No. 25.36.2700.200.18.74.2021.2014 Date: 31/08/2021  
**e-Tender Notice**  
e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works, details is given below.

Sl No.	Tender Id, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of works	Last selling date & time	Opening date & time
1.	e- Tender Id: 601899  Ref. No. 25.36.2700.200.18.74.2021.2016 Date: 31/08/2021  Package No. DPWDC/2021-2022/DINJ/WB-AIIB/WD-14/C	Establishment of 20 bed Isolation unit & 10 bed ICU at Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Nilphamari Sadar Hospital under the Project of COVID-19 Emergency Response & Pandemic Preparedness.	06.10.2021 13:00	06.10.2021 15:00

1. This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.  
2. To submit e-Tender, please register e-GP Portal.  
3. Further information and guidelines are available in the e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

**Muhammad Jakir Hossain**  
Superintending Engineer  
Dinajpur PWD Circle, Dinajpur  
Phone: 0531-67034  
E-mail: [se\\_dinaj@pwd.gov.bd](mailto:se_dinaj@pwd.gov.bd)  
GD-1574

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**Addendum for time extension to Bid submission for Invitation to ITB for Laboratory Equipment**  
**Tender Ref. No. icddr,b/SCM/OTM/2021/38** **Date : 01 Sep 2021**  
Reference discussion on the pre-bid meeting held on August 26, 2021 in subject mentioned proposal, the following decisions were made in the pre-bid meeting. Interested participants can download the Addendum from the web address below: <https://www.icddr.org/work-with-us/tender-notices>  
(Supply & Installation of laboratory equipment (Portable X-ray system with AI)  
Offers shall submit their password protected Technical and Financial offers through email to [supplychain@icddr.org](mailto:supplychain@icddr.org). Offers must be received no later than **09 September 2021 by 3:00 PM (BST)** instead of existing. Bid opening session will not be conducted as a Public Opening. Please see the bid document for details.  
icddr,b reserves the right to accept or reject all/part proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. This **Invitation to Bid** will also form a part of the contract and will be binding upon the tenderer.

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**প্রধান কার্যালয়**  
মতিবিল, ঢাকা-১০০০  
বাংলাদেশ

ব্যাংকর্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়  
"মুজিববর্ষের অঙ্গীকার দেশী শ্রমের ব্যবহার"  
১৭ তাল, ১৪২৮  
তারিখঃ ০১ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২১

বিস্তৃতি নম্বরঃ ৯৩/২০২১

**সোনালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড এ 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেস এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর (৯ম গ্রেড)' এর ০১টি পদে (২০১৮ সাল ভিত্তিক) ২য় পর্যায়ে নিয়োগের জন্য প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিত প্রার্থীর তালিকা**

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ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২১-২৫৯৪  
তাঃ ০২-০৯-২০২১

স্বাক্ষরিত/=  
**ওয়াহিদা নাসরিন**  
মহাব্যবস্থাপক, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক ও  
সদস্য-সচিব, বিএসএসি

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Ministry of Agriculture  
**Barind Multipurpose Development Authority**  
Head Quarter  
Barendra Bhaban, Rajshahi-6000  
Memo No. 12.08.0000.010.07.904.2021.4539 Date: 02.09.2021  
**Corrigendum Notice**  
All concerned are hereby informed that the amendment has been made into the e-GP Tender ID: 597508 and Notice Memo No. 12.08.0000.010.07.930.2021.4115; Date: 09.08.2021 for the mentioned package only due to unavoidable circumstances.

Sl No.	Name of work	e-Tender ID No.	Old value	New value
1	3	4	5	6
1	Procurement of 6-inch diameter stainless steel strainer (AISI Type-304)	597508	Annexure-A, Technical Specification- <b>Diameter &amp; Thickness:</b> a) The screens shall have an internal diameter of 6 inch (152.40 mm) and minimum thickness of the screen excluding supporting rod shall be 3.00mm.	Annexure-A, Technical Specification- <b>Diameter &amp; Thickness:</b> a) The screens shall have an internal diameter of 6 inch (152.40 mm) and thickness of the screen excluding supporting rod shall be 3.00mm (± 10%).

All other terms & conditions for the remaining packages as laid down in the tender notice. This amendment will be treated as a part and parcel of this tender notice.

**Enamul Kadir**  
Executive Engineer  
Irrigation Section, BMDA, Rajshahi  
Phone: 0721-760793  
E-mail: [dtw\\_section@bmda.gov.bd](mailto:dtw_section@bmda.gov.bd)  
GD-1576





An illegal bamboo fence is erected on the Laghata river in Gopinagar area of Patanushar union under Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

# NATIONAL FISHERIES WEEK 2021

## Bamboo fencing in Laghata, Palak rivers wrecks havoc on indigenous fish species

MINTU DESHWARA

When the government is observing National Fisheries Week countrywide, a section of unscrupulous fishers continues to catch native fish and aquatic lives erecting bamboo fences across the Laghata and Palak rivers in Kamalganj upazila of Moulvibazar.

According to the Protection and Conservation of Fish Act, 1950, setting up impediments to the flow of a river is prohibited and a punishable offense.

Although such a method of fishing is banned by law, it is going on flouting rules hampering the breeding and supply of native fish in the rivers.

According to the Fisheries Department, the Laghata river flows through the haors of Adampur, Alinagar, Shamshernagar and Patanushar unions in Kamalganj upazila and falls into the Manu river in Rajnagar upazila. This river plays a vital role in the increased production of native fish in haors, beels and reservoirs and has facilitated irrigation.

Sahadat Hossain, a resident of Adampur area, said the re-excavation work was completed last year as per the demand of the locals. As soon as the excavation work was completed, a section of unscrupulous fishers has erected bamboo fences in Srirampur and Gopinagar areas of the river.

Visiting the area, it was found that two bamboo fences have been installed in Srirampur and Gopinagar areas of Patanushar union of Laghata river and a few bamboo fences have also been installed in Palak river. As a result, the free flow of water is being disrupted harming the reproduction

of fish. Various species of aquatic lives including fish, frogs, snakes and kuchia are dying in the cages kept inside the net.

Residents of the area, including local teacher Ferdous Khan, said several bamboo fences are planted in the small rivers every year hampering drainage and fish breeding.

Farmer Akhter Mia said, "Even a few years ago, there were a number of varieties of indigenous fish in Laghata river and Keola haor, but those have disappeared now. They have been setting up bamboo fences and catching fish in flagrant violation of law, but no action is being taken against them."

Social worker Toabur Rahman said that if the illegal fishing by the influential sector could be stopped, the Laghata river would be full of fish in the current season. Because of the bamboo fences, fish are not able to move upstream. Many species particularly the small ones are on the verge of extinction because of the shrinking of feeding and breeding ground.

Locals alleged, Alta Mia erected a bamboo fence in Gopinagar area, Wahid Mia did it in Srirampur area and Jubair Ahmed, Sufian Khan, Anwar Khan, Arob Ali and Ismail Khan have installed the illegal bamboo fence in Polki river area.

Kamalganj Upazila Fisheries Officer (acting) Siddiqui Rahman said, "I have heard about illegal bamboo fences in Laghata and Palak rivers. However, during the National Fisheries Week, the bamboo fences will be removed and action will be taken against the accused."

Nurul Mohaimin Milton, general secretary of the Bangladesh

Environmental Journalists' Association, said there are many small rivers, canals and beels in the region, which now become green paddy fields every dry season due to massive siltation.

The huge number of water bodies could be one of the effective means of large-scale fish farming alongside protecting the endangered fish species, he added.

Contacted, Alta Mia and Wahid Mia said, "False allegations are raised against us to tarnish the image of the locality."

Sultan Mahmud, assistant project director, Hilsa Development and Management Project, Department of Fisheries in Dhaka highlighted the importance of the open water bodies in conserving the native fish species and said the open water bodies are also important for generating employment in the fish farming sector.

In addition to nutritional aspects, the open water fisheries have been contributing a lot to maintain ecological balance and wetland habitats along with aquatic biodiversity, he added.

He said excessive use of modern technologies in both agriculture and fish culture has contributed to the decline of the feeding and breeding grounds of the indigenous fish varieties.

He opined that frequent and indiscriminate use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers in agricultural land has directly or indirectly been destroying the open and cultured water fishery resources and fish food organisms of the wetland and floodplains.

## Villagers themselves build dyke to save crops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

People of Baghutia Uttarpara village in Kalihati upazila have constructed a temporary embankment through voluntary work to save their crops from flood water of the Jhenai river.

The water level of the Jamuna river has continued increasing for the last couple of days due to onrush of water from the upstream and heavy downpour, causing sudden rise of water level on its branch river Jhenai.

As a result, a portion of the Jhenai river protection embankment at Baghutia Uttarpara under Bangra union badly damaged, inundating vast crop fields at the village and other adjacent villages, locals said.

Finding no other way out, a group of villagers, mostly youths, took an initiative to build a temporary dam with bamboos and other available materials to protect the existing crops, they said.

They construct the dam two-feet above the river bank so that the flood water return to the river flow normally.

Yakub Ali, 75, of the village said the onrush of flood water submerged Aman paddy on about 135 acres of land.

He said existing crops on vast areas at many villages in the middle-east part of the upazila would have been inundated if we hadn't stop the flood water entering through the damaged portion of the river bank.

Another villager Atoar Hossain, 35, said failing to get any support from the authorities concerned and local public representatives, we have constructed the temporary dam by our own labour spending Tk 50,000, donated by the villagers.

Amzad Hossain, 55, said local administration constructed a makeshift dam with bamboo in 2019. However, that

dam was washed away during last year's devastating and prolonged flood.

Mohammad Shofi, a member of Bangra union parishad (UP), said villagers were trying to restrain the water flow by bamboos, straw and other materials to protect their crops, but it will not sustain if the water level increases further.

Hafiz Uddin 50, of the village alleged



PHOTO: STAR

**Villagers, mostly youths, of Baghutia Uttarpara village in Tangail's Kalihati upazila constructed this temporary embankment through voluntary work to save their crops from flood water.**

that they had urged the authorities concerned on several occasions to repair the damaged portion of the river bank with concrete blocks, but no step has been taken in this regard.


Bangra UP Chairman Hasmot Ali claimed that they tried to repair the damaged river bank by filling earth, but could not do so as there is no alternative way to carry the earth.

Kalihati Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rumana Tanjit Antara said she will visit the spot and take necessary measures after holding talks with the departments concerned.



Flood water disrupts communications on Jalalpur-Rupshi road in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila as the all-important road and a bridge have been submerged, causing immense suffering to people.

PHOTO: STAR



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GD-1569



**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
District: Gazipur  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)



শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি  
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo No. 46.02.3300.000.07.114.21-1561

**e-Tender Notice No. 04/2021-22**

e-Tenders are invited on the National e-GP System Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> for the procurement of the following work under Gazipur District.

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of work	Tendering method	Tender/ proposal document last selling & submission date and time
01	603117 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-35.	Periodic Maintenance of Ghorashai Bridge (RHD) – Raniganj GC (Taraganj Bazar) Road Via Jamalpur GC, Shawraide GC (Kaliganj Part) Road from Ch. 00m-3850m [Kaliganj] Road ID No. 333342001.	(OSTETM)	04-Oct-2021 16:00 & 05-Oct-2021 16:00
02	603119 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-37.	Rehabilitation of Soliar More Bazar RHD – Kapasin H/Q Road Via Dolan Bazar (Kaliganj) Road ID No. 333342002.		
03	603120 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-38.	Rehabilitation of Gazipur GC – Fulbaria GC (Sreepur Part) Road from Ch. 00m-3500m [Sreepur] Road ID No. 333382016.		
04	603122 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-40.	Rehabilitation of Giaspur GC – Gosinga GC (Kapasia Part) Road from Ch. 4050m – 10000m [Kapasia] Road ID No. 333362019.		
05	603122 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-41.	Periodic Maintenance of Giaspur GC – Gosinga GC (Kapasia Part) Road from Ch.00m – 4050m [Kapasia] Road ID No. 333362019.		
06	603124 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-42.	Widening of Gazipur (B.O.F.)-Rajandrapur Cantt. at R&H Road from Ch. 6300m – 8990m [Gazipur-S] Road ID No. 333302011.		
07	603125 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-43.	Widening of Safipur GC (NHW)-Boraihari GC from Ch. 2500m – 5000m [Kaliakoir] Road ID No. 333322002.		
08	603127 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-45.	Widening of Sofipur Bazar – Andamanik Road from Ch. 00m – 1115m [Kaliakoir] Road ID No. 333324035.		
09	603129 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-47.	Widening of Naser Market to Madabchala Road from Ch. 00m – 1870m [Kaliakoir] Road ID No. 333325075.		
10	603131 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-49.	Widening of Amraid Bazar R&H Road – Bormi GC (Singhasree Union H/Q) via Sohagpur Bazar Road from Ch. 2000m – 4450m [Kapasia] Road ID No. 333363007.		
11	603132 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-50.	Widening of Mulayed RHD-Bormi GC via Satkhaimar Bazar RHD Road from Ch. 00m – 1725m [Sreepur] Road ID No. 333382021.		

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

**Md. Abdul Bareque**  
Executive Engineer  
LGED, Gazipur  
Phone: 9263989, Fax: 9264128  
Email: [xen-gazipur@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen-gazipur@lged.gov.bd)

GD-1570



## Distrust persists as some Afghan women return to work

AFP, Kabul

Under their previous reign, they shocked the world by brutally oppressing women and girls. Now, back in power 20 years after a US invasion ousted them, the Taliban have promised a softer brand of rule, pledging that women will be allowed to work.

Some women, particularly those in the health and education sectors, say they have continued to go to work in the weeks since the Islamist militants took over Kabul on August 15, following a lightning offensive that culminated days ahead of the US pullout.

Under the Taliban's former regime, women were not officially barred from all professions. But by professing to rule within the limits of sharia, the Taliban made it very difficult in practice for them to access most jobs.

Last week, Doha-based Taliban spokesman Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai told reporters that women had an "innate right" to work, study and participate in politics. But he also told BBC Pashto in an interview that there "may not" be a place for women in the cabinet of any future government or any other top post.

The movement's acting higher education minister has said women will be allowed to study at university -- but that there will be a ban on mixed classes. But gender separation remained the norm in many Afghans' lives even under the former government, with girls and boys segregated in primary and secondary schools.

Yesterday, an Afghan morning show on the country's leading television channel, TOLO TV, has resumed broadcasting -- with a female host -- according to a company executive.

For now, women have little choice but to wait and see what the Taliban will do once they form a government and start to rule.

A female English teacher at a Kabul high school, who teaches boys, said: "I don't know what they will allow me to do."



A member of the Taliban watches as Afghan women hold placards during a protest in Herat, yesterday. The woman said they were willing to accept the all-encompassing burqa if their daughters could still go to school under Taliban rule.

PHOTO: AFP

## 'Feelings of pain and anger'

Most Afghan allies left behind as blame game begins over turbulent US exit from Afghanistan

AGENCIES

Most Afghan allies seeking to flee with the US withdrawal were unable to do so, an official acknowledged Wednesday, as the United States began to wrestle with painful choices in the chaotic final days of the war.

President Joe Biden's administration says the victorious Taliban have promised to keep letting Afghans leave -- but many who worked for the United States over its 20-year mission fear retribution.

"These have been incredibly emotional and trying days, and indeed years," said General Mark Milley, the top US military officer.

"We are all conflicted with feelings of pain and anger, sorrow and sadness, combined with pride and resilience," he said.

A senior State Department official vowed to keep working to help everyone leave.

The United States in the final days of the war airlifted more than 123,000 people out of Kabul's airport, including US citizens and interpreters and others who supported the US mission and are eligible for a special visa to immigrate.

Biden has hailed the airlift as unprecedented, but the State Department official acknowledged that most Afghan visa applicants and their families did not make it.

"I would say it's the majority of them," the



official said.

He declined to give exact numbers. The White House said in early August that some 20,000 Afghans were seeking to emigrate through the visa program, meaning more than 100,000 people when including families.

The chaotic end to America's longest war has sparked the biggest crisis of President Joe Biden's seven months in the White House, finger-pointing within the administration and questions about who, if anyone, would be held responsible.

For months, military officials had urged the US State Department to convince other countries to take Afghans at risk from Taliban retaliation. They had largely failed to secure agreements with other countries, prompting officials across the US government to rush to try to find space for the evacuees.

Frustrated and angry, officials at the Pentagon have privately blamed the lack of urgency leading up to the airlift on the State and Homeland Security departments, who in turn have blamed the White House for slow decision-making.

"Finger-pointing is an ugly Washington sport ... in this case, fingers could be pointed in all directions and probably be right in each case," said Dan Fried, a former senior US diplomat now at the Atlantic Council think tank.

"A failure like this is collective. Everybody screwed up," Fried added.

Some Republicans have pointed fingers at Sullivan and Secretary of State Antony Blinken as the ones most responsible for setting the conditions for a chaotic evacuation, and have demanded their departure.



## Japan princess to marry her love despite controversy

AFP, Tokyo

The course of true love never did run smooth, but after public controversy and a wedding delay, Japan's Princess Mako is reportedly set to tie the knot and move to America.

The daughter of Japan's crown prince and niece of Emperor Naruhito has endured years of sniping and stalling over her plans to marry sweetheart Kei Komuro.

The pair have now decided to wed without some traditional ceremonies and reject a payout that usually goes to female royals marrying out of the royal family.

Japan's imperial succession rules mean that 29-year-old Mako will lose her title after marriage to a commoner.

But Komuro has still been heavily scrutinised over allegations that his mother borrowed money from a former fiancé and failed to repay it.

The pair postponed their wedding, and Komuro moved to the US for law school in a move that was widely seen as a bid to defuse the negative attention.

Crown Prince Akishino last year said that he supported his daughter's marriage, but that she needed to win the public's "understanding".

She is also said to be planning to move to the United States after her wedding.



ATranded cars are seen on a street affected by floodwater in Brooklyn, New York, USA, early yesterday. Flooding killed at least 13 people, swept away cars, submerged subway lines and grounded flights in New York and New Jersey as the remnants of Hurricane Ida brought torrential rains to the area.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Climate co-op at risk over political tension

China FM warns US envoy Kerry

REUTERS, Shanghai

Senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi has warned the United States that political tension between Beijing and Washington could undermine efforts by the world's top two sources of greenhouse gas to co-operate in the fight against climate change.

The United States, which has resumed its role in global climate diplomacy after a four-year hiatus under President Donald Trump, has long hoped to keep climate issues separate from its disputes with China on issues such as trade, human rights and the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic.

China's State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi told US climate envoy John Kerry that the United States saw the two sides' joint efforts against global warming as an "oasis", the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"But surrounding the oasis is a desert, and the oasis could be desertified very soon," he said, speaking by video link on Wednesday. "China-US climate co-operation cannot be separated from the wider environment of China-US relations.

Kerry is in the northern city of Tianjin for face-to-face talks with Xie Zhenhua, China's special climate envoy, on the countries' joint response to the climate crisis.

In a separate video meeting with Kerry, Chinese vice premier Han Zheng urged the United States to "create a good atmosphere of co-operation", state news agency Xinhua said yesterday.

## India cases hit 2 months high

AGENCIES

India reported the biggest single-day rise in Covid-19 cases in two months yesterday, as the government worries about the virus spreading from the most-affected Kerala state, schools reopening, and the start of the festival season.

Densely populated Kerala, on India's southern tip, accounted for nearly 70% of the 47,092 new infections and a third of deaths, a week after it celebrated its biggest festival during which family and social gatherings were common.

"With cases rising in Kerala, adequate steps should be taken to contain the inter-state spread of Covid-19," Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said in a statement after speaking with his state counterparts in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, which border Kerala.

As more than two-thirds of Indians already have Covid-fighting antibodies, mainly through natural infection, experts think another national surge

### CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

EU says no urgent need for vaccine boosters

WHO launches pandemic data hub in Berlin

N Korea rejects Chinese vaccines: Unicef

in cases will be less deadly than the last one in April and May when tens of thousands of people died and hospitals ran out of beds and oxygen.

The federal government, nevertheless, has warned that like in Kerala, the rest of India could also see a rise in infections around the festival season starting this month and ending in early November, reports Reuters.

Meanwhile, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said Wednesday that fully vaccinated people do not urgently need booster jabs against Covid-19, but an

extra dose for people with depressed immune systems should be considered. Scientific data had not proved the need for a booster, the World WHO said on August 18.

WHO on Wednesday launched a global data hub in Berlin to analyse information on emerging pandemic threats, filling the gaps exposed by Covid-19. The data hub is set to bring together experts from various disciplines in Berlin to analyse data quickly in order to predict, prevent, detect, prepare for and respond to risks worldwide, reports AFP.

North Korea has rejected around three million doses of a Chinese Covid-19 vaccine, suggesting they should be given to countries in greater need, Unicef said yesterday.

Pyeongyang insists it has yet to see any cases of the virus -- a claim that analysts doubt -- but it has paid a huge economic price for the blockade, with the regime admitting in June it was tackling a "food crisis".

### MORE NEWS

#### US wasted 15m Covid doses since March: report

The United States has thrown away at least 15.1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines since March 1, according to a report by NBC News. The figure is far higher than previously thought and probably still an undercount, because it is based on self-reported data from pharmacies, states and other providers, NBC said, quoting a response it received to a request for public data. At least seven states are missing from the figures, as well as major federal agencies. Reasons for dose wastage vary and include cracked vials, errors in diluting vaccines, freezer malfunctions and more doses in a vial than people who want them, with a limited window of a few hours to use a vial once it is punctured.

#### Rebel attack on govt stronghold kills 65 in Yemen

Sixty-five combatants -- 22 pro-government soldiers and 43 Huthi rebels -- have been killed after Yemen's Huthi rebels launched a renewed offensive on Marib, the last government stronghold in the country's oil-rich north, a military official said yesterday. The Iran-backed rebels attacked pro-government positions south of the strategic city, making progress despite losing dozens of fighters in coalition air strikes. It was the Huthis' first major offensive on Marib, the key to controlling the region, since June, when 111 fighters on both sides died in three days of clashes.

#### China bans reality talent shows in showbiz crackdown

China banned reality talent programmes yesterday and ordered broadcasters to promote more masculine representations of men, in a wide-ranging crackdown on "immoral" pop culture Beijing believes is leading young people astray. Talent shows that put hundreds of aspiring young performers through rigorous boot camps and subject them to public votes have become massively popular in China, sparking criticism over obsessive fans and poor role models.

Faced with falling birth rates, Chinese authorities have tried to instill traditional masculine values in the country's youth by ramping up gym classes and criticising male entertainers who model the effeminate looks of Korean pop idols.

#### India locks down Kashmir after death of separatist leader

Indian Kashmir veteran separatist politician Syed Ali Shah Geelani, 91, was laid to rest early yesterday in Srinagar, as authorities blanketed the region with troops and clamped down on communications to prevent protests.

Geelani died on Wednesday. Among the most prominent political leaders in Kashmir, Geelani for years led an umbrella alliance of secessionists known as the Hurriyat Conference. But the group split in 2003, when hardliners led by Geelani, who advocated Kashmir's merger with Pakistan, walked out after moderates decided to hold talks with New Delhi. He was kept under house arrest more than a decade after leading several anti-India protests.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



SEPTEMBER 03

**1783** - Treaty of Paris signed in Paris ends the American Revolutionary War between Great Britain and United States of America.

**1939** - Britain declares war on Germany after invasion of Poland. France follows 6 hours later quickly joined by Australia, New Zealand, South Africa & Canada.

**1976** - The US spacecraft Viking 2 landed on Mars and began sending back photographs.

**1994** - Russia and China ended decades of confrontation and agreed to cease keeping nuclear missiles aimed at each other.

SOURCE: WEBSITES

### ৪র্থ বাংলাদেশ রোবট অলিম্পিয়াড ২০২১

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**জুনিয়র : ৭-১২ বছর বয়সের শিক্ষার্থীরা।**

**গ্রুপ : ১) ১৩-১৮ বছর বয়সের শিক্ষার্থীরা।**

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NURTURING DREAMS

# Diya's determined aim



Diya Siddique PHOTO: COURTESY

ZAREEN NAWAR

*Young archer Diya Siddique was eliminated from the women's recurve singles after putting up a brilliant fight in the shoot-off stage of 2020 Tokyo Olympics. She might have missed out on the gold medal, but she fared well against Karyna Dziominskaya of Belarus.*

Prior to being scouted for the Olympics, she won a gold medal in recurve women's singles in 2019 during the 3rd ISSF Solidarity Archery Championship. She made history by reaching the finals of the 2021 Archery World Cup in May, alongside fellow archer Mohammed Ruman Shana, who is one of her role models. The duo won a silver medal in the recurve mixed team event of the tournament.

