

ILLUSIVE HERD IMMUNITY
WHO Europe chief Hans Kluge says Covid vaccines may help curb serious illness, not pandemic
SEE PAGE 5

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"If we see an alarming increase in infection rate of [Covid 19], the education ministry will decide on closing schools. We will give our recommendation,"
HEALTH MINISTER ZAHID MALEQUE.

"We must maintain a dialogue with the Taliban, where we affirm our principles directly -- a dialogue with a feeling of solidarity with the Afghan people."
UN CHIEF ANTONIO GUTERRES PLEADS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

"Whether China and the US can properly handle their relations... is critical for the future and destiny of the world."
CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING TELLS US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Two crore doses every month

Govt plans to revamp vaccine campaign as supply now getting smooth



- 20 crore doses expected by this year
- 3.90 crore received so far
- 2.01 crore people got their first dose; 1.25 crore got both
- 6% of inoculation target met
- Vaccination campaign began Feb 7

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government plans to administer two crore shots of Covid-19 vaccine each month to ramp up the ongoing vaccination drive as it hopes to get around 20 crore doses by the end of this year.

The plan might appear ambitious given the scale of vaccination over the last eight months -- with some three crore doses administered since the campaign started on February 7 -- but health officials believe it is very much achievable.

"Initially we are targeting to administer two crore doses of Sinopharm vaccines each month if we get those as per the commitment," Health Minister Zahid Maleque told The Daily Star yesterday.

The vaccination campaign got some momentum after the government purchased 1.5 crore doses of Sinopharm vaccine from China in June.

Besides, the country has also got around one crore doses of different brands from Covax, a global initiative aimed at equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines, in the last three months.

"The supply chain is a bit smooth now. We are planning to administer two crore doses per month from October," said Prof Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the DGHS.

Health officials say Bangladesh is supposed to get another purchased six crore doses of Sinopharm vaccine between

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Jhumon Das's wife Sweety Das does not know what crime her husband committed and why he was not getting bail. She sits with her daughter in front of a photo of her incarcerated husband during a rally at Shahbagh in the capital yesterday. The rally demanded Jhumon's immediate release as he has been behind bars for over five months in a Digital Security Act case. Story on page 3

PHOTO: STAR

Daily deaths lowest in 3 months

Covid positivity rate declines to 8.65pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country recorded 38 deaths from Covid-19 in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, the lowest daily death toll in the last three months.

On June 9, 36 people died from the highly transmissible virus, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The Covid-19 situation is currently improving in the country as both infection and death rates are falling.

In the 24 hours, 2,325 more people tested positive for coronavirus, said the regular health bulletin of DGHS.

With the latest data on deaths and infections,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Not more than 3 classes a day

In-person classes resume tomorrow

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Primary students will attend three classes a day from tomorrow when in-person classes resume, Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) decided yesterday.

The DPE also asked teachers to make sure that only two students sit on each large bench to maintain social distancing inside the classroom.

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) has asked all school authorities to reopen hostels ensuring enforcement of Covid-19 health safety protocols and keeping in mind the dengue fever situation.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said his ministry would recommend closing schools and colleges if the Covid infection rate surged again alarmingly.

He made the comment at a time when the school and college authorities are making final preparations for partial reopening of their institutions.

Following a significant fall in the Covid-19 daily positivity rate, the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



PK HALDER'S SCAM

2 fake firms, Tk 118 crore shady loans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a rented flat in the capital's Banani, Subrata Das, a friend of Proshanta Kumar Halder alias PK Halder, set up offices of two shell companies -- Wakama Limited and A&B Trading.

With the help of his friend, Subrata then took Tk 31 crore loan from FAS Finance in the name of A&B Trading and Tk 87 crore from International Leasing and Financial Services (ILFS) Ltd for Wakama Limited.

The Anti-Corruption Commission already filed a case against Subrata, who is now in the US, his wife Shuvra Rani Ghosh, former managing director of NRB Global Bank PK Halder and three others.

In connection with the case, a four-member team, led by ACC's Deputy Director Gulshan Anwar Prodhan, interrogated Shuvra, director of both the shell companies, for about five days last week.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Master of swindling

Rab arrests man who defrauded thousands of people thru' MLM scheme using religious clout, embezzled at least Tk 110cr taken from clients

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifteen years ago, he started working as an imam in a Pirojpur mosque. Around the same time, he joined a multi-level marketing (MLM) company with a salary of only Tk 900.

Two years later, Mufti Ragib Ahsan established his own MLM company named "Ahsan Real Estate", enticing people into making interest-free investments following Islamic Shariah with promises of lofty returns. Ahsan even used programmes like waz-mahfil and well-known religious preachers to attract attention of the devotees in Pirojpur and other parts of the country and called on them to invest in a Tk 1 lakh deposit scheme. In the first year, he managed to get around 10,000 clients, accumulating a sum of Tk 110 crore.

Ahsan, now the chairman of Ahsan Group Pirojpur, established 17 businesses using the MLM company's money, most of



which have now vanished. The company could not pay profits to its investors since 2018, let alone return their deposited money. As cases after cases were filed against Ahsan, he went into hiding.

The Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested Ahsan, 41, and his brother Abul Bashar Khan, 37, a director of the company, from Topkhana Road in the capital on charge of swindling crores of taka through the shady businesses.

Rab initially said in a SMS sent to the media that the amount of the embezzled money was around Tk 17,000 crore, but its Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Khandaker Al Moin could not exactly say what the amount was during a press conference later in the afternoon.

"The Anti-Corruption Commission and the Criminal Investigation Department [CID] of police will figure out how much money they have actually embezzled,"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Tigers end NZ series with defeat

SPORTS REPORTER

New Zealand clinched the fifth and final T20I by 27 runs at Mirpur yesterday in a surface that provided much more to batters than the previous matches. Bangladesh, coming into the match having already sealed the series, fought back with Afif Hossain's unbeaten 49 in chase of 162 but eventually the Kiwi bowlers prevailed with intelligent pace variations to seize victory.

Despite coach Russell Domingo previously insisting that there were no issues at the top-order, the Tigers' problems at the top became apparent in chase of 161 for five posted by New Zealand.

The start from Liton Das and Mohammad Naim was stable as they reached 18 for no loss after three overs but things soon unravelled when Liton sliced one in the fifth over off Ajaz Patel to Scott Kuggeleijn at point and departed after a 11-ball 10.

Soumya Sarkar (4 off 9) did not trouble the scorers much, falling in much the same manner as Liton

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Afif Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad stitched together a 53-run partnership in quick time in chase of 163 but eventually Bangladesh fell short of the target by 27 runs in the fifth and final T20I against New Zealand at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Afghanistan at risk of total collapse: UN

Int'l community urged to keep flowing money into the country; Taliban accused of harassment

AGENCIES

The United Nations has warned that Afghanistan is at risk of "total breakdown" if the international community does not find a way to keep money flowing into Afghanistan despite concerns over the Taliban government.

The warning comes as a second charter flight was due to leave Afghanistan yesterday carrying foreigners and Afghans to Qatar in a sign the country's main airport was close to resuming commercial operations. It also comes as the United Nations warned of "credible allegations" of reprisal killings by the Taliban.

Unconfirmed reports in the capital, meanwhile, suggested the Taliban may hold a ceremony to swear in the new government today-- the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks that triggered the end of their first stint in power.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said in a report released on Thursday that about 97 percent of Afghanistan's population may sink below the poverty line unless the country's political and economic crises are addressed.

Nearly \$10bn of Afghanistan's central bank assets are currently frozen overseas and considered key leverage over the new administration.

But the UN special envoy on Afghanistan Deborah Lyons told the Security Council on Thursday that a way needed to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

'WAR ON TERROR'

Big Tech made billions: report

AFP, Washington

Tech giants made billions through contracts with the US military and other government agencies during the so-called "war on terror", according to a report released ahead of the 20th anniversary of 9/11.

The "Big Tech Sells War" report, published Thursday by three US campaign groups, documented an explosion of government contracts with Amazon, Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Twitter since 2004.

The tech companies' contracts were "primarily with agencies central to the War on Terror," said the report.

"From 2004 to today, Big Tech corporations have seen a huge climb in federal demand for their services, particularly from the Pentagon and Department of Homeland Security," it said.

The demand from US military and intelligence agencies for cloud computing and GPS software has surged since 2001 as the defense industry has grown increasingly digitized.

The Department of Defense alone has spent \$43.8 billion on Big Tech contracts since 2004, said the report, a collaboration between the Action Center on Race and the Economy and social justice groups LittleSis and MPower Change.

Four of the five top-spending agencies on Big Tech contracts were "central to foreign policy or were established as a direct result of the Global War on Terror", it said.

"Amazon and Microsoft in particular pulled ahead in recent years, with Amazon signing nearly five times and Microsoft signing eight times as many federal contracts and subcontracts in 2019 compared to 2015," the report said.

AFP has reached out to the five Big Tech companies for comment, but has yet to receive a response.

The report pulled its data from Tech Inquiry, an online tool that allows users to explore US government contracts.

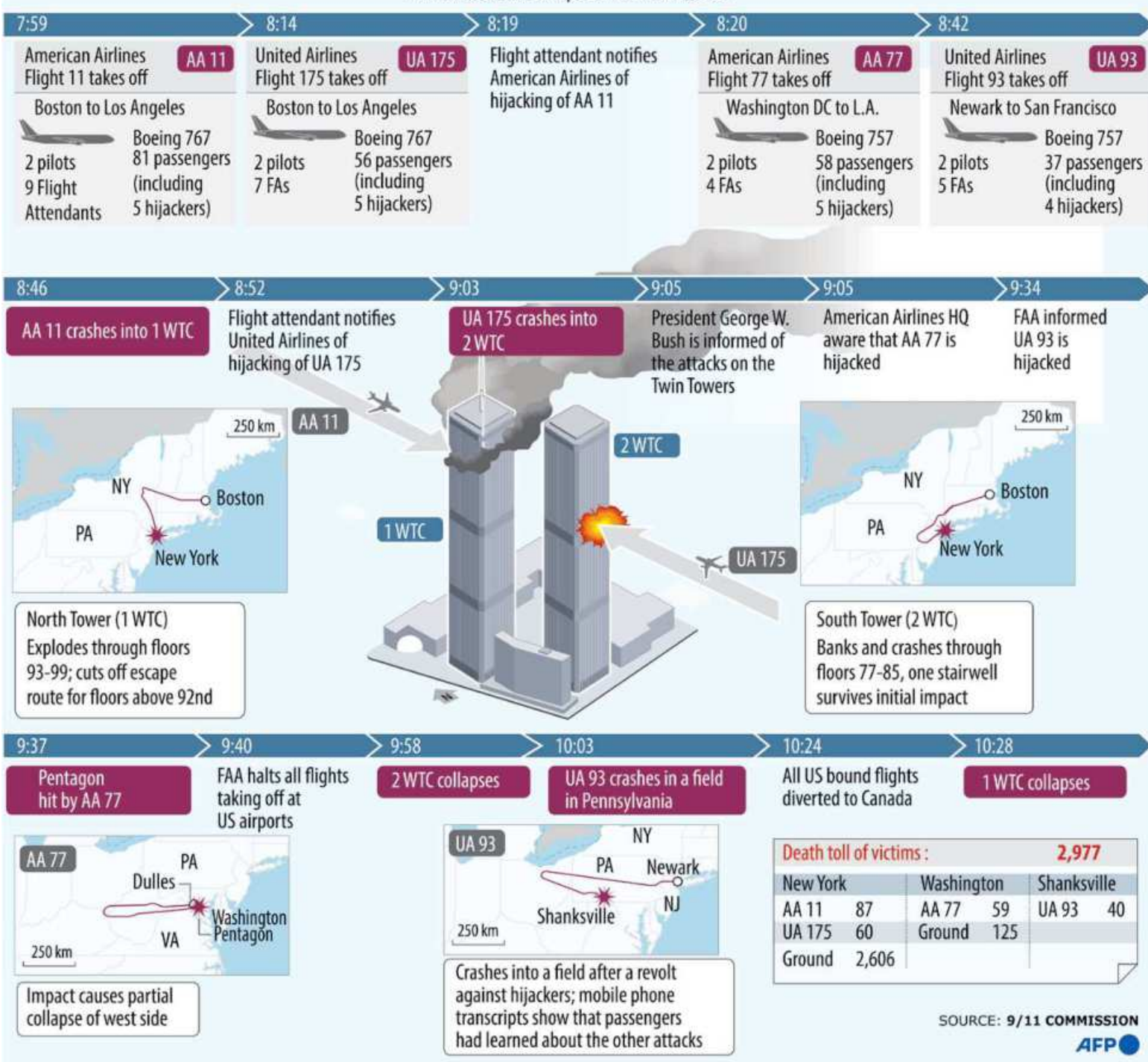
The tool only includes contracts for which information is publicly available, so the figures given in the report are "very likely an underrepresentation", the report said.

Its authors meanwhile criticized a "revolving door" phenomenon between Big Tech and US security agencies with former senior government officials going on to take major roles at technology companies.

The report cited former State Department official Jared Cohen, now at Google, as an example, as well as Amazon's Steve Pandelides -- formerly of the FBI -- and Microsoft's Joseph D. Rozek, who helped found the Department for Homeland Security, as examples.

2001 SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS IN THE US: TIMELINE

149 minutes to the collapse of both twin towers



MI5 chief warns of new terror threats

AFP, London

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan has "emboldened" extremists, the head of Britain's domestic intelligence MI5 said yesterday, warning of the likelihood of new atrocities.

Speaking ahead of the 20th anniversary of 9/11, Ken McCallum said MI5 had disrupted six "late-stage" plots even during coronavirus lockdowns over the past 18 months, and 31 in the past four years.

"That number includes mainly Islamist attack plots but also a growing number of attack plots from right-wing terrorists," he told BBC radio.

"Of course there are likely to be terrorist attacks on UK soil on my watch," McCallum said that after al-Qaeda's plane hijackings of September 11, 2001, the threat had evolved with the so-called Islamic State group inspiring followers into extremism online.

He added there was "no doubt that events in Afghanistan will have heartened and emboldened some of those extremists".

The MI5 director-general also reflected on how, 20 years ago, he watched on an office television with colleagues as the second plane hit the World Trade Center in New York.

"Someone else said 'I guess we all know what we're going to be doing for the next 10 years of our lives', and so it proved."

MORE NEWS

Nord Stream 2 pipeline 'fully completed'

Energy giant Gazprom yesterday announced that construction of the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, set to double natural gas supplies from Russia to Germany by bypassing Ukraine, had been completed.

'Quad' leaders to meet in Washington this month

Leaders from the US, Australia, Japan and India are this month expected to hold the first in-person talks of their "Quad" grouping, seen as a counter to China's growing influence.



Lebanon gets cabinet

Lebanon yesterday ended a 13-month wait for a new government with the unveiling of a lineup that faces the daunting task of rescuing the country from economic meltdown.

Bolsonaro backs off attacks on Brazil's institutions

President Jair Bolsonaro on Thursday backed off his heated attacks on Brazil's federal institutions, insisting that his recent jabs at the Supreme Court just came "in the heat of the moment."

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

US-China ties to decide 'destiny of the world'

Says Xi as he holds talks with Biden to avoid conflict

AFP, Washington

US President Joe Biden and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping talked for the first time in seven months Thursday, with both leaders urging a path away from conflict but holding ground on fierce competition between the superpowers.

In the 90-minute call, Biden warned against misunderstandings that could lead to confrontation between Washington and Beijing, the White House said, while Xi called for a new direction in a relationship beset by "serious difficulties".

US-China relations went into a nosedive under Biden's predecessor Donald Trump, who launched a trade war between the world's number one and two economies and harangued the Chinese government for its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Biden's administration, while urging multilateralism and an end to Trump's "America first" ideology, has kept trade tariffs in place and remains tough on other contentious areas of the relationship with Beijing, such as cybersecurity and human rights.

During the call, Biden's message was that the United States wants to ensure "we don't have any situation in the future where we veer into unintended conflict," a senior US administration official told reporters.

In Beijing, state broadcaster CCTV reported that the phone call was "candid, in-depth" with Xi noting the "serious difficulties" caused by recent US policy towards China, which has seen the countries joust over trade, tech, human rights and the origins of the coronavirus.

"Whether China and the US can properly handle their relations... is critical for the future and destiny of the world. And this is a question of the century that both countries must answer," state broadcaster CCTV said citing Xi.

The White House signaled the diplomatic impasse is unsustainable and potentially dangerous, requiring intervention by the leaders in

Thursday's call.

"We welcome stiff competition but we don't want that competition to veer into conflict," the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told reporters.

The goal of the call was to set out "guardrails" so that the relationship can be "managed responsibly."

Lower level attempts to engage with China have not gone well, especially at an angry March exchange between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and top Chinese officials when they met in Anchorage, Alaska.

Faced with the impasse, "President Biden understood the importance of engaging President Xi directly," the official said.

Thursday's call focused on "broad and strategic" issues, with no concrete decisions expected on outstanding issues or setting up a first Biden-Xi summit, the official said.

The list of disagreements between Washington and Beijing is long and growing.

Beyond trade, with the White House official complaining of "China's unfair and coercive trade practices," there is deepening tension over China's claims to Taiwan and numerous islands in the South China Sea.

Washington is also angered by what it says is China's refusal to cooperate with an international probe into the origins of the Covid-19 virus, which first emerged in China before sweeping worldwide.

There are areas where the two powers also find themselves having to cooperate or at least coordinate, including on North Korea's nuclear weapons program and the climate crisis.

The White House said that Biden and Xi discussed the Covid pandemic and climate, among other global topics. But Thursday's call was "not about finding some sort of breakthrough agreements," the official said. It was "about keeping the channels of communication open" between the two powers.

"Our goal is, is to really reach a steady state of affairs between the United States and China," the official said.

Illusive herd immunity

WHO says Covid-19 vaccines may help curb serious illness, not the pandemic

AFP, Copenhagen

The head of the WHO Europe was pessimistic yesterday about vaccines' ability to put an end to the Covid pandemic, as new variants dash hopes of reaching herd immunity.

Faced with the possibility that the virus may be around for many years, health officials must now "anticipate how to gradually adapt our vaccination strategy," in particular on the question of additional doses, Hans Kluge told reporters.

In May, the WHO director had said "the pandemic will be over once we reach 70 percent minimum coverage in vaccination."

Asked by AFP if that figure was still a target or whether more people would need to be vaccinated, Kluge acknowledged that the situation had changed due to new, more transmissible variants, such as Delta.

"I think it brings us to the point that the aim of a vaccination is first and foremost to prevent more serious disease, and that's mortality," he said.

Epidemiologists now suggest that it is unrealistic that herd immunity can be reached solely with the use of vaccines, though they remain crucial to contain the pandemic.

CLASHES BETWEEN TROOPS, ANTI-JUNTA FORCES

At least 10 killed in restive Myanmar

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar troops killed several members of a local "defence force" in a day of clashes, the junta said yesterday, with local residents and media reporting at least 10 dead.

The country has been in turmoil since a February coup and a military crackdown on dissent that has killed more than 1,000 people, according to a local monitoring group.

Junta troops were attacked with "small arms and homemade guns" as they entered Myin Thar village in the western Magway region on Thursday, army spokesman Zaw Min Tun told state-backed People Media.

The soldiers, who were searching for members of a local "Peoples' Defence Force" had killed a number of fighters, he said, without giving an exact figure.

Soldiers set fire to several houses after the clash, residents said. Local media reported between 10 and 15 locals had been killed.

On Tuesday around a dozen military-owned communications towers were destroyed, the same day a shadow government working to reverse the coup called for a "people's defensive war against the junta." The "National Unity Government" is made up of dissident lawmakers in hiding or exile, many of them from ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's party.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 11

1922 - A British mandate was proclaimed in Palestine. It came into effect at the end of the month, despite Arab protests.

2001 - Four hijacked planes crashed into New York's twin World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon in Washington and a field in Pennsylvania killing 2,973 people. The coordinated attack was planned and executed by al-Qaeda.

2012 - US Consulate attacked in Benghazi, Libya with American staff member dying in the clashes.

SOURCE: REUTERS

Advertisement for Sunshine Park Apartments featuring Asset Developments logo and contact information.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh e-Tender Notice for Polypropylene bags and Loamy Soil.

I promise to bounce back: Khairul Basar

Khairul Basar made his way into the showbiz industry with tele-fictions and TVCs. He soon rose to fame with his natural and effortless acting skills. With two back to back OTT hits, "Mohanagar" and "Networker Baire", the actor soon became the talk of the town, and was appreciated by one and all.

ASHLEY SHOPIORSHI SAMADDAR

He recently survived an accident and is currently resting to recover. In a candid chat with The Daily Star, the actor talks about his journey, recent releases, and more.

Born in Kishoreganj, Khairul Basar had a keen interest in music since childhood. Walking closer towards his dream of becoming a singer, the actor left home and moved to the city to study music at University of Dhaka.

Being exposed to different art forms around him, the actor soon started engaging himself in various campus based co-curricular activities, mostly leaning towards theatre and stage performances.

Khairul Basar started his acting career after being inspired by a mime performance by Mir Lokman, they went on to form an organisation together called Dhaka University Mime Action. "In 2011, I came across a performance by Lokman that left me speechless," shares Khairul Basar. "While miming, my stage presence started effecting the audience's emotions and that powered my passion towards acting."

With time, the actor started coming into the notice of short-film makers which lead to his first breakthrough Projonmo Talkies production "Punorabruti" (2017), directed by Saleh Sobhan Auneem. "This production marks the turning point of my career as I was able to work with prominent directors like Syed Ahmed

Shawki," shares Basar.

Following along the success trail of "Punorabruti", the actor was cast again in "Sincerely Yours, Dhaka" (2018), one of the first two films to enter Netflix originating from Bangladesh. He went on to bag roles in many other critically acclaimed productions, including "Unoponchash Batash" (2020).

He was also featured in the popular fiction-series "Close-up Kache Ashar Golpo" namely "Tomar Pashe Hatte Diyo" and "Ekdin Brishtyte Bikele", both directed by Anam Biswas. He has also appeared in many other tele-fictions, including "Jotno", "Chorer Master", and "Tumi Arekti Din Theko". "Rather than taking up numerous projects, absorbing the character, his struggles and emotions,

are more important for me to perfect the role," says Khairul Basar.

This year, Khairul Basar appeared as Abir in the HoiChoi original "Mohanagar", directed by Ashfaque Nipun, where he shared the screen with prominent actors Mosharraf Karim, Zakia Bari Mamo, and Shamol Mawla.

"As actors, we also have a social responsibility and I always take myself to be a story teller who aims at raising awareness through his work," mentions the actor.

Leaping towards his net appearance, Khairul Basar made his film debut with the Mizanur Rahman Aryan's debut web film "Networker Baire". Upon release, the film started trending on social media, flooding the actor's wall with positive criticisms for his role Munna.

Sadly, the actor along with his "Networker Baire" co-stars survived a deadly accident while returning from the success party of this production. "Accidents don't come with notices. I believe, it was the love and blessings of my fans and their blessings that brought us back from such a place," adds Khairul Basar.

Khairul Basar is currently recovering from his injury and hopes to come back soon with new characters within the next few weeks. "I am looking forward to a couple of OTT alongside films and television releases. I promise to bounce back," he concludes.

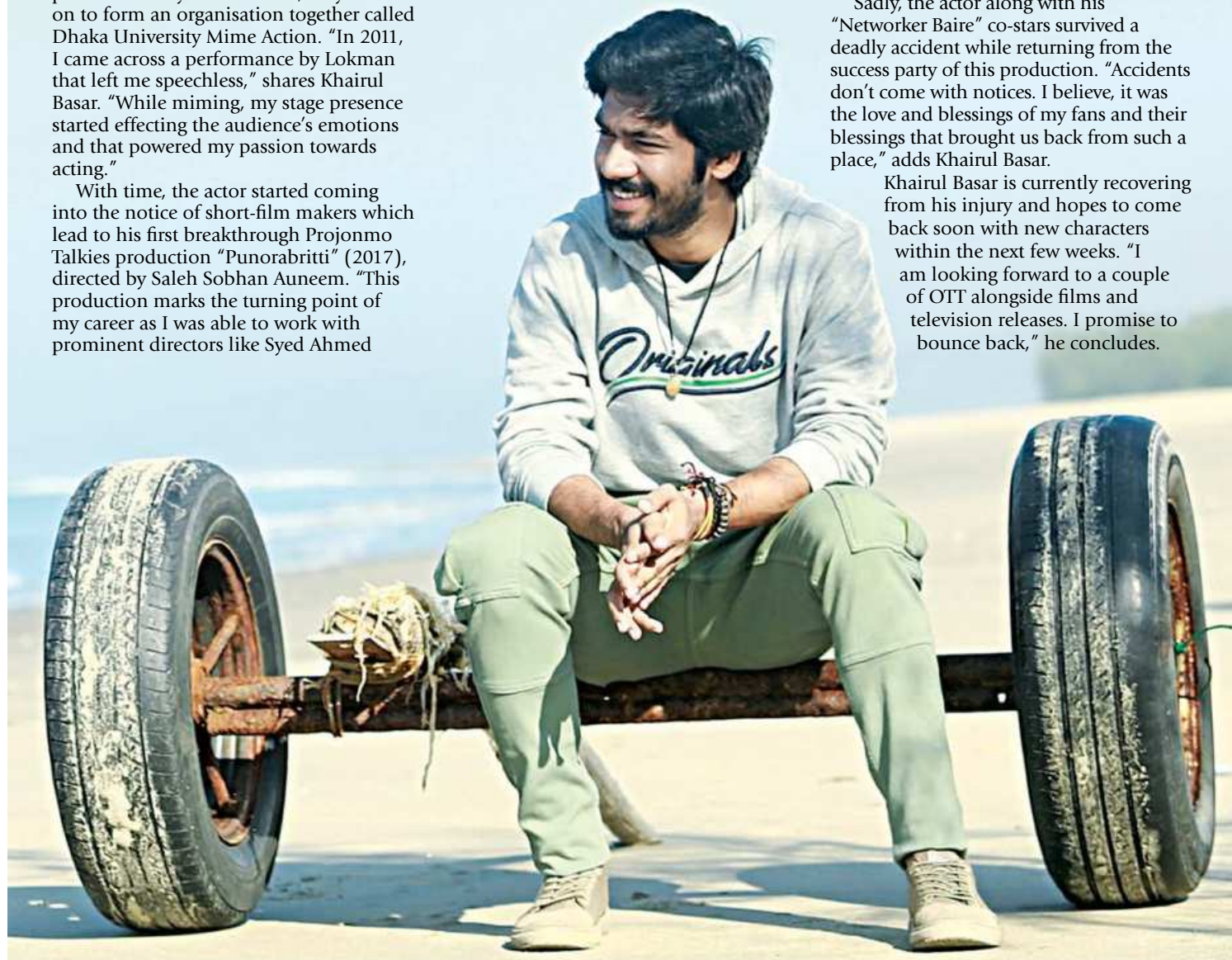


PHOTO: COURTESY

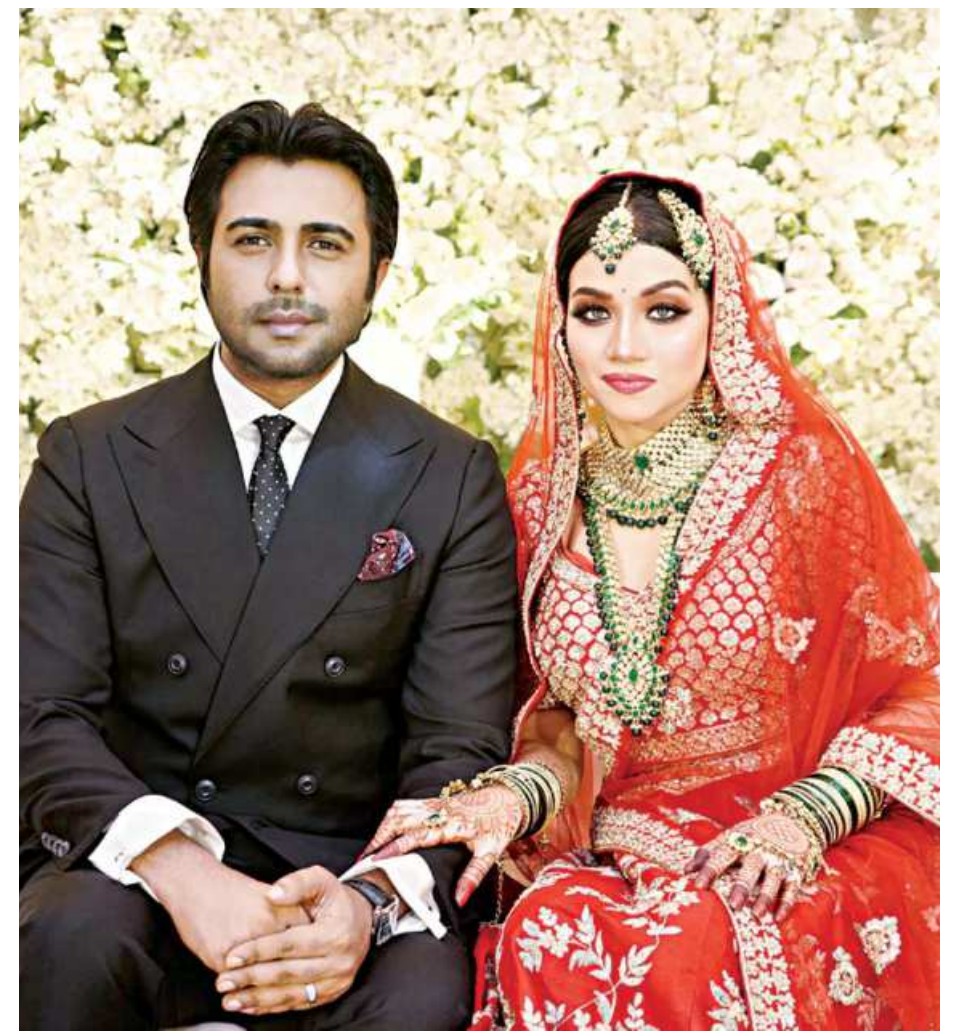


PHOTO: COLLECTED

My wife loves my acting: Apurba

Popular television actor Apurba has carved a place for himself in the hearts of millions with his powerful performances over the years. The "Boro Chele" famed actor recently tied the knot with Shyamma Dewan, a Bangladeshi-American. The news of his wedding created quite a buzz across social media.

SHAH ALAM SHAZI

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, Apurba opened up about his marriage, and his upcoming plans.

How does it feel to start a new chapter in your life?

By the grace of Allah, I have started this new chapter. Please pray for us that we get to spend many more years together. As a newly married couple, we are now busy attending different family events. Currently, Shyamma has a job in America. So, she will have to go back abroad soon.

When will you be returning to shoots?

It will take some time before I can return to work. If all goes well, I will be back to shoots by the end of this month.

Do you have any plans for your honeymoon?

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I don't think we will be going anywhere for the honeymoon. If the situation gets better, we might make some plans.

Does your wife like your acting?

My wife has seen my work, and she loves my acting. She has praised many of my performances, and encourages me to pursue good roles.

Do you have any request or message for your fans?

I have only one request to them. Please continue to shower me with your love and pray for my new journey.

Translated by Rakshanda Rahman Misha



A panel displaying all the victims of the tragic incident.

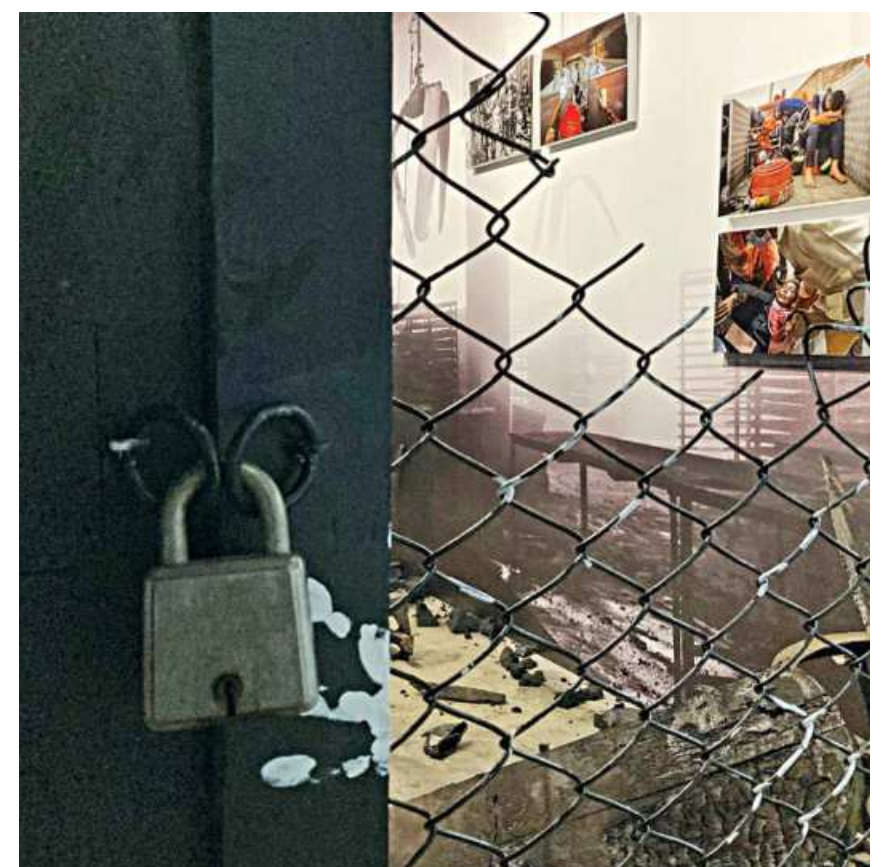


Drik's homage to victims of Hashem Foods Factory fire

Long after the water from fire engines had extinguished the raging flames that surged through Narayanganj's Hashem Foods Factory in July this year, the flames still burned in the charred homes of the 54 who died in the fire.

Their dreams were shattered; their belief in a just society, torn to shreds. "Scorched Lives at Hashem Foods", a mixed media exhibition paying homage to the victims of the factory fire, is currently underway in Drik Path Bhaban at Panthapath.

At the exhibition, a corridor with a photograph of a giant, burnt lock captures the attention of the spectators right away. The photograph, taken by Shahidul Alam, portrays the narrative that workers were dying inside the locked floor of Hashem Foods Factory. The exhibition, organised by media house Drik, will conclude on September 20.



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Jeff Bezos named baldest rich man alive; locals believe they have better candidates

MAHBUB ALAM MUNNA

Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos was named the baldest rich man alive, but that has raised an outcry around the world – especially in Chapasthan.

Amid immense populist challenge, Jeff Bezos is on the verge of losing his long-held position to a Chapasthan policeman, another bald-headed man who once had hair in the millions. He is now bald, and has also accumulated massive wealth in different countries.

Whenever we talk about Bezos, we tend to talk about his wealth. That sort of affluent-ist stereotype has to be left behind, said a pedestrian in Dhoka, adding that it now must be ensured that he doesn't also become baldest rich guy.

We should know that Bezos can be compared with others based on things other than his wealth, such as the amount of hair on his head or his shiny, Amaz-on-ing chrome dome.

The judges of the award, Balffluent 2021, are still deciding which aspect to focus on – the thinning or lack of hair or the fattening of wallets – when deciding the winner.

Now Bezos, despite his billions, is in doubt and absolute fear about losing his position to a person who is totally unknown. That's the beauty of hair and the dollop of embezzlement – humble follicles and offshore riches can make the richest and baldest person insecure.

Meanwhile, the Chapasthan policeman seems angry. He did not like the idea of

being compared based on hair or lack thereof, even if it is with Bezos.

While Jeff Bezos's position is under constant threat from the policeman, another challenger appeared to exacerbate Bezos's follicle-challenged headache.

Bruhsell, the owner of an infamous e-commerce platform in Chapasthan, appeared from nowhere.

Bruhsell is all about potential. His head has a bit of hair, but everyone thinks that it would soon all be lost. The promise – just like the promise of millions of deliveries on his e-commerce platform – was there.

"Also, as soon as I lose the rest of my hair, it will make me more aerodynamic and I can climb up the ladder faster," Bruhsell said.

"Man, the way Chapasthan people are pushing me, I may fail to get myself into the top ten, let alone the top three. Although the new guy Bruhsell looks less threatening as he still has some hair, I am sure that he will get rid of it overnight to outperform us," Jeff Bezos expressed his fear fearlessly.

People are enjoying the competition -- the less the hair on the head, the higher the chance to be champion, they think. As two Chapasthan heads are causing a headache for the world's most known billionaire, the two heads are becoming more known by the day.

A local Chapasthan biker, while pushing his bike on the footpath, said joyfully, "Kick Bezos out of his position. We Chapasthan people deserve top position always, especially when it comes to corruption."



Notorious e-commerce platform brings in 'foreign investments'



Representational image of customers looking for products they ordered in 1779.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

AAQIB HASIB

Last Friday, renowned business guru and founder of E-Gorge, Bruhsell Bromad, announced to thousands of his followers and fanboys through his Facebook live stream that E-Gorge had finally procured some foreign investment.

This came months after regulatory bodies had been pursuing E-Gorge on the basis of what they termed "fraudulent activities".

Bruhsell sat in his signature gaming chair and wiped away the tears on his face after being dogged by regulatory bodies and journalists for months on end. The webcam light bounced off the disco ball on his forehead, branded with E-Gorge stickers in typical Bruhsell fashion.

"Let's get thing one out of the way," he said, pointing to the disco ball, "this is on sale at E-Gorge.com with a 99% discount for all of my fans."

"Now, let's talk about E-Gorge. No one believed in me. People bullied me online, calling me a fraud. Nobody believed me

when I said I just needed more time to ensure E-Gorge could deliver its backlog of two years' worth of orders. Well, now we have procured one the largest foreign investments of all time! A Chinese investment company will be injecting us with \$550 billion!! The Genius Book of World Records has already contacted me and I will be receiving my plaque, delivered by E-Gorge parcel service shortly," said Bruhsell.

The livestream was flooded with likes and heart reacts as long-time fans of E-Gorge and Bruhsell celebrated in the comment sections declaring every news agency and government entity to ever ridicule E-Gorge as "dalals".

But some people were still looking for answers. A few viewers asked for details of the investing company and when they would be receiving products they had ordered in 2019.

"The company's name is ---uh--- it's Pawnzi Ltd. They're a company out of China and they could not wait to invest in us after seeing our business model," Bruhsell said, putting his hand in front of his mouth, choking on what people could only assume

to be tears of joy.

Viewers, at this point, started commenting about the white board with a triangle drawn in marker. Bruhsell moved it out of the frame quickly before reassuring viewers that it was only a new business model that they had been working on. Many fans of Bruhsell have since speculated that it might be the Illuminati sign, as only that can explain how a man from such a humble background could reach such heights.

"Now, for everyone who believed in me and are still waiting for me to deliver their products, I will explain the procedure to get your products in the second quarter of the next year. Firstly, you'll need to draw a pentagram on your floor using some red paint. Then you need to switch off your lights and burn and delete both physical and digital copies of all of your receipts by candlelight. Once you are done, send the video to my Telergraam ID, and you will receive your products soon," he said, and followed up by whispering, "terms and conditions apply."

Tali-Ban ready to deploy peacekeepers in Southeast Asian countries plagued by US bullying

INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION CORRESPONDENT

In support of allies China, a spokesperson of Tali-ban -- a religious organisation which shoots on site anyone who is seen clapping in joy --- on Thursday has declared that the group is ready to deploy peacekeepers in Southeast Asian countries bullied by the United States.

The comments were made at another one of Tali-Ban's eye-opening visionary press briefings where they announced a string of new financial commitments made by Beijing.

"We are always ready to support all Southeast Asian countries plagued by US rule. We will not impose ourselves on them. We will carry out peacekeeping missions by imposing it on ourselves first, and then presenting it as an example to them -- that is the Tali-Ban vision of governance," said the unnamed but fully armed spokesperson.

While answering questions, the spokesperson also said their vision for the future has already been outlined

in religion. "The rules are very clear, and we are in consultation right now to figure out what policies we can draft."

When pressed about China's treatment of the Uighurs -- who follow the same religion of which Tali-Ban says they are the sole guardians -- in Xinjiang, the spokesperson ended the press briefing, exited the building while firing stray shots at protesting women.

In a separate yet related development (go figure) the country's former President Ashlo Bhagi apologised to his countrymen for fleeing the country with millions in cash when the Tali-Ban took over.

"I did it for peace of my people," he said in a televised address. He however did not know that the microphone was still recording after the interview ended and he said: "By my people I mean my family, and by peace I mean the comfort only millions can buy.... Am I right, am I right or am I right?"



Representational Image.

PHOTO: REUTERS

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 ATTACKS

A day of remembrance, a day of reckoning

BLACK, WHITE AND GREY



ALI RIAZ

THIS is not how the day marking the 20th anniversary of the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States was expected to be commemorated...

Like any other year, commemorative events remembering those who lost their lives in the horrific attacks will be held today...

George W Bush, referring to the attackers, said on September 12, 2001: 'The United States will use all resources to conquer this enemy.'

will be needed in the future to deal with the consequences of the war. At one point, most countries in the world extended their sympathy and support to the US.

It is important to recall that the nature and scope of this war was neither clearly stated, nor did one know how someone was being identified as an 'enemy.'

Terrorism is a strategy, which can be adopted by anyone at any point; yet, a war was declared against it by the US and its allies...

Analysing the War on Terror exclusively through the experience of the Afghanistan war will be incomplete, if not erroneous.

The US and the UK were not the only partners of the so-called Global War on Terror (GWOT).

countries, particularly the authoritarians, have grabbed more power, increased surveillance over common citizens...

On September 20, 2001, George Bush declared the war and drew a line in the sand: 'Every nation in every region now has a decision to make—either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.'



The future role of the US in global politics and the geo-strategic global game will be partly shaped by what it learns from the events, strategies, and failures of the last two decades.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

society. Islamophobia, which had existed for long within the US society, reached a new height. The loyalty and patriotism of Muslims were questioned.

The notion of such division has proliferated beyond the boundaries of the US. Other

rulers, many with dubious track records, have used and continue to use this idea. No matter how much they and their supporters oppose US foreign policy...

forms in different countries to justify the violation of democracy and human rights. Whether terrorists exist in society has made little difference...

The measures taken to combat terrorism have become a blessing to domestic and

transnational terrorist organisations, as these measures have helped them recruit new foot soldiers. The rise of Islamic State, in Iraq in 2014, is a case in point.

Some argue that the GWOT has decimated al-Qaeda as a centralised organisation capable of mounting large-scale attacks on US interests.

'Twenty years after 9/11, a new reality has emerged in the wake of the humiliating defeat of the US in Afghanistan.'

Ali Riaz is a distinguished professor of political science at Illinois State University...

Winners and losers of the West's 'forever wars'

THE OVERTON WINDOW



ERESH OMAR JAMAL

TODAY marks 20 years of the 9/11 attacks on the US masterminded by Osama bin Laden...

soldiers called them) sitting in some cave in Afghanistan, as per the West's dubious official narrative of what transpired on this day.

It significantly changed the West's foreign policy (particularly the US) and marked the start of the War on Terror—an odd turn really...

The first country the West invaded in its War on Terror was Afghanistan. Two long decades later, it has finally ended its occupation of that country...

According to the latest report by Brown University's 'Costs of War' Project, the US-led war on terror has killed nearly one million people globally...

Meanwhile, the economic costs tallied by the 'Costs of War' report include USD 2.3 trillion spent by the US government on military operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan...

that, the report included 3.7 million Pakistanis, 1.7 million Filipinos, 4.2 million Somalis, 4.4 million Yemenis, 1.2 million Libyans and 7.1 million Syrians who were displaced.

So, what did the US, the people living in these regions, and the world get in return?

Well, the US spent trillions of dollars of its own taxpayers' income, became a surveillance state—as exposed by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden—and surrendered the constitutional rights of its own citizens.



The US-led War on Terror has killed nearly one million people globally and cost more than USD 8 trillion.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Logs—and then lied about it. According to a 2011 poll, six in 10 Americans believed that the US had weakened its economy by overspending in its responses to the 9/11 attacks.

The people in these regions, needless to say, suffered tremendously. Thousands of people died and millions were injured.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban has now once again returned to power and are better armed, thanks to US-made weapons.

Islamic extremism has only increased and spread out all across

the world, mainly as a reactionary expression of anger against the violent conduct of the West. The Islamic State, which was largely created by the US invasion of Iraq...

The destabilisation of countries—particularly in the Middle East—has led to mass migrations of people, and the European migrant crisis that we witnessed a few years ago was a direct result of the West's interventionist policy.

So, from that perspective, has the War on Terror and Western interventionism been a failure? Well, it depends on your definition of success and failure.

Following the recent US withdrawal

W Bush signed the authorisation preceding the US invasion would be worth USD 97,295 this week,' The Intercept reported on August 21.

War was a failure.'

'On the contrary, from the perspective of some of the most powerful people in the US, it may have been an extraordinary success.'

For everyone else, however, the War on Terror has been a mostly painful and costly disaster...

Eresh Omar Jamal is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT). Request for Expression of Interest (EOI). Includes details of the project, funding, and applicant information.




DOLPHINS in danger

Experts say entanglement in fishing nets primary cause of death

ABIDA RAHMAN CHOWDHURY

French naval officer, explorer and conservationist Jacques-Yves Cousteau was not wrong when he said, "The happiness of the bee and the dolphin is to exist. For man it is to know that and to wonder at it."

As such it feels especially unfortunate that in this piece, we are having to wonder just the opposite.

Why are dolphins washing ashore from the Bay of Bengal, is there one or many more reasons behind their deaths and can anything be done?

News of dead and sometimes emaciated dolphins washing up along the coast have been making the rounds on both social media and news platforms of late.

"If you look closely at the newspaper photographs, you will notice that many of these mammals that wash ashore are emaciated. Often times there's a piece of net around the dolphin's snout," said Rubaiyat Mansur, adviser to the Wildlife Conservation Society Bangladesh programme.

WCS began operations in Bangladesh in 2004 focusing on marine conservation.

Over the last 15 years, 274 dolphin deaths have been reported

At least 65% of these deaths were from gillnet entanglements



A dolphin spotted in the Swatch of No Ground in the Bay of Bengal in 2010. This is an image of a cetacean in its natural habitat, but not many of its ilk can enjoy the open seas, as the sight of the marine mammals washing ashore after being caught in fishing nets have become all too common.

PHOTO: REZA KHAN

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DHAKA-LONDON TALKS

Importance of free polls discussed

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and the United Kingdom have agreed on the importance of free and fair elections and vibrant civil society to promote accountable governance and institutions ensuring freedom of expression and religion.

The UK raised concerns reflected in the FCDO Annual Human Rights Report, including the "impact" of the Digital Security Act, political space, and extrajudicial killings, said the British High Commission in Dhaka yesterday.

The two countries held their fourth annual Strategic Dialogue on Thursday at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in London and discussed the issues.

The dialogue was led by FCDO Permanent Under-Secretary Sir Philip Barton and Bangladesh Foreign Secretary (Senior Secretary) Masud Bin Momen.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Divided, bruised US marks 9/11 anniv

Experts say the 'war on terror' proved a boon for surveillance, bane for human rights



AGENCIES

Americans mark the 20th anniversary of 9/11 today with troops finally gone from Afghanistan, but national discord -- and for President Joe Biden, political peril -- are overshadowing any sense of closure.

The Sept 11 attacks also ushered in an era of increased surveillance, human rights violations and mass displacements globally, with the social and economic fallout likely

to continue for decades, experts said.

A whole generation has grown up since the morning of September 11, 2001.

In the interim, al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden has been hunted down and killed. A towering new sky scraper has risen over Manhattan, replacing the Twin Towers. And less than two weeks ago, the last US soldiers flew from Kabul airport, ending the so-called "forever war."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

VACCINE FROM INDIA Supply will follow rise in production

Hopes information minister after 2-day India visit

UNB, Dhaka

Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday expressed hope that India would be able to supply Covid-19 vaccines to Bangladesh as per the agreement once the neighbouring country's production rises.

He said Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar informed him that the vaccine production has been hampered in India due to scarcity of foreign raw materials, but they would be able to recover the problem in the 4th quarter of the current year (October-December).

"Hopefully, they would be able to supply the vaccines to Bangladesh in line with the agreement, if

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Only self-rule will satisfy Bangladesh: Galbraith

SEPTEMBER 11, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MUSHTAQE TO LEAD DELEGATION TO UN Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Khandaker Mushtaqe Ahmed would present the case of Bangladesh before the UN General Assembly. He would be assisted by a strong team of experts including Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Mahub Alam and diplomat Abul Fateh. The decision to send a strong delegation to the UN General Assembly had been taken by the Bangladesh government in the light of the recent discussions at political level with different

parties in Bangladesh. In fact, the Consultative Committee, formed with five-party representatives had found it necessary to rouse the conscience of the world to the realities in Bangladesh. GALBRAITH URGES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

Professor John Kenneth Galbraith, former US Ambassador to India, said today at the Calcutta Press Club that because of the massive influx of evacuees from Bangladesh to India, the Bangladesh issue had ceased to be an internal affair of Pakistan. He also refused to distinguish between political aspects of the issue and the evacuee question. "Two cannot be viewed separately," he opined.

Earlier today Professor Galbraith discussed various aspects of Bangladesh issues with the Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khandaker

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Pre-Viking gold treasure found in Denmark



AFP, Copenhagen

An amateur archeologist has found 22 gold objects with sixth century symbols that could yield new details about pre-Viking peoples in Denmark, the museum that will house the treasure said.

Some of the objects have runic motifs and inscriptions which may refer to the rulers of the time, but also recall Norse mythology, Mads Ravn, director of research at the Vejle museums in western Denmark, told AFP.

"It is the symbols on the items that makes them unique, more than the quantity found," according to Ravn, who said the treasure weighed about one kilogram.

One piece even refers to the Roman emperor Constantine from the early 4th century, said Ravn.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Man beaten to death as theft suspect

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A suspected thief was beaten to death in the capital's Sabujbagh area early yesterday.

The 28-year-old man could only pronounce his name - Ridoy - to the crowd that started beating him, said police.

Anwar Hossain, sub-inspector of Sabujbagh Police Station, said the incident took place inside the boundary wall of a building under construction for a club.

Some people, including the club manager and caretaker, caught him around 11:15pm yesterday, he said.

They tied up his hands and legs and beat him up, leaving him critically

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Part of the old iron Bailey Bridge in the capital's Aminbazar has collapsed into the river. Locals have alleged that the collapse occurred after a sand-laden trawler hit one of its pillars. There are other such collapsed structures around the bridge, and those could lead to further accidents if not cleared soon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Star HEALTHLINE

What is post-Covid VERTIGO?

STAR HEALTH DESK

If you have recovered from Covid-19, there may be several medical issues that follow suit. Some can be tame and some might make your head spin, quite literally.

There is still not enough research on post-Covid complications since the virus is still very much rampant. We know about persistent coughing, altered sense of smell, and fatigue as symptoms of long Covid, but scientists are increasingly pushing to add vertigo to the list.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Hyginex Instant hand sanitizer

BEACON Pharmaceuticals Limited

PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 11

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:35	12:45	4:30	6:14	7:45
JAMAAT	5:10	1:15	4:45	6:17
				8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION