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Your Right to Know

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3 DEV PROJECTS IN COX'S BAZAR

Syndicate finds MINES OF MONEY

ACC's Ctg office unearths long running con, involvement of ex-DC, top cop in the district

KEY FINDINGS IN ACC PROBE

- Syndicate includes 44 admin, land and top police officials
- Tk 78 crore siphoned off
- Local ruling party men also involved
- Probe report awaits final approval



MOSTAFA YOUSUF

A syndicate of bureaucrats, politicians and officials of Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) in Cox's Bazar have systematically siphoned off Tk 78 crore in public money from three development projects.

For two of the projects, they acquired land that was far more expensive than available alternatives, costing the government an additional Tk 48 crore. Around Tk 30 crore more was embezzled in the name of land requisition for another project.

The findings, by the Anti-Corruption Commission's Chattogram office, shed light on how powerful syndicates make their fortune at the expense of taxpayers' money.

The 750-page probe report, prepared by an investigator in relation to three graft cases involving the three projects, names 44 government officials, including 23 admin cadre officers.

They include a former deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar, former

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Large plumes of thick black smoke spewing from iron factories fill the sky in the capital's Shyampur area. Such air pollution often contributes to respiratory diseases of people of all ages. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

POST-COVID JOB MARKET Govt to upskill women, youth

Set to take up Tk 4,300cr project

- Special training programme for youth, women, the poor
- Implementation period from July 2021 to 2026
- Estimated cost **Tk 4,300 crore**
- WB to loan **Tk 2,580 crore**, Govt to pay **Tk 1,720 crore**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is set to start a training programme for creating skilled manpower fit for the job market with the view to creating employment in the post-Covid period with a particular focus on women and the underprivileged people.

About 6.5 lakh people will be given the training on emerging technology as well as allowances under the project, which was approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Nec) yesterday.

The project, whose duration is July

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Taliban announce hardline temp govt

Core group members get top posts; supreme leader vows to uphold sharia law

AGENCIES

The Taliban announced their new government yesterday, with a UN-blacklisted veteran of the hardline movement in the top role, after the group swept to power in a lightning offensive which toppled the US-backed president.

The announcement came as protests were growing against Taliban rule, with two people shot dead in the western city of Herat yesterday, a doctor told AFP.

The Islamists, notorious for their brutal and oppressive rule during their first stint in power from 1996 to 2001, had pledged a more "inclusive" brand of rule as US troops completed their chaotic pullout.

But all the key positions in yesterday's cabinet went to core, veteran players in the movement.

Chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told a press conference that the new government would be an interim one, and that veteran official Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund would serve as its new acting prime minister.

He had served as deputy foreign minister under the Taliban's old regime, and is on a UN blacklist.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, head of the movement's political office, was appointed as Akhund's deputy, Mujahid said.

Baradar's appointment as Akhund's deputy, rather than to the top job, came as a surprise to some as he had been responsible for negotiating the US withdrawal and presenting the face of the Taliban to the world.

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Hassan Akhund

Abdul Ghani Baradar

People don't have to call you 'sir', 'madam'

State Minister Farhad tells civil servants, asks them to be humble

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saying that government officials' anger towards the general public or misbehaving with them is tantamount to corruption, State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain yesterday said public servants' attitudes represent those of the government.

"Your attitude represents government. People consider your office as a part of the Prime Minister's Office ... there are no rules to address government officials as 'Sir' or 'Madam'," he said, asking bureaucrats to be humble.

"I've repeatedly said misbehaving is tantamount to corruption. It cannot be done by any means," he said replying to a question.

The state minister said this at a "Meet the Press" event organised by Bangladesh Secretariat Reporters Forum at the Mass Media Center at the Secretariat.

Saying there will be no difference between government officials and people, he said, "I always say that your attitude is important. If you don't have a welcoming attitude, vent your anger or scold [the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

50 lakh to be made literate

Govt planning 5yr nationwide campaign

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government is working on a programme that aims at providing basic literacy knowledge to 50 lakh people aged 15 and above and skill development training to five lakh of them.

It wants to set up 500 permanent community learning centres at the union level and 64 livelihood skill development centres in as many districts under the proposed project, called Non-Formal Education Development Programme (NFEDP).

The Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) finalised the five-year government-funded programme for Tk 15,870 crore and sent the proposal to the primary and mass education ministry for further action several months back.

The ministry is now working on it. "The work of the programme is going on. We will be able to take further steps soon. It is taking some time due to the Covid-19 situation," State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Zakir Hossain said ahead of International Literacy Day today.

The ministry is set to hold a programme, titled "Literacy for a human-centric recovery: Narrowing the Digital Divide", to mark the occasion.

Zakir also said the literacy rate in the country is currently 75.6 percent.

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- Beneficiaries to be aged **15** and above
- Project to cost **Tk 15,870 crore**
- **500** community learning centres to be built
- **64** livelihood skill development centres to be built



People throng the vaccination centre at the ward-9 councillor office of Khulna City Corporation in the city's Mujgunni area yesterday, the first day of the mass vaccination for the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine. Many had to wait for hours.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

VACCINE DRIVE Enthusiastic response from recipients

Some go home without jabs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first day of the Covid-19 second dose vaccine rollout marked much enthusiasm among the people in all centres across the country yesterday.

On the first day, people received their second jabs during the campaign from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

The campaign will continue till Sunday, according to the health officials.

On August 7, around 34 lakh people, aged 25 years and above, received the first jab of Covid-19 vaccine through on-spot registration under the six-day-long special inoculation campaign.

The government carried out this special campaign in 4,600 unions in rural areas and 1,497 wards in municipalities and city corporation areas countrywide, in addition to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

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BANGLADESH
UPDATE



2,639
New cases in 24hrs



15,19,805
Total cases



26,684
Deaths



14,60,754
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



4,594,202
Deaths



222,305,422
Total cases

Student ‘taken’ on arrival at HSLA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi student of Egypt’s Al-Azhar University has been traceless for over a month since he landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on August 4.

Rizwan Hasan Rakin, 22, landed at the airport at 8:30am and informed his father-in-law about his safe arrival over the phone, his family members said.

But when he was carrying out immigration formalities, some people took him to a corner and interrogated him for a long time before shoving him into a microbus blindfolded, they alleged quoting Rakin’s brother-in-law Mahfuzur Rahman, who was travelling with him.

Rakin’s father Abu Zafar, a Saudi expatriate, suspects his son may be a victim to “enforced disappearance”.

“Does Bangladesh have any law under which a person can be kept confined for over a month?... If my son has committed a crime, produce him before a court and take legal action,” said Abu Zafar, who lives in Saudi Arabia with his family.

Rakin’s brother-in-law Mahfuzur Rahman, also a student of Al-Azhar University, travelled back home with Rakin.

At one stage, they took Rakin and Mahfuzur out of the airport blindfolded in a microbus, said a relative of Mahfuzur.

Wishing anonymity, the relative said Mahfuzur could not say where they were taken and kept.

The next night, Mahfuzur was dropped, blindfolded in front of the residence of his brother-in-law in Jatrabari area, he added.

Rakin’s father Zafar filed a general diary with Airport Police Station on September 3 after he and his wife return from Saudi Arabia on August 23.

In the GD he mentioned that Rakin has been traceless since he passed immigration at the Dhaka airport.

Sub-Inspector Azizur Talukder, who is investigating GD, said he is trying every possible way to trace the victim.

He was supposed to go to his

grandfather’s home in the capital’s Turag.

Rakin’s grandfather Selim Sarwar said, “I stood outside one of the two terminals at the airport that remained open after the Covid-19 pandemic from morning till evening to receive my grandson, but he did not come out.”

Rakin’s mother Shirin Akhter said, “My son was friendly with me. He always speaks the truth. He was memorising the Quran with tafsir so that he can spread the lesson of the holy book among the general people.”

Asked whether her son had any link with militancy, she said he did not.

Rakin studied up to grade two in Rifles Public School in Dhaka. In 2007, he and his mother moved to Saudi Arabia, where his father had been living for the past 30 years.

He studied at Riyadh International School, run by the Bangladesh Embassy in Saudi Arabia, from grades three to eight. Rakin then came back to Bangladesh and was admitted to Uttara High School from where he completed his SSC in 2016 and then completed his HSC from Notre Dame College in 2018.

In October 2019, he left the country and got admitted to Cairo University. Then he got a scholarship in Al-Azhar University for his bachelor’s, where he was supposed to begin classes soon, his father said.

He said Rakin got married to a Bangladeshi girl online. He came from Cairo on an Emirate’s flight on a two-month vacation and was planning to arrange a post-marriage ceremony.

“All our joy has vanished. I am breaking down every day as my beloved son remains traceless for over a month,” she said.

Rakin’s family went to rights body Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) with a complaint.

Senior Coordinator of ASK Abu Ahmed Faijul Kabir said they advised the family to seek cooperation from law enforcement agencies and take legal steps.

People don’t have to call you

FROM PAGE 1

public], then that is corruption.”

He advised the government officials of different levels to talk politely. “It [talking politely] does not mean you cannot show your power or you are losing. Your attitude should be [geared towards] providing best services within the legal jurisdiction,” said Farhad.

Quoting Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the state minister said service seekers should be considered as government officials’ kith and kin.

He said officials at the field level, including AC Land and UNOs, have at different stages given directives to officials under them in this regard.

The state minister however said many talented people are now joining government service and sometimes they are given chances to correct their behaviour.

“When they continue to commit offence, we take action,” he said.

Sometimes, field-level officials lose their tempers for various reasons but

they are suggested to control their emotions, said Farhad.

Replying to another question, he said public servants must submit their wealth statements every three years to ensure accountability and transparency.

Mentioning that it can be applicable for the ministers also, he said, “Since we’ve pledged, we must disclose our tax return every three years.”

He however said one can obtain tax return of the ministers by applying under the right to information act.

Farhad said around 3,85,000 posts at various government organisations were now vacant as the recruitment process in the public service was stalled following the Covid-19 outbreak in March, 2020.

He said the agencies concerned were asked to resume recruitment process and the government had already decided to extend the age limit considering the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent shutdown, which imposed restrictions on businesses and public movement.

Enthusiastic response

FROM PAGE 1

the regular programme in 1,005 centres.

At that time, many people returned barehanded due to the shortage of vaccine supply, resulting in a mass outcry for the vaccine.

On the contrary, yesterday’s campaign was comparatively smooth except for the violation of health safety guidelines in many vaccination centres.

“I have received my second dose without any hassle. The vaccinators and the volunteers are doing their jobs perfectly,” Kamrul Islam, inhabitants of Belgharia area of north town in Natore, told The Daily Star.

In Dhaka city, however, many had to return without taking vaccines from the centres as the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) rescheduled the dates for many in Dhaka city at the last minute on Monday.

On the official Facebook page of the DGHS, Prof Khurshid Alam announced that those who received their first jabs on August 7 and 8 in Dhaka city, they would receive their second jabs only yesterday.

As a result, many who received their first jabs on August 9 or later, but were asked to come for their second jabs yesterday, returned barehanded.

In Rajshahi city, as many as 27,000 people received their second jabs of Moderna’s Covid-19 vaccine, reports our correspondent.

The campaign was carried out

simultaneously at 84 centres of 30 wards of the corporation between 8:00am and 3:00pm.

Anjuman Ara Begum, the city corporation’s chief health officer, said they would jab the second dose to some 1.25 lakh people of the city in four days till September 12.

In Munshigonj, the campaign for the second dose was carried out without any chaos, but the health safety guidelines were not maintained properly, reports our correspondent.

Munshiganj Civil Surgeon Abul Kalam Azad said, “The second dose of the Sinopharm vaccine was started in 47 unions and one municipality. We will carry out a campaign in the remaining 22 unions tomorrow.”

A total of 41,621 people received their first dose in the Munshiganj during the last month’s special campaign.

Quoting Cumilla’s civil surgeon Mir Mubarak Hossain, our correspondent reports that a total of 173,480 people will receive their second jabs in three days under the campaign.

In Natore district, a total of 24,975 people will get their second jabs under the mass vaccination programme, reports our correspondent, quoting Dr Kazi Mizanur Rahman, civil surgeon of Natore district.

The first day of the second dose vaccination campaign also marked people’s enthusiasm in Khulna, Dinajpur and Sylhet, report our correspondents from those districts.



India’s Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane, left, shakes hands with his Bangladeshi counterpart Lt General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed prior to a meeting in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Syndicate finds mines of money

FROM PAGE 1

additional deputy commissioner, former UNO, four former and current officials of PBI Cox’s Bazar unit, including the SP and ex-additional SP. The gang also includes 23 surveyors, seven kanongos, six additional land acquisition officers and two sub-registrars.

In addition, the list names seven political leaders, including Cox’s Bazar district Awami League president and secretary, detailing the scale of their involvement and share of responsibility in the fraud.

The ACC office in the port city received the report on June 30. Usually, an official submits his report to a deputy director, who then forwards it to the director general (investigation) of ACC.

Afterwards, the report is sent to the ACC chairman for approval. Subsequently, it comes back to the investigation officer who then submits it to the court as part of the charge sheet.

As of yesterday, the report was still sitting at the desk of Mahbubul Alam, the deputy director at Chattogram ACC office.

“We are reviewing it. As the report is too long, it will take time [to be forwarded],” said the deputy director when asked about the status of the report a few days back.

THE LONG CON

The government has undertaken 73 mega projects in this coastal district worth Tk 3.5 lakh crore, and decided to acquire land worth Tk 25,000 crore for the purpose.

In its investigation, the ACC found evidence of graft from the very start of three projects involving the construction of a PBI administrative office, a surface water treatment plant for Cox’s Bazar Municipality and a Single Point Mooring for Eastern Refinery.

For the PBI office and the water treatment plant, the District Land Acquisition Committee (DLAC) led by the deputy commissioner chose disputed sites, overlooking legal barriers.

The DLAC acquired 100 decimals of land for Tk 29.29 crore at Kolatoli for the PBI office and two acres at Tk 36 crore for the municipality water treatment plant last year.

With proper procedures, the total land would have cost a little over Tk 17 crore, the investigator stated in his report.

It was a violation of the guidelines under the law for land acquisition and requisition. The guidelines state that the land-requiring body and DLAC representatives must look for an alternative cost-effective site and check whether the land was already acquired by any other government body.

As it was later discovered, another government body already acquired parts of the land years ago.

And, when it came to compensating the landowners, the syndicate defrauded ordinary people, the ACC investigation found.

The graft watchdog found that 15 fake owners received over Tk 29 crore in the name of land acquisition for the PBI office last year.

Similarly, posing as landowners, Cox’s Bazar Municipality mayor’s family members pocketed Tk 36 crore from the water treatment plant project, documents obtained by The Daily Star show.

Md Kamal Hossen, former deputy commissioner of Cox’s Bazar, now posted at the Local Government Division, and Ashrafur Afsar, former additional deputy commissioner (revenue), now posted at the Ministry of Science and Technology, facilitated the payments, the investigator found.

In the process, thousands of landowners were denied their rightful compensation. Victims held press conferences and lodged complaints with the land acquisition (LA) office, but nobody paid heed to them.

Nazim Uddin, one such victim, said he did not receive any notice for land

acquisition, as is the law. When he came to know about it, the acquisition process was already underway.

“As I am the owner, I applied for compensation. But the land acquisition office behaved so rudely that at one stage I lost all hope. Later, in the middle of last year, my caretaker told me that a team of PBI officials led by its high-ups took the land under their control,” he told this paper.

Three top police officials, who supervised the PBI construction project in phases, were fully aware that all the land documents submitted to DLAC were fake, the ACC investigator mentioned in his report.

They are Sarwar Alam, current superintendent of police of Cox’s Bazar PBI, Md Moniruzzaman, ex-additional SP of the PBI unit now posted in Khagrachhari, and Abdullah Al Mamun, ex-additional SP of the unit now serving at the headquarters of the Bureau.

The DLAC, responsible for verifying land-related papers, certified fabricated documents and authorised payments to fake owners, according to papers obtained by this correspondent.

GRAFT IN LAND REQUISITION

From the Single Point Mooring project, local public representatives and land officials embezzled Tk 30 crore in the name of land requisition, the report said.

A Chinese company won the contract to build a depot on 191 acres of khas land requisitioned for this project in Kalamarchara area.

Tarek Bin Osman Sharif, chairman of Kalamarchara Union Parishad, and Mosharrof Hossen, chairman of Kutubzum Union Parishad, made a “deal” with the company to remove houses and other structures from the land and took Tk 10 crore for the job.

They forcibly demolished the houses and evicted the poor people who used to live on the land, though the task of eviction lies with the district administration, according to the ACC investigator.

When any immovable property is required temporarily for public purpose or in public interest, the district administration may requisition it in accordance with the law.

In case of requisition of immovable property, compensation shall be paid to the rightful owner or owners.

But thanks to the collaboration of surveyors, kanongos and land acquisition officials, Tarek pocketed Tk 20 crore, originally allocated by the government for farmers who used to cultivate the 144 acres of land on which the Chinese company built its office, the investigation found.

The land officials dropped the real farmers from the government list, thus depriving them of their rightful dues.

Contacted, Tarek said, “I have given my statement to the ACC when they called me. I don’t think there was any chance to siphon off money from this project.”

Mosharrof said Tarek and representatives from the Chinese company used to determine the compensation.

“As per the deal, he [Tarek] used to receive 10 percent from the total compensation. I have a business partnership with him. The ACC might have found my name this way. Beyond business relations, I don’t have any collaboration with him.”

ARRESTEES SPILL THE BEAN

The Rapid Action Battalion arrested a surveyor named Md Washim in Cox’s Bazar on February 18, 2020, and the ACC Chattogram office filed a case two days later.

Three middlemen -- Sala Uddin, Kamruddin and Selim Ullah -- were arrested by the ACC separately later that month. They all “confessed” that they had paid commission to LA office staffers.

The trio admitted to bribing Tk 10,123,000 to two land acquisition officers alongside dozens of surveyors and kanongos.

Eleven sacks of documents,

including applications of people seeking compensation, cheques and award books, which were supposed to be preserved at the additional deputy commissioner’s office, were seized by Rab from their apartments.

Their diaries have details of the commission they paid to the LA office staffers.

The ACC came to know details about the graft in the three projects after quizzing the arrestees and analysing the seized documents.

It found that a surveyor used to work as the “commission collector” for the then DC Kamal Hossen and ADC Afsar.

Mohammad Edris, an arrested syndicate leader who is also a commercially important person (CIP), confessed to handing over Tk 40 lakh to a PBI inspector for forwarding it to ex-additional SP Moniruzzaman, according to ACC sources.

NO ONE DID ANY WRONG!

Denying any wrongdoing, SP Sarwar Alam said he had found some discrepancies in the papers.

“I wrote to the district administration to fix the discrepancies. Then representatives from the Roads and Highways Department and the district administration conducted a digital survey and corrected those,” he claimed.

But the ACC did not find any such letter when it analysed land documents relating to the PBI project.

Asked about it, Sarwar said he submitted the letter himself and when the investigation officer came to him for land-related documents, he provided him with a copy.

But the investigation officer told this paper that he did not get any such letter.

Moniruzzaman, ex-additional SP of Cox’s Bazar PBI, neither received calls nor replied to the text messages requesting his comments. Another ex-additional SP of the unit, Abdullah Al Mamun, also could not be reached.

Documents show that Moniruzzaman submitted the proposal to the administration for land acquisition for the PBI project on March 14, 2018. The proposal included wrong plot numbers and concealed the fact that parts of the proposed site had been acquired by Roads and Highways in 1992.

After the proposal was submitted, a joint feasibility report prepared on November 18, 2018, led by the then UNO AHM Mahfuzur Rahman and a police inspector on behalf of PBI, overlooked these issues and certified the papers as genuine.

The DLAC led by the then DC Kamal Hossen approved the joint feasibility study and decided to acquire the land bypassing legal issues on January 1, 2019, the investigation officer found.

Kamal Hossen, now posted at the Local Government Department as deputy secretary, rejected the ACC findings. “I know nothing about the allegations. I did everything adhering to the law,” he told The Daily Star over the phone.

Former ADC Afsar, now posted at the Ministry of Science and Technology, said the land selection was solely the business of the acquiring body. They selected the land considering their “strategic requirement,” he claimed.

“Land acquisition law has been followed in full while acquiring land for the PBI project,” he said in a text message to this correspondent.

Mahfuzur Rahman, former UNO of Cox’s Bazar Sadar upazila, now posted as the ADC of Sylhet, claimed he did not remember anything “as the land acquisition happened a long ago.”

Shamim Hossain, the land acquisition officer, who released the compensation cheques to fake owners in the PBI project, also denied being involved with any syndicate.

Cox’s Bazar Municipality Mayor Mujibor Rahman, also general secretary of district Awami League, could not be reached for comments over the phone.

Momen calls for rehabilitating climate migrants

Bss, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has called upon major carbon emitting countries to rehabilitate the climate migrants displaced from their homes and traditional jobs due to climate change.

“It is the responsibility of the international community, particularly the major carbon emitting countries, to rehabilitate the climate migrants,” he said.

The minister was addressing the meeting of the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) in Rotterdam of the Netherlands on Monday, said a press release issued in Dhaka yesterday.

The GCA is Dutch initiative to develop and share knowledge and best practices for climate change adaptation.

During the meeting, Momen stressed the need for ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in the area of climate change by the major polluting countries.

The Bangladesh foreign minister also highlighted the importance of ensuring the climate finance of at least \$100 billion every year, with equal importance given to mitigation and adaptation.

Momen is a board member of the GCA, while Ban Ki-moon, the immediate past UN secretary-general, is the chairman of the organisation.

The floating office of the GCA Headquarters, the largest floating office in the world, was inaugurated in Rotterdam by King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands in presence of board members, ministers from different countries, and several heads of international organisations.

Earlier, Momen chaired a meeting of the Ministers of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), the platform of 48 countries severely affected by climate change.

In the meeting, the recent CVF activities were reported, and also the possible actions leading up to the 26th UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP26) were discussed. The COP26 is scheduled to be held in Glasgow, UK in November.

56 more die, 2,639 get Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country logged 56 deaths from Covid-19 in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services.

With this, the total number of Covid deaths in the country now stands at 26,684. The death rate is 1.76 percent.

A total of 27,233 samples were tested at laboratories across the country during the 24 hours and at least 2,639 new infections were recorded, taking the total number of infected people to 15,19,805, added the release.

The current positivity rate is 9.69 percent while the overall positivity rate stands at 16.67 percent.

At least 5,567 Covid patients have recovered during the 24-hour period. The total number of recoveries now stands at 14,60,754 and the recovery rate is 96.11 percent.

Among the 56 deceased, 19 were men and 37 women.

Three of the dead were aged between 31 and 40, six between 41 and 50, 20 between 51 and 60, 11 between 61 and 70, nine between 71 and 80, six between 81 and 90, and one was aged between 91 and 100 years.

89 officials promoted to additional secy

Bss, Dhaka

The government has promoted 89 officials of the administration cadre, who were performing duties as joint secretaries, to the post of additional secretary.

The public administration ministry yesterday issued a gazette notification in this regard, said an official press release.

According to the gazette, the newly promoted officials have been made officers on special duty (additional secretary) to the public administration ministry.

Deputy Secretary to the Public Administration Ministry ABM Iftekharul Islam Khandker signed the gazette notification.

Another notification issued by the ministry said two joint secretaries were promoted to additional secretary.

Israel strikes Gaza after incendiary balloon attacks

AFP, Gaza City

Israel launched airstrikes against Gaza on Monday night, the army said, retaliating after incendiary balloons launched from the blockaded Palestinian enclave had started fires.

Blaming Hamas for the balloons, the Israeli army said it had targeted locations belonging to the militant group that controls the Gaza Strip.

WATCH YOUR STEP!

Road 800m, lidless manholes 10, woes manifold

RAFIUL ISLAM

Maneuvering through the 800-stretch of a connecting road in South Matual is tantamount to partaking in extreme sports, with danger lurking every few steps.

In just this short part of the small but busy road, locally known as “College Road”, at least 10 manholes are missing lids or have had their covers damaged.

As authorities continue to turn a blind eye, accidents have become rampant on the road, causing severe injuries commuters, locals alleged.

“One or two accidents per day is the norm here,” said Mozammel Haque, owner of a grocery shop in the area. With his shop located beside one such lidless manhole, he has become an involuntary observer of the debacle.

“The manholes are right down the middle of the road. Bikers and passengers of auto-rickshaws are the biggest victims,” he told The Daily Star recently.

Contacted, local representatives of Dhaka South City Corporation spun a different tale. They said they regularly visit the place and replace the damaged covers, but find them damaged again soon.

Beyond falling into the manholes, locals said accidents also occur on the road when commuters suddenly notice the holes and take sharp turns trying to avoid them, causing chaos on the road.

Another shop owner of the area recalled a recent incident. Two bikers skidded off the road when the vehicle’s front wheel got stuck in one of the pits. One of them sustained severe head injuries.

The risk escalates at night. “I narrowly escaped harrowing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Scorched lives not anymore

Drik pays homage to Hashem Foods Factory fire victims



PHOTO: STAR

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

On the second floor gallery of the Drik Path Bhaban at Panthapath, texts are displayed on a curving wall to the left, beside a list of industrial tragedies that took place over the last two decades. The wall leads to a corridor with a photograph of a giant, burnt lock capturing the spectator’s attention right away.

This photograph, taken by Shahidul Alam, portrays the narrative of the workers dying inside the locked floor of the Hashem Foods Factory in Narayanganj, due to the authority’s negligence.

This was the sight at a mixed media exhibition titled “Scorched Lives at Hashem Foods”, paying homage to the victims of the Hashem Foods Factory fire, recently organised by media house Drik.

The exhibition was inaugurated on September 4, 2021, commemorating the 32nd founding anniversary of Drik.

On July 8 this year, a fire broke out at the Hashem Foods Factory, killing more than 50 workers working in the seven-story factory

building in Rugganj.

“Drik has been running a series titled ‘Aar Na’ (Not Anymore) in response to different industrial disasters that took place over the last 10-12 years. This exhibition is a continuation of that series,” said eminent photographer and founder of Drik, Shahidul Alam, during the opening ceremony.

“We focus on such incidents to voice our demand that these incidents do not happen ever again.”

The exhibition is displaying 36 photographs by Shahidul Alam, Parvez Ahmed Rony, Suman Paul and Istiak Karim, who worked on the site of the disaster.

In addition to the photographs, there is also an installation, a cage serving as a replica of the industrial fire, accompanied by audio-visual elements, which include a video of the burning establishment and two heart-wrenching soundtracks of crackling flames and crying victims pleading for rescue.

The exhibition is open for spectators provided they follow the Covid-19 safety guidelines until September 20, from 3pm to 8pm.

Govt to build 3,040 flats for cleaners

PM tells Ecne meeting not to take rent from conservancy workers

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed not to take rents from the conservancy workers against the proposed residential flats the government is going to build for them.



The government decided to construct some 3,040 residential flats for the conservancy workers of 66 pourashobhas (municipalities).

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) yesterday approved a project in this regard involving Tk 1,142.27 crore.

The duration of implementing the project is between January 2021 and December 2024.

At a press briefing following the Ecne meeting, Planning Minister MA Mannan said the prime minister urged for not taking rents from the conservancy workers for those flats the way rents are taken from the government staff.

State Minister for Planning Shamsul Alam informed the briefing that the officials of the local government ministry at the meeting said there would be some monthly maintenance expenses after those flats would be handed over.

Though the prime minister was initially fully against realising any money from the cleaning workers, but following the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Guile, greed and bloated bank accounts

Three arrested for duping people of over Tk 10cr

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Sohidul Islam is a mason by profession, who works on various contractual jobs at construction sites.

From March 15 last year to August 28 of this year, one of his bank accounts showed that he had a transaction of around Tk 2.37 crore.

Sohidul has five accounts in three banks and the total transaction of these accounts in last one year is around 5.27 crore.

Similarly, Sajib Ahmed is an egg trader. He maintains around 21 accounts in different banks, which show a transaction of around Tk 3.02 crore in one year.

And finally, Sharif Hossain, an auto-rickshaw driver, has around 31 bank accounts and in the last three to four months, he made a transaction of around Tk 50 lakh.

Now the question arises, given their professions, how did they manage to tuck away that much money in so many bank accounts?

Turns out, both Sajib and Sharif were actually working for a woman named Morzina Akhter. She used to pay them Tk 1,500 each as commission for a transaction of Tk one lakh each time.

And Sohidul was their leader.

This ring was collecting this huge amount of money through cheating people across the country.

Police’s detective branch (Gulshan Division) came up with the information following the arrest of Sajib, Sharif and Morzina from different areas of the capital on September 3.

Sohidul is on the run.

Detectives also seized around 47 cheque books, ATM cards and details of 70 bank

accounts from their possession, Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DB (Gulshan division), told The Daily Star recently.

This newspaper also has copies of their bank accounts, which show the transactions.

Investigators said to trap people, they first became friends with various professionals on social media identifying themselves as foreign nationals.

Then they used to send them “expensive gifts” from abroad, which, according to them, used to “get stuck” at the customs.

Afterwards, a syndicate member, identifying him or her as a customs officials called the target and asked to pay a fee to release the gift package from the customs warehouse. That person also used to give the victim an account number to deposit the money.

Abul Bashar, a victim from Jhenidah, told law enforcers that he had deposited around Tk 3 lakh to different bank accounts given by the syndicate.

DC Mashiur Rahman said the syndicate have deceived around 100 people so far.

“The gang also forged documents to send to the victims. They used to communicate with each other through video calls using online applications,” he said.

Mashiur further said bank officials need to be more vigilant. “How can a mason or egg trader have transaction of over crores of taka? They should have monitored that or questioned about it.”

Contacted, Abu Hena Md Razi Hasan, head of Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), told The Daily Star yesterday that it is the responsibility of the banks concerned to inform us if a suspicious transaction is found in any account, so that

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Covishield to be delivered when ‘situation improves’

Says info minister

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud, who is visiting India -- ahead of his proposed meetings with Indian foreign, and information and broadcasting ministers -- has said that New Delhi assured Dhaka of more deliveries of Covid-19 vaccines “when the situation further improves here [in India].”

“The Indian government has assured us that they would provide vaccines that are in the contract... when their situation improves,” he told reporters in the Indian capital on Monday.

Hasan Mahmud, who inaugurated the Bangabandhu Media Centre at the Press Club of India (PCI) on Monday, said Indian authority

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



The port city's hunger for good, juicy palm fruit is met all the way from Gazipur. Every day during peak season, a huge supply of the popular fruit reaches the city on trucks that carry up to 3,000-4,000 units. Depending on size and quality, they are sold for Tk 5 to Tk 60. This photo was taken recently from Station Road area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

‘Remove us from red-listed countries’

Momen asks UK foreign secretary

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has requested London to remove Bangladesh from its red-listed Covid-19 countries, which will allow stranded British Bangladeshis to go back to the UK.



Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen made the request during a virtual meeting with British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab on Monday, according to a statement from the Bangladesh High Commission to the UK.

The foreign minister said given Bangladesh’s robust vaccine roll-out and as the Covid-19 infection rate significantly declined to 9.82 percent, the UK should consider removing Bangladesh from its red list, the statement added.

Momen held the meeting virtually from the Netherlands, as the scheduled meeting on September 2 was postponed, as the UK secretary had to travel to Doha for an emergency meeting on Afghanistan.

Dominic Raad said Britain does politically appreciate the overall pressure on the government regarding red-listing and remains well aware of decreasing Covid-19 infections in Bangladesh.

However, such decisions are reviewed by public health experts on a regular basis, he added.

He said given the long-standing friendship between the two countries, and as more frequent genomic sequencing data is uploaded by Bangladesh, the British government will review Bangladesh’s inclusion in the red list.

Among others, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK Saida Muna Tasneem participated in the meeting, said the statement.

Rain or shine, 3km stretch of Tongi-Ashulia-EPZ national highway remains under water

Talking to The Daily Star, locals and sources inside the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) identified the lack of a proper drainage system -- which

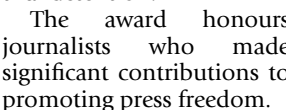


"I have to travel on the road every day as my job needs me to go from Uttara to Baipail," said Kamal Uddin, official of an Uttara-based buying house. "For

RHD OFFICIALS BLAME FACTORY DISCHARGE AND CANAL GRABBING

Badiuzzaman, assistant engineer of RHD, who was a sub-assistant engineer of RHD's Dhaka Zonal office, before getting promoted and transferred recently, said locals and the factories located on the side of the road are responsible for its dilapidated

"We are currently repairing the potholes and hope to complete the works within the next five days," he told this correspondent yesterday.



Among the 343 patients, 57 are from outside Dhaka. The total dengue cases outside the capital rose to 1,148.


In primary interrogation, Morzina said she used to open bank accounts through them. After opening the accounts, she used to give all the debit and credit cards and cheque books to Sohidul. Two cases were filed against the arrestees with Mohammadpur and Tejgaon Police stations.

The minister is likely to meet his Indian counterpart Anurag Thakur and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during the four-day visit to Delhi.

The prime minister at the meeting directed to take steps for building more flats for all the cleaning workers across the country gradually, he informed.


Md. Mokaddess Ali ACS
SVP & Company Secretary

But until then, this space will serve as a reminder of urban mismanagement and the suffering it can inflict on the city's residents.



উইল্‌স লিটল ফ্লাওয়ার স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ
৮৫, কাকরাইল, ঢাকা-১০০০। ওয়েব: www.wlfsc.edu.bd

৮৫, কাকরাইল, ঢাকা-১০০০। ওয়েব: www.wlfsc.edu.bd

অধ্যক্ষ পদে পুনঃ নিয়োগ (সংশোধিত) বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ক্রম নং	নিয়োগের জন্য শিক্ষাপত্র বাণ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বেতন স্কেল ও প্রোড
০১.	<p>শীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে শ্রাচকাক্তর ডিগ্রি/সমমান অথবা</p> <p>শীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ০৪(চার) বছর মেয়াদি স্নাতক (সম্মান) ডিগ্রি/সমমান। সমগ্র শিক্ষাজীবনে ০১ (এক) টির বেশি ৩য় বিভাগ/শ্রেণি/সমমান গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।</p>	<p>উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ের অধ্যক্ষ / উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক কলেজের অধ্যক্ষ / ডিগ্রি কলেজের অধ্যক্ষ/ ডিগ্রি কলেজের উপাধ্যক্ষ পদে এম.পি ও ভুক্ত হিসেবে কর্মরত অথবা</p> <p>এম.পি ও ভুক্ত হিসেবে ডিগ্রি কলেজের সহকারী অধ্যাপক পদে ন্যূনতম ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মোট ১২ (বার) বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।</p> <p>এম.পি ও ভুক্ত হিসেবে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়/ উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক কলেজে জ্যেষ্ঠ প্রভাষক পদে ন্যূনতম ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মোট ১২ (বার) বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।</p>	<p>গ্রেড-৫ স্কেল-৪৩,০০০/- — ৬৯,৮৫০/-</p>

যহেতু লিখিত জীবন বৃত্তান্তসহ আবেদনপত্রের মাধ্যমে প্রথম শ্রেণির গজেজেট কর্তৃক কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রসহ সকল সনদের
ফটোকপি, এম.পি.ও ভুক্ত হবার শীট, সদা তোলা ৩৩ (তিন) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবি, 'উইল্‌স লিটল ফ্লাওয়ার স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ'
এর অনুসরণে ২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার জমা দিতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র নিম্নলিখিত শর্তাবলীর প্রযোজ্য
ডাকযোগ্য পৌছাতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ: ২২/০৯/২০২১ (ত্রি: অক্টোবর চলাকালীন সময়ে)।

বিদ্র: কর্তৃক প্রার্থীদের যথায় কর্তৃককেন্দ্রে মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। বিলম্বে প্রাপ্তি এবং অসম্পূর্ণ আবেদন কোনক্রমেই গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে
না। ইতিপূর্বে যে সকল প্রার্থী আবেদন করেছেন তাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করতে হবে কিন্তু পে-অর্ডারের প্রয়োজন নাই। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে
বেসরকারী শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের (স্কুল ও কলেজ) জনবলকায়ো এম.পি.ও নীতিমালা-২০২১ অনুসরণ করা হবে।

Abdur Rahaman
মুহাম্মদ আরিফুর রহমান
সভাপতি, গভর্নিং বডি
উইল্‌স লিটল ফ্লাওয়ার স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ

He had his

FROM PAGE 12
“A while later, then officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station Pradeep Kumar Das reached the spot and kicked the man who was lying on the ground and stomped on his neck with his foot to confirm his death,” the source added, quoting Amin.
Amin also claimed that he knew Liaquat and Pradeep. But he did not know the victim when the incident happened. Later, he learnt that the victim was Maj (ret'd) Sinha.
Judge Mohammad Ismail recorded Amin’s deposition, which began at 10:15am and continued for an hour and around 15 minutes. The defence then cross-examined his statement.
All 15 accused in the case were present in the court yesterday, said court’s Public Prosecutor Faridul Alam.

The court began recording statements of witnesses in the second phase of the hearing on Sunday and will continue it today. The court has summoned 15 witnesses to testify during this period. Of them, three witnesses could testify before the court till yesterday.

Earlier, local fish trader Mohammad Ali and CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver Md Kamal Hossain placed their depositions before the court on Sunday and Monday.
In the first phase, the court recorded statements of two witnesses between August 23 and 25 -- Sinha’s sister and complainant of the case Sharmin Shahriar Ferdous and one of Sinha’s associates Shahedul Islam Sifat.

After giving their testimonies, all the witnesses were cross-examined by defence lawyers, said PP Faridul.
According to the charge sheet, 83 people are witnesses to the incident.
On June 27, the court framed charges against 15 accused. Of them, 12 are police personnel, including Pradeep, Liaquat, sub-inspector Md Shahjahan, and assistant sub-inspector Liton Mia, who were all suspended from their posts.
The investigators submitted the charge sheet on December 13 last year.

On August 23, the court began the case’s formal trial through recording testimony of Sharmin.
Sinha, 36, had been making travel documentaries for a YouTube channel called “Just Go”. He was returning to Cox’s Bazar from Teknaf.
He was killed in a police firing at a checkpoint of Armed Police Battalion (APBn) at Teknaf’s Shamlapur area on July 31 last year.
Police claimed that they tried to search the vehicle, and Sinha aimed his pistol at them, prompting them to shoot back in self-defence. They also claimed that they seized drugs from the vehicle.
Later, Sinha’s elder sister Sharmin filed the murder case with Teknaf Senior Judicial Magistrate’s Court against Pradeep, Nandadulal, and several others.



A man carries away a girl who was injured during aerial bombardment at a makeshift camp for displaced Syrians near the town of Kafraya in the north of Syria's rebel-held Idlib province yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Badly cleaned schools can help spread

FROM PAGE 12
remained closed for long,” he said.
The government on September 5 announced that schools and colleges will reopen from September 12 in phases.
Earlier, the government also decided to reopen universities from October 15.
Educational institutions have been closed since March 17 last year due to the pandemic.
According to data of the Directorate General of Health Services, 12,434 people were hospitalised with dengue fever across the country this year until 8:00am yesterday. As many as 52 others died from dengue infection.
Visiting some schools in the capital’s Gendaria and Jatrabari on Sunday and Monday, this newspaper found that the authorities took initiatives to clean their institutions before reopening. However, steps taken up by some others were not satisfactory.

The premises of Muradpur Primary School and Muradpur Adarsha High School, both situated on the same campus in Jurain, were not clean.
There are two places on the premises where benches were piled up under tarpaulin. There was stagnant water on the tarpaulin and discarded pots were lying under the benches.
“We have already cleaned our school and its premises to reopen it,” claimed Mahbubur Rahman Khan, assistant headmaster of Muradpur High School.
He, however, said keeping the school clean was very tough as it was located in the DND embankment area where waterlogging occurs due to poor drainage system.
Asked whether the city corporation conducted any anti-mosquito drive at their school, the teacher replied in the negative.
The headmaster of Muradpur Primary School also said they cleaned their building.

About the anti-mosquito drive, he said workers from the city corporation sprayed anti-mosquito chemicals at their school about a month ago. At that time, they had asked the workers to conduct such drives on a regular basis.
Brig Gen Jobaidur Rahman, chief health officer of Dhaka North City Corporation, said they started carrying out larvicide and adulticide spraying activities at schools since Monday.
All educational institutions will have to clean their institutes properly and will keep watch whether there is stagnant water. They will also have to flush their toilets as Aedes also can breed there, he said.
DSCC Chief Executive Officer Farid Ahmmad said they would conduct anti-mosquito drives at any school if the authorities concerned ask them.
“We have already conducted anti-mosquito drives at some schools upon request,” he said.

Free Bangladesh to join

FROM PAGE 12
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would constitute a threat to peace as he did not belong to Bangladesh alone, but to the whole world.
He reiterated the four-point proposal as put forward by the Bangladesh prime minister and the acting president as preconditions to a political settlement of the Bangladesh issue. They were: recognition of Bangladesh by West Pakistan, unconditional release of Bangabandhu, withdrawal of the invading army and compensation for all losses suffered by the people at the hands of the Pakistan army.
MOSCOW WARNS PINDI AGAINST

WAR
The Soviet Union was reported to have warned Pakistan against any misadventure like going to war against India. This had been intimated to President Yahya Khan’s special emissary to Moscow Sultan Mohammad Khan, Pakistan’s foreign secretary, who had suddenly cut short his visit and returned to Islamabad today.
The reason for his sudden departure from Moscow for home was said to be linked with his desire to convey the Soviet stand to his government as early as possible.
ON THE WAR FRONT
In the Kushtia-Jessore-Khulna sector, Mukti Bahini today raided the Pakistani position at Brittiachara

killing eight Pakistani troops and injuring three.
In Dhaka-Comilla-Chittagong sector, Mukti Bahini ambushed three boats carrying Pakistani troops in the Monipur area. In this action, seven Pakistani troops were killed.
In another operation, Bangladeshi freedom fighters ambushed enemy troops travelling in three country boats in Mohanganj area in Mymensingh district. The enemy fled leaving behind three boats and large quantities of arms and ammunitions. The boats and stores were recovered by the Mukti Bahini.
Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

শেখ হাসিনার দিন বদলে
সমাজসেবা এগিয়ে চলে

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সমাজসেবা অফিসারের কার্যালয়

শহর সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়

পটুয়াখালী

তারিখঃ ০৬/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ

স্মারক নং-৪১, ০১, ৭৮০০, ০৪১, ০৭, ০০২, ২১, ১৮৬

সংশোধিত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়।
০২	সম্মানিত কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম	সমাজসেবা অফিসার, শহর সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, পটুয়াখালী।
০৩	যে কার্যের দরপত্র	২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছরের সমাজসেবা অধিক্ষেত্রবাসী শহর সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, পটুয়াখালীর আওতাধীন দক্ষিণ উত্তর প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্রের জন্য ডেস্কটপ কম্পিউটার (ইউপিএস সহ) ল্যাপটপ ও মাল্টিমিডিয়া প্রজেক্টর ক্রয়।
	কার্যক্রমের বিবরণ	২১/০৮/২০২১খ্রিঃ প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়
০১	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১০/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ (শুক্রবার)
০২	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১১/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ দুপুর ১২:০০টা (শনিবার)
০৩	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১১/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ দুপুর ০১:০০টা (শনিবার)
		১৩/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ দুপুর ০১:০০টা সরলতা বা তার মনোনীত প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বীর উপস্থিতিতে ঘোষণা হবে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন)

মেহেদী হাসান
সমাজসেবা অফিসার
শহর সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়
পটুয়াখালী
০১৯৪৪২৬৬৭৬

জিডি-১৬০০

Gazi Wires Limited
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation)
28-FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram-4212, Bangladesh.

তারিখঃ ০৬/০৯/২০২১খ্রিঃ

Tender Notice (NCT)

1	Procuring entity name	Managing Director, Gazi Wires Limited (BSEC), 28-FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram-4212, Bangladesh.
2	Procuring entity district	Chattogram.
3	Invitation for	(1) Uniform for Workers and Staffs (2) Wall Calendar and Desk Calendar
4	Invitation Ref. No.	(1) GWPUR/74/OTM (NCT)/2021-2022 Dated: 07/09/2021 (2) GWPUR/071/OTM (NCT)/2021-2022 Dated: 07/09/2021
5	Procurement method	Open Tender Method (NCT).
6	Budget and source of fund	Gazi Wires Limited's own fund.
7	Tender publication date	08/09/2021
8	Tender last selling date	29/09/2021 (During office time).
9	Tender closing date and time	Date 30/09/2021 Time 11:30am (Bangladesh Betar Time)
10	Tender opening date and time	30/09/2021 11:45am (Bangladesh Betar Time)
11	Name & address of the office(s)	Address (a) Selling of tender document 1) Cash Section, Bangladesh Steel & Engineering, BSEC Bhaban, 102, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh. (2) Cash Section, Gazi Wires Limited, 28-FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram-4212, Bangladesh. (b) Receiving and opening of tender document 1) At the Office of Gazi Wires Ltd., 28-FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram-4212, Bangladesh.
12	Price of tender document (each)	BDT 1,000.00 (one thousand).
13	Brief description of goods	
	Tender package No.	Description of goods and works Tender security amount (BDT)
	GWPUR/74/OTM(NCT)/2021-2022	Uniform for Workers and Staffs BDT 6,000.00 (six thousand only)
	GWPUR/071/OTM(NCT)/2021-2022	Wall Calendar and Desk Calendar BDT 15,000.00 (fifteen thousand only)
14	Regarding tender document	The tender document may be purchased by the interested tenderers on the submission of a written application to the addresses as mentioned in Serial No. 11(a) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee BDT 1000.00. The method of payment will be in the form of cash in favour of Gazi Wires Ltd. No tender will be sent by courier or mail. One tender document cannot be used for submission of tender proposal(s) by more than one tenderer.
15	Special instruction	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without showing any reason.

Shyamal Sarker
Senior Purchase Officer
Head of Commercial
For-Managing Director

GD-1603

Court accepts charges

FROM PAGE 12
Mohammad Russell Mollah of the Detective Branch of police pressed charges only against Kajol before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court of Dhaka on April 8.
Russell appealed to the court to relieve the other accused.
The charge sheet stated that Kajol posted defamatory, objectionable and indecent writings on Facebook about several leaders and activists of the Awami League and Jubo Mohila League.
Usmin Ara and Sumaiya Chowdhury Bonya, central committee members of Jubo Mahila League, filed two other cases against Kajol with Hazaribagh and Kamrangirchar police stations under the DSA on March 10 and 11 last year.
The tribunal set September 8 to decide whether to accept the charges pressed in the case filed with Kamrangirchar Police Station. The one with Hazaribagh Police Station remains pending with the same tribunal.
Kajol went missing on March 10 last year. The Border Guard Bangladesh personnel on May 3 last year said they found him roaming near the Benapole border and detained him. He was sent to jail by a Jashore court the same day under section 54 of the Code of the Criminal Procedure (CrPC).
He was later arrested in the three cases filed under the DSA.
A lower court denied him bail for seven months until the High Court on November 24 granted him bail in one of the cases. The HC on December 17 granted him bail in two other cases after Kajol’s lawyer argued that probes had to be complete within 75 days of filing of the cases, and the investigators failed to do so.
The photojournalist walked out of jail on December 25.

Floating

FROM PAGE 12
to the huge ships and the smoke from the refineries of Europe’s biggest seaport, which accounts for 13.5 percent of the country’s emissions.
With their floating farm, which opened in 2019, Peter and Minke say they wanted to “bring the countryside into the town”, boost consumer awareness and create agricultural space.
The Dutch are no strangers to advanced farming methods, using a network of huge greenhouses in particular to become the world’s second biggest agricultural exporter after the United States.
But that has come at a cost. The Netherlands is one of Europe’s largest per capita emitters of climate change gases and faces a major problem with agricultural emissions, particularly in the dairy sector which produces large amounts of methane from cows.



Jamuna group retracts

FROM PAGE 12
landscape since its entry on December 16, 2018 with its incredulous discounts.
Later, Jamuna Group divulged that the Tk 200 crore of the initial investment was in supplier’s credit, which remains outstanding. In other words, Jamuna Group was converting debt into equity, so it is not a cash injection per se.
And the rest of the amount, as per the letter of intent -- which is not a legally binding contract between the two parties -- would most likely be in the form of goods.
Now, Alam has quashed all possibility of injecting cash in Evaly, which has been searching high and low for funding to fill the massive hole in its books brought about by its aggressive customer acquisition strategy.
In its recent submission to the commerce ministry, As of July 15, Evaly, which is facing the wrath of customers and vendors alike for delayed delivery of goods

and payment, has total liabilities of Tk 543 crore, according to its response on September 2 to the commerce ministry’s show-cause notice on its financial status.
Of the sum, it owes Tk 311 crore to more than 2 lakh customers, who have been waiting a while for goods they purchased with advance payment on the platform.
It owes Tk 206 crore to merchants. Evaly did not disclose the number of vendors it owes money to in its response to the commerce ministry’s show-cause notice.
The e-commerce platform had assets amounting to about Tk 92 crore, and of the amount, the current asset was Tk 65 crore.
Rassel, who faces a travel ban because of an ongoing probe into the disappearance of Tk 338 crore from Evaly’s accounts, declined to make any comment on Jamuna Group’s decision to walk back on its plan to invest.
“We are constantly on the lookout for investors,” he told The Daily Star.

May not be ready when

FROM PAGE 12
is 2024, the authorities planned to operate trains on the Mawa-Bhanga section on the day the bridge would be open. Currently, Bhanga is connected with a railway network.
Sujan yesterday said officials have been working to make the Mawa-Bangha section ready for train operation on the day the bridge would be open to the public.
He added that the section witnessed 69 percent progress so far.
Currently, works for installing a gas line and building a walkway on the bottom section of the bridge is going on.
He said it would require six months to install rail tracks on the bridge and the BR wanted to install the tracks simultaneously, but BBA did not agree to that.
“If we get a chance to start work in December or January next year, we will be able to complete the work by June. But if we get the chance in March or April next year, we may not be able to start operating trains on Day 1,” he said.
If they fail to launch train operation on Day-1, they would try to bring Dhaka to Bhanga section under operation within December next year, the minister said.
He added that works for installing rail tracks might cause vibration and their works may be hampered. “For technical reasons, both the works should be completed simultaneously,” he said, adding that they were discussing the matter with BBA.
Asked whether the June 2022 deadline can be changed for it, the minister said, “We don’t want to see that the deadline has to be changed for us.”
Bridge Division Secretary Abu Bakr Siddique, also the executive director

of BBA, said the gas line is being installed under a different project and it has to be done first.
Officials are working to let the installation of railways begin in January next year.
“And we hope they [railway authority] would be able to complete their works before inauguration of the bridge,” he told The Daily Star last night.
“We want no work on the bridge to remain incomplete after its inauguration,” he said. “We are hopeful about meeting the deadline.”
PROJECT PROGRESS
PBRLP was approved in March 2016 with the cost initially estimated to be Tk 34,989 crore. But the physical work of the project commenced only in July 2018, mainly due to the delay in signing of the loan contract with Chinese Exim Bank.
In the meantime, project costs climbed to Tk 39,246 crore and the deadline was extended up to 2024.
Although the fast-track project suffered setbacks twice due to problems in the design of viaducts and the pandemic, it witnessed 43.5 percent progress so far.
The authority has already installed 1.7km rail lines on the viaduct at Mawa end and the minister and high officials yesterday took a ride on a gang car on this part.
On the other hand, the minister yesterday inaugurated the installation of rail tracks on the viaduct at Janjira end. The Dhaka-Mawa section witnessed 40.5 percent progress while Bhanga-Jashore section witnessed 32 percent progress.
Railways Ministry Secretary Salim Reza, BR’s Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder, PBRLP director Afzal Hossain, among others, accompanied the minister.

Khaleda’s plea sent to PMO

FROM PAGE 12
have given my opinion on the application and sent it back to the home ministry today [yesterday].
“Now, the home ministry will send the file to the Prime Minister’s Office for approval. After getting the decision from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the home ministry will take necessary measures.”
He, however, refused to disclose the opinion he has given on the application. “I will not disclose my opinion now. Wait until the honourable prime minister’s approval.”
Replying to a query, he said the application was submitted on behalf of Khaleda for further extension of suspension of her jail sentence saying that her physical condition has worsened and therefore she needs to go abroad for treatment.
The application is similar to the previous application on which the government has suspended her jail sentence for a few times under section 401 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), the law minister said.

On March 25 last year, the government released the BNP chief after suspending her jail sentence as per section 401 (1) of the Criminal Code of Procedure (CrPC).
Later, the suspension of her jail sentence was extended twice and the government issued separate notifications to this effect. The notification said Khaleda will receive treatment at her home and she cannot go abroad during this period.
Khaleda landed in jail on February 8, 2017, after being sentenced to five years’ imprisonment by a special court in Dhaka in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case. On October 30 the following year, the High Court enhanced her punishment to 10 years after dismissing her appeal in the case.
The former prime minister was convicted by another special court in Dhaka in the Zia Charitable Trust corruption case on October 29, 2018. She was sentenced to seven years’ rigorous imprisonment by the court.

We Deeply Mourn

Shri S.B Prasad founder Chairman of Jaya Group passed away due to old-age complications at his residence on August 20, 2021 early morning.

The veteran businessman is survived by his wife, three sons, daughters-in-laws, daughters, sons-in-laws, grandchildren, relatives and a host of well-wishers.

May the Almighty give the family and friends strength to bear this irreparable loss!

Jaya Group

AFGHANISTAN CRISIS

Basic services collapsing: UN

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations appealed for almost \$200 million in extra funding for life-saving aid in Afghanistan after the Taliban's takeover sparked a host of new issues.

The UN humanitarian agency OCHA said the extra sum meant a total of \$606 million in aid was now needed for Afghanistan until the end of the year.

"Basic services in Afghanistan are collapsing and food and other life-saving aid is about to run out," said OCHA spokesman Jens Laerke.

The issue will be discussed next Monday at a ministerial meeting in Geneva hosted by UN chief Antonio Guterres.

OCHA voiced hope that countries would pledge generously at the conference, saying \$606 million was needed to provide critical food and livelihood assistance to nearly 11 million people, and essential health services to 3.4 million.

The funds would also go towards treatment for acute malnutrition for more than a million children and women, water, sanitation and hygiene interventions, and protection of children and survivors of gender-based violence.

Most of the requested funds had already been asked for at the end of last year as part of a \$1.3-billion humanitarian appeal for Afghanistan.

Even before the Taliban victory, Afghanistan was heavily aid-dependent .

The UN has warned 18 million people are facing a humanitarian disaster, and another 18 million could quickly join them.

AFGHANISTAN: FROM SOVIET OCCUPATION TO TALIBAN TAKEOVER AND US DEFEAT

Main developments

1979-1989 Soviet occupation

Moscow invades in December 1979 to support a communist regime. The Afghan mujahideen resistance, backed by the West, fights the Soviet Army for a decade until it withdraws in February 1989

↓

1992-1996 Civil war

Nearly 100,000 killed in two years. The Taliban movement, supported by Pakistan, begins to emerge

↓

1996-2001 Taliban rule

Hardline Islamic regime takes power. Led by Mullah Mohammad Omar, regime becomes close to Al-Qaeda, sheltering its leader Osama bin Laden. Women and girls mostly denied education and employment, unable to leave home without male companion and full face coverings



2021

Kabul airport, Aug. 30



2021

Anti-Taliban fighter in Panjshir Valley, Sept. 2

Sept 6, 2021
Panjshir taken

Taliban say they have captured last pocket of resistance, in the Panjshir Valley. But National Resistance Front (NRF) says still in "strategic positions", call for "national uprising"

May-Aug 2021
US withdrawal, Taliban back in power

In May, US and NATO start the withdrawal of their 9,600 troops. The Taliban take the capital Kabul on Aug 15 after a rapid offensive. President Ghani flees the country. The Afghan army, trained and equipped by the Americans, collapses. Tens of thousands of Afghans and foreigners rush to the airport in a desperate bid to scramble into evacuation flights. A suicide bombing at the airport on Aug 26 killed over 100 people, including 13 US soldiers. On Aug 30, the last US troops fly out of Kabul, putting an end to a 20-year war.

2020
US-Taliban deal

The two sides sign a historic deal following talks that started in 2018, paving the way for the withdrawal of all foreign troops



1980

Afghan women attend a workplace literacy course in Kabul in the 80s



2021

Taliban fighters in Laghman province, Aug. 15, 2021



1988

Soviet soldier given flowers near Kabul, 1988



2001

Afghan Taliban militia soldiers stand near the dynamited Buddha statue, Bamiyan, 2001



2002

US soldiers arrive at Bagram airbase, 2002

2001
Western intervention

US-led invasion topples Taliban. Hamid Karzai appointed to lead interim government. Up to 130,000 soldiers eventually deployed to help secure the country against the resisting Taliban

2004-2014
Karzai era

Karzai wins Afghanistan's first presidential election based on universal suffrage. Karzai is reelected in 2009 in a poll marred by massive fraud, low turnout and Taliban violence

2014-2016
US withdrawal

NATO completes handover of security to Afghan army and police. New Afghan President Ashraf Ghani signs deal allowing some US-NATO forces to stay on. Security degenerates. In July 2016 US President Barack Obama slows the planned withdrawal of US troops

2017
US reinforcements

New US President Donald Trump scraps pullout timetable and re-commits thousands of soldiers. Attacks on Afghan forces multiply while US steps up air strikes

AFP Photos/BTA/D.E.Curran/Saeed Khan/Roslan Rahman



Segregation as Afghan universities reopen

AFP, Kabul

Universities in Kabul were almost empty on the first day of the Afghan school year, as professors and students wrestled with the Taliban's restrictive new rules for the classroom.

The Taliban have promised a softer rule than during their first stint in power from 1996-2001, when women's freedoms in Afghanistan were sharply curtailed and they were banned from higher education.

This time, the hardline Islamist group have said women will be allowed to go to private universities under the new regime, but they face tough restrictions on their clothing and movement.

Women can only attend class if they wear an abaya -- a flowing robe -- and a niqab -- a face veil with a small window to see through -- and are separated from men, the Taliban said.

"Our students don't accept this and we will have to close the university," said Noor Ali Rahmani, the director of Gharistan University in Kabul, on an almost empty campus on Monday. "Our students wear the hijab, not the niqab," he added, referring to a headscarf.

The Taliban education authority issued a lengthy document on Sunday outlining their measures for the classroom, which also ruled that men and women should be segregated -- or at least divided by a curtain if there are 15 students or less.

From now on at private colleges and universities, which have mushroomed since the Taliban's first rule ended, women must only be taught by other women, or "old men", and use a women-only entrance. They must also end their lessons five minutes earlier than men to stop them from mingling outside.

So far, the Taliban has said nothing about public universities.

For some students, however, it was a relief that women would still be able to attend university at all under a new Taliban regime.

Usually, campus corridors on the first day of the term would be packed with students catching up after the summer. But on Monday, there was a strikingly low turnout at Kabul's universities, leaving education leaders wondering just how many young, talented people have fled the country as part of the "brain drain".

Rahmani said only 10 to 20 percent of the 1,000 students who enrolled last year came to the university on Monday. He estimated up to 30 percent of the students left Afghanistan after the Taliban seized control.

MORE NEWS

Vietnam jails man for five years for spreading Covid

A Vietnamese man has been sentenced to five years in jail for spreading Covid-19 after he breached home quarantine rules. Le Van Tri was convicted of "spreading dangerous infectious diseases to other people" after he travelled to his home province Ca Mau from coronavirus hotspot Ho Chi Minh City in July, according to a report on the website of the provincial People's Court. The 28-year old was accused of breaching a 21-day home quarantine regulation in the southern province. State media said eight people became infected because of Tri.

Climate NGOs call for postponement of COP26

A global network of more than 1,500 climate NGOs called on Britain to postpone the upcoming COP26 climate summit, saying in a statement yesterday that a lack of Covid-19 vaccines risked sidelining developing countries. Rising cases, unequal global vaccine rollout and stringent quarantine requirements for some 60 "red list" nations and territories hoping to attend the 12-day UN climate talks mean that "a safe, inclusive and just global climate conference is impossible," the Climate Action Network (CAN) said.



Nasa confirms Mars rover got its first piece of rock

Nasa confirmed Monday that its Perseverance Mars rover succeeded in collecting its first rock sample for scientists to pore over when a future mission eventually brings it back to Earth. "I've got it!" the space agency tweeted, alongside a photograph of a rock core slightly thicker than a pencil inside a sample tube. The sample was collected on September 1, but Nasa was initially unsure whether the rover had successfully held onto its precious cargo, because initial images taken in poor light were unclear. Perseverance landed on an ancient lake bed called the Jezero Crater in February, on a mission to search for signs of ancient microbial life.

In world first, Cuba starts Covid jabs for toddlers

Cuba on Monday became the first country in the world to vaccinate children from the age of two against Covid-19, using home-grown jabs not recognized by the World Health Organization. The communist island of 11.2 million people aims to inoculate all its children before reopening schools that have been closed for the most part since March 2020. The new school year started on Monday, but from home via television programs, as most Cuban homes do not have internet access. Having completed clinical trials on minors with its Abdala and Soberana vaccines, Cuba kicked off its inoculation campaign for children on Friday, starting with those 12 and older like many other countries. On Monday, it started distributing jabs in the 2-11 age group in the central province of Cienfuegos.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Revolt against junta

Myanmar shadow govt calls for nationwide uprising

REUTERS

Myanmar's shadow government, formed by opponents of military rule, called for a revolt against the junta yesterday, setting out a strategy that included action by armed militias and ethnic forces and urging bureaucrats to leave their posts.

Duwa Lashi La, the acting president of the National Unity Government, said in a speech that the shadow government, which is made up of members in exile or in hiding, was declaring a state of emergency.

Myanmar's military toppled the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, triggering a wave of protests by pro-democracy supporters, and hundreds of deaths as security forces tried to quell the demonstrations.

Some opponents of military rule have formed armed groups, under the banner of the People's Defence Forces, and have forged alliances with some ethnic militias that have long seen Myanmar's army as their enemy.

Declaring it was launching a "defensive war", Duwa Lashi La called for a "revolt against the rule of the military terrorists led by Min Aung Hlaing in every corner of the country."

Myanmar's military ruler Min Aung Hlaing last month took on the role of prime minister in a newly formed caretaker government and pledged to hold new elections by 2023.

The junta has itself branded the NUG and People's Defence Forces as terrorist groups.

Military-appointed administrators should "immediately leave your positions", Duwa Lashi La said in his 14-point speech, in which he urged members of the security forces to join them and for ethnic forces in border areas to attack the military.

Soon after February's coup, a civil disobedience movement was set up in a bid to undermine military rule.

Hastily formed militias have also been involved in regular skirmishes with the army though often appear to operate independently, while it is also unclear how much coordination there is among ethnic forces that have been fighting the army on and off for decades.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) has been leading diplomatic efforts to end the violence and open a dialogue between the military rulers and their opponents.

Asean's envoy to Myanmar, Erywan Yusof, said in an interview with Kyodo news agency that the military had accepted his proposal for a ceasefire until the end of the year to ensure distribution of humanitarian aid.

A pro-democracy activist and another member of the NUG said the junta could not be trusted to honour such a deal.

A military spokesman did not answer calls from Reuters to seek comment on the reported ceasefire or the speech by the NUG.



3-year-old survives 3-day Australia outback ordeal

AFP, Sydney

An Australian mother yesterday said she felt "blessed" after her three-year-old son with autism was found alive and sound, scooping muddy water from a creek in dense outback terrain after a three-day hunt that gripped the country.

Police sent a helicopter with thermal imaging equipment but failed to spot the little boy in the hours after he was first reported missing on Friday morning at his family's remote property in the eastern state of New South Wales, 150 kilometres (90 miles) northwest of Sydney.

Rescue workers and police, including some on horseback, searched through the weekend before finally spotting the boy, AJ Elfalak, during a helicopter sweep of the area on Monday.

AJ had a few scratches and bruises, the mother said. "Other than that he is perfect."

Police said dense terrain complicated the search for the boy, who was spotted within a few hundred metres (yards) of his home.

"The young fellow was sitting in a small creek and was drinking water. He was able to catch the eye of the pilot and the crewman," New South Wales Police superintendent Brad Monk told reporters after the rescue on Monday.

Video images taken from the police helicopter showed the child sitting in a pool of murky water in a rocky creek, wearing a light-coloured top and using his hands to scoop water to his mouth and face.

The hunt for the boy, who police said has autism and does not speak, grabbed the headlines across Australia.

"What a relief. I can't imagine how traumatic this experience has been for AJ and his parents," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said in a message on Twitter Monday.

'Accelerating' Iran strike plans: Israel

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Military plans dealing with Iran's nuclear programme have been "greatly accelerated", Israel's military chief warned, as questions on the ability to revive a landmark accord limiting Tehran's weapons development continue to grow.

Preparations for possible action against Iran are being intensified, Chief of General Staff Aviv Kohavi said in an interview published on Monday, adding "a significant chunk of the boost to the defence budget, as was recently agreed, was intended for this purpose".

He also said efforts were under way throughout the Middle East to check Iran's allies. The main objective is "minimising Iranian presence in the Middle East with an emphasis on Syria ... But these operations take place throughout the Middle East. They're also against Hamas, against Hezbollah", said Kohavi.

US defence chief Lloyd Austin, speaking in Qatar yesterday, said Iranian military activity in the Middle East continued to ramp up tensions.



POSSIBLE COVID-19 THIRD WAVE

India readies 'for the worst'

REUTERS, New Delhi

As Covid-19 cases and deaths exploded in India in April and May, New Delhi's premier Sir Ganga Ram Hospital and several others ran so short of oxygen that many patients in the capital suffocated.

When Reuters visited the hospital on Friday, its last coronavirus patient was readying to leave after recovery - a remarkable turnaround health experts attribute to growing levels of immunity from natural infection and vaccinations.

But hospitals have learned from bitter experience during the second Covid wave, as India braces for another possible surge in infections around its September-November festival season.

"In light of the possibility of the emergence of coronavirus mutants, with higher transmissibility and immune escape, the hospital continues to prepare for the worst," said Satendra Katoch, medical director of Ganga Ram hospital.

Nationally, India has added many more hospital beds in the past few months and imported more than 100 oxygen carriers to raise the total to about 1,250. Companies such as Linde are planning to lift the country's overall output of the gas by 50% to 15,000 tonnes a day.

The federal government, meanwhile, has approved the construction of nearly 1,600 oxygen-generation plants at hospitals, though fewer than 300 had been set up as of early last month as imports take time.

Almost all states are readying special paediatric wards as some experts warn unvaccinated children could be vulnerable to any new virus mutations.

But with a government survey estimating as many as two-thirds of Indians already have Covid-fighting antibodies through natural infection, and 57% of its adults with at least an initial vaccine dose, many health experts believe any new outbreak of infections could be much less devastating than the second wave.

However, both government and hospitals aren't leaving it to chance this time.



Sikh youth shout slogans during a religious procession on the occasion of the 417th anniversary of the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib, at the Gurudwara Ramsar in Amritsar, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2021, BHADRA 24, 1428 BS

Proposed telecom act amendment will only harm the industry

BTRC must be allowed to function independently if we are to modernise the sector

AS the world continues its journey towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution, with exponential growth seen across the global telecommunications industry, we are concerned that Bangladesh, instead of following suit, is taking a huge step backwards with a planned amendment to the Bangladesh Telecommunications Act. This will strip the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) of its independence and cede most of its powers to the telecom ministry, which will hamper the commission’s ability to take decisions and implement effective measures, and ultimately be hugely detrimental to the growth of the industry.

The BTRC’s independence had already been curtailed in 2010 by making it a requirement for the commission to seek ministry approval for issuing, renewing, transferring or revoking telecom licences, and for setting tariffs on different services. However, the 2021 draft amendment will be the final nail in the BTRC’s coffin. It will transfer almost complete control over to the ministry by requiring the commission to take ministry approval for almost everything it plans to do. It will give the ministry the power to recruit, appoint, promote, transfer and penalise all higher-tier BTRC employees (Grades 1 to 9) without involving the commission chairman; the responsibility of investigating allegations against the BTRC commissioner will be transferred from the Supreme Court judges over to the ministry as well.

The rationale that Posts and Telecommunication Minister Mustafa Jabbar has provided for taking away the BTRC’s independence is that the commission can often function in an autocratic manner, especially in the case of appointments. However, if that is the case, the ministry has every authority to call for an investigation into these occurrences and act with due diligence. But it cannot be the reason behind completely transferring the authority of the BTRC over to the bureaucracy, simply because it is not functioning effectively.

It is worrying that the government does not seem too concerned about how the proposed amendment will affect consumers, the industry and the future trends of growth. According to experts, the challenges and roadblocks that are impeding the growth of the telecom industry are not addressed in the draft law, and there are no clear-cut ideas as to how it will work with and implement the “Digital Bangladesh” road map either. Rather than updating a 20-year-old law for modern times, the amendment will only tighten the government’s grip on the telecom sector and create a conflict of interest, where the government will become both the regulator and the operator of the industry. We can simply find no rationale behind amending the law in a way that will not only fail to modernise the industry, but will ultimately harm it instead.

Should workers’ lives come so cheap?

Hashem Food’s legal ploy must be foiled

AS per a report published in *The Daily Star* on Tuesday, Hashem Foods Ltd has bought legal indemnity by handing out a meagre Tk 2 lakh to each of the families of the victims killed in the devastating fire that engulfed its factory in Rupganj, Narayanganj on July 8. While paying said amount, these families were made to give an undertaking, which absolves the factory owners of all monetary liability for the 54 people who were killed in the fire.

We have two points to emphasise here.

Firstly, we believe that Hashem Foods’ action is a mean ploy to circumvent the law and avoid the consequences—both penal and legal—which the culpability of their callous disregard for workers’ safety makes them liable to. It can be mentioned that a writ petition is pending with the High Court, filed on July 11 by four organisations seeking Tk 5 crore in compensation for each of the victims’ families.

As we have said in these very columns before, the fire was not an accident but a case of pure and simple murder, and the factory owners cannot be allowed to get away so cheaply. We are not privy to the findings of the report of the committee set up by the Ministry of Labour. But our views have been substantiated by the citizens’ committee which is unanimous about the gross negligence and callous disregard for workers’ safety displayed by the factory owners. Not only is the money offered a pittance, the manner in which the acquiescence of the victims’ families has been obtained smacks of deceit. Most of them cannot read and did not know what they were signing on. So whatever agreement has been made by Hashem Foods is *ultra vires*—it has no legal basis.

Secondly, the agreement should not absolve the owners of the penal consequences for their culpability in the 54 deaths. In this regard, we would hope that all the necessary investigations are completed quickly, and the case is taken to court as soon as possible and the guilty parties are punished. Industrial accidents have continued to occur mainly because those responsible for the accidents have either not been called to account for their acts of omissions or commissions, or have managed to escape through legal loopholes. Unless examples are made of all those in the chain, apart from the owners, who are responsible for overseeing that safety measures are complied with—and that includes several government agencies, too—accidents will continue to occur and poor workers will continue to die.

Legal empowerment: the missing catalyst for human trafficking victims



SHUPROVA TASNEEM

WHEN you first read it, it may seem like something scripted for the silver screen: the story of a Bangladeshi woman who is struck by an awful tragedy—her 17-year-old daughter lured away by traffickers and forced to work in a brothel in India. At her wit’s end, and with no support from anyone, the woman decides to take her fate into her own hands, going on a hero’s journey to save her. Taking the ultimate risk of being willingly trafficked to India by the same gang—yes, you read that right—she escapes from Delhi, travels around a thousand kilometres to Bihar, and pulls off a daring rescue of her child from the hands of the villains.

What makes for good content onscreen, unfortunately, translates into an extremely sombre reality. This is, of course, the story of a woman with immense fortitude and strength of character. But it is also the story of yet another marginalised family that has fallen through the cracks, and yet another woman who was unable to access the system meant to help or protect victims like her daughter. It is only after her story became viral on social media that the Rapid Action Battalion, early last month, arrested three members of the gang that trafficked them.

According to a report in *The Daily Star*, this gang has allegedly trafficked over 200 girls and women into India over the past 8-10 years. So why did the authorities only apprehend them recently? The speed with which the arrests were made suggest this could have been done much sooner.

The reports surrounding this woman’s daring rescue mission do not clarify if she had reached out to local law enforcement agencies in order to get her daughter back. However, one can only imagine that the decision to get yourself trafficked to another country—opening yourself

background? Did she worry that, because of social stereotyping and patriarchal norms, her teenage daughter would be ostracised instead of being recognised as a victim? Regardless of whether this woman reported her daughter’s trafficking or not, this incident raises serious questions about barriers to accessing justice in this country, especially for women from marginalised backgrounds.

The importance of social media in getting the attention of law enforcement agencies is also hugely disconcerting. Many will remember the horrific video

How did this gang operate for so long, right under the noses of both Bangladeshi and Indian authorities, using digital spaces that are regularly monitored and policed in both the countries (often to the detriment of free speech)?

True, in all of these cases, the law enforcement agencies acted with a great deal of efficiency and speed—but only after an online outcry stirred them into action.

Trafficking is, unfortunately, not a new phenomenon in Bangladesh. Data suggests that around 400 women are trafficked out

Despite the existence of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012 and Bangladesh’s accession to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in 2019, there is a clear disconnect between our policies on paper and our actions on the ground. The State Department report also wrote: “The number of convictions decreased, while law enforcement continued to deny credible reports of official complicity in trafficking, forced labour and sex trafficking of Rohingyas, and child sex trafficking, including in licensed brothels, and did not demonstrate efforts to identify victims or investigate these persistent reports.”

The report also suggested that the government made minimal efforts to assist Bangladeshi victims of trafficking abroad, and did not provide support to victims penalised for the unlawful acts they were forced to commit by their traffickers. This is a fair assessment, given that at least six victims of the TikTok trafficking ring, including a minor, are reportedly still stranded in India, and only recently, seven Bangladeshi women who were trafficked to India and jailed for their “illegal entry” finally managed to return home after being imprisoned for two years.

Saying that the issue of trafficking is complicated would be an understatement, and it is almost impossible to curb it without transnational cooperation. However, there is one common theme here on our end in Bangladesh—from having appeals disregarded by law enforcement officials to being left to languish in foreign prisons/shelters, the female victims of trafficking are still extremely vulnerable and are often ignored. And now their vulnerabilities have been exacerbated by Covid-19. According to a recent report in this daily, transnational trafficking syndicates are now specifically targeting women in city slums and selling them to brothels in India after promising them lucrative jobs.

In a country where labour trafficking syndicates continue to mushroom and flourish, and where such trafficking can even occur via official channels—the case of 14-year-old Kulsum, who was killed in Saudi Arabia in September 2020 after being sent there with false papers, comes to mind—it should come as no surprise that many vulnerable women are voluntarily going abroad in the hopes of employment, only to be trapped into sex slavery. What is surprising is how little is being done to tackle this. There is much more to be said about the repatriation and rehabilitation of trafficking victims and the support that they deserve from their country, as well as about the creation of conditions within the country, so that women do not feel the need to take such dangerous decisions.

But before everything else, they must be able to access the formal justice system and the laws that are meant to protect them. It is high time state authorities seriously invested their time and effort into ensuring this legal empowerment.

Shuprova Tasneem is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. Her Twitter handle is @shuprovatasneem

Pakistan and allow terror groups to have free ingress in Afghanistan at the risk of earning economical reprisals of much of the international community.

New Delhi would like all the assurances Stanikzai gave to Mittal to be translated on the ground before it takes the next steps to deal with the new regime in Afghanistan. But the Taliban has so far been sending contradictory signals. While some Taliban leaders have said that it views the Kashmir issue as a bilateral one between India and Pakistan, some others have said they have the right to flag the issue of Muslims in Kashmir. Foreign policy analysts like Katju and C Raja Mohan believe the US and the EU have given enough hints that they would not be averse to opening contacts with the Taliban. This is most succinctly brought out by the fact that while on August 2, the UN Security Council—under India’s presidency—had warned the outfit against going for forced capture of power to establish an Islamic Emirate, it made no mention of either of the issues in its resolution of August 16, a day after the Taliban captured Kabul. India was the president of the UNSC during August.

The US, under Barack Obama, had once propagated a distinction between “good Taliban” and “bad Taliban” in order to help solve the Afghan muddle and pull its military out of Afghanistan. At that time, India had rejected any distinction between “good terrorists” and “bad terrorists” on the ground that it is a spurious and self-serving argument. New Delhi may have to revisit some components of its known stand and come up with a reworked diplomatic template in order to come to terms with a new reality in Afghanistan.

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



We need proactive action—not reactive—to prevent human trafficking in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN

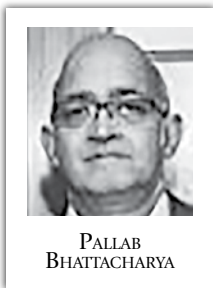
Trafficking is, unfortunately, not a new phenomenon in Bangladesh. Data suggests that around 400 women are trafficked out of Bangladesh every month.

up to all kinds of risks, including being beaten, raped or even killed, with no idea of whether you will ever come back—is not one that is taken lightly. So what happened? Did the police ignore her? Did she lack the financial capacity to convince the authorities to take her seriously? Did she think she would be discriminated against because of her humble

of the gang rape of a woman in Noakhali that acted as a catalyst for the nationwide movement for justice for rape survivors. In an interview to *The Daily Star*, the woman had said: “I went to the [local] Member and told him that I am poor and I do not have the power to go to the police myself. I asked him to investigate the matter and seek justice on my behalf.” However, her appeal fell on deaf ears, and it was only after the video of her abuse went viral that four people were arrested for the crime.

In a similar fashion, the transnational gang that used TikTok to traffic women to India and force them into sex work was only uncovered after (Indian and Bangladeshi) police began investigating a viral social media post of a 22-year-old Bangladeshi woman being tortured and sexually assaulted in India. As arrests were made on both sides of the border, one of the apprehended members of the ring admitted they had trafficked nearly 1,000 women in the last eight years. Is it possible that none of the family members of these women tried to take recourse to the law?

India and the great power game over Afghanistan



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

AS Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla was wrapping up his talks with senior US officials in Washington on the evolving situation in Afghanistan, Pakistan rushed its ISI chief General Faiz Hameed to Kabul to ensure the inclusion of people it had backed for decades in the new Taliban government. The two contrasting pictures summed up the altered great power game over Afghanistan since the Taliban took over the country.

While India is trying to explore how to realign its Afghan policy and recover the ground it has laid with the governments of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani by investing USD 3 billion in assistance over the last two decades, Pakistan is seeking to influence the composition of a new dispensation in that country it has always considered a “strategic depth,” after remaining on the margins since the previous Taliban regime was ousted in 2001.

One of the main purposes of Shringla’s US visit was how to come out with a coordinated strategy to take out their nationals stranded in Afghanistan unharmed, and to deal with the new regime in Kabul that appears to be tilting towards the China-Pakistan axis. His talks with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Undersecretary of State Wendy Sherman provided an opportunity to exchange views on the Taliban’s second accession to power in Afghanistan.

Shringla’s visit to the US came hot on the heels of the first official contact between India and the Taliban on August

31, when Indian Ambassador to Qatar Deepak Mittal had a meeting with the Taliban’s Deputy Political Head Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai in Doha at the latter’s request. The terse readout issued by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs after the meeting spoke about India raising its concerns with Stanikzai over the safety of Indians and religious minorities in Afghanistan, and terror groups operating from that country against India and other countries. Shringla was a little more elaborative

US and the European Union. Notably, around the time Shringla was in the US, Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar was in Slovenia attending a meeting of the EU which, among other things, dealt with the Afghan developments. There is a compelling case for that. The one key area of convergence between India, the US and the EU is to put pressure on the Taliban to not allow terror groups like ISIS, al Qaeda, Jaish-e-Mohammed, ISIS (Khorasan) and Pakistan-based Haqqani network to operate in Afghanistan. The

The Indian foreign secretary made it clear that New Delhi would like to continue to be in wait-and-watch mode as far as the Taliban was concerned. The question is: How long will India be in the wait-and-watch mode?

when he told the media in Washington that although India’s engagement with the Taliban was “limited,” the latter had indicated that they would be “reasonable” in handling things.

At the same time, the Indian foreign secretary made it clear that New Delhi would like to continue to be in wait-and-watch mode as far as the Taliban was concerned. The question is: How long will India be in the wait-and-watch mode? Former Indian diplomat Vivek Katju is among those Indian foreign policy experts and strategic thinkers who have disfavoured shunning the Taliban and want New Delhi to accept the reality of having to deal with the group.

Having little clout with the Taliban, it is now pretty clear that India is aligning its future Afghan policy with those of the

Taliban has gone on record saying it would look to China to bankroll the Afghan economy, but it cannot afford to leave out the US, the EU and India, for that matter, when it comes to pumping in aid. Besides, the Taliban has assets amounting to USD 10 billion in the US, which could be frozen if it does not cater to the major security interests of the American and western countries. The last thing the Taliban would want is a collapse of the crumbling Afghan economy.

This is an area where the Taliban needs Pakistan cannot help in any way. So if the Taliban does not improve its acceptability to the US and the West, it cannot expect that aid and cash would flow into Afghanistan. The Taliban has to decide if it would dance to the tunes of

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

The politics of mass literacy: Where we stand



MANZOOR AHMED

ON the occasion of International Literacy Day, proclaimed by the United Nations in 1966, there will be pronouncements with much fanfare about the vital role of literacy in national development and the

progress that has been made. Meanwhile, Unesco has been reporting since the 1990s that about 780 million adults in the world remain non-literate—any progress made since then is apparently offset by population growth.

The Bangladesh government reported a precise adult literacy rate of 74.7 percent in 2019. Educationists remain sceptical about the real numbers of adults and youth in Bangladesh—as well as in the world—who have the functional and sustainable literacy skills that make a difference in their lives. The effort and the goal of meaningful mass literacy appear to remain mired in shaky political commitments and the consequent policy and programmes that cannot succeed.

Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator and author of the *“Pedagogy of the Oppressed,”* said that literacy should enable learners to read the world, not just the word. Freire spent most of his life in exile from Brazil because of his advocacy for “conscientisation” of the literacy learner. The literacy managers of the world have remained focused on the “word”—the mechanics of decoding the alphabet—and they count literacy results accordingly. This mechanical approach does not motivate and inspire the learners—children or adults.

At Unesco’s birth after the Second World War, its very first general conference, held in 1946, discussed the idea of education as the means to fight poverty and promote well-being of people. In 1947, an ambitious literacy programme titled “Fundamental Education” was announced as a necessary precondition for the maintenance of international peace and the growth of economic prosperity. The history of how this innocuous initiative became caught in Cold War diplomacy and failed to achieve its mission has come to light in part on the basis of declassified US Department of State records [Charles Dorn and Kristen Ghodsee (2012). “The Cold War Politicization of Literacy: Communism, UNESCO, and the World Bank”].

Unesco stressed the importance of education as a mechanism for social, political,

and economic development. The success of literacy campaign in Cuba, China, and the Soviet Union dominated the discussion at the UN agency. The role of mass education in the economic and social change in these particular countries, viewed as Cold War opponents, was an alarm signal for the US-led allied powers. A US government appraisal of Unesco in 1953 concluded that the UN agency had come under communist influence, and that the goals of “Fundamental Education” were “contrary to

– A Non-Communist Manifesto,” was the pointsman for the US move.

Then Unesco Director General Rene Maheu opted in 1966 to pursue the “purely economic” aim, establishing a 10-year Experimental World Literacy Project (EWLP) in 11 countries. In 1969, one-third of the way into the project, an internal evaluation found that the EWLP had not produced the expected results. It had fallen seriously behind schedule, partly due to scarce funding. The US, for instance, placed its



The mechanical approach of merely teaching words does not motivate and inspire the learners—children or adults.

ILLUSTRATION: BIPOLOB CHAKROBORTY

American ideals and traditions.”

At the same time, the logic for fighting mass illiteracy could not be denied. Unesco faced increasing pressure from the administration of then US President Lyndon B Johnson to formulate a sanitised literacy programme called “functional” (the term used to refer to vocationally oriented literacy) rather than “mass” (the term used to refer to literacy meant to achieve political and social goals such as consciousness-raising). The latter became associated with Cuba and communism. WW Rostow, Johnson’s national security adviser who authored *“The Stages of Economic Growth*

fund with the UN Development Programme, rather than with Unesco directly. There were tensions between national and international objectives, and about traditional and functional approaches to literacy instruction. Director General Maheu still asserted that the basic approach of functional literacy was the right one. The report cited the approval of World Bank’s new president Robert McNamara (the architect of the Vietnam War as US defence secretary) as a good reason for the continuation of EWLP.

Unesco mounted a formal evaluation of EWLP in 1976 to reconsider the political,

social, and economic principles that underlie functional literacy. The evaluation team comprising members from Algeria, Brazil, Canada, India and Vietnam issued a scathing indictment of EWLP’s narrow aim that regarded people as cogs in the production machine. It was also critical of the motives of the US-led protagonists and the World Bank, who pushed this view.

McNamara, to his credit, introduced a new paradigm—“redistribution with growth” (meeting “basic needs” in the parlance of UN organisations)—instead of unalloyed economic growth during his 13-year tenure at the World Bank. This paradigm recognised the need for education as an investment in development. World Bank undertook a reassessment of its education strategy, which included an examination of the role of basic and non-formal education. A much-cited report, in preparing which this writer participated, was published by the bank. (Philip Coombs and Manzoor Ahmed, “Attacking Rural Poverty: How Nonformal Education Can Help,” 1974).

While the World Bank’s education investments increased and it included primary education for the first time, its economists, abetted by its bureaucracy, were still wary of supporting a broad vision of literacy. The bank’s self-defined agenda to promote redistribution excluded literacy, which was seen as ideologically linked with political, rather than economic goals. The idea of teaching poor people to read became entangled with fears of socialist revolution. The goal of a world campaign against illiteracy became a casualty of the Cold War.

Unesco has not been able to overcome the sad legacy of the Cold War. The way it defines and measures literacy (or lets countries do it), dictated by its executive board representing national governments, still remains a reductionist and mechanistic approach. Relying mostly on self-reporting of skill levels, rather than assessment by testing, raises questions about what these reported literacy rates really mean. The adult literacy projects are mostly “stand alone” and ad hoc activities, rather than a part of a lifelong learning strategy, despite recent rhetoric about lifelong learning. The Education for All (EFA) targets for literacy, first adopted in 2000 and reiterated in 2015, can be fairly described as reflecting a narrow view emphasising the mechanics of decoding symbols. Many countries have adopted programme strategies along this line and followed the simplistic and conventional definition-and-assessment approach.

The parallel to the global political dynamics that undermined the real aim and approach to

empower people through literacy can be seen in Bangladesh. The Awami League government, in its 2009 manifesto, promised to eliminate adult illiteracy by 2014. The approach indicated was similar to the previous Total Literacy Movement (TLM) initiated in 1996, which enrolled adults in courses set up by the politicians’ favourite NGOs and declared the enrollees to be literate after six months. Thus, many upazilas were proclaimed to be free of illiteracy. The TLM project was later dubbed as a “Total Loss of Money.”

Not until 2014, the target year to eliminate illiteracy, did the government finally take up the Basic Literacy Project to teach literacy and life skills to 450,000 people aged between 15 and 45 years in 64 districts. But the project did not begin until 2018. The life skills component was dropped “due to fund crisis.”

An evaluation report by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of the Planning Ministry said 63 percent of the participants were wrongly selected. Experts say an absence of proper planning, a lack of will and financing as well as the implementation capacity are the reasons behind slow progress of the project (“Literacy heading nowhere,” *The Daily Star*, September 8, 2019). The Covid-19 pandemic has brought to a halt whatever literacy activity was underway (“Literacy project falls thru,” *The Daily Star*, September 8, 2020). The increase in reported literacy rate is mainly the result of the spread of primary education.

A Non-formal Education Development Programme (NFEDP) was formulated by the government’s Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE) in collaboration with NGOs and academic stakeholders. It anticipated a workable multi-tier partnership model at national, district, upazila and union levels to set up a network of community learning centres and to expand the opportunity for literacy as a first step for lifelong learning. The NFEDP is premised on a concept of strong partnerships of state and non-state actors, substantial roles for NGOs, community organisations, local government; and supportive and facilitative regulatory processes and mechanisms, along with adequate funding.

A decision regarding the proposed NFEDP, however, remains stalled. Ambivalence at the policy-making level about the anticipated strong role of non-state actors appears to be a reason for the indecision. The political dynamic of policy and decision-making keeps success unattainable in respect of meaningful literacy.

Dr Manzoor Ahmed is professor emeritus at Brac University.

Community partnership can minimise learning gaps



SAYKAT BISWAS

WHILE schools are primarily responsible for facilitating schooling activities for the students, there are other factors as well that play crucial roles in ensuring the best learning experiences. Community

partnership is one of them.

The significance of community partnership in the context of primary education in Bangladesh is enormous, particularly when children are set to go back to school after an 18-month hiatus from regular academic activities because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The concept of community partnership is almost the same in different educational contexts, but its nature could vary from one context to another. Therefore, it is considered a highly situational phenomenon. Joyce Epstein, director of Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, said that community partnership is a situation where different groups of people collaborate with schools to run and manage events, support students’ academic activities, and take decisions democratically.

Considering the importance of community partnership in education, the World Declaration on Education for All, in its Article

27, puts a greater emphasis on strengthening partnership. The current pandemic situation has also heightened its importance. The major reason for prioritising community partnership is that, since schools could not be in touch with all their students proportionately, it would be tough for the teachers to properly understand what their students have been through during the pandemic. Hence through community partnership, teachers will be able to easily reach out to their students’ guardians to learn about the students’ academic and mental health conditions in detail.

Along with traditional teaching-learning practices, schools could help provide need-based and context-specific support to the pupils through community partnership, which may include trauma-informed and differentiated teaching. By building and strengthening partnership with the community, schools will also have greater opportunities to mobilise the resources of the community. In addition, it can help schools enhance their adaptivity to the post-Covid situation, which would eventually impact students’ academic achievements positively.

According to Harvard Family Research Project reports (2010), partnership can support, transform, and strengthen individual participants, which can eventually contribute to a better curriculum and the attainment of goals. Beside this, community partnership can contribute to students’ all-round improvements. Therefore, it can be said that



Community partnership is about building an efficient and sustainable relationship among the stakeholders to run the schools effectively.

FILE PHOTO: TDS

community partnership will play a crucial role in ensuring a better learning experience, particularly in the post-Covid period.

Bangladesh’s education policies have already undertaken two major initiatives to enhance the scopes of community partnerships: Parent-Teachers Association, and School Managing Committee. However, the results yielded by those initiatives are not satisfactory enough. A 2016 study, conducted by Mohammad Abul Hasnat, a Dhaka-based teacher, revealed that rural parents do not have a clear idea about whether or not their involvement is required and how they can

be involved. In government primary schools, which have limited resources, it has been observed that parents do not have much scope to get involved, although everything is there, just on pen and paper.

Bangladesh needs to pay close attention to the challenges around community partnership. In his study, Mohammad Abul Hasnat found that lack of communication from the school’s end is one of the major barriers to community involvement. Another issue is that many parents are not aware of what it takes to build and sustain the partnership with schools. Beside this, a small section of parents are

involved, but not actively engaged due to the lack of proactive communication. In addition to this, teachers of the government primary schools have to take extra administrative responsibilities besides their main duties. Therefore, many teachers and administrators lack the motivation and urge to build a strong partnership with the community.

In order to overcome the aforementioned roadblocks, the government can initiate a comprehensive programme, through which members of communities will develop a strong awareness of the importance of their partnership with the schools. Besides, research should be conducted to find the challenges as well as potential scopes for building effective and context-specific partnerships. The government should also introduce a range of policies dedicated to enhancing the partnership building process. Also, a sense of ownership and responsibility is important from everyone’s end to make it a success.

Finally, community partnership is about building an efficient and sustainable relationship among the stakeholders to run the schools effectively and to adapt to the needs of the students and community members. It can help students cope with the new normal and get the best out of formal schooling. Although Bangladesh has made some progress in building community partnerships for education, it still has room to grow.

Saykat Biswas is working as a deputy manager in the Skills Development Programme of Brac.

QUOTABLE
Quote

ALICE MILLER
(1923–2010)
Swiss psychologist

Learning is a result of listening, which in turn leads to even better listening and attentiveness to the other person. In other words, to learn from the child, we must have empathy, and empathy grows as we learn.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Out of bed
6 Chart of numbers
11 Cry of surrender
12 Mariner’s place
13 Share in a business
14 Baker’s need
15 Heir, often
16 Singing Sandra
18 CBS series with spinoffs
19 Conclude
20 Young buck
21 Batter’s goal
22 Puzzle
24 Follow the rules
25 Salacious

27 Different
29 Roman poet
32 Fan cry
33 — canto
34 Gun owner’s org.
35 Put away
36 Photo blowup: Abbr.
37 Young fox
38 Long attack
40 Past plump
42 Come in
43 Pool fill
44 Derby prize
45 Smart

DOWN
1 Winter apple
2 Chant

3 Tabloids
4 Moose’s kin
5 Pine parts
6 Trifled
7 Superb serve
8 Spots for sunning
9 Dog star
10 Being
17 Made of clay
23 Be litigious
24 “— Town”
26 Goes after
27 Pencil part
28 Barrio resident
30 Turning points
31 Diner, e.g.
33 Saloon orders
39 “My word!”
41 Ewe said it

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

YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

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

BEETLE BAILEY
BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES
BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

Star

e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net
DHAKA WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2021, BHADRA 24, 1428 BS

SPORT



PHOTO : FIROZ AHMED

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS

Bangladesh vs New Zealand
Fourth T20I
Live from 4:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & 2
US Open
Quarterfinals
Live from 9:00 pm

TEN 1

World Cup Qualifiers
Kosovo vs Spain
Live from 12:45 am
(Thursday)
TEN 2
World Cup Qualifiers
Poland vs England
Live from 12:45 am
(Thursday)

TEN 3

World Cup Qualifiers
Iceland vs Germany
Live from 12:45 am
(Thursday)
SONY SIX
World Cup Qualifiers
Italy vs Lithuania
Live from 12:45 am
(Thursday)

‘Reading the pitch and adapting is important’

SPORTS REPORTER



After suffering a 52-run thrashing against New Zealand, many questioned the approach from Bangladesh's batting department, which folded for the just 76 runs -- the Tigers' lowest T20I score at home.

The pitch at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur played better than in the first T20I of the series, when the visitors were bundled out for 60 runs. But in this instance, the hosts had themselves to blame for the poor batting display.

Bangladesh's batting coach Ashwell Prince admitted that the batsmen could have shown a more composed approach.

"I think we could have been a little more composed in our chase after a

we were possibly being too aggressive early on. I don't think the pitch changed much and I think 129 was a competitive score and we could have gotten it if we were calmer in our chase."

The 44-year-old also pressed the need rotate the strike because boundaries were difficult to come by on such pitches, adding that the Tigers had the right batting combination but need to adapt to pitches.

"There was one particular run chase against Australia where Nurul Hasan and Afif Hossain had a good partnership. For me what's important is to have a combination of batsmen in the team.

You have guys who can rotate the strike and can hit boundaries and then you have a group of guys towards the end of the innings who can chase nine-ten runs



beautiful start where Naim [Sheikh] hit two boundaries in the first over and then Liton [Das] hit a couple of boundaries to put us at 20-odd runs after two overs," Prince told media yesterday.

"At that stage, we were ahead of the run rate. But we lost too many quick wickets over the course of the next few overs and

per over if necessary and if the pitches are conducive.

"I think we have a good combination of both types of players but what's also very important of course is that every pitch is different. Being able to read the pitch on the day and adapt accordingly is important," he added.

History awaits Shakib, TIGERS

SPORTS REPORTER



4-0-24-0. Those were Shakib Al Hasan's bowling figures in the third T20I against New Zealand. And when Shakib's wicket column remains empty, more often than not, it does not augur well for Bangladesh.

That proved to be the case in the previous game, with Bangladesh missing their chance to wrap up the series and instead suffering a 52-run thumping after the Tigers were bowled out in 19.4 overs for 76 runs -- their lowest total in T20Is at home.

There is no denying that the Tigers have had a number of performers, especially in the bowling department, in recent outings such as the five-match T20I series against Australia last month and in the ongoing series against the Kiwis.

Despite that, it was often Shakib's impact that the Tigers needed more than anything to turn things around after a dismal showing. After all, Shakib is said to be the vital cog in bringing balance to the side by his teammates, coach, skipper and team management.

In going wicketless, Shakib not only affected the Tigers' chances but also delayed a crowning

moment in his career. The champion all-rounder has claimed numerous records over the years and now finds himself on the cusp of becoming the leading wicket-taker in T20I history.

With 106 wickets from 87 T20Is, the left-armer is breathing down the neck of Sri Lankan pacer Lasith Malinga, who tops the chart with 107 scalps from 84 T20Is, and needs just two wickets to dethrone one of the finest and lethal T20I bowlers the world has ever seen.

The question on everyone's mind is whether Shakib can do today when Bangladesh take on New Zealand in the fourth T20Is in Mirpur and, in the process, create

another piece of history by sealing Bangladesh's maiden T20I series win over the Kiwis.

That question might even be going through the 34-year-old's head, who mentioned during the series against Australia that he "sometimes keeps track of his records" after becoming the only cricketer to get 1000-plus runs and 100 wickets in the shortest format of the game.

Going by Shakib's penchant for making spectacular turnarounds, it is not unlikely that he will achieve another milestone and help Bangladesh return to their winning ways.

Sufil's goal only consolation in heavy defeat

SPORTS REPORTER



The challenge of taking on a fast-paced Kyrgyzstan proved too tough to handle for Bangladesh

as the men in red and green suffered a 4-1 defeat to the hosts in their second and final match of Three Nations Cup at the Dolen Omurzakov Stadium in Bishkek last night.

It was expected that the match against the Central Asian nation, who are 87 places ahead of Bangladesh in the FIFA rankings, was going to be a tougher affair than Bangladesh's previous game against Palestine. And the edge in terms of pace, skills, technique and tactics from Kyrgyzstan was evident as they proved difficult to deal with till the last minute.

Jamie Day made four changes to the playing eleven, drafting in Canada-based Rahbar Wahed Khan along with first-choice goalkeeper Anisur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman Sufil and Riyadul Hasan. But the visitors time and again failed to contend with the home side in

one department, letting them capitalise on their pace to score all three goals.

Kyrgyzstan dominated and exposed Bangladesh's five-man backline time and again and went to the break with a comfortable 2-0 lead. After resumption, they



added two more goals on either side of Bangladesh's consolation strike.

Although Day's charges failed to hold possession and exchange passes to the extent they had done against Palestine, they fought bravely and tried to attack on the break. Most importantly, they

penetrated into the box a few times on either side of the break and even pulled a goal back.

The hosts made inroads in the 10th minute when Elder Moldozhunusov tapped in an Alimardon Shukurov free-kick before Tapu made a brilliant goal-



line clearance in the 16th minute.

Bangladesh then caused havoc in the Kyrgyz box and exchanged passes inside the area but the ball was cleared safely at the cost of a corner in the 27th minute. Alimardon Shukurov then collected a cut-back from left-back Kairat Izakov and doubled the

lead with a left-footed drive from inside the box in the 39th minute.

After resumption, Kyrgyzstan made it 3-0 within the first minute as winger Gulzhigit Alykulov easily entered the box from the left and passed to captain Tursunali Rustamov, who drove home from the edge of the six-yard box.

Bangladesh reacted soon after, scoring in the 53rd minute when a long throw-in by substitute Rahmat Mia was cleared feebly to Mahbubur Rahman Sufil, who brought the ball under his spell nicely before driving to the near post.

Despite their two-goal cushion, the home side continued to press with the same pace as they looked to widen the margin and Bangladesh survived a scare in the 69th minute as a shot came off the post.

Goalkeeper Anisur was then called into action in the 87th minute and made a save, but he was powerless to stop the hosts' fourth in the 89th minute.

Bakhtiyar Duyshobekov, who plays in the Bangladesh Premier League, wrapped up the win with a header that took a deflection off a Bangladeshi player.



‘WE’RE GOING TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE’

New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel, who took four wickets in the third T20I to bring his side back into contention in the five-match series against Bangladesh, shares a light moment with batting coach Thilan Samaraweera during their training session in Mirpur yesterday. "They [Bangladesh] have had a fantastic record not just against us but also against every other team in the world [at home]. So, for them to lose, they'll come back pretty strong and they'll be hurting from that [the 52-run defeat in the third T20I]. We're certainly prepared for a backlash from them but we're going to fight fire with fire, so to speak, and we're certainly up for it as well," New Zealand stand-in coach Glenn Pocknall said ahead of today's game. And definitely, the visitors will be looking forward to Patel for keeping the series alive when they take on Bangladesh in the fourth match today.

PHOTO: STAR



SRI LANKA SEAL SERIES

Sri Lanka's cricketers celebrate their 78-run victory in the third one-day international against South Africa, which helped them to a 2-1 series win, at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Tuesday. Debutant spinner Maheesh Theekshana claimed four wickets as the hosts bowled out the tourists for 125 in 30 overs after having themselves posted 203 for nine in their allotted 50 overs. The two sides will now play three Twenty20 internationals starting Friday at the same venue.

PHOTO: AFP

SHANG-CHI

THE LEGEND OF THE TEN RINGS

QUIZ CONTEST

The Daily Star | **STAR** CINEMA

10 WINNERS EVERYDAY! 2 PREMIUM TICKETS FOR EACH WINNER

Email your answer to starquiz@outlook.com by 4.00 pm today with your name, DOB, mobile number and address. The winners of the quiz will be announced tomorrow in this newspaper and through email.

Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

QUIZ - 04

How many movies were released before Shang-Chi and the legend of the Ten Rings in the MCU?

WINNERS LIST OF QUIZ - 03

- Shova Aktar, Katarur.
- Mohammad Imran Hossain, Zahurul Haque Hall.
- Soikat Hossen, Mirpur 6.
- Anurup Asraj, Baily Road.
- Nilesh Saha, Noakhali.
- Md. Abu Taher Mesbah, Rampura.
- Tariq Salmon, Azimpur, Dhaka.
- Aleef Aladin Rahman, Keranigonj, Dhaka.
- Farhan Shadman Chowdhury, Narayanganj.
- Malyha Nawar Zannath, Rampura.



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PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK May not be ready when bridge opens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is uncertain whether the rail and road communication on the long-cherished Padma Bridge can be opened for the public on the same day, likely in June next year.

The rail lines may not be ready for use by then.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) said it would take six months for the contractor to set up the tracks on the bridge, but Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA), has yet to officially clear the BR contractor to begin setting up the tracks.

BBA officials hinted that they may take up to March 2022 to let BR begin the installation. In that case, the tracks from Mawa-Bhanga will not be ready to be used by next June, said Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan yesterday while visiting the project site.

Moreover, the BR wants both the road and the rail lines to be complete at the same time, because opening the road to traffic while the tracks are being set up on the bridge may cause problems for the installation work.

The double-decker Padma Bridge is being constructed by BBA at the cost of Tk around 30,000 crores. The road will be on the top while the railway on the bottom.

The BR is implementing the Padma Bridge Rail Link project, building a 169km rail line to connect the capital with Jashore via the Padma Bridge at a cost of TK 39,246.80 crore. Rail tracks on the bridge would be installed by the contractor.

Although the revised deadline of the railway project

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Around 1.5km stretch of rail line has been set up on the viaduct at Mawa end under the Padma Bridge Rail Link project. But the inauguration of the rail link and the opening of the bridge are unlikely to happen at the same time. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

‘He had his hands up’

Eyewitness tells court about how Maj Sinha was shot

Our Correspondent, Cox's Bazar

Despite putting his hands up, Maj (retd) Sinha Rashed Khan was shot by now-suspended police inspector Liaquat Ali, according to a witness named Hafez Mohammad Amin.

Amin said this while testifying before the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday in a case filed over the incident, said court sources.

Amin is the muezzin of a mosque situated close to the spot where Sinha was shot and killed.

"Amin told the court that he along with some students was on the mosque's rooftop at that night and they coincidentally saw the incident," said one of the sources.

"He said he saw a man coming out of a car with his hands up. Within a few moments, police inspector Liaquat shot him twice. The man fell on the ground," said the source.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Badly cleaned schools can help spread dengue

Experts warn

HELEMI ALAM

Experts have expressed fear that the dengue fever may spread further in the country this year if the authorities concerned do not take appropriate measures before reopening educational institutions.

They suggested cleaning schools, colleges and universities properly to destroy Aedes mosquito larvae and breeding sources as well as applying adulticide and larvicide before reopening the institutions.

"As educational institutions remain closed for long, carrying out extensive cleaning work in and around those is very important. Otherwise, students will be under huge risk of contracting dengue fever," said entomologist Saifur Rahman.

He said school, college, and university authorities also will have to conduct extensive fogging at their institutions with the help of city corporations.

If a school is in the area of active clusters of Aedes mosquitoes, anti-mosquito drives and cleaning activities will have to be done there very sincerely and effectively, he said.

Entomologist Kabirul Basher said they found Aedes mosquito larvae in some primary schools in the capital's Mirpur and Jurain during their survey from Jahangirnagar University around 15 days ago.

"Primary schools are the most vulnerable to Aedes mosquitoes as those

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Free Bangladesh to join Commonwealth

SEPTEMBER 8, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

RECOGNITION VERY SOON: KAUL

India had opened a meaningful dialogue with China and the USA, as with many other countries, on the Bangladesh issue. Some significant developments were expected soon after Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to the USA.

Disclosing this in an interview today TN Kaul, Indian external affairs secretary, made it quite clear that in a similar manner India would strongly represent the Bangladesh issue at the forthcoming General Assembly meeting of the UN. India would also plead with the UN Secretary General U Thant to use his good offices to solve the Bangladesh problem, he assured.

Asked when India would extend recognition to the Bangladesh government, Kaul said: "very soon."

'90% OF BANGLADESH TERRITORY IS IN OUR CONTROL'

KM Shehabuddin, head of the Bangladesh mission in New Delhi, said today that Bangladesh as a free country would like to join the Commonwealth because of certain facilities available to its members. He added that was the reason M Hossain Ali had been named the Bangladesh high commissioner to India with headquarters in Calcutta.

The Bangladesh representative told a press club luncheon meeting: "Even Dacca, considered a safer place for Islamabad is no longer that safe for West Pakistan. We have achieved a lot of success in our struggle."

He claimed, "Nine-tenths of Bangladesh territory is in our control ... The control of the Pakistan Army is only up to cantonments."

Amjadul Haque, another diplomatic staffer of the Bangladesh mission, warned West Pakistan that any harm done to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Jamuna group retracts plan to invest in Evaly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamuna Group has retracted its plan to invest in Evaly after analysing the beleaguered e-commerce platform's assets and liabilities and business strategy, said a top official of Jamuna Group yesterday.

"We initially became interested to invest after Evaly invited us but now we are withdrawing," Mohammed Alamgir Alam, Jamuna Group's director of marketing, sales and operation, told The Daily Star.

Evaly's assets and liabilities, business, sales and marketing strategies did not meet Jamuna's criteria for investment, he added.

Jamuna does not want to put its reputation and money at stake, Alam said in a Facebook post earlier in the day.

In a Facebook post on July 27, Mohammad Rassel, chief executive officer of Evaly, disclosed that Jamuna Group has decided to invest Tk 1,000 crore in the company, which has disrupted Bangladesh's e-commerce

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Floating cow farm aims to curb climate impact



AFP, Rotterdam

Among the cranes and containers of the port of Rotterdam is a surreal sight: a herd of cows peacefully feeding on board what calls itself the world's first floating farm.

In the low-lying Netherlands where land is scarce and climate change is a daily threat, the three-storey glass and steel platform aims to show the "future of breeding".

The buoyant bovines live on the top floor, while their milk is turned into cheese, yoghurt and butter on the middle level, and the cheese is matured at the bottom.

"The world is under pressure," says Minke van Wingerden, 60, who runs the farm with her husband Peter.

"We want the farm to be as durable and self-sufficient as possible." The cows are a sharp contrast

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

SUED UNDER DSA Court accepts charges against journo Kajol

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A tribunal in Dhaka yesterday accepted the charges pressed against photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Judge Mohammad Ash Sams Joglul Hossain also fixed October 20 to hear the framing of charges against Kajol.

Kajol was granted bail earlier in the day.

Awami League MP Saifuzzaman Shikhor of Magura-1 filed the case with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station on March 9, 2020, accusing Kajol and 31 others of publishing "false news and circulating it in social media".

After nearly a year-long probe, Sub-inspector

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 8

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:30 6:20 7:45
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 4:45 6:25 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Ignoring their safety and the law, two men ride motorcycle beside the Tejgaon-Moghobazar rail line in the capital while a column of people walk on the lines. The photo was taken near FDC level crossing yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

TREATMENT ABROAD Khaleda's plea sent to PMO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Prime Minister's Office is to decide the fate of an application seeking the extension of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's jail sentence suspension and permission for her to have treatment abroad.

Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star, "An application has recently been submitted to the home ministry for extending the suspension of Khaleda Zia's jail sentence and permission for her going abroad for treatment. The home ministry forwarded the application to the law ministry for my opinion. I

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Our Heartfelt and warm Congratulations to

Mr. Habibur Rahman Habib

Deputy Managing Director, PROBASHI PALLI GROUP

On his being elected as a
Member of Parliament

from Sylhet-3 constituency.
He has won the election with a landslide victory, held on 4th September 2021. We are overwhelmed with joy and we wish him the best from the bottom of our heart.



All officers & employees



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