Diya grew up in Nilphamari until she got the opportunity to join Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP). Initially, her family was not supportive of her ambitions to attend BKSP, until her father stepped up for her. Diya has been learning archery since 2017. She believes that practice and consistency are crucial in this field.

In her journey towards getting to where she is today, she received immense support from her coach Martin Friedrich, her BKSP coaches Nur Alam and Ziaul Haque, and her father, in particular. "As of now, I am focusing on my studies, but I plan to participate in the 2024 Olympics," Diya said about her future plans.

The author is a freelance journalist. Email: [nawarzareen@gmail.com](mailto:nawarzareen@gmail.com).

YOUNG ACHIEVER

# The 20-year-old with 11 national awards



Tanjim Tabassum Orthi PHOTO: STAR

AZIBOR RAHMAN, FROM JHENIDAH

Twenty-year-old Tanjim Tabassum Orthi won 11 national awards in singing from 2013 to 2019. Besides being a singer, she hopes to be a BCS cadre.

The talented girl is the daughter of Md Parvage Imam of Madanmohonpara in Jhenidah. He is a lecturer of English at Harinakundo Saleha Begum Degree College.

Orthi began learning music from the age of eight. Noted artistes Motalib Biswas (Kushtia), Jakir Hasan Rumi, Ajoy Das, and Tapash Datta (India) have been her teachers.

Distinguished Nazrul Sangeet exponent Sujit Mustafa praised Orthi as a promising singer, who understands the nuances of music.

Orthi passed her SSC exams with GPA-5, as an arts student, from Jhenidah Government Secondary Girls School in 2018. She obtained GPA-5 in her HSC exams from Government Nurunnahar Mohila College, Jhenidah. Now,

she is studying at home for admission in university.

She got a gold medal in Classical Sangeet in 2013 at Jatjo Shishu Purashkar Protijogita. In 2014, she got three gold medals in Rabindra, Nazrul, and Classical Sangeet. The same year, she received a gold medal in Classical Sangeet at the golden jubilee programme of Bangladesh Television (BTV).

Besides, she got another gold medal in 2016 in Classical Sangeet in Jatjo Shikkha Sapta and in 2017, she received a gold medal in Nazrul Sangeet from Jatjo Shishu Purashkar Protijogita. In 2019, she got another gold medal in Classical Sangeet from Jatjo Shishu Purashkar Protijogita. She was enlisted as a singer for BTV in 2020.

Orthi said that her father's contribution in her pursuit of music has been immense. She is inspired by singers Rashid Khan, Ajoy Chakrabarty, Kaushik Chakrabarty, and Priyanka Gope.

YOUTH IN ACTION

# Promoting self-reliance for rural communities

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Founded in 2016, Dreamunteers is a social organisation that intends to create a platform for rural communities to have sustainable and self-reliant ways of living. The founder of the organisation, Nibrasul Alam, a student of Notre Dame College, was selected for the Sir Fazle Hasan Abed Ashoka Young Changemakers 2020.

Being an active member of the Bangladesh Scouts, Nibrasul had the opportunity to explore several hill districts and remote villages. The experience shaped his understanding about the lives of the people in such areas. He discovered that many were migrating to urban areas in search of work, since they were unable to find employment in their own communities.

"The main aim of Dreamunteers is to help people in rural areas to meet their basic needs independently. We want to make their dreams come true," Nibrasul shared. Dreamunteers involves local leaders, maps out the everyday challenges of rural communities and assesses the willingness of communities to adapt to different environments for their project plans.

They have facilitated the education of over 120 children in rural regions. They have also ensured that rural communities have access to clean drinking water and proper sanitation. Since its inception, Dreamunteers has provided their services to 1,500 people across the country.

Their enterprise, Arora Agri Industries, has a cheese factory in Chattogram, which helps in building employment opportunities. "Arora will not be confined to just the cheese



Nibrasul Alam

factory as we intend to expand and include a biofloc fish plant, factories for agro food, dairy, fertilisers and pesticides," said Yasir Bin Taleb, Co-founder, Dreamunteers.

The organisation's other enterprises include NURI Rural Garments, a clothing brand and industry employing more than 100 people. Additionally, their 4X Rural Development Research Centre is currently working on a plan to develop neglected rural areas.

Dreamunteers also runs a medicine bank that provides free medicines to underprivileged communities. Their Project Change 365 surveys villages to effectively identify major problems, and propose solutions. "We are also working on a speedboat ambulance service in some islands, and conducting medical camps in inaccessible hill districts," added Nibrasul.

The author is a medical student and a freelance journalist who likes reading, scribbling, and blogging. Email: [mislammonamee@gmail.com](mailto:mislammonamee@gmail.com).



Team members of Dreamunteers at a discussion for Project Change 365, which surveys villages to identify major problems and propose effective solutions. PHOTO: COURTESY

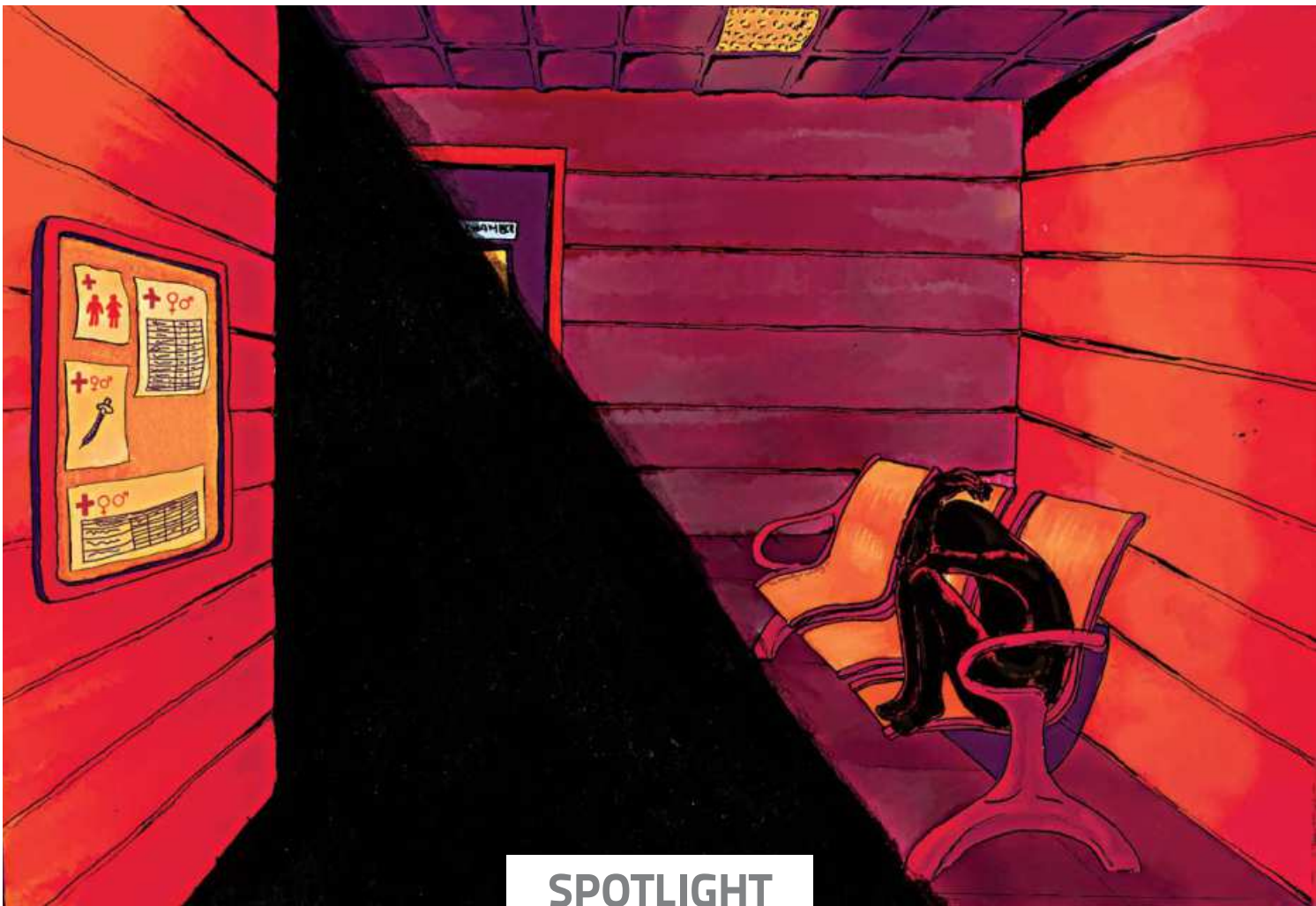


ILLUSTRATION: TASHITA SHAMIM/THE NOBODY'S GALLERY

SPOTLIGHT

# Health disparities of transgender youth: Still left in the lurch

NILIMA JAHAN

30-year-old Mugdha\* a transgender woman of Rajshahi, still depends on traditional healers or dispensaries when she feels unwell, considering the disparities she faces at hospitals.

Once when she went to Rajshahi Medical College with a urinary tract infection, she was mistreated so badly that she felt like she had no right to medical treatment.

"Since there's no separate queue for transgender people like me, I stood in the female queue to buy a ticket, as I identify myself as female. However, other women in the queue were scared of me," she said. "When I stood in the queue for males, the men were taunting me. The doctor was visibly agitated to have a transgender patient like me. She hurriedly wrote down a prescription, and threw it at me, without looking at me, or listening to any of my problems."

When Mugdha asked the doctor's assistant for help, he harassed her by asking her inappropriate questions about her gender and sexuality.

The situation is similar in the capital. When Bijli Chowdhury\*, a transgender youth volunteer, went to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College for dengue fever tests, she was also asked irrelevant questions by the staff, and blamed for roaming around the roads and parks.

According to a 2019 survey by Bandhu Social Welfare Society, 90 percent of transgender people face mental and sexual harassment when they go to seek health services. 88 percent

of them said that sexual and reproductive health needs are not often addressed for them.

In addition, 82 percent of them said hospital authorities do not allow them in women's wards, since women do not feel comfortable in their presence, while in men's wards, they face sexual harassment. 73 percent of them said they do not have access to public health services.

Although transgender people can access reproductive healthcare services from 128 drop-in-centres run by the National AIDS/STI Programme (NASP) under Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), data showed that only 39.8 percent of them fall under the coverage of different services by the programme.

According to government data, Bangladesh has about 11,000 hijras, as transgender people are known in South Asia, even though, other estimates put the number at more than 50,000. "In advocacy meetings with government bodies, we are told that the government facilities are bound to provide services to all, regardless of gender. But the reality is often disappointing. Staffers in hospitals are yet to be sensitised in treating transgender people due to lack of proper orientations," noted Dr Mashiur Rahman, Advocacy Manager of Bandhu Social Welfare Society.

Appropriate infrastructure, including separate queues and wards, is necessary to ensure that the transgender population can access healthcare services properly, he added.

Samiul Alam Shammi, a successful transgender entrepreneur and transgender

rights activist said that hospital staff, doctors, nurses, and other patients, need to be respectful towards transgender people.

Notably, Prof Dr Md Shamiul Islam, Line Director, TB-Lep and NASP of DGHS, said that the district and upazila hospitals are open for people of all genders, and there's no specific bar for the transgender population. However, if they feel uncomfortable seeking services, they can receive services from the drop-in centres, he said.

In addition, Dr Nurun Nahar Begum, Line Director of Clinical Contraception Services Delivery Program of Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), runs a project which provides services for those transgender individuals who identify themselves as women. Those who identify themselves as male can also avail counselling services from the staffers.

"However, individuals are either registered as male or female, as they do not have any medical identification of their gender. If there's any system of providing them with certificates regarding their gender identification, it would be easier for us to provide them with the required services," she added.

Dr Mohammed Sharif, Director, (MCH-Services) and Line Director of MCRAH, DGFP, added that DGFP has established 1103 adolescent-friendly health services centres in the country, where adolescents of all genders can access services.

\*Names have been changed for privacy. The author is a staff reporter at The Daily Star. Email: [nilima.jahan@thedailystar.net](mailto:nilima.jahan@thedailystar.net).



The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR  
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2021, BHADRA 19, 1428 BS

## Protect and rehabilitate victims of floods and river erosion

*It's high time the authorities formulated a comprehensive river management strategy*

LAST month, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released their landmark report on climate change that was termed a "code red for humanity" by the UN chief. The section of the report that focused on South Asia warned of increased risks of death, injury, ill health or disrupted livelihoods due to storm surges, coastal flooding, sea-level rise and inland flooding. "The risk of floods, and loss of life and property associated with floods, is highest in India and Bangladesh," it stated.

In less than a month since the report came out, we are seeing the real-time impacts of climate change as predicted. According to a report in *The Daily Star* on Thursday, around 30 percent of Bangladesh's land area is set to be inundated as the water levels of the Jamuna and Padma rivers are forecast to continue rising over the next three days. People from flood-affected districts have already been forced to leave their homes—many of them taking shelter, along with their furniture and livestock, on government roads and Water Development Board dykes—and there is an emerging crisis of food and drinking water. Reports from different districts paint a bleak picture of government assistance with delays in providing relief, inadequate relief or no relief at all.

According to a bulletin from the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, of the 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. Given that these changes in water level are being monitored and updated, there really are no excuses for the authorities for not having relief mobilisation and distribution measures in place. The provision of shelter, even for the short term, could also have been done, in the same way such efforts are organised during cyclone warnings.

However, there is a deeper issue that must be highlighted here. Despite the fact that global climate change is having serious negative impacts on Bangladesh, we cannot shy away from our own responsibilities in causing environmental destruction and failing to stop river erosion—both of which have contributed to the current state of affairs. On Thursday, this daily told the story of Jalalpur village in Siraiganj's Shahjadpur upazila, where 500 homesteads, a school and three mosques were lost to the Jamuna River in monsoon, and the remaining 100 to 120 houses are now at risk of being devoured as well. The day before, we reported on Chilmaripara village in Lalmonirhat's Hatibandha upazila, the entirety of which has been swallowed up by the Teesta.

There are countless other stories such as these. Data suggests that every year, some 55,000 people are made homeless by river erosion, and experts have long been stressing the importance of a national river management strategy to deal with associated risks. The government cannot drag their feet on this any longer. They must formulate long-term strategies and projects for river bank protection, and work with experts and NGOs to ensure that these projects are implemented where they are most needed—in the most efficient and transparent manner. Additionally, given the magnitude of these climate disasters in Bangladesh, the authorities should set up a permanent fund to rehabilitate the victims of river erosion and flooding, rather than putting together last-minute, haphazard relief programmes once these events have already occurred.

## Stop elephant poachers at all costs

*We must not allow the Asian elephant to become extinct!*

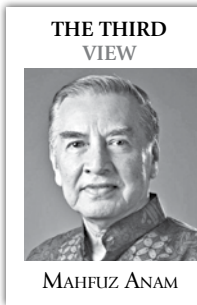
ACCORDING to a report published by this newspaper on Thursday, multiple smuggling syndicates are allegedly hunting the endangered Asian elephants in Chattogram region and the hill tracts. Law enforcers came up with this information recently after arresting five people in two separate incidents along with three elephant ivories in Chattogram. They also discovered that the tusks were being smuggled from Banskhali and the CHT after the smugglers poached the elephants in deep jungle.

In another report published on the same day, four individuals from Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar electrocuted an Asian elephant and mutilated it in an attempt to cover up the killing. In recent years, according to the International Union of Conservations of Nature (IUCN), 12 elephants were killed after being shot by poachers, while in the last 20 years, at least 120 of these endangered elephants have been killed—mostly through electrocution and shooting.

Since 1986, the IUCN has labelled the Asian elephants as "endangered" as their population has declined by at least 50 percent over the last three elephant generations, which is about 60-75 years. In an attempt to circumvent the law and continue to kill elephants and sell their tusks, poachers have been using the pretext of human-elephant conflict. Reportedly, some of the smugglers apprehended by the police were on the verge of selling the elephant tusks for Tk 35,000. Law enforcers are now running investigations to unearth more information about the black market where poachers are selling elephant tusks after killing the animal.

Despite having laws in place to prevent the killing of these endangered animals and to punish poachers, it is disappointing that the authorities have been unable to stop a decline in the elephant population. The Asian elephant is the only living species of the genus *Elephas*, and we must do our utmost to protect them.

Unfortunately, the results show we have so far failed in that. That has to change. We cannot allow these animals to go extinct. The authorities must redouble their efforts to prevent poachers from taking advantage of human-elephant conflict to murder these animals. In that regard, the Forest Department and law enforcement agencies must work together. If needed, stricter measures should be put in place to prevent poaching and reduce human-elephant conflict. Finally, the authorities should do more to protect elephant habitats and also conduct more research on proper conservation of these endangered animals.



THE THIRD VIEW  
MAHFUZ ANAM

What happened recently in Barishal between a local mayor and an Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) is not the real story. Why it happened is. And in that story is hidden many facets of the crucial issue of the state of our governance.

It happened because of a bitter political rivalry within the party and the unhealthy practice of dragging public servants into the fray to serve the agenda of politicians. It was not a small incident. A total of 50 people got injured. Two ruling party leaders—one of them the local MP who is also a state minister, and the other the local mayor—are fighting for supremacy in the district. The local UNO, Munibur Rahman, got dragged into the melee and was targeted by the mayor, who comes from a very powerful political family and who, according to local reports, has now arrogated to himself the power to override all administrative prerogatives. The UNO's house was attacked by the staff of the city corporation, allegedly led by the mayor's men, which resulted in the UNO calling for police protection, which in turn led to firing by the law enforcement officers and finally ended up in police cases filed against the mayor.

The event became more revealing after the Bangladesh Administrative Service Association (BASA) reacted to it. In a press release dated August 19, it stated that "the incident shows how a government servant became victim in the hands of Mayor Semiatat Sadiq Abdullah and his city corporation goons", and termed them to be "rajnaitik durbritta" (political thugs/criminals). The press release further said that the mayor had put up many barriers in the work of the administration and was terrorising the whole district. BASA demanded the arrest of the mayor and hoped that the law would take its own course.

The mayor countered by lodging a set of his own cases against the UNO, accusing him of attempting to kill him.

Of course, the incident was not allowed to brew further. It was soon explained to have arisen out of "misunderstanding" and steps were taken to patch things up.

The event in Barishal is a microcosmic representation of the district-level rivalries that are going on in many parts of the country, among various aspirants of the ruling party for total control of their respective districts. The fight is usually, but not always, between the local member of parliament and the district leadership. This malaise is afflicting almost every district of the country today. When there is virtually no political opposition at the grassroots level, intraparty squabbles intensify resulting in splitting the local units and turning fellow party workers into mutual mortal enemies. This obviously make a mockery of party discipline—something that is almost non-existent even at the best of times—and opens up avenues for the rise of local hoodlums who are then used to disrupt the activities of their rivals in every possible manner, including

# Who do our 'public servants' serve?

violence. Thus local politics becomes more and more about violence, and less and less about public concerns.

The propensity for violence—nothing new in our politics—leads to the rise of musclemen and the gradual decline in participation of politically conscious elements. In time, the party becomes filled with thuggish elements whose main purpose in joining politics is to extract benefits—and that's what they do, destroying the reputation of the party and eroding public support for it. Just as in economy "bad money drives out good many", Gresham's law also applies in politics, where hoodlums drive away genuine political elements from overall politics, allowing the vacuum so created to be filled up by the criminal elements. Thus criminalisation takes over local party politics to the detriment of politics in general, and ruling party politics in particular.

Leaders, on their part, to maintain their hold on these so-called "party workers", give in to their demands

masters" of the administration. How did the bureaucrats garner the courage to use such language against an elected representative? The answer has two sides to it: 1) The politicians are themselves denigrating their honour, dignity and prestige by what they do and by the people they patronise, and 2) Bureaucrats are not as disciplined as before, and have been significantly politicised and drawn into local politics.

This brings us to the delicate question of the relationship between the political leadership and bureaucracy in a democratic system, and how they should function for the benefit of the people. This is a vital question for any country, more so Bangladesh, a lower middle-income country which is on track to graduate from the UN's Least Developed Countries (LDC) list in 2026.

In their seminal book "Why Nations Fail" (2012), Daron Acemoglu and James A Robinson made a simple proposition: countries that build "institutions" are able to sustain their development, while

and accountability are. In fact, we would want everybody who works for the government to be justly paid for the services that they render. But who will ask what is the quality of service they render and how satisfied the public (whose tax money is the basis of all salaries and perks) are? The general public, the sources of all power in our "People's Republic", are never asked as to what their evaluation is of the services they get from our public servants. In fact, the term "public servant" itself seems more like a mockery as the public is made to feel like the "servant" instead of the other way around.

Has there ever been any study, research or investigation about how efficiently our administration is working? How long does it take for a file to pass through all the stages of government requirement? Has that timing improved? If not, then why? With the rising cost of bureaucracy, shouldn't efficiency become a must?

Then comes the question of transparency and accountability. Do we really know why certain cases are solved smoothly, while other cases are not? After all, if the ultimate purpose of public administration is to serve the people, then our bureaucracy should be subjected to all the modern accountability process that bureaucracies in other democracies are subjected to. Do we really search to find out why so many projects are delayed repeatedly, with huge increments in costs? Whose money is being so recklessly spent? Our planning minister recently lamented how his efforts to monitor projects are repeatedly thwarted.

According to a letter sent by the chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to the cabinet secretary, a "huge" number of civil servants own and run businesses on the side violating their service rules. These government servants have either become contractors in their own names or in the name of their dependents, said the letter, sent on March 29. "The commission thinks such practices should be stopped immediately," the letter said. Section 17 (1) of the Government Servants (Conduct) Rules, 1979 forbids a public servant from engaging in any trade or employment. Section 17 (3) says not to permit any members of a public servant's family to engage in any trade over which said government servant has jurisdiction. Till date, we are not aware of any action being taken on this score. Normally such a letter should have created a storm. In this instance, if there was a storm, it was confined to a tea cup.

As stated earlier, graduating from the LDC status also means that we have to establish a more efficient administrative system that is commensurate with the modernisation process that we have embarked on. Tax payers will keep on footing a higher and higher pay bill for our bureaucrats, but their service, attitude and efficiency level will remain the same—this cannot be the ideal way forward for a country aspiring to be the "model" for development.

The Barishal incident and the letter of ACC chairman to the cabinet secretary make the question "Who do our public servants serve?" so much more urgent and relevant.

Mahfuz Anam is Editor and Publisher, *The Daily Star*.



TDS FILE PHOTO

and, as it happens all the time, they themselves become deeply involved in it and end up leading this process. This is the inevitable fate of parties who have been in power for a long time and who successfully, politically or otherwise, have destroyed all democratic opposition.

Then there is the vitiation of the process of law itself. Instead of the law taking its own course, it suddenly stops in its tracks. As a result of an understanding between the rival groups, legal process suddenly stops. Why? After all, guns have been fired, a house was attacked and 50 people in all were injured, some with bullet wounds. We are aware of civil cases where contesting parties may come to an "out-of-court" settlement. But for criminal acts?

Whatever may have been the merit of the BASA statement—facts on the ground prove that the allegations deserve to be looked into—the language used in the press statement shocked and surprised all, calling the mayor, an elected person, and his followers "durbritta" (criminal elements) and demanding the mayor's arrest. This is something very unusual in the administration's dealing with public representatives, where the elected representatives of the people are always supposed to be the "political

those who do not falter after a while. It is only the institutions that guarantee sustainability; everything else may ensure success for a while, but in the long term they all falter.

Of all the institutions that form the integral part of the governance process of a country, civil administration is among the most important. In Bangladesh, it is made up of a huge and complex structure consisting of, according to latest official figures, 15,04,913 officers and staff. For officers, who are divided into 26 cadres, we spend Tk 11,000 crore to pay salaries, and another Tk 26,000 crore for the staff per year. A staggering Tk 33,000 crore is spent for various perks for the above officers and staff each year. What we have here is a total of Tk 57,000 crore, making for 19 percent of our revenue budget that we, the tax payers, dish out annually. In 2015, the pay scale for the civil administration was doubled. A special interest-free car loan facility of Tk 30 lakh was allowed for officers of the rank of deputy secretary and above (administration cadre) with a monthly car maintenance allowance of Tk 50,000.

For all that, we, the public, are supposed to get a clean and honest bureaucracy. Pay and allowances are not the issue here. Efficiency, transparency

# Tackling Covid-19: Are good days waiting for India?



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

In its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, India achieved two milestones in five days between August 27 and 31 while vaccinating its people. Both relate to a new high in the number of vaccine recipients—1.03 crore doses on August 27, and 1.28 crore on the last day of a month that saw nearly 18 crore doses being administered, up from 13.45 crore in July and 11.97 crore in June.

In all, more than 66.3 crore doses have been given so far and a little more than half of India's 94 crore adult population, who are vulnerable to due to the virus in terms of mortality, have either been fully vaccinated or gotten at least one dose. According to official statistics, almost all healthcare workers have received the first dose, and 83 percent got both the doses. Nearly 84 percent of frontline workers have been fully vaccinated.

The latest data on vaccination, coupled with low to moderate pace of new infection reports coming from most parts of India every day—which prompted WHO Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan to suggest that India may be entering "some stage of endemicity of the pandemic"—has brought some relief to the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after its handling of the devastating second wave in March-April faced severe criticism. Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya lost no time in

hailing the highest single-day feat of vaccine dose administration on both the occasions.

But numbers are just one, even though important, part of the much larger story in the drive against Covid and, drawing a lesson after the first wave, gloating over them is best avoided because the virus and its unknown number of mutations are highly unpredictable as evidenced by rising breakthrough infections affecting fully-vaccinated people in many parts of

*The increasingly ramped-up vaccine production and supply in India also raise the possibility of resuming vaccine export. Being the biggest manufacturing hub, India needs to step into this area.*

the world. There is simply no scope for being lulled into complacency, as had happened in the run-up to the second wave of the pandemic. For example, take the recent report about Indian and South African virologists detecting a new variant named C.1.2, which was first detected in South Africa. This new strain is likely to be much more transmissible, but there

is no clarity as yet about its possible virulence.

The main reason behind the sharp increase in the speed of vaccination—which had begun on January 16—in July and August is the drastic improvement in supplies of Covishield, the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid vaccine which is manufactured by the Serum Institute of India, the world's biggest vaccine manufacturer, and Covaxin, India's home-grown vaccine produced by Bharat Biotech. According to officials, vaccine availability is set to go up to around 22 crore doses in September and nearly 35 crore in October, while 35 crore doses are expected to be in supply in the final two months of the year, when the government aims to inoculate the majority of the adults. Bharat Biotech plans to ramp up its production at its new plant in the state of Gujarat. Equipped with a capacity of more than one crore doses per month, enhanced supplies from Bharat Biotech's Ankleshwar facility will be available from September.

India has to aggressively push ahead with enhanced vaccine supplies, because schools are gradually set to reopen in different parts of the country—a move that calls for vaccination of children and teachers on an urgent basis. The increase in vaccine availability and the results of nationwide serosurvey covering 70 out of India's 718 districts that indicated the presence of Covid-19 antibody in about 70 percent of the country's population is, no doubt, a good news for the government.

But there are reasons not to get carried away and instead be on the side of abundant caution, particularly after

the country's apex medical research body, the Indian Council of Medical Research, said vaccines are "disease-modifying" and not always "disease-preventing", especially when it comes to breakthrough infections, which means a fully-vaccinated person can get the disease again unless Covid-appropriate behaviour is adhered to. Secondly, there are reports that immunity generated by natural antibodies (following infection) or by vaccines are prone to waning, and that is why many countries are thinking about administering booster shots.

The increasingly ramped-up vaccine production and supply in India also raise the possibility of resuming vaccine export. Being the biggest manufacturing hub, India needs to step into this area, especially for its South Asian neighbours. India had supplied 6.6 crore doses from 2020 to early 2021 before the second wave of the infection and shortage in production led to a halt amid severe criticism of the Modi government. The government is in a once-bitten-twice-shy situation now.

Despite its belief that no one is safe until everyone is safe, India may not be able to export vaccines again without first ensuring adequate domestic availability. True, India has an important role in promoting global vaccine cooperation, and the WHO's COVAX window is looking up to the supply of vaccines made in India. But India needs to have a balance between its international obligation and commitment to its own people.

Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent for *The Daily Star*. He writes from New Delhi, India.



123RD BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF ABUL MANSUR AHMAD

Abul Mansur and his political wisdom

MORSHED SHAFIUL HASAN

ABUL Mansur Ahmad was a polymath well-known for his work as a writer, journalist, editor, legal expert and politician at the same time. Few others possessed such a diverse set of talents—in that he remains unmatched in contemporary history. He cemented a permanent place in our literature with his satirical pieces, but he achieved monumental success in other areas as well. He authored the historic 21-Point Programme of the United Front in 1954. He served as a provincial minister of East Pakistan and also a minister for the central government of Pakistan. He briefly assumed the role of prime minister when Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy went on foreign trips. His books, including “Amar Dekha Rajnitiir Panchash Bachhar” (1968), “Sher-e-Bangla Hoite Bangabandhu” (1972), “End of a Betrayal and Restoration of Lahore Resolution” (1976), and “Atmakatha” (1978) are important documents of the socio-political history of this land, especially in the last 100 years or so.

In 1958, when martial law was imposed in Pakistan, Abul Mansur was arrested along with many other politicians. Eventually, he was banned from active politics in accordance with the Election Bodies Disqualification Order. During this period, he had to endure jail time twice, with a total duration of three years. After he was released from jail, he did not return to active politics, focusing principally on writing instead. He authored the aforementioned books and others as well as a host of political articles. After the liberation of Bangladesh, he wrote another book titled “Beshi Dame Kena Kom Dame Becha: Amader Shadhinota” (1982).

Though not a political scientist per se, he was a keen observer of political developments and poured out his thoughts

and ideas on the pages of newspapers, which showed his deep political insight and foresight. Abul Mansur equally supported the ideologies of democracy and socialism as enshrined in our constitution, and emphasised that neither should contradict or substitute the other as the sole political objective. He called socialism the “fairest” of all economic theories, in that it promotes equitable distribution of wealth and equal justice in society. He also acknowledged the necessity of going through class struggle to enact socialism or build a society free of oppression. In his view, it is possible to channel and reap the dividends of a class struggle in a “systematic, democratic and peaceful” manner.

In addition to supporting constitutional commitments towards socialism, he also mentioned the need for the public and private sectors to coexist and for foreign investments in the industrial sector. But he was clearly opposed to the post-independence expectation of some people to see a revolutionary government undertaking revolutionary steps or reforms, bypassing the imperatives of a democratic system.

He rejected any idea for government formation without an election. “I do not support revolution as a means of forming a government,” he said. “When a government is formed through a revolution, it takes another revolution to change it. In contrast, to change an elected government, all one needs is another election. During a revolution, power changes hands on a few people’s whims. In an electoral system, power changes hands because of the collective will of the people.” Clearly, not only did he not support using violence to form a new government, he also claimed himself to be a Gandhian in principle.

However, Abul Mansur was aware of the fact that within a bourgeois economic system,



Abul Mansur Ahmad (1898-1979)

even democracy can be used as a tool to serve the interests of the rich.

Despite criticising the post-independence Awami League government for its mistakes and failures, he espoused its continuation of power for the sake of having a stable government at the helm. But he wanted that continuation to come through a democratic means, through elections where people’s expectations are reflected.

While commenting on the newly formulated constitution of Bangladesh after independence, he said as people and their representatives—who are a mixture of good and bad like any other people—devised this constitution, it might not be absolutely faultless. But, as a whole, he considered the constitution to be acceptable. But he emphasised more on the application of the constitution than on the questions of its

accuracy. He lauded the constitution for its insistence on rulers coming to power with the support of the people through elections. But he mentioned two major risk factors for democracy: 1) Lack of a proper election, and 2) The possibility of power being usurped by the military. He likened the obligation for holding fair elections for a democratic state to the necessity of breathing for human beings. “Even when Hitler’s forces were raining bombs upon them, the English still conducted their election,” he reminded us.

“To reap the benefits of democracy, we have to walk the path of democracy,” he said. He emphasised on the importance of a democratic culture and mentality within the political institutions—not just in the ruling party, but the opposition as well. When it comes to elections, he said: “The ruling party’s responsibility will be to refrain from using government power, vehicles and instruments of publicity and to build confidence in the minds of opposition parties about impartiality, fairness and neutrality in the election.” The opposition’s responsibility, he added, will be not to indulge in unfair means to disrupt the electoral process or unseat the ruling power.

We know that in his long illustrious life, Abul Mansur Ahmad always believed in the distinct linguistic and cultural identities of West and East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh). Not surprisingly, he saw the emergence of the state of Bangladesh in 1971 not as a negation of the two-nation theory leading to the Partition of India, but rather as a delayed execution of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. But in politics, he was a democratist through and through. And he always considered secularism as an essential prerequisite for democracy. In that regard, he cautioned against any kind of compromise or exception.

While discussing the importance of having

a strong opposition party coexisting beside the ruling party, and playing an active role in order to ensure the overall success of democracy, Abul Mansur Ahmad compared both camps with the “positive and negative charges of electricity”, or “two peas in a pod”, or the two feet of a human being. One cannot function without the other, he said. It is expected that in a parliamentary system, there will be lively discussion and heated debates in parliament regarding the government’s policies and activities. Noticing the absence of such discussion in the sessions of the first post-liberation parliament, he lamented: “Our parliament is almost a one-party parliament, and hence there are no lively, detailed and illuminating debates. It’s a lamentable situation for parliamentary politics.”

He also regarded freedom of press as an essential precondition for the development of democracy. “Just like the opposition is an inseparable part of the government in a parliamentary democracy, a free press is also an essential requirement, along with the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the state,” he said. A newspaper must ensure that its readers and people in general can trust the truthfulness and accuracy of the news items that are published. If such a trustful environment does not exist, that newspaper cannot extend any help towards the betterment of the country or the government. And also, in his words: “if a credibility gap is created between the people and the press, then it does not matter whether the media continues to exist or not.”

Abul Mansur Ahmad’s thoughts on democracy and what it needs to survive and flourish can offer many important lessons for us today, and we need to pay attention.

Morshed Shaful Hasan is a researcher, book editor and political analyst.

INTERNATIONAL CEDAW DAY

Positive discrimination needed to protect women’s rights



A CLOSER LOOK



TASNEEM TAYEB

WOMEN face discrimination every hour of every day, in various forms. From a greater lack of access to equal opportunity and payment in workplace, educational institutions, social discourses and household decision-making, to the more specific instances of intimate partner violence, domestic abuse, sexual violence and an apathetic lack of acknowledgement for caregiving and household contributions—women are undermined in every sphere of life.

This, unfortunately, is not a new phenomenon. From the dawn of civilisation, women have been looked at through a male-oriented lens—except for perhaps a few communities, which followed a matriarchal structure.

The world has made significant progress in the last century to drive equality for women, including ensuring their right to vote, own property, have better access to literacy, healthcare and livelihood opportunities. But the problem at the root remains: the patriarchal worldview that sees women as the lesser being, unequal to men.

As the world gets ready to observe the 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) today, we face new challenges posed by Covid-19, which have further exacerbated the discrimination against women.

According to “Policy Brief: The Impact of Covid-19 on Women,” a report published by the UN in April 2020, “Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of Covid-19 are exacerbated for women and girls simply by

virtue of their sex”.

The policy brief elaborates on the economic, social and health impact of the pandemic on women and girls. “Compounded economic impacts are felt especially by women and girls who are generally earning less, saving less, and holding insecure jobs or living close to poverty,” it says. While early reports reveal more men are dying as a result of Covid-19, the health of women generally is adversely impacted through the reallocation of resources and priorities, including sexual and reproductive health services.

“Unpaid care work has increased, with children out-of-school, heightened care needs of older persons and overwhelmed health services. As the Covid-19 pandemic deepens economic and social stress coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, gender-based violence is increasing exponentially. Many women are being forced to ‘lockdown’ at home with their abusers at the same time that services to support survivors are being disrupted or made inaccessible.”

The situation is no different in Bangladesh where women are facing discrimination due to the pandemic. With lifestyles changing, women now have to manage work-from-home, household chores, children’s education during online classes, and provide care to the sick. While men do participate, due to the prevailing patriarchal social mindset, it is the women who are shouldering most of these added workloads.

Similarly, women are increasingly becoming trapped with abusive husbands due to restricted mobility. A research jointly conducted by the NGO Manusher Jonno Foundation and James P Grant School of Public Health of BRAC University on 65,000 women and children in 53 districts, titled “Life in the time of coronavirus: A gendered perspective,” revealed that 30 percent of those who survived domestic violence had

first encountered such violence during the pandemic. The forms of violence range from sexual and physical torture to economic and mental abuse.

The research also found that, trapped at home, the husbands demanded more frequent sexual intercourse from their wives. In one instance, when a wife—tired from her household chores—refused to entertain her

*The problem is we take discrimination against women for granted. We take it for a fact that the role of a woman in a household includes household management, performing daily chores, cooking, caregiving—all for free, of course. Thus the women are engaged in both productive and reproductive roles within the household.*

husband’s overtures, she was subjected to physical and mental torture.

And this problem is not unique to women. With child marriage increasing sharply in the country, this problem is also being faced by many underage girls. Data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics indicate that child marriage increased by 13 percent—the highest child marriage rate in the country in 25 years.

These young girls—who should be in school, learning, growing, finding their own feet—are now trapped in the homes of their in-laws, engaged in caregiving, household chores, and giving in to the sexual needs of their husbands, and in the process becoming pregnant at a tender age, often damaging their sexual and reproductive health.

Not that these problems were not there before the pandemic, but there is no denying that Covid-19 has created multi-layered opportunities to exploit women and further discriminate against them. And this problem cannot be addressed in the short to medium term, because we are perhaps not assessing the problem from the right perspective.

The problem is we take discrimination against women for granted. We take it for a fact that the role of a woman in a household includes household management, performing daily chores, cooking, caregiving—all for free, of course. Thus the women are engaged in both productive and reproductive roles within the household, while the men are only engaged in productive roles.

We also take it for granted that women as employees are less efficient than their male colleagues. And women are often systematically overlooked in their workplaces to reduce their visibility. An article by Harvard Business Review, titled “Why Women Stay Out of the Spotlight at Work”, says: “On the one hand, women’s contributions are systematically overlooked at work. This limits their professional advancement and helps to explain why the senior levels of organizations remain overwhelmingly male. Yet when women try to make themselves more visible, they can face backlash for violating expectations about how women should behave, and risk losing their hard-won career gains.” Under pressure, women have to “over-invest”—work harder in order to get equal opportunity at work.

However, since these predominant social perspectives and patriarchal views are not

going to change anytime soon, there is no point in simply talking about discrimination against women. We need to leverage these discriminating tendency of the society and turn it into a driver of positive growth for women; in short, we need to actively work on positive discrimination of women.

In the household, we need to acknowledge women’s contributions and make way for rewarding them financially for the services they are rendering. We also need to provide them with economic empowerment opportunities—access to skills development, access to finance—so that they can work, be financially independent. And have an equal say in the family.


In the workplace, we need to actively look out for the women performing well and reward them for their performances. There can also be women-friendly promotion policies. These days, many international organisations have certain reserved places for women in leadership positions. This can also be arranged for mid-level female employees. In fact, every organisation must have a minimum requirement to employ women workers as part of HR compliance so that women have better access to work opportunities.

These can be the starting points.

Since as of now, there is no way to end discrimination against women, we have to turn this discrimination into an opportunity for women’s growth, otherwise there would be no positive outcome.

There is clearly no point in just talking about the prevailing discriminations. Women need to step up, actively fight for their rights, turn these discriminations into opportunities and pave way for their own growth. This won’t be an easy fight, but without this approach, eliminating inequality and discrimination would become very difficult, even in the long run.

Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for The Daily Star. Her Twitter handle: @tasneem\_tayeb



**AI WEIWEI**  
(born August 28, 1957)  
Chinese artist

*The only way to avoid misunderstanding, war, and bloodshed is to defend freedom of expression and to communicate with sincerity, concern, and good intentions.*

**CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**

1 Improvise musically

5 Timber wolf

9 Silver or gold

10 Take on

12 Bakery come-on

13 Conductor's concern

14 Book genre

16 “— appetit!”

17 Singer DiFranco

18 Book genre

20 Add

22 Looks over

23 Stand

25 Ready for customers

28 High-collared jackets

32 Book genre

34 Heater

35 D.C. player

36 Book genre

38 Delight

40 Kind of kitchen

41 Hamper

42 “Survivor” team

43 Turn down

44 Lushes

**DOWN**

1 “Romeo and Juliet” setting

2 Like some clocks

3 Baby's call

4 Anticipate

5 Grow toward

evening

6 Keats work

7 British East India Company base

8 Stand against

9 Victim of Corday

11 Theater awards

15 “Let me give it a go”

19 Freshman, usually

21 Philosopher Immanuel

24 Romantic sights

25 Held title to

26 Rang

27 Will topic

29 Words of understanding

30 Antilles natives

31 Song writer

33 Abrasive powder

37 Poi source

39 Decimal base

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO [dsopinion@gmail.com](mailto:dsopinion@gmail.com).

**YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS**

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


**BEETLE BAILEY**

BY MORT WALKER



**BABY BLUES**

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT





## AL lawmaker

FROM PAGE 12

at the parliament secretariat said.

He had returned home after a successful surgery. But he flew to Turkey again on Sunday as his condition deteriorated due to post Covid and kidney-related complications.

The body of the former deputy minister for industries is likely to be brought home today. After the namaz-e-janaza, he will be buried in Shahjadpur, the sources added.

Educated up to HSC, Hasibur was involved with transport, contracting and hotel business, according to his biography published by the parliament secretariat.

Hasibur was born on June 16, 1956 in Dariyapur village of Sirajganj's Shahjadpur upazila.

He led Paribahan Samik Sangathan in the 1980s and was elected an MP from the then Sirajganj-7 in the seventh Jatiya Sangsad election in 1996 as a BNP candidate.

He joined the AL in 1998 and was elected a lawmaker from Sirajganj-6 in 2014 and 2018 national elections.

Hasibur, also the Shahjadpur upazila AL president, served as the deputy minister for industries (1998-2001) during the tenure of the then AL government.

Meanwhile, condolences and tributes poured in for the ruling party lawmaker yesterday.

In separate condolence messages, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Deputy Speaker Md Fazle Rabbi Miah, Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Chief Whip Noor-E-Alam Chowdhury, ministers, state ministers and distinguished personalities expressed deep shock at the demise of Hasibur.

They prayed for the eternal peace of the MP's departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to the bereaved family members.

## Lost ancient

FROM PAGE 12

The site has yielded hundreds of items thought to have been buried in around 800 BC as part of a religious ritual. Such abundance is rare from French hillforts.

Indeed, it represents one of the richest metal deposits sites from the Bronze Age ever discovered in Europe, experts said.

The excavations also represent something of a victory for posterity over looters — who had begun to plunder some of the treasures from the site back in 2017.

During the time of the Gannat Hill Fort, the Allier region had significant economic value due to the navigable Sioule river and local tin deposits for making bronze.

## Flight to India

FROM PAGE 12

3 under the air bubble agreement.

It said passengers travelling from Bangladesh to India will be subjected to mandatory RT-PCR tests on arrival at Indian airports at their own expense.

Passengers holding tourist visas, however, will currently not be allowed to enter India, the circular added.

With rising demands in Bangladesh for resuming the flight operations, Caab on August 4 sent a letter to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) of India seeking approval for resumption of flights from August 11 under the air bubble agreement as daily Covid infections in both countries dropped significantly.

In response, the Indian civil aviation ministry issued a notice stating that it may resume the flights from September 3.

The circular said the ministry examined the proposal in consultation with the local health authorities and would recommend resumption of operations with seven flights a week.

Three Indian airlines will operate flights over a week -- three of SpiceJet; two of Indigo and two of Air India. The flights will be operated from the Indian cities of New Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai to Dhaka.

The Indian side is now awaiting information on flight details from the Bangladesh side.

Air bubble arrangements are temporary arrangements between two countries aimed at restarting commercial passenger services when regular international flights are suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They are reciprocal in nature, meaning airlines from both countries enjoy similar benefits.

On August 17, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen had announced that flight operations with India will resume from August 20.

He had said India agreed to resume flights upon a request made by Bangladesh considering demands for facilitating the movement of passengers and goods.

Bangladesh suspended flight operations with India in late April following a surge in Covid cases in the neighbouring country. Movement of passengers through the land ports was also restricted.

As a result, several hundred Bangladeshis have been stranded in India for months. Most of them went there for treatment.

Besides, many Bangladeshis are also waiting to travel to India for treatment.



Taliban fighters wave as they patrol in a convoy along a street in Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday. New Taliban rulers were preparing their government yesterday, more than two weeks after the Islamist militia's capture of Kabul brought a chaotic end to 20 years of war, while the economy teetered near collapse.

PHOTO: AFP

## New Afghan cabinet ‘today’

FROM PAGE 12

Now, all eyes are on whether the Taliban can deliver a cabinet capable of managing a war-racked economy and honour the movement's pledges of a more “inclusive” government.

Speculation is rife about the make-up of a new government, although a senior official said Wednesday that women were unlikely to be included.

Senior leader Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai -- a hardliner in the first Taliban administration -- told BBC Pashto in an interview that while women could continue working, there “may not” be a place for them in the cabinet of any future government or any other top post.

In the western city of Herat, some 50 women took to the streets in a rare, defiant protest for the right to work and over the lack of women's participation in the new government.

“It is our right to have education, work and security,” the protesters chanted in unison, said an AFP journalist who witnessed the protest. “We are not afraid, we are united,” they added.

Herat is a relatively cosmopolitan city on the ancient silk road near the Iranian border. It is one of the more

prosperous in Afghanistan and girls have already returned to school there.

One of the organisers of the protest, Basira Taheri, told AFP she wanted the Taliban to include women in the new cabinet.

“We want the Taliban to hold consultations with us,” Taheri said. “We don't see any women in their gatherings and meetings.”

Among the 122,000 people who fled Afghanistan in a frenzied US-led airlift that ended on Monday was the first female Afghan journalist to interview a Taliban official live on television.

Speaking to AFP in Qatar, the former anchor for the Tolo News media group said women in Afghanistan were “in a very bad situation”.

“I want to say to the international community -- please do anything (you can) for Afghan women,” Beheshta Arghand said.

‘BUSINESS BELOW ZERO’

Women's rights were not the only major concern in the lead-up to the Taliban's announcement of a new government.

In Kabul, residents voiced worry over the country's long-running economic difficulties, now seriously compounded by the militant

movement's takeover.

“With the arrival of the Taliban, it's right to say that there is security, but business has gone down below zero,” Karim Jan, an electronic goods shop owner, told AFP.

On Wednesday, a Qatar Airways flight landed at the trashed airport in Kabul -- a first step towards getting the facility back up and running as a crucial lifeline for aid.

Qatar is working with the Taliban to reopen the airport as soon as possible, its foreign minister said yesterday, urging the hardline Islamists to allow Afghans to leave.

“Hopefully in the next few days we will hear some good news,” Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told a news conference in Doha.

A source with knowledge of the matter said the goal was to resume flights both for humanitarian aid and to provide freedom of movement, including the resumption of evacuation efforts.

More than 123,000 foreign nationals and Afghans fled the country in the airlift operation, but many more are desperate to depart.

FIGHTING OVER VALLEY

Taliban forces and fighters loyal to

local leader Ahmad Massoud, fought in Afghanistan's Panjshir Valley yesterday, with each side saying it had inflicted heavy casualties in recent days of combat in the last province resisting Taliban rule.

Following the fall of Kabul on August 15, several thousand fighters from local militias and the remnants of army and special forces units have massed in Panjshir.

The Taliban said it has failed to find a peaceful resolution with the resistance movement due to the “irrational demands” it put forward, according to Al Jazeera's Rob McBride reporting from Kabul.

Taliban fighters had entered Panjshir and taken control of some territory, the group's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said yesterday.

However, a spokesman for the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan (NREFA), a grouping of rebels, said it had full control of all passes and entrances and had driven back efforts to take Shotul district at the entrance to the valley.

The spokesman said NREFA forces had also killed large numbers of Taliban fighters on two fronts since clashes first broke out earlier in the week.

## Dos and don'ts after bypass surgery

FROM PAGE 12

body (chest, leg or arm) are removed and used to bypass the blocked coronary arteries to restore blood flow. “So, it is actually not a curative surgery,” he said.

“It is important for such patients to know that the disease is still there and they must continue medicines to prevent its progression,” Dr Tanvir said.

The patients are given medicines like a blood thinner (aspirin), a statin (cholesterol lowering drug) and a beta blocker (reduce heart rate and blood pressure). Other medications depend

on individual patients, Dr Tanvir further said.

If there are no post-surgical complications, patients need 8-12 weeks for full recovery but they are advised to visit cardiologists twice a year, the doctor said.

Healthy diet with low cholesterol and unsaturated fat, little carbohydrate with adequate protein and fibre are good for the heart -- slowing the progression of coronary disease, Dr Tanvir said.

Moderate exercise prevents progression of the disease. Walking

is the best form of exercise for post bypass patients, Dr Tanvir said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Istiaq Ahmed, associate professor and head of the department of cardiac surgery at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said that generally, bypass surgery is not routinely performed unless the person fits a criterion such as after a heart attack, chest pain (angina pectoris) and when coronary stenting fails.

Dr Istiaq said a post bypass patient has to limit strenuous exercise or work, avoid lifting more than 5 pounds for first three months and limit extra salt with

food. “If the patient is a smoker, he/she must stop smoking,” the doctor said.

“The patient should never stop medications without consulting the surgeons,” Dr Istiaq said.

The patient should be careful even after full recovery and must visit the surgeon if s/he suffers chest pain or breathlessness, palpitations, blackouts or syncope.

The cardiologists suggested that a disciplined lifestyle and healthy diet with regular exercise and follow up ensure a normal life for post bypass patients.

## Nazrul's family refuses pension from Pakistan

FROM PAGE 12

pension to the poet.

BHUTTO WARNS YAHYA

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto warned the Yahya Khan regime that his party would not accept “any gimmick” in civilisation of the administration in West Pakistan. Commenting on the appointment of Dr AM Malik as governor of East Bengal, Bhutto said the mere appointment of a civilian governor was not an adequate step towards civilisation. It might be a step “in the right direction” if other steps towards genuine civilisation were also taken.

ON THE WAR FRONT

Mukti Bahini today exchanged fire

with Pakistan troops in Darsha in Kushtia-Jessore-Khulna sector and killed six Pakistani soldiers.

In the Dhaka-Chittagong sector, they raided Latifpur, Ghazipur, Banghara, Bagber, Koteswar, Jambari, Solla, Noapur Bazar killing 51 enemies and injuring many.

‘INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD INTERVENE NOW’

HL Kirkley, director of Oxfam, in a letter published today in the Times (London), appealed to the international community to come forward to avert total famine in East Pakistan.

“This situation is clearly beyond the control of individuals and private agencies, but there is a role for

lesser groups to continue pressure for governmental and international action which could stave off famine now,” he said.

“Indeed, the greatest problem is not the material shortage, which this technological generation could adequately combat, but the twin problems of starting up the lumbering machine of international compassion and then maintaining public and government interest. Refugees who are hungry today are likely to be hungry every day for a long time. Public response is inclined to be in the form of one instinctive donation and then forgetfulness,” he added.

USA DOUBLING FOOD RELIEF

FOR EAST PAKISTAN

The USA was doubling its food relief programme for the war-torn East Pakistan, a senior state department official disclosed today. Deputy Administrator Maurice Williams, speaking to reporters after returning from the region where the food problem was now compounded by major flooding, said it appeared that a very large famine could occur. The USA was negotiating a new Food for Peace agreement totalling \$40 million to supply wheat and edible oils to East Pakistan.

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

## Countries eye UN deal to rein in plastic pollution

AFP, Geneva

The European Union and other countries yesterday called for negotiations towards a legally-binding agreement to reduce plastic pollution, including the microplastics infesting oceans and waterways.

Ministers attending a conference in Geneva hosted by the UN Environment Programme, UNEP, were presented with a draft resolution stressing the urgent need to address the global crisis.

UNEP has warned that “our planet is drowning in plastic pollution”, with the world today producing some 300 million tonnes of plastic waste every

year.

Since the 1950s, it has been estimated that some 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced, with around 60 percent of that tossed on landfills or into the natural environment.

Millions of tonnes of plastic end up in our oceans each year, with the debris causing the deaths of more than a million seabirds annually, and over 100,000 marine mammals, from otters to whales.

And the pandemic is expected to worsen the situation, with participants at the Geneva conference pointing to the dramatic increase in single-use face masks and gloves.

The draft text, presented yesterday by Peru and Rwanda and with the support of the European Union, its member states and seven other countries, called for the creation of an intergovernmental negotiating committee to draft an agreement.

The committee, the text said, should “develop an international legally binding agreement based on a comprehensive approach to prevent and reduce plastic pollution in the environment.”

This also includes microplastics, it said, referring to the tiny fragments that have been detected in every ocean on the planet and even at the bottom of the world's deepest

trench.

The aim should be “promoting a circular economy and addressing the full life-cycle of plastics from production, consumption and design to waste prevention, management and treatment,” the draft text said.

It meanwhile goes further than marine pollution, pointing out that “80 percent of plastics ending up in the seas come from land-based sources”.

The proposed resolution is due to be discussed during the United Nations Environment Assembly, which is due to be held in Nairobi from February 28 through March 2 next year.

## Court gives bail

FROM PAGE 12

and members of the local AL clashed with police and Ansar members over removal of banners from the Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office in Barishal.

UNO Munibur Rahman and police then filed two cases, naming BCC Mayor Semiabat Sadiq Abdullah as the prime accused for instigating the violence. The other accused were mostly local AL men.

Two days after the incident, the city corporation and local administration officials and the local AL leaders settled the matter at a meeting.

## ACC sues

FROM PAGE 12

the ACC found that these were bought in the last two decades, said an ACC source.

The Daily Star could not reach Junaid after repeated attempts over the phone.

Sources said that Junaid produced concocted documents to fake the original price before the commission.

According to the case statement, the ACC issued notice to Junaid and his wife for submitting a wealth statement. Junaid submitted it on September 9, 2018.

In his statement, it was mentioned that he bought 11.45 kathas of land in Adabar, 10.74 kathas of land in Banasree project, five katha plot in Uttara (third phase) residential area, 10 katha plot in Purbachal, 1,250 sq ft flat in Elephant Road and a shop in the Bashundhara City Complex at about Tk 1.45 crore.

Junaid also said that he obtained a 2,400sqft flat in Sobhanbag of Dhanmondi, one-sixth of two separate two-storied buildings in Mymensingh and Jamalpur as a gift.

Besides, he has Tk 50 lakh investment in business and other schemes.

Analysing documents, investigators found his acceptable income would be Tk 77.47 lakh and family expenditure Tk 25.35 lakh.

“His total acceptable income would be Tk 52.11 lakh,” reads the FIR.

“No legal source of income of rest Tk 14,416,783 was found during the enquiry,” it added.

## Ansar Al Islam

FROM PAGE 12

“We have already got details of a clinic run by the outfit in Dhaka and we are now collecting information on it,” the officer told The Daily Star.

CITC officials claimed to have learned about the outfit's strategy following the arrest of a female member -- Zobaida Siddiqua Nabila -- of Ansar al Islam from the capital on August 26.

Mishuk Chakma, deputy commissioner of CITC unit, told The Daily Star that “analysing Nabila's social media ID and activities, we first thought that it was being operated by a male. We found some 25,000 followers and we are suspecting many of them are female, but we need time as they are using fake accounts.

“So far, we have managed to identify some 100 potential militant users and we are working on it,” he said.

But it is a difficult task to get detail of these IDs as the outfit maintains a very segmented structure in their social media activities which promotes secrecy as many followers do not know details of other followers, he added.

Investigators said Nabila used to maintain communications with the outfit's mid-level leadership but never had any face-to-face contact with them.

Regarding top leadership, a CITC official who tracks the outfit's activities, told The Daily Star that top leaders of the outfit, Tamim Al Adnani and Syed Mohammad Ziaul Haque alias Major (sacked) Zia, are in hiding somewhere inside the country.

Meanwhile, Golam Mawla, father of Nabila, demanded punishment of those who dragged her into militancy.

“My daughter was very bright and got scholarship in class five and class eight. I really do not understand how my daughter got involved in militancy,” Mawla told The Daily Star recently.

Nabila used to live in a two-storey building adjacent to a police station in Lalmojan upazila of Bhola. Locals said they always found Nabila to be a quiet and calm person.

Due to a sudden change in her behaviour, the family members sent her to Dhaka 15 days back for treatment, but she was arrested by police.

Sayed Nasirullah, additional deputy commissioner of CITC unit, said Nabila used to work in the social media wing recruiting new members.

“The outfit recruits female members for the security of the outfit. We have got some communication details with Nabila and we are now working to trace them,” he added.

It should be mentioned that around 90 female members of different militant outfits have so far been arrested by CITC since the attack on a Gulshan cafe in 2016. During interrogation, a majority of them told investigators that they were inspired into militancy following the instigation of their husbands.

Some of these militant suspects were self-radicalised and Nabila was one of them, said officials.

[Susanta Ghosh, our Barisal Correspondent contributed to this report.]





After an instrumental all-round performance against New Zealand in the first match, all eyes will be on Shakib Al Hasan as he remains a major threat for the visitors in today's match.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

# Tamim's decision opens door for others

SPORTS REPORTER



Tamim Iqbal's decision to withdraw from consideration for the upcoming ICC World T20I will surely have a positive impact on those contending for Bangladesh's opening slots, which remains among the major areas of concern for the team management before announcing the squad.

Despite being the most successful opener that Bangladesh has produced over the years, Tamim's decision to opt out of the World Cup -- which came in light of the fact that the left-hander had not played a T20I for the past 17 months -- was huge given that he would have been an automatic choice based on his wealth of experience if he could recover from a knee injury ahead of the mega-event.

His extended absence from the shortest format was one of the reasons, but the way he emphasised the word 'fair' and said that he did not want to take the place of someone who has been playing T20Is during this period was exceptional.

Now, the onus will be on the likes of Naim Sheikh, Liton Das, and Soumya Sarkar to utilise the huge opportunity. At the same time, it will be important for these three players to engage in healthy competition among each other for a place in the Tigers' opening slot.

Naim is the top-ranked Bangladesh batsman in the shortest format and the

left-hander has managed to provide some assurances from one end in recent times.

The 22-year-old also showed a great deal of resilience in the home series against Australia, when the pitch made it extremely difficult for batsmen to play their shots.

Liton Das, who will be making a comeback to the side against New Zealand after missing out on the Australia series, will need to gain in confidence so the selectors may bank on the pair of Naim and Liton as first-choice openers for the World Cup.

However, both Naim and Liton missed out in the first T20I against New Zealand as they opened in chase of a small 61-run target on yet another slow and low Mirpur surface.

Despite scoring two fifties in three games in Zimbabwe, Soumya Sarkar failed in all five matches against the Aussies and it will also be important for the think-tank to provide the left-hander with confidence ahead of the mega-event.

The series against New Zealand will be the Tigers' last international assignment ahead of the World Cup and with Tamim making way for these cricketers, it will be important for the likes of Naim, Liton and Soumya to get relief by not worrying about losing their place and make the most of the opportunity.

One should also mention that it will be harsh to judge batsmen, especially over their performances at home as the Mirpur pitch has proved to be extremely difficult. But despite the fact, someone needs to put their hands up to take the challenge.

SPORTS REPORTER



There is an air of uncertainty in the New Zealand camp following a seven-wicket defeat to the Tigers in the first T20I of their five-match series. Despite coming to Bangladesh having simulated slow and turning pitches in Lincoln, the Kiwis were caught off-guard by how difficult it is to actually bat in these conditions. The short turnaround comes almost as sweet relief, not sweating out on details on such trying conditions.

There will be positives for the Kiwis as they take on the Tigers today in the second T20I. Left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel returned the second-most economical figures for a New Zealand player in T20Is in the first game and was able to pressure the Tigers' batsmen, conceding just seven runs from four overs and bagging a wicket.

And the visitors' surprise regarding the first T20Is wicket was apparent when Patel spoke to the media yesterday.

"It is nice to finally get out there [on the ground]. Obviously, we have been training for a few days prior to that but you never know what it is going to be like until you get out into the middle," Patel insisted.

A few meetings took place in the Kiwi camp yesterday as they looked to overcome the jarring sensation



The wicket of Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium has once again become a topic of discussion as New Zealand were bundled out for their joint-lowest total of 60 runs in the first match. Coaching staff of New Zealand team inspect the pitch on Thursday ahead of the second match, on a day when neither team took part in practice sessions.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

of being bowled out for their joint-lowest T20 score in the first T20I. There is a lot of inexperience in the lineup and none of the players in the current outfit are likely to make it to the T20 World Cup in two months' time. So, the Kiwis took their time to analyse the conditions at play.

"It's about getting a clear idea of what we experienced yesterday [Wednesday] and what our plans are going forward," Patel reiterated.

Coach Glenn Pocknall had spoken after the match on Wednesday, saying that the little time before the game was to not

only get ready but also to flush some bad memories of their experience. He too identified that the Bangladesh team were an in-form unit and discussed a way of dealing with them in such conditions.

Tom Latham and Henry Nicholls had put on a good partnership of 34 runs and those are the kind of contributions the Kiwis are hoping for. They will be further reinvigorated by the return of batsman Fabian Allen, who returned two negative Covid-19 tests, while Matt Henry is set to join the squad today following his

mandatory quarantine.

Pocknall added that 25 more runs would have made the first T20I more interesting, but they were yet to face the full vigor of Mustafizur Rahman's cutters due to the top-order slump. Thus, the benefit of not having too much time to ponder was obvious with their task probably set to get harder.

"When it's [fixtures] condensed like this, you don't have much time to dwell on the past. I guess we're going to see how we can improve and where we can improve. Looking forward to the game coming up," Patel concluded.



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Boat Race is a very popular game in riverine areas of Bangladesh. Villagers of Mogolgaon organised a rural traditional ceremony in the form of a rowing competition, held over Chengerkhal river yesterday. A total of fifteen boats from different parts of Sylhet Division took part in the century-old competition. The winner, runner-up and third place holders each received a horse, a goat and a Television set, respectively.



Even though we want it all the time, however, you have to understand why we can't prepare good quality wickets. The reason being, if you notice, whenever we play during January-February, the wickets stay flat. This is not the case this time around due to the conditions created by continuous rain. We wanted to feature two separate venues but they wanted a single venue instead. It's hard to hope for sporting tracks when five matches have to be played in the span of ten days. One more point, the wicket remains the same for both teams.

AKRAM KHAN  
BCB DIRECTOR



PHOTO: REUTERS

## Bowlers put England on top

REUTERS, LONDON



Seamers earned England early control of the fourth Test against India despite Virat Kohli's fighting fifty on the opening day of the contest at the Oval on Thursday.

Kohli made 50 but India could not really recover from a top-order collapse and were reeling on 122-6 at tea. Ollie Robinson had Kohli caught behind.

Put into bat, the tourists found themselves early on the back foot after losing their top three batsmen in the morning session.

England captain Joe Root pressed Chris Woakes into service after James Anderson had proved expensive in his wicketless first spell and the bowling change immediately worked.

Playing his first test in 12 months, Woakes struck in his first over to trigger a mini-collapse.

The seamer surprised Rohit Sharma, who made 11, with extra bounce and Jonny Bairstow, replacing Jos Buttler behind the stumps, took the catch.

Robinson dismissed KL Rahul lbw for 17 and Anderson returned to account for Cheteshwar Pujara to reduce India to 39-3.

# HISTORY MAN RONALDO 'not closing the count'

AFP, LONDON



Cristiano Ronaldo signalled his intention to keep playing for Portugal for "years to come" after breaking the all-time international goalscoring record of 109 previously held by Iran's Ali Daei.

The Manchester United forward scored twice in the dying minutes to move to 111 international goals as Portugal came from behind to beat Ireland 2-1 in World Cup qualifying on Wednesday.

Ronaldo, who is the all-time top goalscorer in the Champions League and the leading marksman in Real Madrid's history, led his country to their only major tournament win at Euro 2016. The 36-year-old spoke of his pride after his latest milestone.

"From all the records that I have broken during my career -- and fortunately there have been a few -- this one is very special for me and it's certainly on the shelf of the achievements that make me truly proud," Ronaldo said in a post on Instagram. "Scoring 111 goals for Portugal means 111 moments like the ones we experienced today in Algarve, moments of worldwide union and happiness for millions and millions of Portuguese citizens all around the globe. For them, every sacrifice is worth it."

Ronaldo became the first player to feature in five European Championships

at this year's Euro 2020, winning the Golden Boot.

And he could equal the record of playing at five World Cups should Portugal make it to Qatar next year.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner, who secured a return to United from Juventus this week, hinted he has no intention of retiring from international football in the near future.

"Thank you Portugal. Thanks to all my teammates and opponents for making this journey so unforgettable," he added. "Let's keep meeting inside the pitch in the years to come! I'm not closing the count just yet. Portugal face Qatar in a friendly on Saturday before travelling to Azerbaijan on September 7."

Thanks to Ronaldo's rescue act in the Algarve, Fernando Santos's men top Group A of European qualifying, three points clear of Serbia, who have a game in hand.

Meanwhile, Manchester United captain Harry Maguire hailed Ronaldo's return to the club and said the "greatest player to play the game" will have a huge impact at Old Trafford.

"It's amazing to have Cristiano join us, and come back home," Maguire said.



PHOTO: TWITTER

## Salahuddin joins team at Bishkek

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin reached Bishkek yesterday to inspire the national football team as they gear up to start their Three Nations Cup campaign by taking on Palestine on Sunday.

Kazi Salahuddin, in the middle of last month, wanted to be part of the national football team after he shared his technical knowledge with head coach Jamie Day over a meeting. He also expressed his desire to watch all three matches in Kyrgyzstan and travel with the team during October's SAFF Championship in Maldives.

Central defender Riyadul Hasan Rafi believes the presence of BFF president will be an additional inspiration for the whole team.

Salahuddin may share his thoughts with Jamie after watching last night's opening match between Kyrgyzstan and Palestine but the British coach will badly miss the services of his compatriot Stuart Watkiss, who is no longer part of the national football team's coaching staff.

"We have been together for a long time, so he will be



missed," was Jamie's simple reply after working with the boys for four days in Bishkek.

"The boys have worked hard in the last few days. Some look a little tired, carrying a few knocks and sores, but they are giving their best," Jamie said while hinting that the two expatriate players -- Tahmid Islam and Rahbar Wahed Khan -- need time to settle down.

"I think it is very tough for them travelling for two days and settling into a new squad. So hopefully a few more days will help them.

"[Rahbar Wahed] Khan's bag was lost on the plane and was just received while Tahmid is very young, so it will take time," said Jaime.





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# Ansar al Islam plans to beef up its female wing

## CTTC officials claim

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Militant outfit Ansar al Islam, said to be the Bangladesh chapter of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent, is aiming to strengthen its female wing with at least 25 female members directly involved in its organisational activities.

The outfit also has around 300 female supporters connected with its online social media accounts, counterterrorism officials said.

The female operatives of Ansar al Islam are using fake social media accounts, pretending to be males to avoid law enforcers' vigilance, they said. They do this because a female user hosting or spreading militant content raises more suspicion than if a male member does so.

Officials said although the outfit has no present plan to use female members in violent operations, they are recruiting females to marry male members in order to create husband-wife units that would promote the outfit's secrecy and efficiency. Ansar al Islam was also recruiting females to work for their social media section to recruit new members and collect funds from the outfit's financiers.

"If any female member marries [an existing operative] and stays in the house, it will not raise locals' suspicion. The outfit is now working with that strategy," said a senior official of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit.

The outfit is also working to set up some clinics where female doctors will only provide treatment to female patients, said the official requesting anonymity.

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**A greater painted-snipe is searching for food in a marsh in Laxmikola Deuly village of Bogura's Shibganj upazila. The bird feeds on insects, crustaceans, molluscs and seeds. The photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SHABBOSACHI DAS



# Flight to India may resume tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Flight operations under the air bubble agreement between India and Bangladesh are likely to resume from tomorrow instead of today, sources at the civil aviation ministry and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh said.

Earlier, the date of resuming flights was deferred twice.

Speaking to reporters at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday, State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbub Ali said Bangladesh-India flights would hopefully start from tomorrow under the air bubble agreement.

Caab Chairman Air Vice Marshal Mofidur Rahman at the airport said, "We hope to issue a circular by tonight [last night] stating conditions for resuming flights with India."

Earlier on August 28, the Indian civil aviation ministry in a circular said flight operations between the two countries might resume from September

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

# New Afghan cabinet 'today'

Say Taliban sources as Qatar working with the Islamist group to reopen Kabul airport

AGENCIES

The Taliban said yesterday they were close to forming a new government, as dozens of women held a rare protest for the right to work under a new regime that faces enormous economic hurdles and deep public mistrust.

The Islamist militants, who have pledged a softer brand of rule than during their brutal reign of 1996-2001, must now transform from insurgent group to governing power.

The announcement of a cabinet, which two Taliban sources told AFP may take place today following afternoon prayers, would come just days after the chaotic pullout of US forces from Afghanistan, ending America's longest war with an astounding military victory for the Islamist group.

In one of the most symbolic moments since the takeover of Kabul on August 15, the militants paraded Wednesday some of the military hardware they had captured during their offensive, even flying a Black Hawk helicopter over Kandahar, their movement's spiritual heartland.

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

**Nazrul's family refuses pension from Pakistan**

SEPTEMBER 3, 1971  
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

**YAHYA'S MONEY UNTOUCHABLE: NAZRUL'S SON**  
Kazi Sabyashachi, son of rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, outright rejected today Pakistan's offer to renew payment of monthly allowances to the poet. He said they would not touch the blood-stained money of Pakistan.

Kazi Sabyashachi said in a statement: "I am surprised at the audacity of Pakistan proposing to renew payment of monthly allowance to my father, who has been in bed for the several years."

"It is known to all that in poems, songs and other writings, Nazrul Islam has been the embodiment of Bengal's cultural and revolutionary spirit, sought to be crushed today by the barbarous army of Pakistan in Bangladesh. Whatever difficulties we may have to face we shall not touch any of Pakistan's money stained with the blood of innocent millions."

Radio Pakistan reported yesterday quoting an official spokesman in Islamabad, that payment of monthly allowance to the poet "had been resumed through the Pakistan high commission in New Delhi".

When Pakistan stopped the allowance, the Bangladesh government-in-exile announced an allowance to the ailing poet. The Government of West Bengal had for a long time been giving a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



# Violence in Barishal Court gives bail to all accused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A Barishal court yesterday granted bail to every Awami League leader, activist, and Barishal City Corporation employee arrested over a recent conflict between them and the administration officials.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Masum Billah, issued the bail order at 12:30pm yesterday upon a bond of Tk 10,000. The order will be in effect until submission of the next police report, Khokon Chandra Das, general recording officer of the court said.

Talukdar Mohammad Yunus, lawyer of the accused, said, "We are pleased to receive the bail, and the settlement process will proceed."

On August 18, at least 50 people were injured when BCC employees

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# 'Lost ancient capital city' discovered in France



MAIL ONLINE

A Bronze Age hillfort in France may represent a lost Celtic capital city, archaeologists said after finding treasures there including jewellery, weapons and chariot parts.

The priceless trove was unearthed near Gannat in France's Allier department, some 80 miles northwest of Lyon, by experts from the University of Toulouse-Jean Jaurès.

Excavations revealed a large — 30 hectares in total — fortified settlement which would have sported a double row of ramparts and 20-foot-high stone walls.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

# ACC sues a retired RHD official

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday filed a case against a retired additional chief engineer of the Roads and Highways Department and his wife for amassing about Tk 1.44 crore.

ACC Assistant Director Ataur Rahman Sarkar filed the case against RHD additional chief engineer (retd) Junaid Ahsan Shibib and his wife Shahana Parvin.

According to ACC sources, Junaid presented fabricated information to the ACC during quizzing.

He mentioned that a shop at Bashundhara City Shopping Complex, a 1,250sqft flat in Elephant road, and a total of 37 kathas of land in the capital's Adabar, Banasree, Uttara and Purbachal cost only Tk 1.45 crore.

Junaid also said that the properties were purchased in the 80's and 90's, whereas

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# AL lawmaker Hasibur passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hasibur Rahman Swapon, Awami League lawmaker from Sirajganj-6 (Shahjadpur), passed away at a hospital in the Turkish city of Istanbul early yesterday.

The 67-year-old politician is survived by his wife and three daughters.

Hasibur, also a valiant freedom fighter, was elected thrice as an MP. He underwent a kidney transplant at a hospital in Turkey in February, sources

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**PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 3**

Fajr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:30	12:30	4:45	6:23	7:45
JAMAAT 5:05	1:15	5:00	6:26	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Bus Owners Association of Patuakhali and Sramik Union yesterday called a strike for an indefinite period and blocked the Kuakata-Barishal highway by placing buses near the district bus terminal. The organisations went for the strike demanding banning of three-wheelers on the highway.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

**Star HEALTHLINE**

**Dos and don'ts after BYPASS SURGERY**

FARHANA AHMED

Coronary artery bypass surgery, commonly referred to as "bypass surgery", is very common nowadays -- with thousands of patients undergoing this procedure every year in Bangladesh.

The surgery is needed when coronary arteries are blocked by plaques (calcium and fatty deposits), reducing blood flow to the heart, said Dr Syed Tanvir Ahmad, assistant professor at Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital and Research Institute.

Blood vessels from other parts of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



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