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"We have a conversation with Indian high commissioner and the [officials of] Beximco Pharma. They informed us the vaccine may arrive in October."  
HEALTH MINISTER ZAHID MALEQUE



"... The Afghan people's gains must be protected including women's rights and their role in the development of Afghanistan."  
QATAR'S FM SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ABDULRAHMAN AL-THANI



"... Reject bravely all those lies, and I 100 percent confirm to you there is no issue and we have no problem."  
TALIBAN CO-FOUNDER ABDUL GHANI BARADAR ON HIS DEATH RUMOURS

## PRIMARY-HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION

# Major reforms on the horizon



- No public exam before grade X
- No exam till grade III
- Science, business, humanities streams from class XI
- SSC exam on five subjects
- Public exams after XI and XII
- HSC result combining results of XI and XII
- New curriculum implementation to begin January 2023

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government will do an overhaul of the education system which, among other changes, will scrap any public exams before class 10 and also ensure no exams of any kind for students up to class 3.

The new curriculum will reduce emphasis on memorisation and prioritise experiment- and activity-based learning.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday approved the outline of the new curriculum, which is set to be implemented in phases from January 2023, and will be

fully implemented by 2025.

The government is also going to introduce streams -- science, humanities and business studies -- from class 11. In the existing curriculum, students had to choose the streams in class 9.

After getting the PM's approval, Education Minister Dipu Moni said the government wants to change the current education system.

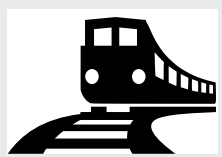
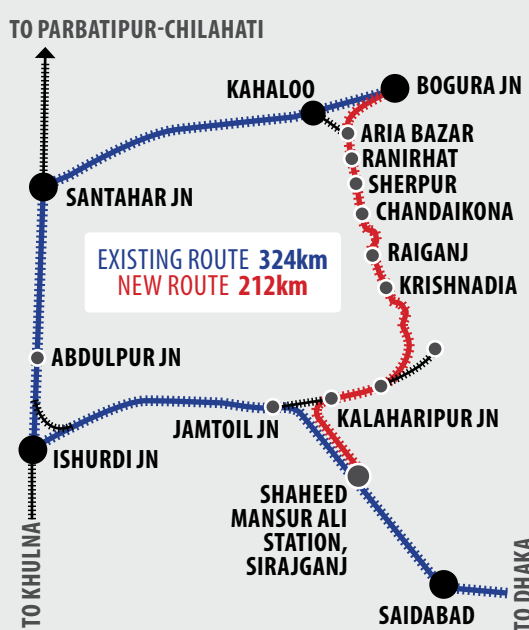
"We do not want that students go through the pressure of education. We want to give students education amid fanfare,"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Dyed pieces of cloth left in the sun to dry at a dyeing factory in Narayanganj's Hajiganj area. The local dyeing industry continues to recover from losses as garment work orders pick up with improvement in the Covid-19 situation. With much less work orders, such colourful scenes at the factories were rare even a few months ago. The photo was taken recently.  
PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## DHAKA-BOGURA RAIL LINK



ESTIMATED COST  
Tk 5,580 crore  
WORK TO START BY  
JUNE 2023

# Detour no more

Trip from Dhaka to Bogura to take 3hrs less; new line to cut distance by 112km; Indian consultant to do detailed design, review feasibility study

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A long-awaited railway project for setting up a direct rail line between Bogura and Sirajganj, ultimately shortening Dhaka-Bogura travel distance by 112 kilometres and time by three hours, has finally seen some progress.

Bangladesh Railway has been able to select consultants for the Tk 5,579.70 crore project. It is set to sign a contract later this month with an Indian joint venture firm for updating the project's feasibility study, detailed design, and preparing tender documents, sources aware of the development confirmed to The Daily Star.

The development comes around three years after the government approved the project for constructing the 86.51km dual gauge rail line from Bogura to Shaheed M Mansur Ali Station in Sirajganj.

The project authorities now hope to begin the project's physical work within the first half of 2023, meaning the current deadline, which is June 2023, will have to be extended by at least two years, said sources.

The existing railway distance from Dhaka to Bogura is 324km and once the

proposed rail line is built, the distance will be cut short to 212km, said project officials.

It will also cut the distance and travel time between Dhaka and other northern districts, including Gaibandha, Rangpur, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, they said.

This is one of the six projects being implemented under the Indian Line of Credit. India would provide Tk 3,146.59 crore or 56.39 percent of the total project cost in soft loans.

Under the project, seven new stations would be built at Kalia Haripur, Krishnadia, Raiganj, Chandaikona, Sherpur, Aria Bazar and Ranihat. Besides, the new line will connect three existing stations -- Shaheed M Mansur Ali, Kahaloo and Bogura.

BR Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder said the contract with the Indian joint venture is likely to be signed on September 27. However, it will depend on the arrival of officials from the Indian side, he said.

The rail line will significantly reduce the travel time between Dhaka and northern districts like Lalmonirhat and Rangpur, he also said.

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## Personal conversations must stay private: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday said all concerned should be sincere about protecting the private communications of citizens.

The incidents of eavesdropping on personal conversations, which were later passed on to the media, is not fair as they cause damage to the persons concerned, said the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman during the final hearing on a writ petition that sought its directive for preventing such episodes.

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) needs to find out who are responsible for the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## NATIONAL EDUCATION FRAMEWORK Make it modern for new world

Says PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday underscored the need for modernising the national education framework further to cope with the technology-driven competitive world.

She said this while witnessing a PowerPoint presentation on the draft outline of the "National Education Framework" at the Gono Bhaban.

The Ministry of Education prepared the draft outline. Hasina said technology is advancing and Bangladesh must move ahead keeping pace with the advancement of the world and technology; and the country's education framework needs to be befitting of the time.

Mentioning that the education framework is being modernised following the policy of the government, she said Bangladesh must not lag behind as the world is advancing in terms of knowledge, science and technology.

She expressed satisfaction over yesterday's presentation saying measures were highlighted there to make academic

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## Covid shots may arrive from India in October

Maleque says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The supply of Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine from India may resume next month, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

"We have had conversations with the Indian high commissioner and the [officials of] Beximco Pharma. They informed us that the vaccine may arrive in October. We are also in contact with our foreign minister. We hope [vaccines] will be supplied in October," he told journalists following an ambulance handover ceremony in the capital.

At the event, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Vikram Kumar Doraiswami handed over 41 ambulances as a donation from the Indian government. He also assured of donating 68 more ambulances soon.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Students getting out of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College on the capital's Bailey Road through a crowd of guardians waiting to receive them after the end of school hours yesterday. Such gathering of guardians at the school gate makes it impossible for the school authorities to maintain physical distancing which was one of the main conditions for the recent reopening of the educational institutions after a closure of 18 months.  
PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## LPG costlier in Bangladesh than in India

Says CAB at public hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in Bangladesh is higher than the price in India, so the operators' demand for a higher price does not hold water, said the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB) yesterday.

Earlier in April, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) had for the first time fixed the retail price of LPG, progressively becoming the fuel of choice for cooking and running vehicles.

Then, the BERC stipulated that a 12 kg cylinder, the most form for marketing the fuel, would sell for Tk 975 -- an amount that did not go down well with the industry stakeholders.

At that time, it also said that the prices would be adjusted based on the contract prices with Saudi Arabia for propane and butane.

Since April, the BERC has revised upwards the price three times and yet the industry stakeholders, which include LPG cylinder manufacturers, bottling plant owners, importers and traders, remained dissatisfied.

They demanded a public hearing to press home their demand for an extra Tk 224 for a 12 kg LPG cylinder as the BERC's pricing formula did not incorporate all aspects of the cost components for the sellers.

In India, the average price of a 12 kg cylinder is about Tk 875, said Shamsul Alam, energy adviser of CAB, at the hearing yesterday, which was conducted by BERC Chairman Md. Abdul Jalil.

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**BANGLADESH UPDATE**



**1,953**  
New cases in 24hrs



**15,32,366**  
Total cases



**26,972**  
Deaths



**14,82,933**  
Recoveries

**GLOBAL UPDATE**



**46,48,489**  
Deaths



**22,57,41,125**  
Total cases

## CONSTABLE RECRUITMENT

# Standard must be maintained strictly

Senior police officials say at crime conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior police officials have discussed strict measures for the hiring of right and competent candidates during the upcoming constable recruitment test to be held in seven phases.

They discussed the matter in the presence of Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed yesterday, which was the second day of the three-day crime conference.

The conference began at 11:00am on Sunday at the Hall of Integrity of the Police Headquarters. It is happening after nearly a year and a half due to the pandemic.

The conference started at 2:30pm and continued till 6:00pm yesterday. It will end today with the concluding remarks of the IGP.

The police officials suggested that the Police Headquarters forms a committee to set the questions for the recruitment test and then send them to districts.

The answer scripts should be sent to the PHQ for evaluation. Additionally, candidates' medical and psychological state, education background and height should be checked strictly as per the requirements to make the recruitment

fair.

Additional Inspector General (media) Kamruzzaman Rassel said the respective officials of different sections yesterday gave presentations on the activities of operations wings, functions of Bangladesh Police Welfare Trust, development wing, pending departmental cases against police members, vehicle maintenance, budget management, appointment of constables under new rules, posting and creation of police posts, media management etc.

As part of development work, various buildings are being constructed on different police compounds. Police officials also suggested that an instruction should be given to SPs concerned to monitor the work.

The AIG gave a presentation on appropriate police behaviour with the media and the journalists.

On the first day of the conference, the overall crime situation of January-June this year, including issues related to robbery, murder, speedy trial cases, women and child abuse cases, kidnapping, burglary, riot, drugs, weapons and car recovery, was raised for discussion.



With her child, a mother along with others waits in a queue to buy daily essentials at subsidised prices from a truck of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) in Kamalapur area of the capital yesterday. The woman had been waiting since 10:00am and the photo was taken around 1:00pm.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Major reforms on the horizon

FROM PAGE 1

replace the memorisation-based system with experiment-activity-based education," she said during a press conference at the Secretariat.

She said students would be evaluated based on continuous assessment until class 3 at schools.

Currently, these students need to sit for half-yearly and final exams every year.

Dipu Moni said for students of classes 4 to 8, 60 percent of evaluation in Bangla, English, mathematics, social sciences and science will be done through continuous assessment, and the rest through "overall evaluation."

For other subjects, students of these classes will be evaluated based on continuous assessment.

Contacted, National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) Member (Curriculum) Prof Md Moshuazzaman explained that "overall evaluation" means exams and continuous assessment means evaluation of regular school work.

Half the evaluation of Bangla, English, mathematics, social science and science of students of classes 9 and 10 will be done through continuous assessment, and the rest will be done through exams.

Dipu Moni said students will need to take public exams after class 10, based on the curriculum of that grade only.

"The SSC exams will be held on Bangla, English, mathematics, social science and science subjects," said an NCTB official.

NCTB officials said that would mean that there will be no more Primary Education Completion Exam after class 5 and no Junior School Certificate exams for class 8.

The PECE was introduced in 2009

and the JSC exams a year later. Many educationists frequently termed the exams unnecessary and slammed those for stressing out the students.

"There was nothing about PECE and JSC exams in the existing curriculum. But the government decided to hold the exams," an NCTB member said.

The curriculum was last revised in 2012.

"We did not propose any public exams before class 10 [in the outline of the new curriculum]," Moshuazzaman told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon following the press conference at the Secretariat.

Students of grades 9 and 10 will study 10 subjects -- Bangla, English, mathematics, science, social science, ICT, religion, health studies, life and livelihood education, and art and culture studies.

HSC EXAMS IN TWO PHASES

Dipu Moni said students would need to sit for public exams after classes XI and XII based on the curriculum of the respective classes. The HSC exams will take place in two phases, and the final result will be determined by combining results of both phases.

NCTB officials said 30 percent evaluation of compulsory subjects -- Bangla, English, mathematics and ICT -- of classes 11 and 12 will be done through continuous assessment, and the remaining 70 percent will be done through public exams.

For optional subjects, students will be evaluated based on a combination of continuous assessment and exams. But details are yet to be finalised, NCTB officials said.

Under the existing system, students of classes 9 and 10 take the SSC exam on 10 papers after studying a syllabus for two years. They sit for the HSC exams on 12 papers after studying a two-year syllabus in classes 11 and 12.

NO STREAM BEFORE CLASS 11

Dipu Moni yesterday also said the government is going to introduce streams -- science, humanities and business studies -- from class 11.

She said since the period of Ayub Khan, secondary schools have been requiring students to choose among science, humanities and business studies when they are in class 9.

Officials said most countries around the world do not have science, humanities and business disciplines at the school level. All school-level students should have similar knowledge, they said.

Students of classes 11 and 12 will study the compulsory Bangla, English and ICT. And they will be able to choose three other subjects from any of three disciplines of science, humanities and business. They will pick another subject from vocational courses.

NEW BOOKS TO ALL BY 2025

The education minister said the government will begin implementation of the new curriculum from 2023 in phases. She said they will start piloting of the new curriculum for class 1 students at 100 primary schools and at 100 secondary schools from January 2022.

Students of classes 1, 2, 6 and 7 will get new books based on the new curriculum, in January 2023. Students of classes 3, 4, 8 and 9 will get books in 2024.

Students of grade 5 and 10 will get new books in January 2025.

The NCTB started the process of revising the current curriculum in 2018. NCTB was supposed to begin phase-wise implementation of the new curriculum from January 2021.

But the introduction of new curriculum was delayed by two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

## LPG costlier in Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 1

In September, the BERC fixed the price of the 12 kg cylinder, the most common form for selling the fuel, at Tk 1,033 based on the month's contract price with Saudi Arabia.

But the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB) has demanded Tk 1,372 and Beximco Tk 1,381.

The facts and proofs do not support the LOAB's pricing demand, so the latest price of LPG should be at Tk 997 instead of Tk 1,033, Alam said.

Besides, the application to reform the pricing does not have legitimacy as the LPG operators did not apply within the month of the BERC's fixing the price as specified, according to Alam.

"The prices were not implemented anywhere," he said, adding that the retailers were selling LPG at least Tk 100-250 more than the price set by the BERC.

But the LPG operators said the price fixed was untenable for them.

In Bangladesh, the LPG's market size is \$2.5 billion and 27 players are in operation, said Shamsul Haque Ahmed, chief executive officer of Omera Petroleum, who presented the demands on behalf of the LOAB.

"But due to the non-methodical approach of LPG pricing by the BERC, the industry has become unhealthy."

He went on to call for a floor and ceiling for the prices of LPG rather than a set price.

"Not only should the Saudi contract

price be in the consideration when setting the price, but also components like transportation costs."

The transportation costs would be different for every company as they do not collect the same quantity from the international market, according to Ahmed.

In 2016 and 2021, the price of LPG is near about the same, whereas the Saudi contract price has doubled, he said.

Ahmed demanded fixing the LPG price based on the Saudi CP of the same month and not on the previous month along with consideration of other issues.

The BERC pricing is affecting the small LPG providers as they are at loss with high bank loans, said Zakaria Jalal, executive director of Basundhara LPG, the market leader.

The profit is marginal under the price fixed by the BERC, as a result of foreign investors are losing interest, said Mohammed Mujibur Rahman, chief of marketing and sales at Totalgaz Bangladesh.

Ruhin Hossain Prince, central committee member of the Communist Party of Bangladesh; MM Akash, a professor of Dhaka University; Barrister Tureen Afroz; Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganasanghati Andolan; and Mohammad Sirajul Mawla, president of the Autogas Station Owners Association, spoke at the event.

The implementation of the BERC's pricing is more important than the announcement, they said.

## Make it modern for new world

FROM PAGE 1

activities more attractive to students alongside teaching them on life and livelihood.

Hasina regretted that educational institutions had been closed for more than one and a half years due to the Covid-19 pandemic although educational activities continued online during this period.

She said the children were deprived of enjoying their academic life and environment in educational institutions, including colleges and schools.

About reopening of the educational institutions, the premier hoped that the situation would become normal in the days ahead.

She said the government introduced pre-primary education to attract the children to schools through games and amusement.

Terming Bangladesh a country of rivers, canals and swamps, she said the

government is constructing schools and colleges across the country keeping this reality in mind.

Besides, necessary steps have been taken to build roads and paths towards the schools in villages to ensure easy communications of the students, she added.

Hasina said children in the past were not interested in science education and her government took steps to establish 12 science and technology universities in the country to attract them into science education.

Besides, the government also established specialised universities in the country on some specific subjects, she said.

About primary education, the PM said the government nationalised primary schools and gave the highest importance to technical education following the footsteps of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

## Personal conversations

FROM PAGE 1

and recording of private phone incidents of eavesdropping, said the bench, which fixed September 19 for delivering its order on the petition.

During the hearing, petitioners' lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told the court that the BTRC is responsible for ensuring private communication of citizens under the relevant provisions of the constitution and the law.

But the BTRC has failed to carry out its duties properly, he said.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin opposed the writ petition as the petitioners, who are lawyers by profession, were not the aggrieved party in any of the incidents of eavesdropping and recording of private phone conversations.

If any person becomes aggrieved, he or she can file a case, he said.

In response, the petitioners' lawyer Shishir Manir said his clients as lawyers have the right to move a writ petition to protect the people's legal and constitutional rights.

On August 10, 10 Supreme Court lawyers submitted the writ petition as public interest litigation to the HC, seeking its directive on the government as well as to inform what necessary steps have been taken to prevent such incidents of eavesdropping

and recording of private phone conversations and to ensure the right to privacy of telecommunication.

In recent years, they have come across numerous incidents of eavesdropping and recording of private telephone conversations from various reports published in national dailies, including The Daily Star.

As per its constitutional statute, the BTRC is delegated with the responsibility of ensuring the privacy of telecommunication and upholding the sanctity of Article 43 of the constitution.

However, the newspaper reports demonstrate the continued failure of the BTRC in carrying out its constitutional duties.

Such regular incidents of eavesdropping and recording of private telephone conversations show that the BTRC is failing to take any necessary actions or preventive measures or carry out investigations to prevent such breach of privacy of telecommunication, the petition said.

The lawyers who submitted the petition are Rezwana Ferdose, Uttam Kumar Banik, Shah Navila Kashphi, Farhad Ahmed Siddiqi, Mohammad Noab Ali, Mohammed Ibrahim Khalil, Mustafizur Rahman, GM Muzahidur Rahman (Munna), Imrul Kayes and Ekramul Kabir.

## Covid shots may arrive from India in October

FROM PAGE 1

Besides, 81 more ambulances, purchased by the government, were distributed among different hospitals and upazila health complexes across the country.

Addressing the event as the chief guest, Zahid said, "India was the first country to give us vaccine. As the situation became worse in India, they could not supply the vaccine as per the contract. I hope that the supply will resume within a very short time."

Thanking the Indian government, the minister said, "India has always been a trusted friend of Bangladesh. This relation as it is today will be strengthened in the days and decades to come."

On December 13 last year, the

government signed a deal with Serum Institute of India to purchase three crore doses of AstraZeneca vaccine.

As per the deal, the government was supposed to get 50 lakh doses a month. But until yesterday, it only received 70 lakh shots in two instalments.

The Indian government had also sent 33 lakh jabs as gift.

Amid a steep rise in Covid cases in India and reports of shortage of vaccine doses, the Indian government stopped vaccine exports in March to meet the domestic demand.

At yesterday's event, the minister also recalled the contribution of the Indian government in Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971.

Meanwhile, the country logged

1,953 new Covid cases yesterday, according to a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

In the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, 41 more people died from Covid.

With them, the total number of fatalities rose to 26,972 and the total cases to 15,32,366.

However, the positivity rate continued to rise for the straight second day.

Yesterday, the positivity rate was 7.69 percent, up from the previous day's 7.46 percent.

Of yesterday's deceased, 25 were men and 16 women, said the press release.

## Detour no more

FROM PAGE 1

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Vikram K Doraiswami are expected to join the programme, said BR sources.

WHY THE PROJECT?

Construction of a direct line between Bogura and Sirajganj has been in discussion for the last three to four decades as the current route is a lengthy and time-consuming one.

Currently, if anyone wants to go to Bogura from Sirajganj, they have to travel via Iswardi, Santahar and Kahaloo.

The BR did a feasibility study and then a final local survey in the early 1990s to establish the direct link. A follow-up study conducted by CANARAIL in 1996 also recommended the establishment of the direct line, showrailway documents.

Call for the direct line got louder when the rail link between Dhaka and BR's west zone was established with the construction of Bangabandhu Bridge in 1998. However, no project for setting up the direct line was taken

until October 2018 over unknown reasons.

Asked about the reasons, railway sources said many believe a strong syndicate of bus owners could be behind the delay. The sources did not go into the details.

Around 20 passenger trains are being operated on the Sirajganj-Iswardi-Santahar-Bogura route, BR sources said.

On October 30, 2018, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) approved the project and the work was supposed to be completed between July 2018 and June 2023.

But the project authorities have so far been able to select consultants following lengthy tender and approval processes involving several authorities from both Bangladesh and India. The Covid-19 pandemic only aggravated the delay.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase on July 29 approved a proposal for selecting an Indian joint venture company, led by RITES Ltd, as consultant at a cost of

Tk 72 crore.

As per the proposal, the firm will update the feasibility study within six months of signing of the contract and prepare a detailed design within the next seven months, project sources said. The tender process for hiring the contractor will start then.

"So, we hope to start the physical work within 18 months after signing of the contract, meaning within the first half of 2023," a BR official said wishing not to be named.

However, starting the physical work would depend on how quickly they would be able to complete the bidding process, he added.

Once the contraction work starts, the consultant would provide services for two and a half years as construction supervisor, he said, meaning the construction work would take at least two and a half years to complete.

In that case, the project deadline has to be extended. "Yes, the project deadline has to be extended for sure. However, it is not possible to say whether the project cost would go up or not," the official said.

## Cop dies of bullet wounds in Rab HQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Rab member died with bullet wounds at the elite force's headquarters in Dhaka's Kurmitola area yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Shuva Malla, 26, a constable of Bangladesh Police.

Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, said Shuva sustained bullets wounds while discharging duty around 2:30pm at the Rab headquarters.

"He was alone during the incident. We can say after investigation whether he was shot accidentally or if it's a case of death by suicide," he said.

Critically injured Shuva was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Doctors at DMCH declared him dead around 5:15pm.

Hailing from Chattogram, Shuva was deputed to Rab from Police a couple of months ago.

## Correction

The Daily Star yesterday ran a story on page 1 titled "Personal Data Protection Law: Door ajar for misuse" where Md Saimum Reza Talukder, an advocate who specialises in law, privacy and digital technologies, was quoted as saying, "With this section, it is completely exempting government agencies, or state forces who are functioning as data controllers."

Talukder was misquoted in the story. We apologise for any inconveniences caused and regret the error.

KARNAPHULI TUNNEL

## Same Chinese firm to do maintenance, toll collection

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Chinese contractor that has been building the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel under the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram is also set to be responsible for its maintenance and toll collection.

Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) has selected China Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC) for the maintenance and toll collection work under direct procurement method for five years after the tunnel is completed.

The proposal would be placed before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs today for approval, BBA Executive Director Abu Bakr Siddique told The Daily Star yesterday.

As per the proposal, the company would get the duties for five years from the start of the tunnel's operation, he said. However, neither the contract price nor the toll rate has been fixed yet, he added.

The 9.1km tunnel, the first of its kind in South Asia, is being built at a cost of Tk 10,374.42 crores. It will help develop a modern communication system between Dhaka, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar, and also be linked to the Asian Highway.

The project has witnessed 72 percent progress so far, Project Director Harun-or-Rashid told The Daily Star yesterday.

The deadline of the project is December next year, he said, adding that although the Covid-19 pandemic has caused some delay, they would try to meet the deadline.

Abu Bakr Siddique, also the secretary of Bridge Division, said the tunnel would be the first of its kind among South Asian countries and it is a highly technical matter.

So, they found it would be better if the construction company provides maintenance services for the tunnel in the initial stage, he said.

## BB recommends audit into 9 errant e-commerce firms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank has requested the commerce ministry to appoint firms to conduct financial audits of nine errant e-commerce organisations.

"We have received a letter in this regard from BB on Sunday," Hafizur Rahman, additional secretary to the ministry, told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

In the letter, BB wanted to know whether the e-commerce platforms faked any audit reports, Hafizur added.

Evaly, eorange and Dhamaka are three of the platforms.

He also said a high-level meeting would be held today to make a final decision about Evaly.

The audit firms will work to find out the financial health of the companies as a lot of people are suffering due to their anomalies. Those people alleged that they did not get delivery of products in time.

Moreover, the ministry is taking steps to formulate a policy on food delivery as many food delivery companies charge unusual commissions on restaurant food, said sources.



Near Baiy Road's Viqarunnisa Noon School and College campus, a manhole right down the middle of the 'tin rasta mor' is left uncovered. With no caution signs or barricades whatsoever, only a bamboo pole has been stuck inside it to warn pedestrians and vehicles of the danger it poses. Moreover, it's also become quite the nuisance for vehicular movement on the busy road that leads to the school and the nearby Monowara Hospital. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# High surcharges clipping airlines' wings

Operators demand reduced rate in letter to aviation ministry



Airlines	Main Amount	Surcharge, others	Total Debt
Biman	Tk 920.16cr	Tk 3,394.94cr	Tk 4,315.11cr
GMG Airlines (defunct)	Tk 56.98cr	Tk 311.30cr	Tk 368.29cr
United Airways (defunct)	Tk 56.88cr	Tk 298.49cr	Tk 355.37cr
Regent Air (defunct)	Tk 136.18cr	Tk 147.2cr	Tk 283.38cr

RASHIDUL HASAN

Different airlines of the country are struggling to survive due to the sky-high surcharge rate imposed by Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), according to the country's private airline operators.

In a letter sent to State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali on Sunday, Aviation Operators Association of Bangladesh (AOAB) -- a platform for the country's privately-owned airline operators -- has demanded that the government fix a reasonable surcharge rate.

The letter said four airlines (both in operation and defunct) owe CAAB Tk 5,322 crore. The amount includes surcharge and landing, air navigation, and embarkation fees.

AOAB said a compound surcharge is in place for them, with a monthly rate of six percent, or annual rate of 72 percent, on the various arrears.

Of the total arrear, the original amount of debt is Tk 1,170 crore, while the remaining Tk 4,152 crore is due to surcharge imposed on the debt, it said.

In the letter signed by Mofizur Rahman, secretary general of AOAB, they urged the government to reduce the annual surcharge from 72 percent to 12 percent to help keep airlines afloat.

Currently, if any airline fails to pay charges to CAAB on time, it has to pay an additional 72 percent surcharge per year, which is up to 83 percent higher than neighbouring India, said Mofizur, also managing director of private air operator Novoair.

Sources at different airlines said many airlines are unable to pay their dues because of accumulated surcharge, and many even went bankrupt due to the huge debts.

At present, three airlines are operating in Bangladesh: the national flag carrier

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Free Jhumon immediately

DU students demand at rally



Holding up a banner, the protesters yesterday gathered in front of Raju Memorial Sculpture, seeking Jhumon's release.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday demanded immediate release of Jhumon Das, who has been in jail for over five months, after being accused in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Holding a protest rally titled "We Want Release of Protester Jhumon Das" at the capital's Shahbagh, the DU students urged the government to release Jhumon immediately, saying that he is innocent.

They also demanded exemplary punishment for those who carried out a communal attack and vandalised houses of the Hindu community at Sunamganj's Shalla upazila a few months ago.

They further demanded formulating a specific law to protect innocent people like Jhumon, who are wrongfully accused. SM Rakib Sirazy, former president of Dhaka University Debating Society, questioned why Jhumon did not get bail even after appealing seven times.

Jhumon is an inspiration when it comes to free-thinking and free speech.

The country should have space for people like Jhumon, he said.

Former member of DU Central Students' Union Rafiqul Islam Sabuj said some communal groups still exist in the country, and they are conspiring against people like Jhumon.

"We cannot tolerate their plans at all," he said, adding they stand by people like Jhumon, so that such citizens can live in the country safely.

Vice-presidents and general secretaries of DU's different hall unions also spoke at the programme.

Jhumon was detained on March 16 for criticising Hefajat leader Mamunul Haque in a Facebook post. The post allegedly led to the mayhem in Noagaon village of Sunamganj's Shalla upazila on March 17, which saw about 90 Hindu houses vandalised and looted.

He was sent to jail on March 17. On March 22, police filed a case against him and 20-30 unnamed persons under DSA.

He has been in jail ever since and his bail has been refused seven times so far.

## 'Govt defending a faulty design'

Petitioners tell HC on felling trees for project at Suhrawardy Udyan; court to deliver order Sept 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will deliver its order on the writ petition filed seeking its directive on the government to refrain from any further tree felling in the historic Suhrawardy Udyan for commercial purposes on September 19.

The bench of Justice Farah Mahub and Justice SM Maniruzzaman fixed the date yesterday.

Petitioners' counsel Syeda Rizwana Hasan told the HC that the government is defending a faulty design of an architect firm to implement the construction project in Suhrawardy Udyan, although the design is a violation of the masterplan and the previous HC verdict.

According to the design, pathways will be constructed in the Udyan, for which more of its mature, old and ecologically important trees will have to be cut. Besides, the government has no commitment to preserve such environmentally important trees there, she argued.

Opposing the petition, Additional Attorney General Sk Md Morshed told the HC that the government is implementing a big project for constructing historical monuments in Suhrawardy Udyan, all while protecting the environment, which is a policy decision.

Thousands of people will gather there on different occasions and they will need washrooms, toilets and shelter, he said, adding that the government will not construct any structures there for commercial purpose.

A six-member committee has been formed to decide how many and what kinds of new trees will be planted there, he said. Morshed argued that the government will implement the project in line with the HC's 2009 verdict.

Replying to a question, he said tree felling at Suhrawardy Udyan has remained

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## Biased selection, toothless probes plague NHRC: ASK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The selection process of the National Human Rights Commission's (NHRC) committee is politically motivated, with only people from the ruling party getting preference, said speakers at a virtual discussion organised by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

They pointed out that former bureaucrats who are not involved with human rights are given preference for the committee.

They made these observations at a discussion titled "Ensuring Government's Human Rights Accountability: Is the NHRC Fulfilling its Mandate?"

The selection is neither impartial, nor transparent or participatory, said Tamanna Hoq Riti, assistant coordinator of Media and International Advocacy at ASK.

"While political influence isn't overt, it can be understood by observing the kinds of conversations the commission has with stakeholders, and the overly cautious approach of its investigations," she said.

To mitigate the flaws of the selection process, NHRC should make sure ordinary citizens are present during the selection, she recommended.

The commission should stick to the Paris Principles when selecting and recruiting its members and chairpersons, stated ASK.

The Paris Principles are guidelines adopted by the UNHRC that delineate how institutions that protect human rights should function. The guidelines ensure the independence of the bodies.

Bangladesh's NHRC is only "partially compliant" with the Paris Principles, as accorded by the Global Alliance on National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). It is one of the 33 commissions in the world to be classified as such, with most commissions being fully compliant, speakers said.

In a recent report by ASK on a decade of the NHRC's activities, the organisation observed that the commission always recruits its secretaries, directors, and joint directors from the Public Administration through deputation on an ad-hoc basis. This adversely impacts the independence of the commission and is a violation of the GANHRI standards, the ASK report stated.

ASK also pointed out that while the NHRC

### ISSUES

- ▶ People from ruling party, former bureaucrats not involved with human rights preferred
- ▶ Selection process not impartial, transparent or participatory
- ▶ Commission overly cautious, often toothless to challenge state-sponsored violations
- ▶ Founding law restricts probe into forces, can only send letters

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Involve citizens during selection process
- ▶ Stick to Paris Principles for recruitment
- ▶ Ensure independence of NHRC
- ▶ Go to SC if govt ignores recommendations

makes recommendations to the government, it cannot ensure that the recommendations are followed.

However, speaking at the session, Kazi Arfan Ashik, director at NHRC, claimed that the NHRC functions with full autonomy from the government.

In response, SC lawyer Barrister Abdul Halim said, "Why is the NHRC not approaching the Supreme Court saying that the government is not listening to it? The NHRC is supposed to make recommendations and if the government doesn't listen then they can take it to the Supreme Court."

Speakers at the session also observed that the founding law of the NHRC itself restricts the commission from investigating any forces, including the police and Rab. The investigations are limited to just sending letters.

In 2020, the commission took up 49 complaints on their own initiative, but only one has been solved so far, observed ASK. The commission received a total of 432 complaints in the last year, of which 302 are still pending.

Zahid Hossain, human rights officer at the UN resident coordinator's office, and Md Golam Sarwar, assistant professor at the law department of DU, also spoke at the event.



## JP MP Masuda Chowdhury passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmaker from reserved seats for women in parliament, and a presidium member of Jatiya Party, Prof Masuda M Rashid Chowdhury passed away early yesterday.

She was 70 years old at the time of her passing.

Suffering from various ailments, the former professor of the Sociology department at Dhaka University died at the city's Birdem Hospital at around 3:30am, said Delowar Jalali, press secretary of Jatiya Party chairman.

Masuda was receiving treatment at the Birdem Hospital for the past several days. She was put on life support on Sunday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## India assured us of stopping border killing: Quader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the Indian government has assured Bangladesh that there will be no more killing along the border.

"There have been several meetings on border killings. The Indian government has promised that there will be no more killing along the border... they will keep their assurance," he said.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, came up with the remarks while speaking at a press briefing at his residence in the capital.

He also said the independence and sovereignty of the country is safe only in the hands of Awami League.

The minister said though BNP leaders now talk about the border killing issue, but they try to keep alive this problem for their political gains.

"They (BNP leaders) have forgotten that the longstanding border problem between Bangladesh and India was resolved through Sheikh Hasina," he observed. Quader said BNP had not been able to resolve any problem with the neighbouring countries during its rule. "Rather, it has built walls of mistrust and lack of confidence with them."

The AL general secretary said the Hasina-led government has broken down the walls of mistrust and built a bridge of relations by upholding the interests of the country and its people.

He said though BNP tries to demonstrate an anti-Indian stance with their various remarks and statements, the party had taken a "knee-jerk" policy towards India during its stay in power.

Quader also alleged that BNP does not hesitate to sell the country's independence to go to power.



For close to 35 years, a few families in Khulna's Bil Pabla area have earned a living by extracting snail meat. After snails from nearby districts and upazilas arrive in large bags, they sort them and separate the meat from the shells. Each bag gets them Tk 70, and it's possible for a single worker to go through up to three bags a day. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## 321 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of dengue cases crossed 14,000 marks yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 321 people were hospitalised with dengue in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday.

Among the new cases, 75 are from outside Dhaka.

According to the DGHS, 54 people have died of dengue infection in the country this year. Twelve people died in July while 34 have died in August and eight in September so far.

With the new cases, a total of 3,865 were diagnosed during the running month out of total 14,221 infected.

## Govt defending

FROM PAGE 3  
halted, but a few trees may be cut for its beautification and installing the historic monuments there.

On May 9 this year, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), Association for Land Reforms and Development, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Ain O Salish Kendra and architect Mubasshir Hossain filed the petition.

The petitioners also urged the HC to ask the authorities to protect and preserve the original and natural historical shape of Suhrawardy Udyan by removing the structures which were constructed beyond the original master plan.

They said in the petition that the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, which is implementing a project titled "Independence Monument" at Suhrawardy Udyan, had said in a press release that 1,000 new trees will be planted at the places where the 100-year old trees were cut.

The new trees cannot play the role like the old trees did in protecting the environment and birds, they said. Damaging a green orchard is contradictory to the Water Bodies Act and the 2009 HC verdict, they added.

Following another petition, the HC on July 7, 2009 directed the government to identify and preserve all the important historic places related to the Liberation War and to set up memorial monuments at the historic places at Suhrawardy Udyan maintaining international standards.

The HC also ordered the government to take steps to protect and maintain the historic places there.

## High surcharges clipping

FROM PAGE 3

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Novoair, and US-Bangla Airlines. AOAB said the total amount Biman owes CAAB is Tk 4,315.11 crore. Of this, the main amount is Tk 920.16 crore, and the remaining Tk 3,394.94 crore are surcharge and other charges.

The now defunct GMG Airlines owes CAAB Tk 368.29 crore. The main amount is Tk 56.98 crore, and Tk 311.30 crore are surcharge and other charges.

United Airways, which has ceased operation, owes CAAB Tk 355.37 crore, Tk 56.88 crore being the main amount, and remaining Tk 298.49 crore being surcharge and other charges.

Regent Air, also defunct, owes Tk 283.38 crore. Of this, the main amount is Tk 136.18 crore, while the remaining Tk 147.20 crore are surcharge and other charges.

The letter did not mention anything about Novoair and US-Bangla.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mofizur said, "In 1991, CAAB issued a circular, fixing the high rate of surcharge. We have been urging the regulatory authority to reduce the rate for many years, but nobody paid heed to our request to save the industry."

"The country's aviation sector will not develop if the surcharge rate is not reduced," he said.

Insiders in the sector said due to the high surcharge rate, airlines can do nothing

### AT A GLANCE

- » AOAB urges CAAB to reduce surcharge rate from 72pc to 12pc
- » 4 airlines (in operation, defunct) owe CAAB Tk 5,322cr
- » Tk 1,170cr original amount of debt; rest surcharge
- » At present 3 airlines in operation: Biman, Novoair, and US-Bangla

but go under once they fall into the cycle of debt. The letter cited the three defunct airlines as vivid examples.

They said there are rules in many countries that airlines will pay their dues with surcharge. But the rate in Bangladesh is much higher than in many other countries.

For example, Mofizur said, the annual surcharge in Bangladesh is 72 percent, while in India the rate is 12 to 18 percent, in Singapore, it is eight percent, in Oman 10 percent, and in Pakistan two percent.

Contacted yesterday, State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali said, "The finance ministry is also involved in the matter. We will sit down with all the parties concerned soon and try to come up with a positive solution."



Crystal Gold's stay at the beach has been long and unwelcome. In its four years here, it has generated so much silt that the nearby "char" and Jhau forest have been massively damaged. Meanwhile contaminants leaking from it are threatening the area's ecosystem. These photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR



# As it stands, the world around it burns

Ran aground 4yrs ago, vessel on Parki sea beach threatens environment

SANJOY KUMAR BARUA

For four years now, a ship has remained anchored at Chattogram's Parki beach.

The 192-metre ship, Crystal Gold, ran aground at the popular beach in Anwara upazila in 2017, when cyclone Mora hit the region. Since then, it hasn't moved an inch, and has now become a threat to the area's ecosystem, said environmentalists.

Legal complications have stalled moving the vessel to a ship breaking yard in Sitakunda, according to the Department of Environment (DoE).

Dr Md Atiqur Rahman, associate professor of geography and environmental studies department at Chittagong University, said, "The ship has been stuck on the beach for such a long time that silt has started to accumulate there.

This could lead to erosion later on. It is also leaking contaminants, which is affecting the area's ecosystems."

In addition, the beach's "char" area is being destroyed by silt, he added.

"If the ship is broken up at the beach area, it could lead to a serious environmental hazard," he said. "The only solution is to move it out as soon as possible."

The area's tourism is also being affected by the ship, according to Shekh Jobaer Ahmed, Anwara upazila nirbahi officer and president of Parki beach management committee.

"As the silt spread to the nearby Jhau (tamarisk) forest, Jhau trees are being damaged, which is driving away tourists from the area," Jobaer said.

The ship used to belong to Crystal Group. But facing legal complications over dubious bank loans and payment of crew members, the company sold it off to Four Star Enterprise.

### AT A GLANCE

- » Ship: Crystal Gold
- » 192m bulk carrier
- » Ran aground at Parki beach in 2017 during cyclone Mora
- » Legal complications stalled its removal

### DANGERS

- » Leaking contaminants
- » Affecting biodiversity, tourism
- » Accumulating silt can lead to erosion

### LEGAL ISSUES

- » Ship belonged to Crystal Group
- » Four Star Enterprise bought it at auction in 2018
- » Started dismantling it on the beach
- » DoE intervened, slapped Tk 2cr fine
- » Four Star appealed to HC, who rejected application
- » Now it remains anchored on the beach

Sources said Crystal Group even secured multiple loans against the ship.

The Daily Star tried to contact Crystal Group owner Morshed Murad Ibrahim, former president of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, but failed to reach him for comments.

Four Star Enterprise bought the ship at an auction near the end of 2018, said Md Amjad Hossain, its director.

Unable to move the vessel, it took initiatives in December that year to dismantle the bulk carrier on the beach, but the DoE intervened and slapped it with a Tk 2 crore fine, saying it had not taken the mandatory clearances required, he said.

"In early 2019, we imposed a compensation of Tk 2 crore on Four Star Enterprise for breaking the ship on the beach without permission," confirmed Mofizul Alam, director of DoE (Chattogram region).

"At that time, biodiversity and sea life of the Parki beach area got ravaged by the ship breaking," said Mofizul. "We only allowed Four Star to break the ship if they followed 32 conditions, but those weren't followed."

Asked, Md Amjad Hossain said they have appealed to the High Court after DoE ordered for the compensation.

But the court has rejected their application, said the DoE director. About the vessel, he said they are trying to come up with a solution in this regard.

Contacted, Anwara upazila vice-chairman Mrinal Kanti Dhar said, "Thousands of tourists visit Parki beach every year. Just 17 km away from the port city, tourists come here to see the Bay of Bengal and Karnaphuli river at the same time."

"However, this ship is damaging the environment of the area. The authorities should move it from the beach immediately," he added.

**Islami Bank**  
Bangladesh Limited  
Based on Islamic Shari'ah

**Operations Wing**  
**Engineering Division**  
63 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka

### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited by Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited from bonafide Bangladeshi Interior Contractor(s) having wide experience in Internal Construction and other related works for performing (i) Internal Construction, shifting & other related works of Paltan Branch (Urban), Dhaka, (ii) Internal Construction, shifting & other related works of Rampura Branch (Urban), Dhaka and (iii) Internal Construction, shifting & other related works of Khulna Branch (Urban), Khulna. Details information regarding the Tender will be available in Bank's website: [www.islamibankbd.com](http://www.islamibankbd.com) from the next day of publication of this advertisement.

**Senior Vice President**

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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**(Dilip Kumar Paul)**  
General Manager

**পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

**Establishment Division**  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

## Universal College opens campus

CITY DESK

Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) -- a partner of Monash College, Australia -- officially inaugurated its campus on Sunday, said a press release.

Education Minister Dipu Moni was the chief guest at the event while Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi was the special guest.

Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, Australian High Commissioner Jeremy Bruer, UCB Group CEO Dr Sandeep Ananthanarayanan, chairperson Bob Kundanmal and director Zarif Munir were also present. The campus is located on SA Tower (1), Gulshan Avenue in Dhaka.

## JP MP Masuda

FROM PAGE 3

he added. She is survived by her son, daughter, a host of relatives and well-wishers.

Masuda was elected MP for the first time in 2019.

Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad, JP Chairman GM Quader, Opposition Chief Whip Mashiur Rahman Ranga, among others, expressed deep shock at her demise. Hailing from Chattogram, Prof Masuda was involved with various social organisations.

Her first namaz-e-janaza was held at her residence in Moghbazar after Jhor prayers yesterday. Her second namaz-e-janaza was held at JP central office at Kakrail after Asr prayers. The third one will be held at Laldighi maidan (ground) in Chattogram today after Jhor prayers. She will be laid to rest at Gahira village in Raozan today after Asr prayers.

In a condolence message, GM Quader said Prof Masuda played a unique role in nation building as an ideal teacher. She worked tirelessly to strengthen Jatiya Party. She also played a special role in the socio-economic development of the masses.

**সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশন উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর-১৭০৩।**  
(দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিমিটেড এর অর্ধাংশে পরিচালিত)

### নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশন উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়ে নিম্ন বর্ণিত বেসরকারি এবং অত্র বিদ্যালয়ে প্রচলিত অন্যান্য ভাতাদিতে নিয়োগ দানের লক্ষ্যে আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স	বেতন স্কেল
প্রধান শিক্ষক	০১	ক) স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে মূলতম বিএডসহ স্নাতকোত্তর (কোন পরীক্ষায় তৃতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণী/সমমানের জিপিএ গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।)	মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ে প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ২ বছর বা সহকারী প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ কম পক্ষে ১২ বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা বা কর্মরত প্রধান শিক্ষক থাকতে হবে।	অনূর্ণ ৫৫ বছর	জাঃবেঃ স্কেল ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী ৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-
		খ) স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে স্নাতক/সমমান ও বিএড ডিগ্রি/সমমান (কোন পরীক্ষায় তৃতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণী/সমমানের জিপিএ গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।)	মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ে প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ৩ বছর বা সহকারী প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ সর্বমোট ১২ বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	অনূর্ণ ৫৫ বছর	জাঃবেঃ স্কেল ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী ২৯,০০০-৬৩,৪১০/-

বিঃদ্রঃ: প্রার্থীরা সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশনের বাবস্থাসহ আনুষঙ্গিক সুবিধা রয়েছে।

**শর্তাদি:**

ক) আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের পূর্নকালীন জীবন বৃত্তান্ত, ০৩ কপি সত্যায়িত ছবি, সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপিসহ আবেদনপত্র 'সজপতি, স্থল ম্যানেজিং কমিটি, সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশন উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর-১৭০৩'- এই ঠিকানায় আগামী ১২/১০/২০২১ তারিখের মধ্যে ডাক যোগে/স্বীয়ার সার্ভিসের মাধ্যমে অথবা হাতে হাতে দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিস্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিঃ এর তনঃ গেটে রক্ষিত বাক্সে পৌঁছাতে হবে।

খ) কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের অবশ্যই যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের (স্থল ম্যানেজিং কমিটির সজপতি) অনুমতি সাপেক্ষে আবেদন করতে হবে। অন্যান্য আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

গ) কোনরূপ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন অথবা সকল আবেদনপত্র বাতিল/গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা বিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

ঘ) ১২/১০/২০২১ তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স অনূর্ণ ৫৫ বছর হতে হবে।

ঙ) যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যম এবং শিক্ষাগত ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র ছাড়া আবেদন বাতিল বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

(এহতেশামুল করিম)  
সজপতি  
স্থল ম্যানেজিং কমিটি

GD-1640



The Bhasani Hall in Tangail, the epicentre for entertainment and cultural activities of the town, has remained abandoned for the last three years due to its dilapidated condition.

PHOTO: STAR

## BHASANI HALL

# The cultural hub of Tangail lies abandoned for three years

The epicentre for local cultural activists in Tangail town turns into a den of drug addicts, anti-social activities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The Bhasani Hall in Tangail town, the epicentre for entertainment and cultural activities of the town, has remained abandoned for the last three years due to its dilapidated condition.

The hall, a part of the heritage of the town, used to be abuzz with different cultural activities over the year, has now turned into a den of drug addicts and anti-social activities.

Abul Fazal founded the hall in 1976, while Khan A Alam Khan, former Dhaka divisional commissioner, formally inaugurated it on April 2, 1978. Fazal was the Education Advisor of the then President.

Later, the hall was modernised in the next two years under the supervision of Sheikh Habibullah, the then deputy commissioner in Tangail. Later, the hall was renamed after Maulana Abdul

Hamid Khan Bhasani, the leader of the oppressed and downtrodden. "After the closure of the Bhasani Hall, we cannot hold any programme or stage any play due to lack of suitable place or stage for it," said Talha Al Mahmud, general

Abul Fazal founded the hall in 1976, while Khan A Alam Khan, former Dhaka divisional commissioner, formally inaugurated it on April 2, 1978.

secretary of Natyam, a prominent theatre troupe in Tangail.

Until the outbreak of the coronavirus, the central Shaheed Minar and the open stage of the Shaheed Smriti Pouro Udyan in the town would remain booked for political programmes for most of the days, he said.


"However, works to reform the dilapidated Bhasani Hall have not started yet although three years have passed since it was declared abandoned," he said.

Singer Jalaluddin Shahin Chakladar, president of Awami

during meetings, and they assured us that they would take necessary steps in this regard," he said.

Asked about the matter, Md Aminul Islam, additional deputy commissioner (General) in Tangail, said a proposal to modernise the Bhasani Hall was already sent to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs after the hall was declared abandoned.

"Later, a team from the ministry along with local officials of Public Works Department (PWD) visited the hall," he said. Contacted, Al Amin Mohammad Nurul Islam, executive engineer of PWD in Tangail, said after visiting the hall, the ministerial team directed them to conduct a survey to construct a cultural complex in place of the hall.



**Bangladesh Bank**  
Common Services Department-1,  
Head Office, Dhaka-1000  
Website: [www.bb.org.bd](http://www.bb.org.bd)

**Invitation for Tenders**  
Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka

1	Ministry/Division	Not applicable
2	Agency	Not applicable
3	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Bank
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	The Procurement of Structured Wi-Fi for Bangladesh Bank, Head Office
7	Invitation ref no	CSD-1(Equip/wifi)/2021-30
8	Date	13/09/2021
<b>Key Information</b>		
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method
<b>Funding Information</b>		
10	Budget and source of funds	Own Source
11	Development partners (if applicable)	Not applicable
<b>Particular Information</b>		
12	Project/program code (if applicable)	
13	Project/program name (if applicable)	
14	Tender package no.	
15	Tender package name	
16	Tender publication date	
17	Tender last selling date	Not applicable
18	Tender closing date and time	Date: 04/10/2021 Time: 03.00PM
19	Tender opening date and time	04/10/2021 03.30PM
20	Name & address of the office(s)	Address
-Receiving tender document		
BB website and Hard Copy Document		
-Opening tender document		
Common Service Department-1, 6 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Annex-2 Building, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.		
21	-Pre tender meeting	20/09/2021
<b>Information for Tenderer</b>		
22	Brief eligibility of tenderer	Tenderers having 5 years overall business experience and minimum specific experience as supplier in supply of similar goods of at least two (2) contract(s) of similar nature successfully completed within the last three (3) years.
24	Brief description of goods or works	Supply and installation of Structured Wi-Fi at Main Building, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office
24	Brief description of related services	N/A
25	Lot No	Identification of lot
1	Structured Wi-Fi	CSD-1
		Tender Security amount (Tk)
		75,000/-
		Completion time in weeks/months from the date of contract signing
		8 weeks
<b>Procuring entity details</b>		
26	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Abul Kalam Azad
27	Designation of official inviting tender	General Manager
28	Address of official inviting tender	Common Service Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka.
29	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel: 9530148 Fax: 9530120 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ma.azad@bb.org.bd">ma.azad@bb.org.bd</a>
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings.	

ব্যাবহিক ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Md. Abul Kalam Azad  
General Manager  
Phone: 9530148, E-mail: [ma.azad@bb.org.bd](mailto:ma.azad@bb.org.bd)

ডিসিপি: ৪৮/২০২১-২৭৮৪  
তারিখ: ১৩-০৯-২০২১

## Launch staffers sued for throwing 4 kids into Meghna river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A case was filed on Sunday night against yet to be identified staff members of Chandpur-bound launch Imam Hasan-5 for attempting to kill four children by throwing them into the Meghna river in Munshiganj on Saturday.

In Charge of Mukhtarpur River Police Outpost Inspector Mohammad Lutfar Rahman filed the case with Munshiganj Sadar Police Station against unknown staff members of the passenger carrying launch around 10:00pm on Sunday.

According to the case statements, staff members of Imam Hasan-5, a Chandpur-bound launch from Dhaka's Sadar Ghat threw four children-- Mehedul Hasan, 13, Shakib Hasan, 13, Tariqul Islam, 10, and Siyam, 13-- into the Meghna river in Munshiganj on Saturday morning as they failed to pay their launch fares.

On information, police rescued Mehedul and Shakib while Tariqul and Siyam were rescued by staff members of another boat.

Denying the allegation of throwing the kids into the river, Delwar Hossain, master of Imam Hasan-5 launch, said the children jumped into the river on their own will.

## Illegal sand lifting worsens Padma erosion in Pabna

At least 20 homesteads devoured by the erosion at Aria-Gohailbari village in Pabna Sadar upazila in the last couple of weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

At least 20 families have been rendered homeless at Aria-Gohailbari village of Chartarapur union under Pabna Sadar upazila and several hundred have shifted their houses elsewhere as the erosion of Padma has taken a serious turn in the area because of illegal sand lifting by an influential quarter.

Villagers demanded that the illegal sand extraction from the river be stopped immediately.

Lawmaker of Pabna-5 Golam Faruk Khandaker Prince also blamed illegal sand lifting for the severity of the erosion after visiting the affected area couple of days ago.

The MP has also asked the Water Development Board (WDB) to take initiative to lessen the impact of erosion in the area and stop the sand lifting.

"My house, my orchard were standing tall a few weeks ago on the riverbank; now a lone coconut tree is standing there in place of them. The erosion has rendered me homeless," Md Wahab Ali Khan, a resident of the village, said.

Influential quarters have been lifting sands setting dredger machines in the river over the last few months resulting into the erosion of the river bank, he claimed.

Helena Khatun, a housewife of Aria-

Gohailbari village, who also lost her homestead in the river erosion a week ago echoed Wahab saying that "Because of them (influential quarters) we have been rendered homeless. We requested them to stop sand lifting but they didn't pay any heed to our pleas."

Robiul Haque Tutul, chairman of Chartarapur Union Parishad, said that some 20 homesteads have gone into the riverbed over the last couple of weeks while several hundred people have shifted to other places due to the erosion.

"We took steps to stop the sand lifting, local administration raided the spot and stopped sand lifting several times but it resumed after few days," he said.

Lawmaker of Pabna-5 constituency Golam Faruk Khandaker said, "It is true that illegal sand lifting is main reason behind the erosion. I have ordered the WDB for taking immediate steps to mitigate the impact of the ongoing erosion."

Talking with The Daily Star, Md Mosharaf Hossain, assistant director of Pabna WDB, said encroachers have been continuously lifting sands and digging the river vertically therefore the river bank has been eroding so severely.

"We have already taken initiative to dump GEO bags in the eroding point of the river in a bid to tame the erosion," Mosharaf added.



Losing all her belongings to the erosion of the mighty Padma, a woman stares at a bleak future. The photo was taken from Aria-Gohailbari village of Chartarapur union under Pabna Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer

Patuakhali  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)

Memo No: 46.02.7800.000.14.003.21-2673

Date: 13.09.2021

### e-Tender Notice - 06/2021-2022

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of

SL No.	Package No	Tender ID	Name of Scheme	Document last selling Date and Time	Security Submission Last Date and Time
01	W-DISASTER-PATUA-KALAPARA-UNR/03A	607705	Construction of 44m RCC Girder Bridge on Mithagonj UPC - Chotto Baliaoti Bazar via Joybanga Bazar, Bongobondo Bazar WAPDA Road at Ch. 8000m over Sapuria Khal (ID No. 578663030) [NOTM]	18-10-2021 & 17:00	19-10-2021 & 11:00
02	W-DISASTER-PATUA-KALAPARA-VR/03B	607706	Construction of 35m RCC Slab Bridge on Kalachanpara-Khuzra Road at Ch. 300m over Khajura Khal (ID No. 578665009) [NOTM]	18-10-2021 & 17:00	19-10-2021 & 11:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

(G.M. Shahabuddin)

Executive Engineer

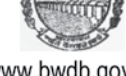
LGED, Patuakhali

e-mail: [xen.patuakhali@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.patuakhali@lged.gov.bd)

## বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

Bangladesh Water Development Board  
Office of the Executive Engineer

Rangamati O&M Division  
BWDB, Kaptai, Rangamati  
Tel. No.03529-56237



নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর  
রাঙ্গামাটি প ও র বিভাগ  
বাপাউবো, কাপ্তাই, রাঙ্গামাটি  
ফোন অফিস : ০৩৫২৯/৫৬২৩৭

[www.bwdb.gov.bd](http://www.bwdb.gov.bd) E-mail: [xen.bwdb.rangamati@gmail.com](mailto:xen.bwdb.rangamati@gmail.com)

Memo No: EX-EN/RANG/T-6/1177

Date: 13-09-2021

### e-Tender Notice- [Notice No. K-01]

An e-Tender has been invited in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No. & Description	Location of the works/supply	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
1	608025, T-06/Rang/1175 Date 13/09/2021	Bank protective work along the right bank of Betagi Katakhal area km 0.000 to km 0.100 =100.00m Total= 100.00 m in Upazila Rangunia Dist-Chittagong in connection with ADP under Rangamati O&M Division BWDB, Kaptai (PR-14/ADP/Lot-01)	Rangunia, UPazila, District- Chittagong	13-Oct-2021 16:30	14-Oct-2021 12.00

This is an online tender notice, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to banking hours on specified in the tender notice.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) (01762625528-31) (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Md. Nurul Islam

Executive Engineer

Rangamati O&M Division

BWDB, Kaptai,

Date: 13-09-2021

পানি-১৫/২০২১-২০২২

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GD-1638

## Media always publish fake propaganda

Taliban co-founder Baradar responds to his death rumours

AFP, Kabul

The Taliban co-founder and now deputy prime minister of Afghanistan released an audio statement yesterday saying he was alive and well after news of his supposed demise went viral on social media.

Abdul Ghani Baradar, who was last week named as a number two to Mullah Mohammed Hassan Akhund, blamed "fake propaganda" for the death rumours in an audio message posted by the Taliban.

Social media has been in a frenzy over the speculation -- particularly in India, where rumours swirled that he had been mortally wounded in a shootout between rival Taliban factions at the presidential palace.



"There had been news in the media about my death," Baradar said in the clip.

"Over the past few nights I have been away on trips. Wherever I am at the moment, we are all fine, all my brothers and friends."

"Media always publish fake propaganda. Therefore, reject bravely all those lies, and 100 percent confirm to you there is no issue and we have no problem."

It was not possible to authenticate the message, but it was posted on official Taliban sites -- including that of the spokesman of the political office of the new government.

The Taliban's supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, was also rumoured to have died for several years before the group's spokesman said he was "present in Kandahar" two weeks after they took power.

Chatter in Pakistan and Afghanistan had suggested he had contracted Covid or been killed in a bombing.



A Taliban fighter stands guard as a Pakistan International Airlines plane, the first commercial international flight to land since the Taliban retook power last month, takes off with passengers onboard at the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday. *Inset*, people wait before boarding the plane.

PHOTO: AFP

## Taliban breaking promises

Says UN rights chief on women's rights in Afghanistan

REUTERS, Geneva

The Taliban are breaking their promises on women's rights and inclusivity in Afghanistan, the UN rights chief said yesterday, as she also criticised violence against protesters and alleged reprisal killings.

Michelle Bachelet said there were "credible allegations" former members of the security forces had been killed, and some people who worked for previous administrations had been detained and later "found dead".

She also highlighted allegations of house-to-house searches of former officials, raids on civil society groups and "increasing violence against protesters and journalists".

She told the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva she was "dismayed by the lack of inclusivity of the so-called caretaker cabinet, which includes no women and few non-Pashtuns".

The announcement of the government of male loyalists last week was a key step in the Taliban's consolidation of power over Afghanistan, following a military victory that saw them oust the US-backed administration on August 15.

Notorious for their brutal and oppressive rule from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban had promised a more inclusive government this time.

However, all the top positions were handed to key leaders from the movement and the Haqqani network -- the most violent faction of the Taliban known for devastating attacks.

In an update to the council on the rights situation, requested during a special session last month, Bachelet stressed that most Afghans were eager to see an end to decades of conflict and division.

"They long for peace and stability in a country where they and their children can prosper," she said. And she highlighted promises by the Taliban to install a more moderate brand of rule including protecting women's rights.

"In contradiction to assurances that the Taliban would uphold women's rights, over the past three weeks women have instead been progressively excluded from the public sphere," she said.

Bachelet reiterated her appeal to the council to set up a "dedicated mechanism" to monitor the rights situation in Afghanistan in a bid to ensure accountability for violations.

## 2020 deadly yr for nature defenders

Report says 227 killed worldwide

AFP, Bogota

A record 227 people were killed worldwide in 2020 for their defense of nature -- more than four a week on average, and almost three-quarters of them in Latin America, environmental rights organization Global Witness said Sunday.

For the second year in a row, Colombia was the country with the highest number of killings -- 65 -- while Nicaragua had the highest per-capita rate, with 12 murders up from five in 2019, the group said in its annual report.

Seven of the 10 deadliest countries for land and environmental defenders were in Latin America, with 165 killings recorded, though Global Witness said the number was "almost certainly" an underestimate. After Colombia, Mexico had the second highest number of deaths globally, with 30.

It was followed by the Philippines (29), Brazil (20), Honduras (17), the Democratic Republic of Congo (15), Guatemala (13), Nicaragua (12), Peru (six) and India (four).

"This is a crisis against humanity," said the report. "Land and environmental defenders that have stood up to powerful interests have paid a heavy price -- with their freedom, livelihoods and even their lives."

### MORE NEWS

#### Malaysian PM, opposition in deal to boost stability

Malaysia's new government signed an agreement to cooperate with the opposition yesterday in exchange for a promise of reforms, a bid to bring stability after intense political turbulence. Less than a month after taking office following the collapse of his predecessor's short-lived government, Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob has extended an olive branch to his rivals. The new administration's arrival has lowered the political temperature -- at least in the short term -- and fuelled hopes that officials will be able to focus on fighting a serious coronavirus outbreak. Ismail Sabri and representatives of the opposition, led by Anwar Ibrahim, signed the agreement in parliament, as the legislature convened yesterday for the first time since the new premier took power.

#### Dozens of abducted students freed in NW Nigeria

Nigerian gunmen have freed dozens of schoolchildren kidnapped earlier this month in northwest Zamfara State, according to a local government source and a video showing state officials with the children. The release of the Kaya school students on Sunday came after the army began a crackdown on criminal gangs in the state and local authorities shut down telecoms in Zamfara to disrupt communications between armed groups. More than 70 students and some teachers were snatched in Kaya on September 1 in the latest in a series of mass abductions at schools and colleges this year by heavily armed gunmen known locally as bandits. "A total of 75 hostages taken from the Government Junior Secondary School Kaya were released on Sunday evening," the local government source said. "They looked robust and unharmed." A video released by Zamfara State Governor Bello Matawalle's office showed him greeting buses full of students in the night and asking them if they had been harmed.



#### North Korea tests new long-range missile

North Korea test-fired a new "long-range cruise missile" over the weekend, state media reported yesterday, with the United States saying the nuclear-armed country was threatening its neighbours and beyond. Pictures in the Rodong Sinmun newspaper showed a missile exiting one of five tubes on a launch vehicle in a ball of flame, and a missile in horizontal flight. Such a weapon would represent a marked advance in North Korea's weapons technology, analysts said, better able to avoid defence systems to deliver a warhead across the South or Japan -- both of them US allies. The test launches took place on Saturday and Sunday, the official Korean Central News Agency said.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Israeli medics stretch off a wounded man following a reported stabbing attack in Jerusalem yesterday. A Palestinian man stabbed two Israelis in Jerusalem before being shot by a border police officer yesterday, leaving all three wounded, police and medics said.

PHOTO: AFP



### SEPTEMBER 14

**1901** - US President William McKinley died from his wounds after being shot by an assassin on September 6.

**1982** - Lebanese president-elect Bashir Gemayel was assassinated in a bomb explosion at his party headquarters in East Beirut.

**1996** - Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk pardoned Khmer Rouge leader Ieng Sary for his role in the "killing fields" era of the 1970s.

SOURCE: REUTERS

## Won't file detailed affidavit

Indian govt tells SC, cites nat'l security

TOI, New Delhi

The Indian government yesterday informed the Supreme Court that it is not going to file a detailed affidavit on petitions seeking inquiry into alleged use of spyware Pegasus. The government had asked for time to decide on filing the affidavit twice.

Appearing before the top court, Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta said that whether a "particular software was used or not is not a matter for public domain". He said the matter can be inquired into by a committee of independent domain experts and it can be filed before apex court.

"The Supreme Court has given a reasonable and fair opportunity to file detailed affidavit to know its stand on crucial issues linked to petitions. If the government does not, then the Supreme Court will hear parties and pass appropriate orders," a bench of Chief Justice of India NV Ramana, Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli told SG Mehta.

SG Mehta also said that the government

will constitute a technical committee of independent domain experts that will examine the phones of petitioners and those claiming to have been affected by Pegasus to determine if there was snooping or hacking. The experts will not have any employment contract with the government, he said, adding that panel can examine and submit a report to the Supreme Court.

The top court, meanwhile, said it will pass interim order on pleas seeking independent probe into alleged Pegasus snooping row. It asked the government to mention Pegasus case before it if it re-thinks over filing fresh affidavit as passing of interim order will take 2-3 days. It also told the Centre that "beating around the bush would not take the issue anywhere".

The court said if a committee is constituted and it files a report, it (the report) may come in the public domain. court to decide if the report will be put in public domain.

### SECOND DOSE OF COVID VACCINE

## India worried about growing complacency

REUTERS, New Delhi

India is worried that growing complacency as Covid-19 infection rates and deaths decline could lead to people skipping their second vaccine shots, leaving communities vulnerable to the coronavirus, said two health experts briefed on the matter.

India has administered more than 744 million vaccine doses - with 60% of its 944 million adults getting a first shot and 19% fully vaccinated with the required two shots.

India has the most partly immunized people in the world, according to the Our World in Data website, mainly due to a long gap of between 12 and 16 weeks between doses, as prescribed by the government.

"There's a concern among the highest quarters of an impending vaccine hesitancy, in view of most taking a single dose already and disease incidence at its lowest," said one of the sources, both of whom declined to be identified.

Large numbers of people skipping their second dose would be particularly problematic in areas with low numbers of previously infected people, meaning more people with fewer antibodies so those communities would be more vulnerable, the first expert said.

The second expert said the health ministry had told states to encourage people to get their second doses as soon as possible, so on the 12th week after their first dose, rather than waiting for the latest date, in a bid to ensure people don't miss the second shot.



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## LAW OPINION

# LDC graduation: Evaluating the implications of implementing the TRIPS agreement

MAZHARUL ISLAM

Graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category is a key milestone in the sustainable development progress of a country. Bangladesh has been recommended for graduation over the next five years, i.e. 2026, by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP), a subsidiary advisory body of the Economic and Social Council

The LDCs currently enjoy benefits from two types of transition periods under the TRIPS Agreement which include— a general transition period and a special transition period for the pharmaceutical industry. The general transition period has been extended till July 1, 2034 and special transition period for the pharmaceutical industry shall remain valid until 1 January 2033. However, LDCs will lose benefits provided under the transition periods

With graduation on 2026, Bangladesh will have to ensure compliance with the TRIPS agreement as well as other international treaties related to IPR except protecting patents and undisclosed information for pharmaceutical products as waived under special transition period. The Government will be required to update the existing IP laws or enact new laws as envisaged under the TRIPS Agreement – which will be subject to review by the TRIPS Council annually. The adoption of new laws by LDCs shall include laws for protection of undisclosed information – known as trade secrets – and for Layout-Designs (Topographies) of Integrated Circuits – design of electronic circuits (chips).

Ensuring compliance with these requirements will require more engagement of workforce and technical experts which will undoubtedly involve huge financial budget of the government concerned. The government would no longer receive incentive from developed country to foster technology transfer and thus ensuring the compliance with TRIPS agreement would be expensive.

During the specific transition period, LDCs have been exempted from protecting patents and undisclosed information for pharmaceutical products. Thanks to the waiver, pharmaceutical manufacturers in LDCs may export patented drugs to other LDCs or countries where the patent of the drugs being exported has expired or is absent. The generic manufacturers of on-patent drugs do not have to pay royalty or operate in a level-playing field along with innovators.

Among the LDCs, Bangladesh, utilising the patent waiver, has gained self-sufficiency in the pharmaceutical sector and now supplies almost 97% of medicines for the local market and exports to hundred countries including the United States.

After graduation, the pharmaceutical industry of the countries would stop enjoying patent waiver seven years before

*To make the graduation sustainable, the graduating LDC governments should put in place appropriate regulatory and institutional forces to make the most effective and strategic use of the relevant TRIPS provisions that include increasing efficiency, transparency, improving service quality of intellectual property institutions, reorganisation and strengthening of IP offices.*

the expiry of the stipulated transition period which may negatively affect their ability to produce and import generic versions of patented medicines. Graduated LDCs will have to introduce provisions for patents to pharmaceutical products and processes.

In addition to the specific transition period for pharmaceutical products, LDCs were also exempted by the General Council from the application of – mailbox requirements and exclusive marketing rights – for the same time period (i.e. 2033). In accordance with the mailbox provisions, countries concerned had to establish a “mailbox” system for receiving and filing patent applications from the beginning of the transitional period.

The mailbox provision allows the patent application to remain fresh even if many years pass after the patent applications are put in the mailbox, waiting for the concerned patent office to start examining pending applications after graduation. The requirement

of mailbox obligation may require considerable administrative efforts that would burden the country's health budget.

LDCs were also exempted from notification requirements for issuing compulsory licenses for exports of pharmaceutical products to LDCs or other countries with insufficient manufacturing capacities in the pharmaceutical sector. After graduation, LDCs pharmaceutical companies would have to notify the intention to use the system and, in their notifications concerning needed pharmaceuticals, they would need to address the existence of insufficient or no manufacturing capacity.

To mitigate these challenges, the government would need to map out which incentives have proven to be the most useful and need to give emphasis on effective bilateral and multilateral negotiation with the developed country members granting those incentives so that preferential market access can be explored. Graduating LDCs may also place proposals to TRIPS council for further extensions of the transition periods for implementation of the TRIPS Agreement even after their graduation until a reasonable period.

In today's knowledge-based economy, the importance of intellectual property is increasing day by day and knowledge-based resources are considered as a sustainable primary source. Therefore, to make the graduation sustainable, the graduating LDC governments should put in place appropriate regulatory and institutional forces to make the most effective and strategic use of the relevant TRIPS provisions that include increasing efficiency, transparency, improving service quality of intellectual property institutions, reorganisation and strengthening of IP offices.

THE WRITER IS A CORPORATE LEGAL PRACTITIONER AND WORKS TO PROMOTE IP RIGHTS.



(ECOSOC). During this transition period, Bangladesh will be fully entitled to all benefits associated with the category.

After graduation, LDCs will lose all the flexibilities enjoyed under WTO Rules and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). However, if the flexibilities in implementing the provisions of the TRIPS agreement are revoked, the challenges that graduated LDCs may face are not so discussed in detail.

once they cease to have their LDC membership.

During the general transition period, LDCs have been exempted from implementing the TRIPS Agreement other than those containing the core non-discrimination principles. In addition, developed country WTO members were instructed to provide technical and financial assistance to enterprises and institutions of LDCs to enable them to create a sound and viable technological base.

## LAW VISION

## Urgent reforms to ADR in South Asia to achieve SDG-16

ANUSHA ISLAM RAHA

The traditional process of litigating has been one of the best ways of resolving disputes from time immemorial because of its credible methods of examination, depiction, and judgment-giving. But as the world population grew, judiciaries across the globe became overburdened and a colossal number of cases now rest in files “neatly” organised in cupboards. With the incessantly growing urge to cater to the needs of the disputants, countries sought to decipher alternatives to the traditional litigation system.

UK came first after it enacted the very first arbitration statute in 1698 which primarily aimed to settle disputes between merchants without having to submit them to a judge. But recently, when the brilliant legal minds of the South Asian countries gathered together for a webinar organised by the Bangladesh International Arbitration Centre (BIAC), it became clear that South Asian countries of the oriental wing is not far behind.

For over a decade now, countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have vastly invested in the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) spectrum to stimulate the emancipation of the disputants by way of peaceful settlement. In Bangladesh for example, section 89A of the Code of Civil Procedure has included mediation as a viable option to settle disputes, showing legislative steps taken towards promoting ADR. The state of ADR in other countries like India is neither too dim nor very bright, particularly on account of the pandemic. Private mediation is famous only in the southern part of India and has not picked up in the northern arena.

For countries like Bhutan, the ADR centres have been established to expedite the justice delivering system whilst in the context of the Maldives, 50-60% of the cases are getting resolved by way of mediation or negotiation even during the pandemic.

It is indeed a promising position that these countries are in. However, to maintain this and improvise, it is imperative that these South Asian countries realise the need for reforms that must be made to ADR on an emergency basis to enable the countries achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-16.

As per the experts invited by BIAC, the first reform suggested is that ADR must be introduced in the consumer sector to resolve consumer disputes resulting from faulty industrial products. For example, it is not uncommon to find faults in the electronic mosquito bat that you recently

bought. But either the cases are treated as minor ones and thereby wafted away, or the customers do not bring them to light because they are confident of not finding any solution.

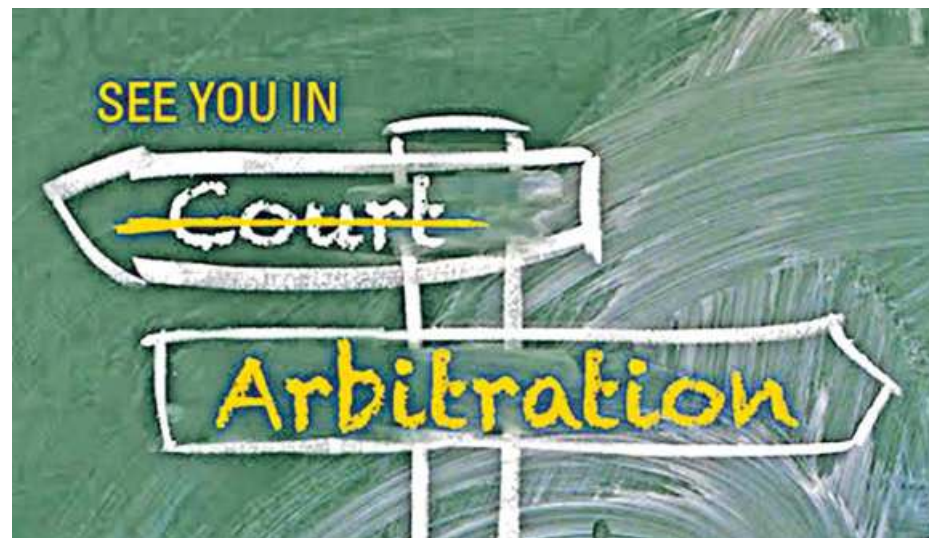
Therefore, ADR in the consumer sector is very important to build the trust, to eradicate the disillusion and apathy nurtured in consumer minds and to contribute to the achievement of SDG-16, which is very crucial for the growth of a country.

ADR should get equal importance in Government contracts and public sector agreements as well so as to create a business friendly environment in Bangladesh and to build a strong ADR infrastructure that foreign investors can rely on. To do so, inspiration can be taken from the Delhi High Court which supported the Delhi Dispute Resolution Society and has encouraged mediation at both community

and state level.

As mentioned above, people should be made aware of their rights and available alternatives so that they know that they have access to justice and that, efforts are being made to protect their rights.

Let us not forget that United Nation's SDG-16 is nothing new. For instance, for Bangladesh, it is a reiteration of what the Constitution of Bangladesh has enunciated years ago. Therefore, as legal practitioners and/or ADR specialists, it is our responsibility to uphold the constitution and to contribute to the upholding of rule of law, equality and justice by introducing community-based institutional ADR practices with new and sufficient reforms and advancements.



and state level.

However, it is crucial to comprehend that ADR methods that already exist to help the people are not being used due to lack of awareness. People do not know that they have a way to access justice. Hence, awareness campaigns by use of social media, print and broadcasting media etc. are of utmost importance.

The second suggested reform is that, more people, especially legal practitioners, should be given training that shall not remain limited to gaining a certificate but also be put to practice. Furthermore, if these trained ADR practitioners can build a linkage among the SAARC countries, it is plausible that these highly trained arbitrators and mediators of the oriental countries can freely outsource themselves in a cost-effective manner and contribute to the growth of ADR centres across all of

the SAARC countries. Not only will it be a novel step towards economic growth but also will be a revolutionary one.

A third reform is to make ADR a regulatory parallel to the usual judicial system. Many experts have already addressed ADR as “additional” dispute resolution instead of “alternative” dispute resolution. Therefore, because it is visible that the purpose of both the judiciary and the ADR mechanisms are the same, they should receive the same importance, infrastructure and resources.

In a nutshell, the problem is that South Asian countries still have limited access to justice and the solution is the removal of limitations such as high cost, unnecessary delay, and other complexities associated with litigation. If such limitation is removed, and it should be removed by now, SDG 16 can easily be achieved by these oriental countries. However,

## LAW WATCH

## THE STRUGGLES OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES FOR WANT OF CONTEMPORARY RULES

SHISHIR MANIR

In 1990, Bangladesh ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989, manifesting its commitment to fulfill the rights of children in Bangladesh. The UNCRC is the most comprehensive instrument on children's rights and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history. It covers all aspects of a child's life and sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children exercise their rights.

To fulfill the requirements imposed on a state party by the UNCRC, Bangladesh enacted the Children Act 2013 by repealing the Children Act of 1974. Under the powers conferred in section 77 of the 1974 Act, the Government could make rules for, inter alia, the conditions subject to which institutions, industrial schools or other educational institutions shall be certified or “approved home” shall be recognised for the purposes of this Act.

Accordingly, the Government promulgated the Children Rules, 1976. The rules had some controversial provisions which are not acceptable in the twenty-first century. It contained the provision of caning as a form of punishment for breaking the rules. It used denigratory words like ‘inmate’ to indicate the children, a term which is used to refer to the prison population. Furthermore, rule 22 of the 1976 Rules sought to divide children into penal grade, general grade and star grade, which ultimately resulted in creating a gang culture inside the development centres. Younger children are compelled to stay with their senior counterparts. Most children who were previously in the development centres complained about the prevalent “Boro Bhai” culture in the centres.

These provisions were ultra vires to Article 37(c) of the UNCRC which states that “every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age”.

Unchecked abusive behaviour, sexual harassment, bullying, poor and unhygienic living conditions, overcrowding, torture by staff and senior “inmates”, lack of professional support, (e.g. doctor, psychologist, therapists) are some of the major concerns that are being raised by social scientists as well as activists and reported in the news media time and again. The killing of the three children in Jessore Centre by beating them to death in 2020 is a recent gruesome example.

The first correction facility for boys in Bangladesh was established in 1978 at Gazipur. Currently, there are three Child Development Centres (CDCs), known as Sishu Unnyan Kendra, of which one is for girls and two are for boys. By virtue of section 59(1) of the Children



Act 2013, the Government is mandated to establish and maintain the necessary number of CDCs based on gender disaggregation for the accommodation, reformation, and development of children who are ordered to be detained and those who are undergoing trial using recognised methods. The 2013 Act further empowers the Government to frame Rules or, from time to time, issue circulars, notifications or orders in connection with the accommodation, correction, reformation, development, and maintenance of children coming into and residing in these development centres.

Eight years have elapsed since the Children Act, 2013 was passed. Unfortunately, the Government is yet to formulate any such policy or frame any such Rules. In the absence of Rules, the CDCs are administered under the old Children Rules, 1976.

The objective of rehabilitation of children placed in CDCs is to provide care, protection, education, and vocational skills, to assist them to assume socially constructive and productive roles in society thus ensuring juvenile justice. The practice does not seem to match the objective. The existing legal mechanism falls too short to ensure a complete mechanism that upholds the international standards of ensuring juvenile justice.

The Government must make proper rules to ensure not only the proper maintenance and administration of these development centres but also the basic rights of the children of the CDCs. A holistic approach can meet the objectives of juvenile justice to ensure proper rehabilitation of the children in society. Professional education, in-service training, refresher courses and other appropriate modes of instruction must be introduced to establish and maintain the necessary professional competence of all personnel dealing with the operation of the CDCs.

The Government must consult with social workers, child rights activists, child health specialists, child psychologists, academics and lawyers before enacting the Rules. The enactment must reflect all the aspects of juvenile justice. It must appoint administrative bodies well acquainted with child rights. A proper set of Rules outlining the mechanisms of administration can make the “development centres” truly equipped to serve the best interests of our children.

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## Reopened schools bring a moment of joy long denied

*Authorities now must maintain the same level of vigilance to keep schools open*

AFTER 543 days, most schools and colleges finally reopened on Sunday to the delight of students and teachers. On the first day, schools opened amid a festive mood and were buzzing with students who were overjoyed at being able to see their friends after such a long time and get back to in-class learning. Many schools welcomed their students with flowers, chocolates, pens, pencils and so on. Teachers were also seen dressed up and excited. From our vantage point, the first day of schools reopening was a success, albeit with minor hiccups.

The most glaring among those hiccups were the scenes of parents crowding outside of different schools. According to several reports published by this daily, getting students to follow the health guidelines—i.e. maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands—was relatively easy for the teachers and school authorities. It was the parents who were violating the rules outside of school gates. By gathering outside of the gates in large numbers, many without masks, these parents were not only risking their own health, but that of their children and also the school staff. We are greatly disturbed by their lack of awareness or, if they were aware, their lack of willingness to follow the health guidelines—both equally concerning. If children otherwise preoccupied with the thought and delight of meeting their friends after so long can remain conscious of following guidelines, why can't their guardians?

The performances of the majority of school authorities as well as the government authorities were commendable. And they mostly did an excellent job of preparing the necessary facilities for students to safely return to schools. However, it has to be kept in mind that this is a marathon and not a sprint. And schools have to maintain this level of performance consistently, as any laxity amidst a still-dangerous pandemic could lead to dire consequences.

Unfortunately, not all schools were able to reopen on Sunday. Some 400 schools affected by floods in different parts of the country were forced to remain closed due to waterlogging. Although the school authorities have been attempting to take classes elsewhere, we call on the government to assist them to return to normal school functions at their institutions as early as possible.

What has been obvious on the first day of school reopening is the sheer joy experienced by students at being able to return to their schools, which makes learning fun and that much easier. In order to keep the schools open in the long run, the authorities have to ensure that health guidelines are consistently followed without exception, so that the virus cannot spread there leading to further school closures. This will be a tough task, but one that must be successfully carried out.

## Save the environment, and the leather industry too

*Shutdown of pollutant Savar tannery complex should not be permanent*

WE commend the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for its quick move to implement a recent recommendation of a parliamentary committee to shut down the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate (STIE) in Hemayetpur. Though the complex has been in development for nine years and has had Tk 500 crore spent on it, its Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) is still not fully constructed (the completion deadline was 2017). According to a report by this daily, the CETP is currently only able to treat 70 percent of the around 40,000 cubic metres of waste produced by the tanners every day.

The delay in completing CETP construction has caused a number of problems. Besides causing severe harm to the surrounding environment, the complex is unable to acquire the Leather Working Group (LWG) certification which is needed to get better export prices for our leather goods on the international market. Currently, Bangladeshi leather, leather goods and tanned leather goods exporters are having to sell their products for 40 percent below the actual price, as the lack of LWG certification reflects poorly on the compliance practice of a country. Now, it seems the undesirable export situation of the country's leather goods must be forgotten in order to save the Dhaleshwari river from having tonnes of untreated liquid and solid waste dumped into it every day.

While we support the move by the environment ministry to shut down the tannery complex in a bid to save the environment, we also hope that this will not result in a complete cessation of the production of leather goods. If the CETP is constructed fully in the near future and the LWG certification is obtained, it would be ideal to revive the country's multi-billion-dollar leather industry. If that happens, not only can the tanneries operate in a more environment-conscious manner, but the industry will also attract better prices for leather goods thanks to the LWG certification.

There is hope in this regard as the parliamentary body has reassured that the issue of reopening the 130 tanneries of the STIE may be considered in the future if they operate in accordance with the provisions of the law. This is what we would urge the relevant authorities to work towards as well, so that the leather industry of the country does not die an unnecessary and preventable death.

# Schools have reopened, but can we stem the tide of child marriage?

*More targeted measures necessary to bring girls back to schools*



LAILA KHONDKAR

NEWS of child marriage is unfortunately quite common in Bangladesh. But the report about 50 young girls from the same school being married off during the pandemic is

something that hits you especially hard. It happened in Alipur Ideal Secondary Girls' School of the Alipur Union of Satkhira district, according to a national newspaper. School authorities, parents and activists say that child marriage has increased at an alarming rate during the prolonged school closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

There is a lack of data on child marriage since the pandemic began. However, non-governmental organisations have confirmed, based on information gleaned from their field-level operations, that child marriage has indeed increased. According to the "Rapid Analysis of Child Marriage Situation during Covid-19" by Manusher Jonno Foundation, at least 13,886 girls from 84 upazilas of 21 districts were forced into child marriage from April to October last year. The media has been reporting on incidents of child marriage during the pandemic quite regularly.

Child marriage is a serious violation of children's rights and a form of sexual violence. Girls who are forced to marry early have increased health problems and face more domestic violence. Child marriage also means school drop-out and an end to childhood. It's worth noting that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.3 aims to eliminate child

marriage. About 51 percent of women currently aged 20-24 were married while they were still children. I have been privileged to meet many adolescent girls—from the *haors* of Sunamganj to the slums of Khulna—who were determined to continue their education but lived with the constant fear of marriage. I wonder how many of them had to give up on their dreams of education and a decent

shows that families turn to child marriage as a coping strategy to reduce the number of mouths to feed. Concerns regarding joblessness, poverty, food shortages and fear and insecurity among parents due to the pandemic are the reasons for a surge in child marriage in different parts of the world. This is reversing the progress made over the last 25 years.

In Bangladesh, it is estimated that 24.5 million people have become new poor

development to find jobs. Initiatives should be taken to strengthen the child protection system so that communities themselves can protect girls from early marriage. Girls' safety in the communities must be ensured. Also, efforts should be made to bring back married girls to schools. All stakeholders have to listen to girls while taking decisions affecting their lives.

In addition to the proper enforcement



'It is our collective failure that we have not been able to prevent so many child marriages during the pandemic.'

PHOTO: AP

*It is crucial that girls are especially supported to return to education. This might involve flexible learning, catch-up courses and accelerated learning opportunities.*

marriage by 2030. Each year, globally 12 million girls are married before they turn 18. International organisations project that an additional 10 million girls will marry as children by 2030 due to Covid-induced restrictions, school closures, disruption to child marriage programming, and economic instability.

According to "Ending Child Marriage: A Profile of Progress in Bangladesh" (a report launched by Unicef in October 2020), Bangladesh has the highest prevalence of child marriage in South Asia and ranks among 10 countries in

job if they were forced into marriage.

Poverty, lack of social safety of adolescent girls, natural disasters, and weak enforcement of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 are some of the reasons for child marriage in Bangladesh. Our patriarchal society places disproportionate emphasis on girls' and women's caregiving and reproductive roles. As a result, there is a high level of social acceptance of child marriage. Parents arrange the marriage of their daughters whenever they find a "suitable groom" without thinking how this would affect their education, health and future.

In Bangladesh, incidence of child marriage begins to decline only among those with at least 10 years of schooling, and its prevalence falls below 50 percent among those with at least 12 years of schooling. It is, therefore, extremely important that girls stay at schools. In many places, as the schools were closed for so long, friends and teachers did not know about the forced marriages of victims and could not do anything to prevent them. Union-level committees meant to prevent child marriage were not that active either during the pandemic.

Evidence from a multi-country study in Africa and Asia on the pandemic's impacts on the lives of young people

due to the pandemic. This means that even now, when schools have finally reopened after 543 days, girls, especially in the rural areas, are less likely to return to classrooms because their families cannot pay the fees. This, among other factors, increases their risk of early marriage. Many girls have become the main caregiver for their sick family members or had to look after siblings. They may not return to schools. This happened to girls in West Africa after the Ebola crisis.

Therefore, it is crucial that girls are especially supported to return to education. This might involve flexible learning, catch-up courses and accelerated learning opportunities. Teachers need to check school enrolment lists to identify and follow up with those girls who have not returned to schools. Specific attention should be paid to the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work so that it does not hinder girls' return to schools.

Targeted initiatives should be taken by the government to protect and support the incomes of families with girl children, including social protection interventions such as cash transfers to reduce the risk of child marriage as an economic coping strategy for the families. Adolescent girls should also have opportunities for skills

of the law against child marriage, birth and marriage registration systems should be strengthened. Local administrations must perform their duties effectively to prevent child marriage. Parental awareness of the rights of girls to education, health and protection should be increased. Social norms regarding the acceptance of child marriage have to be addressed so that community members learn to respect the academic and professional aspirations and achievements of girls and women. NGOs and government authorities can work in a collaborative way for a greater impact in this area.

It is our collective failure that we have not been able to prevent so many child marriages during the pandemic. And the danger, even after schools have reopened, is far from over. If we are serious about achieving the national target of ending child marriage by 2041, then we must make this a priority and bring momentum to implementing the plans we have made. The government, parents, teachers, civil society, the media, community members, etc. all must be more committed to ensuring that our girls can grow up to realise their full potential.

Laila Khondkar is an international development worker.

## If Accord is doing more harm than good, why are we not speaking up?



NURUL MUKTADIR BAPPY

WHENEVER there is any news on the Accord, we can almost sense the fierce debate between owners and workers about to follow. Yet,

despite being the bridge between the two sides, mid-level executives like me are always left out of such conversations. It is a wonder that our opinions don't seem to matter; even if they do, not many of us are willing to come forward and share them.

There is a common conception that all the good, compliant and green factories in Bangladesh exist because of the Accord. The usual narrative is that, without such a pact, many factories would collapse or catch fire on a regular basis. Although it is somewhat true, the opinion of the managerial people directly involved in implementing the "corrective action plans" wouldn't just vary—it would be the polar opposite.

Hence it almost felt like a triumph when two years ago I read about a conference where the BGMEA's former president Rubana Huq clearly said the conditions being imposed by the Accord were harming the apparel industry. I remember feeling delighted to see that someone was finally protesting publicly!

Among our small and scattered community of executives, it seemed almost too good to be true, given the Accord's extension earlier. It is evident that every factory, having the most skin in the game, is too wary of such one-sided

regulations to support its stay any longer. So, how come none of them criticise its shortcomings openly? And, if the Accord was so unjustified, why did only one factory go to the court (Smart Jeans Ltd in Chattogram), while the rest did not?

The prime reason has to be the reaction (or punishment?) from the brands. As I was reading numerous news on the new Accord formation, I couldn't help but notice that all the responses in opposition

result in factories being tagged as "anti-compliance."

The Accord did a lot of good. It stirred us in ways that we needed decades ago. Still, there were—and most certainly are—so many better and more thoughtful alternatives to achieve the same outcome. Accord is a legally binding agreement between trade unions and brands, but not us. Even its new form, the International Accord on Health and Safety in the

# ACCORD

on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh

The Accord is a legally binding agreement between brands from around the world and trade unions in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

were "anonymous."

I recall a piece where Mostafiz Uddin, managing director of Denim Expert Ltd, frankly admitted to being blacklisted by buyers for revealing their names after they didn't pay for orders in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. As the founder of Denim Expo as well as one of the most internationally acclaimed faces when it comes to sustainability, Mostafiz is surely not an easy target; yet, his business has taken the heat. Not many of the hundreds of his counterparts can claim to have similar or even remotely close footing in this trade. Since one's entire business falls at risk for objecting to the vile crime of non-payment with no protection whatsoever, criticising the Accord will not only hamper business, but also

Textile and Garment Industry, completely disregards the factories' involvement in policy making. So, if a garment manufacturer fails to comply with its requirements, however impractical or illogical they might be, the brand either cuts business ties with it or faces legal repercussions from the workers' unions. Our country's laws and local jurisdiction have not been taken into account. It is as if the buyers would play the role of a referee in a match where workers and the factory management fight each other.

This "policing" comes with unchecked power that giant brands have already been exerting over supply chains. We are not China, who can simply wipe off a brand (H&M) from its map for nonconformity. In Bangladesh, equal and opposite

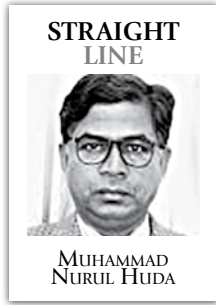
reaction doesn't occur. So, unless you have nothing else to lose (like the factory who went to court), the best way to deal with it is to keep quiet.

It's only understandable that questioning the Accord angers the workers' representatives, who got a much needed but long forgotten role to play at the policy-making level through this. We all want safety at workplace, but not with the strings attached with the Accord. My father had joined the garment sector before I was born. I started working in a factory while I was still an undergraduate student. I survived Rana Plaza and its aftermath. As I have seen during my time in this trade, the fundamental issue that stops ensuring safer working environment is the absolute imbalance of power—not a few noncompliant owners at the helm. We must first address that elephant in the room, and establish the buyers' financial involvement in the production process. As for the safety and compliance concerns, international pressure, intense competition among suppliers, and authorities like the RMG Sustainability Council (RSC) will do more than just fine to address those issues.

Nurul Muktaadir Bappy is chief operating officer at Panna Traders. He has nearly 10 years of experience in the textile and garment industry.



# Cleaning up our police force is critical



STRAIGHT LINE

MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

**T**HE malfeasance and misfeasance of some errant police officials in the recent past—which brought into sharp focus their worrisome delinquency—

has perhaps prompted the Inspector General of Police to initiate a process of cleaning that apparently aims to rid the police of bad apples. The admirable pragmatism behind such an initiative cannot escape the discerning eye, because the misdeeds of the police impinge quite adversely on people's liberty, in addition to the lamentable erosion of public confidence in a vital regulatory organ of the state funded by taxpayer's money.

It's worth reiterating that the delinquent actions or inactions of deviant police personnel are not a mere figment of the imagination. Instead, these are hard realities which would have been less ominous had they been rare instances of misconduct on the part of a coercive organisation. Corrective measures to contain police deviance assumes added significance because the protectors of citizens cannot be allowed to indulge in any kind of activities that are dubious or deplorable. Police has to come clean in the mirror of public opinion.

A democratic society which values individual liberty will look very closely at any infringement of that liberty by the government, and at the particular arm whose actions are seen to be restrictive. The power wielded by police

is all the more worrying for members of society if they feel they have no means of controlling the police and their powers. We have to bear in mind that no other individual or body has anything like the general powers police have. Often, the momentous question of the suspension of individual rights is decided by the most junior and inexperienced members of the police force.

A police officer has lawful power to

individuals have no place in the police force and there must be some means of removing them. The most obvious criterion for a system of investigating complaints about police behaviour is that it be stringent, effective, and capable of discovering facts. This requires trained, experienced, skilled investigators and the largest number of such individuals has to be found within the police organisation itself. It is also necessary that the public

more needed is a properly introduced code of ethics and sound training in its principles.

It is time to come out of the colonial policing model of order maintenance and reactive strategies and move towards a service culture which requires officers to work with the community to keep the peace and prevent crimes. This change in policing ethos is expected to bring a new view of police officers who are required to be culturally

and consensus.

It is important to note that behavioural norms of our police organisation need to change. For this to become a reality, police norms have to comply with the requirements of the organisation. In plain words, the police culture must broadly conform to the new code of ethics. The question is, how can this be done? Admittedly, training has a large part to play in modifying police culture to the mores required in modern progressive policing. This will, however, be a long-term strategy. At the same time, the traditional "carrot and stick" (reward and sanction) process has to continue. There has to be rewards like promotion, pay increments or preferment for those whose actions merit it—and sanctions to rid the organisation of those whose behaviour is seriously unacceptable to merit dismissal.

The propositions placed above cannot be effected in isolation without looking at the broader canvas of the trappings of our subcontinental colonial policing. We have to remember that the "colonial-repressive" character of out policing emerged when the governing elite of a decolonised society had decided to retain the inherited police organisation, bypassing justified demands for change. In other words, we have retained the colonial administrative, police and judicial structures without recasting them to meet the changed situation, although we have adopted a written, liberal democratic constitution.

There is a cynical view that politicians in the subcontinent do not want to professionalise the police service because control over it is central to political conflict in a polarised society. Putting all the blame on the political class, ignoring the less-than-proactive role of police leadership, would be grossly unfair. The imperative, quite clearly, is mental decolonisation to ensure a fair and merit-based police service.

Muhammad Nurul Huda is a former IGP of Bangladesh.



FILE PHOTO: AFP

*It is time to come out of the colonial policing model of order maintenance and reactive strategies and move towards a service culture that requires officers to work with the community.*

take away individual liberty by arrest, questioning about movements, and demanding name, address and proof of identity. Police powers frequently authorise officials to use force if necessary.

In view of the stipulations above, the cleaning endeavour has to ensure that undesirable and unacceptable

have confidence in the rigour of the investigative process. The public needs to be given faith in the fact that allegations of unacceptable behaviour by police officers will be investigated and dealt with. However, it would be pertinent to note that the traditional police discipline code is now of less use to a modern police service. What's

sensitive, and agents of assistance rather than control. There has to be a realisation that police officials are accountable not just for what they do but how they do it; they can no longer be unthinking, unquestioning functionaries accountable only to senior officers. The change has to come through management by leadership

## PROJECT SYNDICATE

# Covid-19 and Human Freedom



JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ

**T**HE upsurge of Covid-19 cases, hospitalisations, and deaths in the United States serves as a bitter reminder that the pandemic is not over. The global economy will not return

to normal until the disease is under control everywhere. But the US case is a true tragedy, because what's currently happening here is so unnecessary. While those in emerging markets and developing countries are longing to get the vaccine (with many dying because they cannot get it), the US supply is ample enough to provide a double dose—and now a booster shot—to everyone in the country. And if almost everyone got vaccinated, Covid-19 would almost surely just "fade away," as former President Donald Trump memorably put it.

And yet not nearly enough people in the US have been vaccinated to prevent the highly contagious Delta variant from driving case numbers in many areas to new highs. How do so many in a country with seemingly well-educated people act so irrationally, against their own interest, against science, and against the lessons of history? Part of the answer is that the country, for all of its wealth, is not as well-educated as one might expect—which is reflected in the country's comparative international performance

on standardised assessments. In many parts of the country—including some with the highest rates of resistance to vaccination—science education is particularly poor, owing to politicisation of fundamental issues like evolution and climate change, which in many cases have been excluded from school curricula.

In this environment, misinformation can gain traction with many people. And social-media platforms, insulated

from liability for what they transmit, have made a business model of maximising "user engagement" by spreading misinformation, including about Covid-19 and the vaccines.

But a key part of the answer is a deep misinterpretation, especially among the right, of individual liberty. Those

who refuse to wear masks or socially distance often argue that requirements to do so infringe on their freedom. But one person's freedom is another person's "unfreedom." If their refusal to wear a mask or get vaccinated results in others getting Covid-19, their behaviour is denying others the more fundamental right to life itself.

The essence of the matter is that there are large externalities: In a pandemic, one person's actions affect

against killing, stealing, and so on restrict an individual's freedom, we all understand that society could not function without them. In our post-Covid world, we might interpret the Ten Commandments to include: "Thou shall not kill, including by spreading infectious diseases when thou can avoid doing so."

Similarly, "Thou shall get vaccinated." Any infringement of an individual's liberty by requiring safe and highly effective Covid-19 vaccination pales in comparison to the social benefits—and consequent economic benefits—of public health. It is a no-brainer to require all individuals, with only limited medical exemptions, to be vaccinated. While many governments appear to be too timid to impose this requirement, employers, schools, and social organisations—any organised activity that brings individuals into contact with others—should do so.

As we have been learning for the last 18 months, global health is a global public good. As long as the disease rages in some parts of the world, the risk of a deadlier, more contagious, more vaccine-resistant mutation grows.

In most of the world, however, the problem is not resistance to vaccination but a severe shortage of vaccines. Evidently, the private sector is unable to scale up production to ensure an adequate supply. Is that because vaccine producers lack capital? Is there a shortage of glass vials or syringes? Or is it because they hope that fewer doses will lead to higher prices and even bigger profits? Among the key barriers to greater supply is access to the

requisite intellectual property, which is why the IP waiver being discussed at the World Trade Organization is so important.

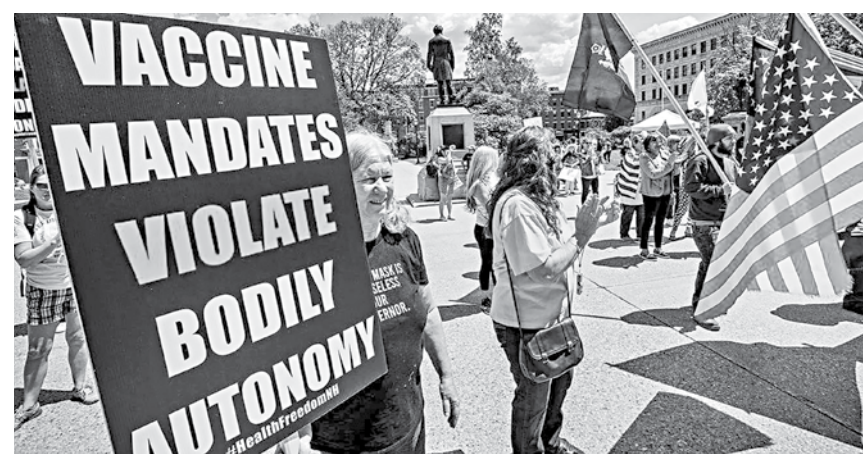
Given the urgency and scale of the challenge, more is needed: Among the steps US President Joe Biden's administration could take is to invoke the Defence Production Act and leverage the federal government's ownership of the patents. The US has been allowing the pharmaceutical companies to use this public IP freely, while they reap billions of dollars in profits. The US must use every instrument at its disposal to increase production at home and abroad.

This, too, is a no brainer. Even if the costs of global vaccination totalled tens of billions of dollars, the amount would pale in comparison to the costs of persistent Covid-19 outbreaks to lives, livelihoods, and the world economy.

Joseph E. Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate in economics, is University Professor at Columbia University and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

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*As we have been learning for the last 18 months, global health is a global public good. As long as the disease rages in some parts of the world, the risk of a deadlier, more contagious, more vaccine-resistant mutation grows.*



**'Those who refuse to wear masks or socially distance often argue that requirements to do so infringe on their freedom. But one person's freedom can be another person's "unfreedom."**

PHOTO: AFP/JOSEPH PREZIOSO

the well-being of others. And whenever there are such externalities, the well-being of society requires collective action: regulations to restrict socially harmful behaviour and to promote socially beneficial behaviour.

Any ordered society entails restrictions. But while prohibitions

restrictions. But while prohibitions

restrictions. But while prohibitions

**QUOTABLE Quote**

**Milton Friedman**  
(1912 – 2006)  
American economist

*History suggests that capitalism is a necessary condition for political freedom. Clearly it is not a sufficient condition.*

**CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Staff symbol
- 5 Crotchety folks
- 11 Turner of Hollywood
- 12 Lighten
- 13 Kitchen fixture
- 14 ATM bill
- 15 Hole number
- 16 Vaccine deliveries
- 17 Film legend Garbo
- 19 Soaking site
- 22 So far
- 24 Went fast
- 26 San Juan Hill setting
- 27 — Major
- 28 Center
- 30 Stable worker
- 31 Blunder
- 32 Exemplary
- 34 Zest source
- 35 Chemist's place
- 38 One-celled creature
- 41 Skilled
- 42 Type of insurance
- 43 Lawyer's job
- 44 Takes the wheel
- 45 Easy run

**DOWN**

- 1 Hoof sound
- 2 Hot flow
- 3 Gym snack
- 4 Team supporter
- 5 Suggest
- 6 Seafood restaurant fixture
- 7 Calls on
- 8 Fellows
- 9 Deposit
- 10 007, for one
- 16 Airport sight
- 18 Caboose setting
- 19 Browser part
- 20 Mexican coin
- 21 Genesis name
- 22 Dull pain
- 23 Litigious one
- 25 Surrounding glow
- 29 Cufflinks' kin
- 30 Hair goo
- 33 Bargains
- 34 Singer Seeger
- 36 In addition
- 37 Sugar source
- 38 Spots on TV
- 39 Convened
- 40 Count start
- 41 Drama division

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

**SUNDAY'S ANSWERS**

W I S H    S L I D E  
I D E A S    T E N O R  
M I S D E M E A N O R  
P O T N I P E M O  
S M E L T S P E E R  
S T A R S A D D S  
T Y P O S

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

**BEETLE BAILEY** BY MORT WALKER

I'LL HAVE SOME MORE OF THAT HASH.

YOU WANT MORE OF THAT FOUL, DISGUSTING CRUP?!

I DIDN'T ASK FOR MORE!

GREG WORTH WALKER

**BABY BLUES** BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

THE DOCTOR SAID THAT I'M TOO SHORT?!

HANNIE, NO.

EVERYONE GROWS AT A DIFFERENT RATE. YOU'RE PERFECTLY NORMAL.

FOR SOME REASON, I'M HUNGRY FOR SHRIMP.

NOT HELPFUL, ZOE.

## Child tortured

FROM PAGE 12  
living in Dubai for the last 13 years, had married Marium's mother Sabina Yasmin eight years back, said family members.

In Dubai, Mostafa met Ripa, got married to her and divorced his first wife when Marium was only four months old, the family said.

When he went back to Dubai, Mostafa left Marium in Ripa's care in Sreepur.

The Sreepur Police Station SI said Marium was tortured and underwent surgery due to infections caused by injuries. Ripa is now in police custody, he said.

## Ragib, three

FROM PAGE 12  
filed with Pirojpur Sadar Police Station on Thursday.

Police in Pirojpur arrested Ragib's two brothers -- Mahmudul Hasan, an imam of a mosque in Pirojpur town, and Khairul Islam. Rab arrested Ragib and his other brother Abul Bashar in Dhaka the same time.

According to media reports, the four brothers allegedly embezzled Tk 17,000 crore from general people through a so-called multi-level marketing (MLM) business. Promising their clients of hefty returns, Ragib lured them into investing in different investment schemes. He allegedly used mosque imams and madrasa teachers in this regard.

After the clients were deceived, some of them held human chains and press conferences seeking justice from the authorities.

Then, cases after cases were filed against Ragib and his brothers.

Four of them were lodged with Pirojpur Sadar Police Station, said its OC Abu Zafar M Masuduzzaman.

## Scientists discover

FROM PAGE 12  
the 8-metre-long dinosaur weighed more than a tonne.

Based on estimations from the analysis of the fossil remains, the scientists say *U. uzbekistanensis* may have been twice the length and over five times heavier than a tyrannosaur.

The jawbone fossil analysed in the study was initially found in Uzbekistan's Kyzylkum Desert in the 1980s, and rediscovered by scientists in 2019 in a museum collection.

"Among theropod dinosaurs, the size of the maxilla (upper jawbone) can be used to estimate the animal's size because it correlates with femur length, a well-established indicator of body size," Tanak said in a statement.

"Thus, we were able to estimate that *Ullughbegsaurus uzbekistanensis* had a mass of over 1,000 kg, and was approximately 7.5 to 8.0 meters in length, greater than the length of a full-grown African elephant," he added.

The study, published in the journal Royal Society Open Science, noted that *U. uzbekistanensis* belongs to a group of "shark-toothed dinosaurs" called carcharodontosaurids.

"The discovery of *Ullughbegsaurus* records the geologically latest stratigraphic co-occurrence of carcharodontosaurid and tyrannosaurid dinosaurs from Laurasia, and evidence indicates carcharodontosaurians remained the dominant predators relative to tyrannosaurids, at least in Asia," the scientists noted in the study.

The scientists say dinosaurs in the carcharodontosaur group were usually larger than tyrannosaurs, sometimes reaching weights greater than 6 tonnes.

## Rain helps fight against 'monster' fire in Spain

AFP, Madrid

Light rain gave some breathing room to crews struggling yesterday to battle a "monster" wildfire in Spain that has killed a firefighter and forced roughly 2,600 people from their homes.

About 500 firefighters and 51 water-dropping planes have been tackling the blaze, which officials believe was started deliberately last Wednesday in the southern Malaga province, the regional government said.

Firefighters were joined on Sunday by some 260 soldiers from the military's emergency brigade as they battled to control the blaze in the Sierra Bermeja mountains.

TV footage showed older residents who had been evacuated to the town of Ronda breaking into applause as it began to rain.

But firefighters said the rain would not be enough to bring the blaze under control.

"The rain will not put out the fire," said regional fire chief Juan Sanchez.

"But in places where we have it under control, it will help shorten the time to extinguish it completely."

The fire, described by local emergency services as "complex and exceptional", has so far destroyed some 8,000 hectares (20,000 acres).

Erratic winds, scorching temperatures and low humidity levels had helped to turn the blaze into a "hungry monster", the region's deputy fire chief Alejandro Garcia said last week.



Residents register to take nucleic acid tests (NAT) at a testing site in Quanzhou, following new cases of the coronavirus disease, in Fujian province, China yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Donors pledge over \$1b in aid

FROM PAGE 12  
advance as the last US-led Nato troops pulled out and the forces of the Western-backed government melted away.

With billions of dollars of aid flows abruptly ending due to Western antipathy and distrust towards the Taliban, donors had a "moral obligation" to keep helping Afghans after a 20-year engagement, several speakers in Geneva said.

Neighbours China and Pakistan had already offered help.

Beijing last week promised \$31 million worth of food and health supplies, and on Friday said it would send a first batch of 3 million coronavirus vaccines.

Pakistan sent food and medicine, and it called for Afghan assets frozen abroad to be released. Iran said it had dispatched an air cargo of aid.

"Past mistakes must not be repeated. The Afghan people must not be abandoned," said Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi,

whose country has close relations with the Taliban and would most likely bear the brunt of an exodus of refugees.

Both China and Russia said the main burden of helping Afghanistan out of crisis should lie with Western countries.

"The US and its allies have a greater obligation to extend economic, humanitarian and livelihood assistance," said Chen Xu, China's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva.

The United States pledged \$64 million in new humanitarian assistance at the conference, while Norway pledged an extra \$11.5 million.

Even before the Taliban's seizure of Kabul last month, half the population - or 18 million people - depended on aid. That looks set to increase due to drought and shortages.

Around \$200 million of the new money is earmarked for the UN World Food Programme, which found that

93% of the 1,600 Afghans it surveyed in August and September were not getting enough to eat.

'BRINK OF STARVATION'  
WFP Executive Director David Beasley said 40% of Afghanistan's wheat crop had been lost, the price of cooking oil had doubled, and most people anyway had no way of getting money, reports Reuters.

While banks have started reopening, the queues for withdrawals are extremely long, and more importantly, no one who depended on the government for a salary - from civil servants to police - has been paid since July.

"Fourteen million people, one out of three, are marching to the brink of starvation. They don't know where their next meal is," Beasley said.

"If we are not very careful, we could truly, truly enter into the abyss in catastrophic conditions, worse than what we see now."

The UN World Health Organization, also part of the appeal,

wants to shore up hundreds of health facilities at risk of closure after donors backed out.

Antonio Vitorino, head of the International Organization for Migration, said the Afghan medical system was "on the verge of collapse", and WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that gains made towards eradicating polio and vaccinating against Covid-19 could unravel.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi warned that there could "very soon" be far greater displacement than the estimated half a million who have already sought refuge elsewhere in Afghanistan this year.

"The physical distance between our nations and Afghanistan shouldn't mislead us," Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu added.

"A humanitarian and security crisis in Afghanistan will have direct implications across the globe. We should take collective action now."

## Time to rethink Ivermectin in Covid-19

FROM PAGE 12  
considerable concerns remain about ivermectin, an anti-parasitic drug. Several hundred million tablets of ivermectin have been used globally, especially in developing and resource-constrained countries. Several observatory studies and others found that the drug may have some beneficial effects on Covid-19 patients. In Bangladesh, ivermectin has been used for both therapeutic and preventive purposes with a propaganda that it is safe, effective and prevents Covid-19.

In this write-up, we address these perceptions about ivermectin one by one. It is not as safe as assumed for human usage. Ivermectin can cause a

severe allergic reaction and troubled breathing, swelling of throat or tongue and skin rash. If used with blood thinning drugs, ivermectin can induce severe bleeding. Although ivermectin has been used in Covid-19 treatment for more than 18 months, there has been no phase II/III clinical trials to optimise this drug.

Ivermectin is also endowed with a counterproductive role in containment of SARS-CoV-2. When one assumes that taking a drug like ivermectin would prevent Covid-19 infection, all public health measures are left behind and jeopardised. Testing becomes irrelevant as ivermectin has been taken, tracing becomes confusing and

voice of reason for usage of "mask" becomes inconsequential whereas the largest study in the world on the effectiveness of masks in preventing Covid-19 has recently been published from Bangladesh.

In the meantime, World Health Organization, Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA, Japan and manufacturer of ivermectin, Merck, have instructed not using the drug in Covid-19 treatment.

If action is not taken against this, we may be thrown into similar dilemma once experienced with thalidomide, when birth defects devastated the world for not properly approving the drug after requisite

clinical trials.

Dr Sheikh Mohammad Fazle Akbar is a researcher at Department of Gastroenterology and Metabolism, Ehime University, Japan.

Professor Mamun Al Mahtab is the chief of Interventional Hepatology Division, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and a member of Strategic and Technical Advisory Group, WHO-SEAR.

References:  
Adverse effects of Ivermectin: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/ivermectin-oral-tablet#interactions>

WHO joins Europe, Merck in recommending against ivermectin for Covid-19 | Reuters

## Podgorny calls for 'speediest political settlement'

FROM PAGE 12  
inalienable rights of people and nations..."

WE ARE TODAY UNITED AS NEVER BEFORE: HOSSAIN ALI  
M Hossain Ali, the high commissioner of Bangladesh in India, today said "politically, we are today united as never before".

"Although the Awami League won absolute majority in the elections, it has now joined hands with other equally dedicated political parties in order to ensure the participation of all shades of people and opinion to carry the liberation struggle to a victorious conclusion," he added.

Hossain Ali was inaugurating the exhibition of sketches by Subal Paul at

the Academy of Fine Arts in Calcutta.

Commenting on the activities of Mukti Bahini, the high commissioner said, "Our death-defying Mukti Bahini are already playing havoc with the enemy. The War of Liberation is gaining momentum every day. Our guerrillas are killing large numbers of West Pakistan soldiers -- they are disrupting their line of communication by blowing up bridges, snapping rail and road communication and also sinking boats and ships which West Pakistan are using to carry their arms, ammunition and troops. Our guerrillas are also systematically wiping out the collaborators inside Bangladesh. The morale of the

Pakistan army has gone down with the colossal loss of their men and material and they are compelled to fall back at different points. The Mukti Bahini is in control of large areas of Bangladesh and already the troops belonging to the so called "Martial Race" are panic-stricken and retreating."

ON THE WAR FRONT  
In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini today ambushed a Pakistani patrol at Bhotemari killing two Pakistani troops. Another group of Mukti Bahini raided the Pakistan position at Mughalhat and seriously injured six soldiers.

In the Kushtia-Jashore-Khulna sector, Mukti Bahini encountered

Pakistani troops in Alfapur area. Seven Pakistani troops and 20 irregulars were killed in the action. Mukti Bahini captured 16 rifles and seven boxes of Chinese ammunition.

CORRIGENDUM  
In yesterday's article it was mistakenly written that Khurram Panni was the first diplomat of ambassadorial rank to defect to the Bangladesh cause.

It was Ambassador Abul Fatheh, Pakistan's ambassador to Iraq, who was the first ambassador to defect to Bangladesh. He defected on 15th August, 1971. We express our sincere regret for this inadvertent error. *Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at [sajen1986@gmail.com](mailto:sajen1986@gmail.com)*

## Med colleges reopen for in-person classes

FROM PAGE 12  
will attend classes in person every day," Dr Enayet Hossain, director general of the Directorate General of Medical Education, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He also said they have inoculated all students and teachers against Covid. "We will bring back third and fourth year students to classes gradually."

At Dhaka Medical College, students attended classes from 9:00am yesterday, maintaining health safety guidelines.

The DMC authorities arranged an orientation class for the first year MBBS students who had been attending their classes virtually since last year.

The students said it was a great day for them.

"We were bored of virtual classes. Today, we joined classes in person for the first time following health safety

guidelines. This was a great day for us," Towhidul Abedin Tanvir, a first-year DMC student from Noakhali, told The Daily Star.

Second-year student Mostafa Anif Faisal said, "We attended classes in person for only two months last year. Since then, we completed our first year courses and had been continuing second-year courses virtually. The wait for in-person classes is over today. It's a great feeling."

According to DMC authorities, classes for second year students will be held from 9:00am to 11:00am while the classes for first year students will be held from 11:30am to 1:00pm regularly.

Besides, classes (practical) for the fifth year students will be held in the morning and night shifts regularly.

"We have around 230 students in each session. So we have started

in-person classes for the students of three sessions from today [yesterday] ensuring that health safety guidelines are maintained," DMC Principal Dr Md Titu Miah told The Daily Star.

Third- and fourth-year students have already been attending classes virtually from 8:00am to 9:00pm every day, he added.

Like DMC, first, second, and fifth year students at three other public medical colleges -- Shahid Shuhrawardy Medical College, Sir Salimullah Medical College and Mugda Medical College -- in the capital also attended their classes in person yesterday.

Similar scenes were seen at the other health institutions across the country yesterday.

Rajshahi Medical College welcomed students to the campus following health rules strictly. They

were greeted with flowers and asked to following the health rules, reports our correspondent.

Dr Nawshad Ali, the college principal, said they began in-person classes for first, second and fifth year students initially as 90 percent of them were vaccinated against Covid.

"The first-year students have received only the first dose. They will be administered the second shot soon," he said.

Teachers took classes dividing the students in two shifts on the first day, Nawshad said, adding that they would call all students to attend classes in person after observing the situation for a month.

In between classes, college staffers were directed to clean the classrooms with disinfectants.

The RMC has a total 1,100 MBBS and 300 BDS students.

## Medvedev foils

FROM PAGE 12  
accomplished in your career... for me, you are the greatest tennis player in the history."

Medvedev, the 2019 US Open runner-up, captured his first Grand Slam title in his third Slam final, a rematch of February's Australian Open final, won in straight sets by the 34-year-old Serbian to launch his Slam quest.

"Congratulations to Daniil. Amazing match," Djokovic said. "If there's anyone that deserves a Grand Slam title right now, it's you."

Djokovic's bid to sweep the US, French and Australian Opens and Wimbledon in the same year for the first time since Rod Laver did it 52 years ago collapsed at the last hurdle, with 83-year-old Aussie legend Laver among 23,700 watching at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"Simply stunning Daniil Medvedev, you stopped one of the greatest tonight," Laver tweeted. "To win your first Grand Slam title is always special, to do it against a champion like Novak Djokovic is something else. Take heart Novak, the quest continues. Best wishes."

## Draft policy

FROM PAGE 12  
He said it is very tough to censor contents on OTT platforms through the censor board.

"It is easy to censor cinemas as 50 to 100 films are released every year. But it is not easy to censor hundreds of contents on the OTT platform. For this, we have made a draft of the policy which we will publish as notification after scrutiny," he added.

He said the policy has been made to protect the country's culture and heritage from deviation and lead the society and its people, including youths.

The minister said currently social media is added with mass media. Social media has given unfettered opportunity to people to express their opinions, said Hasan, also the ruling Awami League's joint general secretary.

At the same time, he said, it was also seen that the social media was being used to create instability in society and spread propaganda against the government or individuals.

The minister said some people are trying to spread rumours and to create confusion among the public by sitting abroad, through social media and online news portals.

"We have taken actions against them on behalf of the government through coordination of other ministries. But, in this case, many times we didn't get proper support which is needed from service providers. For this, we are in discussions with service providers," he added.

The minister said a decision has been taken to take action against those specific persons as per the existing law of the country from where they carry out the propaganda.

## No need for a vaccine third jab booster: study

AFP, Paris

Vaccines are effective enough at preventing severe Covid-19 that there is no current need for the general population to be given third doses, according to a report in The Lancet published yesterday.

Some countries have started offering extra doses over fears about the much more contagious Delta variant, causing the World Health Organization to call for a moratorium on third jabs amid concerns about vaccine supplies to poorer nations, where millions have yet to receive their first jab.

But a report by scientists, including from the WHO, concluded that even with the threat of Delta, "booster doses for the general population are not appropriate at this stage in the pandemic".

The authors, who reviewed observational studies and clinical trials, found that vaccines remain highly effective against severe symptoms of Covid-19, across all the main virus variants including Delta, although they had lower success in preventing asymptomatic disease.

"Taken as a whole, the currently available studies do not provide credible evidence of substantially declining protection against severe disease, which is the primary goal of vaccination," said lead author Ana-Maria Henao-Restrepo, of the WHO.

She said vaccine doses should be prioritised to people around the world still waiting for a jab.

"If vaccines are deployed where they would do the most good, they could hasten the end of the pandemic by inhibiting further evolution of variants," she added.

Countries like France have started distributing third jabs to the elderly and people with compromised immune systems, while Israel has gone further, offering children 12 and older a third dose five months after full vaccination.

The Lancet study concluded that the current variants had not developed sufficiently to escape the immune response provided by vaccines currently in use.

# SPORT

## What to WATCH

**T SPORTS BPL**  
Bashundhara Kings vs Saif Sporting  
Live from 4:00 pm  
Sri Lanka vs South Africa (3rd T20I)  
Live from 7:30 pm

**SONY TEN 1**  
**UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**  
Young Boys vs Manchester United  
Live from 10:45 pm  
Chelsea vs Zenit  
Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)  
**SONY TEN 2**

**UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**  
Barcelona vs Bayern Munich  
Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)  
**SONY SIX** **UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**  
Malmö FF vs Juventus  
Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)



## 'I'M JUST HAPPY TO WIN A MAJOR'

AFP, New York



Being disrupted by hecklers while serving for the match only made Daniil Medvedev's first Grand Slam title that much sweeter when it came Sunday at the expense of Novak Djokovic in the US Open final.

World number two Medvedev ripped top-ranked Djokovic 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 to deny the Serbian star the first Grand Slam sweep since 1969 and a men's record 21st career major title.

"He definitely was not at his best. We saw him playing better," Medvedev said. "Question is, if he would be, would I be able to cope up with him? We can never know now. I'm just happy to win."

The 34-year-old Djokovic was trying to become the first man in over a half-century to win all four majors (Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, U.S. Open) in the same year.

It would have made him only the third man to achieve the feat after Don Budge (1938) and Rod Laver (1962 and 1969), who was watching from a court-side seat.

"It's a tough one to swallow, this loss, considering everything that was on the line," said Djokovic. "I was glad it was over because the build-up for this tournament and everything that mentally, emotionally I had to deal with throughout the tournament in the last couple of weeks was just a lot. It was a lot to handle."

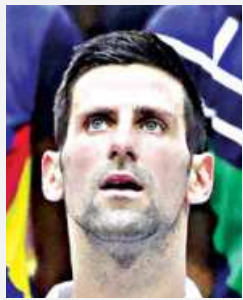
The breakthrough came in Medvedev's third Slam final after losses to Rafael Nadal in the 2019 US Open final and Djokovic in February's Australian Open final.

"A lot of happiness. That's my first Grand Slam," Medvedev said. "So I'm really happy. Means a lot to me. I'm definitely going to be celebrating the next few days."

It also came after some spectators tried to disrupt him as he served for the match in the final set. Medvedev double faulted on two match points before hitting a service winner for the triumph. "It was definitely tough. I knew that the only thing I can do is focus. They wanted to see their guy win a

"I was below par with everything, to be honest. So just one of these days where unfortunately, yeah, wasn't meant to be."

NOVAK DJOKOVIC



calendar Grand Slam," Medvedev said. Medvedev has never been ranked higher than second, but there's a sense his Slam breakthrough might inspire a fight to claim the number one spot -- one day.

"I'm just happy to win a major," he said. "That's not my first goal in my mind to try to achieve it this year. If I manage to do it one day, it's great."

Medvedev's coach, Frenchman Gilles Cervara, expects to see a higher level. "To beat Novak, in Grand Slam, it's a big thing. In final, it's another big thing," Cervara said. "I guess it will make him be at another level also. For sure it will be different."

## 'My aim will always remain to finish the game'

Wicket-keeper batsman Nurul Hasan Sohan's story is nothing short of a heroic tale where the 27-year-old made his comeback to international cricket after more than four years earlier this year and eventually went on to become the first-choice keeper for Bangladesh in the upcoming ICC World T20 squad. Nurul opens up and shares his philosophy towards the game along with few other topics during an exclusive interview with The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin. The excerpts of the interview are given below:



The Daily Star (DS): Since making a comeback to the national team in Zimbabwe earlier this year, things changed dramatically for you in the last three series. Now you are considered as the first-choice wicket-keeper for the Tigers in the upcoming World T20. Tell us about the new beginning.

Nurul Hasan Sohan (NHS): Previously when I played for the national team I used to think a lot about my performance whether I did well enough or not. But since I was out of the national team, during that period I just asked myself one question: am I giving my best or not after every training or match? For me, it was a great learning experience where I developed this mentality of not overthinking about everything that was beyond my control, rather I started focusing only on my process and working hard. I think it was a big lesson for me when I was out of the national team. As there are bound to be frustrations when you are out of the setup, it's important to have faith in yourself and keep working hard.

DS: Were you under pressure?

NHS: Obviously when you play for the national team there is always pressure but at the same time whoever plays for the national team receives great support from team members. Yes, there will be competition for the place but as it's a team game, those who are out of the playing eleven or otherwise, everyone tries to support each other. For example, in the last home series against Australia and New Zealand there were a lot of talks regarding the nature of the pitch. But as players, we knew that even scoring ten runs on such surfaces is equivalent to scoring thirty. So everyone realised the importance of those small contributions and kept the negative aspects aside.

DS: Considering your batting position, you must be working on becoming the finisher for the Tigers?

NHS: To be very honest, I'm not at all bothered about my individual goal rather I want to contribute for my team in any way possible. I'm not the type who'll give excuses over a situation, rather I'll take the blame if I'm not able to perform according to the demand of the situation. Scoring 50s or hundreds may be a great achievement for the batters who bat up at the top-order but for me it's different. I can't think of those milestones as being the lower-middle-order batsman whereas my aim will always remain to finish the game.

DS: There has been plenty of buzz over your competition with Mushfiqur Rahim for the wicket-keeping spot during the New Zealand series. How did you take that?

NHS: Mushfiq bhai [Mushfiqur Rahim] has been playing international cricket for more than 16 years now, so there is no point in talking about the competition between us. To me, he is one of the best wicket-keeper batsmen in world cricket. If he didn't sacrifice his keeping, I would've never been able to play. I tried to stay honest



not just with Mushfiq bhai but also with everyone and gave my best. Mushfiq bhai remained supportive towards me and he has always been like this to any youngsters over the years. There may have been a lot of talks outside the team or on social media so I even deactivated my Facebook during that time. To be honest, what is said outside the team hardly matters to me and there is nothing to prove to them.

DS: How do you see Bangladesh's chances in the upcoming World T20?

NHS: Once again I will say there might be a lot of talk over the pitch we played at home recently but the wins over Australia and New Zealand will surely boost our morale in the world cup. If it was an individual game then it would've been different but as it's a team game you definitely want the self-belief which can only arrive by winning matches together. So I honestly believe that we can work wonders in the upcoming World Cup if we are able to perform as a unit.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Raja names Hayden, Philander as Pak coaches

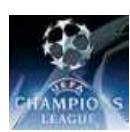
Former Pakistan captain Ramiz Raja has been elected the new chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for a tenure of three years after winning an unopposed election, the country's cricket board announced on Monday. Raja also announced that former Australian opener Matthew Hayden and former South African all-rounder Vernon Philander were signed up as head coach and bowling coach respectively for the Twenty20 World Cup that begins next month. Hayden and Philander replace Misbah-ul-Haq and Waqar Younis after both coaches stepped down from their respective roles shortly after the World Cup squad was named last week.

#### Taylor retires from international cricket

Zimbabwe batsman Brendan Taylor has announced his retirement from international cricket, posting on social media that Monday's 50-overs match against Ireland in Belfast will be his last. The former captain engineered a number of stunning wins for his embattled team, scoring 60 not out in a Twenty20 international upset against Australia in 2007 and an unbeaten 105 in a Test against Bangladesh, which ended a six-year hiatus in the longest format. The 35-year-old has scored 2,320 runs in 34 tests and 6,677 runs in 204 ODIs, notching 17 international centuries, the most of any Zimbabwean.

## New starts for Messi, Ronaldo

AGENCIES



The 2020-21 UEFA Champions League gets underway tonight with holders Chelsea among 32 teams aiming for the final in Saint Petersburg. Matchday 1 offers some world-class clashes.

Following his arrival in Paris this summer, Lionel Messi can play his first game for his new side when they kick off away to Club Brugge on Wednesday.

Cristiano Ronaldo could play his first European game for Manchester United since a 2-0 defeat in the 2009 final against Messi's Barcelona. Ronaldo leads Messi 134-120 in the competition's all-time scorers list.

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, however, said he will carefully manage Ronaldo's playing time. "It's not impossible to leave him out. He is 36. Mason (Greenwood) is 19 so it's the same, I have to manage his minutes and I have to manage a



36-year-old's minutes as well," he said.

Ronaldo, who scored a brace on his second debut in Saturday's 4-1 win against Newcastle, was included in the 22-man squad.



Chelsea return to the fray with a home game against Russian champions Zenit, whose Gazprom Arena will stage this season's UEFA Champions League final.

Barcelona face Bayern again, without Messi, after year of upheaval and change. "We need change from top to bottom," Gerard Pique said but even he could not have predicted what followed as Barcelona, without Lionel Messi, reunite with Bayern Munich on Tuesday, a year on from the defeat that changed everything.

After the 8-2 loss by Bayern in the Champions League quarter-finals, Pique said Barca needed change of all kinds, "not just players and coaches, but structurally", insisting "new blood" was needed. "We are not able to compete in Europe," he said.

Amazingly, Matchday 1 brings only the third competitive meeting for AC Milan and Liverpool. The first was Liverpool's shoot-out success in the 2005 UEFA Champions League football: the 'Miracle of Istanbul', in which the Reds hauled back a 3-0 deficit to triumph. Milan fans, though, will remember the last encounter more fondly, the Rossoneri beating the Reds 2-1 in the 2007 decider in Athens.



### BENZEMA GRABS TREBLE AS REAL WIN SEVEN-GOAL THRILLER

Real Madrid's Karim Benzema netted a hat-trick as they capped their return to the refurbished Santiago Bernabeu stadium with a thrilling 5-2 comeback win over Celta Vigo in LaLiga on Sunday. The Frenchman was unplayable at times as Madrid were reunited with their fans for the first time since March 1, 2020. They played the whole of last season at reserve team Castilla's Alfredo Di Stefano ground at their training complex. "It's a special night for us with the fans here and the atmosphere. It was a little strange to be playing in front of fans again, but they got right behind us. We need their support and they gave us everything today," said Benzema.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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## CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

# Donors pledge over \$1b in aid

WFP says 14m people 'on brink of starvation' after Taliban takeover

AGENCIES

Donors have pledged more than \$1.1 billion to help Afghanistan, where poverty and hunger have spiralled since the Islamist Taliban took power, and foreign aid has dried up, raising the spectre of a mass exodus.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, speaking halfway through a UN conference seeking \$606 million to meet Afghanistan's most pressing needs, said it was too early to say how much had been promised in response to the appeal.

After decades of war and suffering, Afghans are facing "perhaps their most perilous hour", he said.

"The people of Afghanistan are facing the collapse of an entire country — all at once."

He said food could run out by the end of this month, and the World Food Programme said 14 million people were on the brink of starvation.

The Taliban ruled Afghanistan according to their strict interpretation of Islamic law from 1996-2001 and were toppled in an invasion led by the United States, which accused them of sheltering militants behind the September 11 attacks.

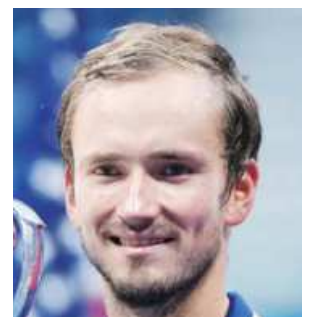
They swept back to power last month in a lightning

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Hundreds of vessels moored next to each other in the Karnaphuli makes a sight to behold but such anchoring of ships renders passage of other vessels difficult and rather risky at night. The photo was taken recently from the Bariki Building area of Chattogram city.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



## Medvedev foils Djokovic's record bid

AFP, New York

Daniil Medvedev shattered Novak Djokovic's Grand Slam dream with a straight sets victory in the US Open final here Sunday, denying the world number one a record-breaking 21st major men's singles title.

Russia's second-ranked Medvedev dominated Djokovic 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 to prevent the first calendar-year Grand Slam since 1969 and keep Djokovic level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal atop the career Slam title list.

"Sorry for you fans and Novak because we all know what he was going for," Medvedev said.

"What you have

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## Draft policy for OTT platforms already made

Says info minister; govt to prosecute people spreading rumours from abroad

STAR REPORT

The government has drafted a policy to regulate over-the-top platforms, which allows viewers to stream contents through the internet.

In addition, the government has taken the decision to begin prosecuting individuals involved in spreading rumours from abroad.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday informed the above during a meeting of his ministry at the Secretariat, reports BSS.

Examples of OTT platforms are Netflix, Hoichoi, Amazon Prime, etc.

"OTT platform is now a reality of growing demand. But, there has been no approval system for releasing cinema, drama, web series or any other content on OTT platform till now. We've already made a primary draft on the policy for OTT platform," he told newsmen.

The minister hoped that his ministry could issue a notification of the policy soon.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

## ROAD TO FREEDOM

THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

# Podgorny calls for 'speediest political settlement'

SEPTEMBER 14, 1971  
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

YAHYA IN TEHRAN  
Pakistan President Yahya Khan flew to Tehran today for a two-day visit, and was met at the Airport by the Shah of Iran. Informed sources said the two leaders were expected to discuss the Bangladesh crisis.

The Tehran Journal said the forthcoming 2500th anniversary celebrations of the Persian empire in October 1971 could provide a favourable opportunity to arrange a meeting between Yahya Khan and Indian leaders attending the celebration.

**PODGORNY-ZAHIR SHAH MEETING**  
Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny today called for the "speediest political settlement" in Bangladesh as a condition for preservation of peace in South Asia.

He was speaking at a kremlin banquet in honour of the visiting Afghan King, Muhammed Zahir Shah.

The Soviet president said, "An aggravation of the situation in the Asian subcontinent has taken place lately." The problem of refugees, he observed, rose in connection with known events in Bangladesh.

King Zahir Shah in his reply to the Soviet president's banquet speech, said, "In our opinion any use of military pressure for the solution of disputes leads to dangerous consequences. All differences should be resolved politically with due regard for the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



## Child tortured by stepmother dies at DMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A two-and-a-half-year-old girl died Sunday at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital after fighting for her life for a month following alleged abuse by her stepmother in Gazipur.

Marium Akter, daughter of Mostafa Kamal who works in Dubai, was undergoing treatment at DMCH for the last month. She died around 6:30pm on Sunday, said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a sub-inspector of Sreepur Police Station.

On August 14, Mostafa Kamal's father Afaz Uddin filed a case against his daughter-in-law, Alifa Akter Ripa, 30, with Sreepur Police Station, saying she had abused the child to create pressure on her husband to transfer ownership of a multi-storey building Mostafa had constructed in Sreepur to her.

Mostafa, who has been

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Scientists discover 26-foot-long 'shark-toothed' dinosaur

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have discovered a new gigantic dinosaur with shark-like teeth that lived 90 million years ago and was an apex predator of its time, ruling the food chain on land before the advent of the Tyrannosaurus rex.

A fossil jawbone of the beast, now named *Ulughbegsaurus uzbekistanensis*, was unearthed in Uzbekistan, representing the first record of an apex predator dinosaur of this era from Central Asia.

According to the researchers, including Kohei Tanaka from the State Geological Museum of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Med colleges reopen for in-person classes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

First, second and final year students of all medical colleges and other health institutions across the country resumed their in-person classes yesterday with much enthusiasm after about one and a half years.

All educational institutions, including all 43 public and 70 private medical colleges and about 40 health education institutes, were closed on March 17 last year to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Since then, medical colleges and other institutions had been conducting most of their classes online.

"We conducted academic activities virtually during the long closure. However, students of different batches used to attend practical classes before exams and take exams in person. From now on, all the three batches

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

## EMBEZZLING VIA MLM

# Ragib, three brothers on 7-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A Pirojpur court yesterday granted a seven-day remand for Ehsan Group Chairman Ragib Ahsan and his three brothers in a money embezzlement case.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Md Mohiuddin passed the order after the four brothers were produced before his court, said Public Prosecutor Khan M Alauddin.

The PP said the case was

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Many of the old trees on Indira Road between Farmgate intersection and Khamar Bari intersection have been chopped down for development work. The logs have been kept beside the pavement of the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Park which is being used as a construction site for the metro rail project. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

**Star HEALTHLINE**

## Time to rethink Ivermectin in COVID-19 TREATMENT?

SHEIKH MOHAMMAD FAZLE AKBAR and PROF MAMUN AL MAHTAB

After the emergence of the pandemic, several repurposed antiviral drugs such as hydroxychloroquine, ivermectin, favipiravir, remdesivir, nitazoxanide, and lopinavir/ritonavir were provided emergency authorisation approval as there was no direct antiviral drug for Covid-19.

Hydroxychloroquine is no more used and limited efficacy of most of these drugs have been reported.

At this moment,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

**BEACON**  
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**PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 14**

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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION