

BORDER TENSIONS
India tells China troop pullback needed for better ties
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"If tuition fees are high, school authorities can allow guardians to pay those in instalments."
DIPU MONI SAID IN CHANDPUR YESTERDAY



"Illegal occupants residing at residential halls or dormitories of universities should be stopped."
ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES MINISTER OBAIDUL QUADER SAID YESTERDAY



"The staggering inequity and severe lag in shipments of vaccines threatens to turn areas in Africa ... into breeding grounds for vaccine-resistant variants."
WHO'S AFRICA DIRECTOR MATSHIDISO MOETI



ROAD TRANSPORT ACT

LAW LEFT CRIPPLED when crashes leap



- Several sections of the 2018 act ineffective even after three years
- Demands of transport associations get priority
- Country sees **40%** rise in road accidents, deaths this year

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Although the Road Transport Act was passed three years ago, its rules have not been formulated yet, preventing the authorities from executing some vital sections of the law which aims to curb crashes and bring discipline to the road transport sector.

In the meantime, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) continues to carry out its day-to-day functions, including issuing vehicles' registration and fitness certificates, following the rules of the now-defunct Motor Vehicles Ordinance-1983.

Under those rules, however, compensations cannot be handed to road

accident victims and their families. So, they have to wait for the formation of a government trustee board under the new rules to get the compensation.

Road safety campaigners say several key sections of the Road Transport Act-2018 remain "ineffective" following "negotiations" between transport associations and the government since November 2019.

Also, at a time when the draft rules are still at the law ministry for vetting, the government has taken a move to amend the act in face of demands from road transport platforms. The government has already prepared a draft in this regard.

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A child sleeps precariously on the median barrier of a busy street in the capital's Kakrail area. His mother left him unattended while she was asking for alms from cars stuck near the traffic lights around noon on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PM off to New York

To attend UNGA session in her first foreign trip during pandemic

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina left Dhaka for the US yesterday morning to attend the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, with a scheduled stopover in Finland.

A VIP chartered flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the PM took off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Finnish capital Helsinki at 9:10am.

The flight reached Helsinki at 3:37pm (local time) yesterday. Ambassador of Bangladesh in Finland (non-resident) Md Nazmul Islam received the PM at Vantaa

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Liabilities transfer was Evaly trick

CEO of the e-commerce company planned to file bankruptcy as last resort, Rab says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amidst crushing liabilities of Evaly, its CEO Mohammad Rassel was eyeing two possible escape routes: Either sell Evaly to a foreign investor or file for bankruptcy.

Commander Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, told a press briefing yesterday that Rassel planned to get the controversial e-commerce company enlisted in the stock market at the end of the third year of its operation so as to be able to put some of the liabilities on the market. The company's expenditures were borne from the money paid by the shoppers, Moin said. "As a result, the liabilities started to increase gradually."

Since they were arrested on Thursday evening, Rassel and his wife Evaly Chairman Shamima Nasrin told investigators that the company's total liability was over Tk 1,000 crore.

A Rab official, wishing not to be named,

- Total liabilities now over Tk **1,000**cr
- It owes four large companies over Tk **200**cr

said Evaly owes four of the country's largest companies over Tk 200 crore. There are a host of other businesses waiting for payment of their supplied goods.

"Rassel was planning to file for bankruptcy if the company failed to

clear the debts," Moin said. "There was only Tk 30 lakh in the bank accounts of Evaly. Besides this, Tk 30-35 crore paid by the shoppers was with several online payment gateways."

Asked how customers and vendors will get their money back, the Rab director said it was for the government agencies concerned to decide.

In late June, the government ordered that payment gateways would not pay the e-commerce companies until the consumers get their deliveries.

According to Rab, Rassel owns properties and assets in Savar.

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SCHOOL TUITION FEE Instalment can be an option if amount is big

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Dipu Moni has said the school authorities concerned can allow guardians to pay tuition fees in instalments if those are big.

She said no one can realise fees from a student or a guardian while handing out assignments to students and submission of those.

The minister was speaking to reporters at Chandpur Circuit House after inaugurating the construction work of a school building yesterday.

"Schools reopened after a long closure. So many students might not have deposited tuition and other fees. If tuition fees are high, school authorities can allow guardians to pay those in instalments," Dipu Moni said.

She urged guardians capable of paying tuition fees to pay it regularly.

In-person classes at schools and colleges resumed on September 12 after the educational institutions remained shut for 543 days due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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CAAB, healthcare facilities at odds

PCR LAB AT SHAHJALAL AIRPORT



RASHIDUL HASAN

Complications have arisen regarding setting up rapid RT-PCR labs at the Dhaka airport to test outgoing passengers for Covid-19, continuing the uncertainty surrounding the return of around 30,000 expatriate workers to their workplaces in the UAE.

The seven facilities made responsible for testing the workers said in a meeting with Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) officials on Thursday that the venue provided to them is unsuitable, and there is the added complication of their standard operating procedures being approved by UAE authorities.

In this context, sources at the expatriates' welfare ministry and Caab failed to say exactly when the labs would be set up at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA).

Following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directives to setting up rapid

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BANGABANDHU BRIDGE 45pc bearings problematic

Authorities to replace those

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Around 45 percent pot bearings, a vital element for load transmission, of Bangabandhu Bridge have been found problematic and require replacement.

Although experts don't see any immediate threat to the 4.8-kilometre bridge due to the problem, they said delay in replacement may cause damage to the large structure.

Bridges Division has already directed the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to replace those bearings after communicating with the Italian company which supplied those.

The country's largest bridge on the Jamuna river, which was opened to traffic in 1998, is a vital strategic economic road, rail, energy and telecommunication link between its northern and southern parts.

Bridges Division on August 24 held a meeting on the operation and

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Police get Evaly CEO Mohammad Rassel, in black polo shirt, off a microbus in front of a court in Old Dhaka to produce him before it in a case filed over embezzling money. Rassel's wife Shamima Nasrin, chairman of the e-commerce company, was also produced before the court yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

2YRS OF CASINO DRIVES

Online gambling now uncontrolled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It all started with a buzz -- raiding well-known sporting clubs only to discover running of gambling and illegal casino business where ruling party leaders were at the helm.

Although the month-long drive largely contained sporting club-based gambling, online gambling continues, dodging the law enforcers' eyes.

On September 18, 2019, the much-talked about crackdown on gambling, extortion, land grabbing and other forms of corruption started with raids in five sporting clubs.

Though government high-ups repeatedly hinted that the drive would continue, it apparently lost steam after a series of raids that saw the arrests of over 250 people, including several leaders of different affiliated bodies of ruling Awami League. There has been no such drives since November 1 that year.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director, legal and media wing of Rab that spare-headed the drives, said now the club-based casino and gambling has been contained. "We are collecting intelligence. If we found any such activities again, we will re-launch drives."

He, however, admitted that online-based gambling was going on and their cyber monitoring unit was on alert.

"Whenever we get information, we launch raids," he added. On September 14, detectives arrested three members of an online gambling gang -- Delwar Hossain, Mohiuddin and Jamal Mia -- in the capital's Demra area.

In May, Anti-Terrorism Unit held four members of a gang on charge of smuggling money using a social media gambling app called StreamKar. Using various apps and sites, online gambling continues, say law enforcers.

They said online gambling is being done during cricket matches through bitcoin or digital currency (cryptocurrency). They said crores of taka are being

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BANGLADESH UPDATE



1,907
New cases in 24hrs



15,40,110
Total cases



27,147
Deaths



14,97,009
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



46,86,050
Deaths



22,79,23,189
Total cases

ROHINGYA REPATRIATION

Dhaka seeks help from C'wealth

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has sought the Commonwealth's solidarity for smooth repatriation of Rohingyas to their home in Myanmar's Rakhine.

Leading the Bangladesh delegation in the 21st Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting (CFAMM), he urged Commonwealth to assist in persuading the government of Myanmar to follow their commitments.

Momen highlighted the current impasse over the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) voluntary repatriation to Myanmar and their partial relocation to Bhasan Char.

He also sought efforts to boost up intra-Commonwealth trade, ensure vaccine equity and result-oriented climate action.

Commonwealth leaders have commended Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's humanitarian role in taking the bold decision to give shelter to a huge number of FDMNs and thus saving thousands of innocent lives.

They also appreciated her leadership at the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF). They made these comments during the 21st CFAMM held virtually in London on Thursday.

The foreign minister informed the Commonwealth leaders of the initiatives undertaken as the Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF).

The Foreign Minister also called

upon further collaboration between the Commonwealth and the CVF.

Momen urged the Commonwealth member states to stand together more than ever for trade and economic recovery which was hampered due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

He also called upon the post-pandemic Commonwealth to demonstrate Commonwealth solidarity, connectivity and collective action to build back a more resilient, greener and sustainable post-coronavirus recovery.

The foreign minister informed the meeting that as the leading country for the Commonwealth Business-to-Business Connectivity Cluster, Bangladesh has relentlessly championed for connecting the Commonwealth private sectors for creating a tech-driven low carbon business recovery model and a Commonwealth digital marketplace at the first High-level CW B2B Connectivity Dialogue organised by Bangladesh in November 2020.

Elizabeth Truss MP, the UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs chaired this meeting where Commonwealth Secretary General and Foreign Ministers of the Commonwealth countries were present.

Before this meeting, the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana was held on September 14, 2021, which was chaired by Momen.



Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque, left, sees off Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday. The premier left Dhaka for New York to attend the 76th United Nations General Assembly. Ministers, high officials and the chiefs of the three forces were also present at the airport to see her off.

PHOTO: PID

Law left crippled when crashes leap

FROM PAGE 1

The government says the law is supposed to bring discipline in the road transport sector and curb road crashes. But after three years, road safety has not improved, rather it has only worsened.

The country witnessed a 40 per cent rise in road accidents and deaths till July this year compared to the same period last year, shows police data.

As many as 3,095 people were killed in 3,259 road crashes till July this year, shows the data.

The numbers of road accidents and deaths were 2,609 and 2,635 respectively in 2018. The numbers rose to 4,198 and 3,918 respectively last year, according to the data.

Different road safety platforms say the numbers are much higher.

Talking on the issue, Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said the road transport sector was one of the few sectors where transport owners' and workers' bodies hold enormous power due to their leaders' direct links with the ruling party.

"So, the law is not being implemented properly here," Jyotirmoy, also the vice chairman of Road Safety Foundation, told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

THE MUCH-TALKED ABOUT ACT
On September 19, 2018, the Jatiya Sangsad passed the Road Transport Act following an unprecedented student protest for road safety.

But the law did not come into effect until November 2019 as road transport associations called strikes against several sections of the law in October 2018.

The government, following a meeting between the home minister and transport leaders in November 2019, decided not to enforce several sections of the act till June 2020.

The government decided not to penalise those who drive large vehicles with licences for light or medium sized vehicles for that period. Later, the deadline was extended for another year.

The authorities would also not impose a fine on any vehicles that were modified for carrying containers. Commercial vehicles would also not be fined for illegal parking if there was no parking space.

Hossain Ahmed Majumdar, joint secretary of Bangladesh Covered-van Owners Association, admitted that police still do not file cases for operating such modified vehicles and the BRTA still issues fitness clearances to them.

IMPLEMENTATION YET TO

START FOR SOME SECTIONS

Under the Motor Vehicles Ordinance-1983, road crash victims or their family members had the opportunity to seek compensations from the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal for death, injuries, and damages to properties.

But the ordinance was repealed after the act in question came into force in November 2019, narrowing victims' scope for getting compensations.

In some cases, victims can now file writs with the High Court to get compensation.

As per the act, the government will create a fund for compensating and treating, if necessary, road crash victims.

The fund would be created with one-time or annual "contributions" from motor vehicle owners, transport associations, and the government.

The government will form a trustee board to manage the fund and related issues, the act says.

The relevant rules, however, have not been formulated.

The ministry on December 22 last year issued a circular, making BRTA chairman and its secretary the chairman and secretary of the trustee board with immediate effect.

BRTA Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder on Thursday said other members of the board were nominated and the ministry was expected to issue a gazette in this regard soon.

"We are expecting to hold our first meeting next week to discuss the organogram of the board and manpower recruitment issues," he told The Daily Star.

However, the trustee board cannot deal with compensation-related issues until the relevant rules are formulated.

As per section 11 of the act, each driver will have 12 points against his or her driving licence and the point would be cut for violating traffic rules. His or her licence can also be cancelled for repeated offences.

The way the points would be cut or added would be determined by the rules.

BRTA officials said as the point-related issue is new in the country, they cannot be implemented until formulation of the rules.

WHEN WILL THE RULES COME?

After the law was passed, the road transport and bridges ministry tasked the BRTA with formulating a draft of the rules. After missing four deadlines,

BRTA submitted a "partial" draft.

But the law ministry, where the draft was sent for vetting in 2019, rejected it and asked for a "complete" one.

The BRTA prepared the "completed" rules and sent them to the road transport ministry in September last year. The ministry sent the draft to the law ministry again in April this year, said officials aware of the development.

The draft is still pending with the law ministry for vetting, an additional secretary of the road transport ministry said on Tuesday.

Once vetted, it will be sent to the finance ministry for approval, as there are some issues related to fees for traffic rules violation, the additional secretary said, seeking anonymity.

The Cabinet Division's approval would also be required before making the rules functional, he said, adding, "So it is not possible to say when the rules would come into action."

Asked about the delay in framing the rules, the BRTA chairman said, "Formulation of a law or rules usually takes some time."

MOVE FOR AMENDING LAW

In April, the road transport ministry uploaded a draft of the amended law on its official website. It held an inter-ministerial meeting on August 30 to discuss opinions from line ministries and individuals concerned on the draft.

As per the draft, at least 29 of the 126 sections of the act will be amended and punishment or fine under at least 14 sections would be reduced.

The law, if amended as per the draft, will lose its jurisdiction to hold a driver responsible for causing injuries by reckless and negligent driving.

The jurisdiction will only be applicable when someone dies in an accident.

The educational qualifications required to obtain a driving licence will also be changed. Drivers, who will operate registered three-wheelers, will get licences if they have a class-five certificate, instead of class eight, says the draft.

The Daily Star tried to contact Road Transport and Highway Division Secretary Nazrul Islam for comments, but could not reach him over the phone.

Talking on the issue, Jyotirmoy Barua said, "The move to amend the law even before its full implementation is nothing but a compromise [with transport associations]."

CAAB, healthcare facilities

FROM PAGE 1

PCR lab for Covid-19 tests for outbound passengers at the country's three international airports within three to four days, the expatriates' welfare ministry on September 15 gave permission to seven healthcare facilities to set up labs at HSIA.

The seven firms chosen by the Directorate General of Health Services are: Stenz Healthcare (BD) Limited; CSBF Health Centre; AMZ Hospital Limited; Anwar Khan Modern Medical College Hospital; Zainul Haque Sikder Women's Medical College and Hospital (Pvt) Ltd; Gulshan Clinic Limited; and DMFR Molecular Lab and Diagnostic.

The facilities were given between three to six days to set up the labs and the fees for the Covid-19 test were fixed between Tk 1,700 and Tk 2,300.

Caab on Thursday held a meeting at its headquarters in the city's Kurmitola with representatives of the seven facilities and asked them to set up the labs at the open space on the roof of the multi-storied parking building to the north of HSIA.

The representatives however said the open roof is not suitable for setting up rapid-PCR labs.

Another complication is that, the seven organisations will have to send their SOPs to the UAE to verify whether they are up to requisite standards.

"If UAE raises objections about the SOP of any healthcare facilities, they will not get the job," an official who had knowledge of the meeting said.

Caab chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman, who chaired the meeting, wanted to know from the seven organisations how long they would take to set up the labs and the number of manpower needed, meeting sources said.

Representatives of the seven organisations said temperatures on the roof and wind will create obstacles to testing activities.

They demanded that Caab allocates spaces to set up labs on the second floor of the car park.

"There are various obstacles in setting up rapid-PCR test lab in an

open space. Besides, setting up tents or mobile sheds will also not be possible to carry out test," a representative of one of the seven healthcare facilities said.

Caab, however, rejected their objections, saying they have already informed the intended organisations that space will be provided on the roof for setting up the lab.

"Those who will work will have to create an environment for setting up labs at their own expense. If the lab is not set up within the stipulated time after receiving the work order, action will be taken against the respective organisation," he said.

In August, the UAE lifted ban on flight operations from Bangladesh and several other countries but made the rapid PCR test result mandatory for passengers flying in from Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia and Indonesia.

Since then, the expatriate Bangladeshis in UAE, who sent home about 10 percent of the \$24.8 billion of remittance the country received in the last fiscal year, have been demanding setting up of rapid PCR test labs at the country's three international airports.

India vaccine tycoon calls Covid booster shots 'unethical'

AFP, Mumbai

The head of the world's largest vaccine maker said yesterday it was "unethical" to give third doses of the Covid-19 vaccine while developing nations are struggling to access first and second jobs.

Adar Poonawalla, billionaire chief executive of Serum Institute of India, spoke out as he announced a \$4.9 billion deal to take a 15 percent stake in a rival pharma firm, allowing vaccine production to be ramped up.

PM off to New York

FROM PAGE 1

International Airport, Helsinki.

This is Hasina's first foreign trip since the Covid-19 pandemic hit Bangladesh in March last year. She will attend the UNGA for the 18th time as the head of the government and will address the General Debate on September 24.

Tomorrow, Hasina will leave Helsinki for New York by a VIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines at 3:00pm (local time). The flight is scheduled to land at John F Kennedy International Airport, New York, at 6:00pm (local time).

She will stay at Hotel Lotte Palace during her stay in New York from September 19 to 25 as part of her official visit to attend the UNGA and a number of high-level events there.

The premier will also hold talks with a number of leaders during her stay in New York. She is likely to return home on October 1.

On Monday, Hasina will attend a closed-door meeting on climate change at the UN Headquarters, plant a tree and dedicate a bench at the UN Gardens in honour of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the occasion of his birth centenary, and lay a floral wreath at the Peace Memorial on the North Lawn of UNHQ.

She will sit in two bilateral meetings with EU Council President Charles Michel and Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Motley. Besides, she will join a virtual event of Sustainable Development Solution Network.

On Tuesday, the PM will attend the

opening session of the UNGA General Debate, sit in a bilateral meeting with Denmark Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen in the afternoon and join Business Roundtable by US-Bangladesh Business Council.

Hasina on Wednesday will virtually attend three events -- the high-level meeting of the UNGA to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, White House Global Covid-19 Summit and a high-level event on Rohingya crisis.

On Thursday, the Bangladesh PM will send her pre-recorded statements to two events. She will sit in four bilateral meetings with Queen Mxima of the Netherlands at the place of residence, UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and Vietnam President Nguyễn Xuân Phúc at the UNHQ.

The Bangladesh prime minister on Friday will address the UNGA 76th general debate in the morning, sit in a bilateral meeting with Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte at UNHQ, and join a community programme virtually.

On September 25, Hasina will depart New York for Washington DC by a Biman flight. She will stay in Washington DC from September 25 to 30.

The PM is scheduled to leave Washington DC for Dhaka on September 30. She is expected to return home on October 1 after a short stopover in Finland.

UPAZILA PARISHAD HC for proper security to chairpersons

Asks govt to provide them with gunmen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has directed the government to provide security to all upazila parishad chairpersons with gunmen like that of the upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) across the country.

The court also asked the authorities concerned to put up signboards reading "Upazila Parishad Office" instead of the existing "UNO Office" on the gates of all upazila parishad offices.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice SM Maniruzzaman came up with the order on September 7 following a writ petition filed by three upazila parishad chairmen, including Md Abdul Aziz of Patuakhali's Dasmina upazila, seeking necessary directives.

Online gambling

FROM PAGE 1

siphoned off through online gambling. During the drive against the casino business, around 30 operations were conducted at 22 places.

Rab arrested immediate-past Dhaka City Jubo League (south unit) president Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat, organising secretary Khaled Mahmud Bhuiyan, vice-president Enamul Haque Arman and Dhaka City North unit joint general secretary and ward councillor Tarequzzaman Rajib, and Krishak League central committee member Shafiqul Alam Feroz on charges of running illegal casino business.

Jubo League later expelled all these leaders.

Names of several patronisers came out in media reports, but no legal action has yet been taken against them.

The arrestees also include Jubo League leader and tender Mogul GK Shamim, Shamim, Mohammedan Sporting Club's director-in-charge Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan, Online casino kingpin Selim Prodhan, three local AL leaders and ward councillors Moynul Haque Manju and Habibur Rahman Mizan were also arrested.

A huge quantity of gambling equipment, liquor, 22 firearms, Tk 8.45 crore in cash, FDR worth Tk 166.27 crore, gold ornaments weighing around eight kg were seized in the drives. Besides, Rab mobile courts fined or sentenced 204 others to different terms of imprisonment.

The Rab crackdown brought to light how a group of political leaders in alliance with some sports organisers turned renowned sporting clubs in the capital into lavish establishments to run casino businesses round the clock.

Rab, Criminal Investigation Department and Anti-Corruption Commission officials filed 58 cases against 15 people. Rab investigated 10 of the cases and already submitted charge sheets in nine cases.

A top ACC official said they have already submitted charge sheets in 13 of some 22 graft cases they were tasked with probing.

The rest are being investigated by police.

45pc bearings

FROM PAGE 1

maintenance of the bridge, with its Secretary Abu Bakr Siddique in the chair.

Italian company FIP Industrial had supplied the pot bearings and as per the bridge maintenance manual, the service life of the bearings is between 20 to 30 years, shows the meeting minutes.

Pot bearing is a special type of bridge bearing used for transmission of load from superstructures to piers and absorb vibration caused due to the movement of vehicles, experts said.

China Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC) is the Bangladesh Bridge Authority's operator for maintenance and operation of Bangabandhu Bridge.

A CCCC report said problem surfaced in around 45 percent of 112 bearings' pad, shows the meeting minutes.

Prof Khan Mahmud Amanat of Buet civil engineering department said service life of a pot bearing used in a bridge is between 25 and 30 years. He said problems in 45 percent bearings would not pose any immediate risk to the bridge.

The problem gives an indication that service life of the bearings has been over and they need to be replaced immediately, he added.

However, a senior engineer involved in constructing roads and bridges said most of the bridges in the country lack regular and periodic maintenance.

He said problem in around 45 percent bearings of Bangabandhu Bridge also indicates a lack of regular and periodic maintenance of the structure, he said wishing not to be named.

Different types of problems would surface if the bearings are not replaced on time, the engineer said.

Both the experts said replacing bearings is very technical work and it may take several months to replace all the problematic bearings. They, however, said it is possible to change those keeping the bridge operational.

Bridge Division Secretary Abu Bakr Siddique, also the executive director of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, said they have already directed the authorities to communicate with the Italian supplier to replace the bearings.

"If they can't supply the bearings, we will look for other sources," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Liabilities transfer was Evaly trick

FROM PAGE 1

As of February 28, the liabilities of Evaly stood at Tk 403 crore, the company was worth Tk 65 crore, the amount shoppers paid to it was Tk 214 crore, and payment of Tk 190 crore to individuals and businesses was due, said the Rab official.

The Rab official said Evaly has been making losses since its inception in December 2018.

Rassel and Nasrin told officers that they failed to come up with a plan on how to clear the debts to their customers and suppliers.

"Since February, Evaly has not been able to deliver any large [expensive] product to any customer. Rassel has a marketing policy... He wanted everyone in South Asia to know Evaly's name. He wanted to create a brand value. People know him... He ran campaigns and sponsored [others] with the hard-earned money of his customers."

Moin ruled out the likelihood of any influential individual patronising Rassel.

Rassel often went live on Facebook asking for time to refund the customers as a ploy to deceive people until he filed for bankruptcy.

Evaly's has over Tk 44 lakh customers, he added.

The company made a very little investment as its strategy was to extract a large sum of money from the suppliers and the consumers. They lured the customers with impressive discounts and cashback offers in campaigns titled Earthquake, Cyclone, Priority Store, T-10, and T-5.

A Rab official said the couple bought a Range Rover and an Audi for personal use and each withdrew Tk 5 lakh in salaries. The source of the money was individuals who paid for the goods.

The company's CSR programmes and promotional activities were also

run with the money of the people who thought they were paying for products.

"Evaly's debts are increasing by crores every day," Moin said.

Conglomerates at home and abroad didn't invest in Evaly because they saw no way out for the company, he added.

Rassel started several other e-commerce platforms like E-food, E-khata, and E-bazar.

During primary interrogation, Rassel and Nasrin told Rab that the Evaly head office and customer care in Dhanmondi and two warehouses in Amin Bazar and Savar were set up in rented space.

The company at one stage had about 2,000 permanent and 1,700 temporary employees. The numbers have come down to 1,300 and 500. It once paid Tk 5 crore in salaries each month. The current amount is Tk 1.5 crore. Besides, many employees have not been paid since June.

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Rassel and Nasrin on a three-day remand each.

Late last night, Sub-inspector Ohidul Islam, who is investigating the case, told this correspondent that Rassel was taken to Mitford hospital as he felt unwell around 9:30pm. He was taken back to Gulshan Police Station after doctors said the issue was not serious.

Rassel and Nasrin were arrested in their Mohammadpur apartment on Thursday on charges of embezzlement as thousands of consumers worry if they would get back their money or the products they had paid for.

The arrests happened hours after Arif Baker, an aggrieved consumer, accused Rassel, Nasrin and several unnamed individuals involved in the company's financial management of embezzlement in a case filed with Gulshan Police Station.

The e-commerce company disrupted

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



The Kella on a weekend afternoon in winter.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Kella Photographs

Lalbagh Kella in Old Dhaka is an unfinished but picturesque Moghul fort with surrounding gardens. It was started in 1678 by Prince Azam, son of Emperor Aurangzeb. After the prince was recalled to Delhi, construction continued under governor Shaista Khan. But Khan's daughter Pori Bibi died suddenly, leaving him heartbroken. The half-done project, now deemed inauspicious, was abandoned.

Today, however, the Kella is a well-maintained and popular public attraction. The grounds include Pori Bibi's tomb, a mosque, a residence complex intended for the governor, and barracks for soldiers. These structures share eighteen acres of land with manicured lawns, flowerbeds, flowering shrubs, walkways, fountains and a large pond.

Starting in 2008, I photographed people visiting the Kella for several years. I hoped photographing these happy interactions would reveal something about what it means to be Bangladeshi. Having lived most of my life abroad I was keen to rediscover my roots.

Visitors come here to enjoy the open, outdoor setting in an otherwise crowded city. The Kella is most popular on Friday and Saturday afternoons when there is a long queue at the ticket counter, mostly families and friends groups in a picnic mood.

But you don't go to the Kella just to see. You also come here to be seen. Women wear colourful saris and salwar kameez, hands adorned by henna, flowers on their hair and any number of ornaments on their necks, hair, ears and wrists. Colourful burqa ensembles are worn by some women. Men wear tight jeans, the latest shoes

and smart shirts open at the chest. And the children? In one glance you know their outfits were chosen by proud parents.

The first thing visitors do is to make memories in these beautiful surroundings. Some pose for photographs with props – sunglasses, a bandanna, masks in pre-Covid days, perhaps a guitar. Others find a favourite plant and put an arm on a branch or even embracing it. Standing with back to the fort's ancient wall with arms outstretched is another popular pose. Friends line up for group photos on the rooftop of the barracks. Brave ones climb the fort's tall walls and risky ledges for unusual backdrops.

The children have the grandest time of all. Finding open space they run themselves breathless. A girl, having a piece of a lawn all to herself, spins at dizzying speeds, her kameez streaming around her. Another chases dragonflies landing on the flowers. Others scream in delight running down slopes of the mound – perhaps fifteen feet high – east of the barracks. In the flat terrain that is Dhaka and most of the nation fifteen feet can be exciting.

After several years I look through the photographs and ponder what I learned. The innate, almost goofy friendliness of my compatriots, for one thing, but what also strikes me is the closeness of friends of all ages and the utter devotion of parents to children. Perhaps it is the disregard for formalities that leads to a boundless exuberance for all that can be squeezed out of life.

facebook.com/ikabirphotographs or follow "ihtishamkabir" on Instagram.

Education must not be for sale

Say academics on occasion of historic Education Day

DU CORRESPONDENT

It's time to stop the commercialisation of our education system, said academics yesterday.

Education should be a right, accessible to all, and not a product to be sold to the highest bidders, they added during two separate programmes, marking historic Education Day.

The two programmes were organised by left-leaning organisations, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front and Bangladesh Students Union, in Dhaka University to commemorate the education movement of 1962, when students took to the streets to oppose the Pakistani government's unequal and exclusionary national education policy.

"The country's education sector has been left at the mercy of businesses. Education has become a product, to be bought for money -- those who have the means can access it, while those who don't are left behind," said Prof Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University's economics department.

"To save education from corporatisations, the state has to regain control of it, as per the aspirations of the Liberation War," he added.

At the programme organised by Samajtantrik Chhatra Front,



The country's education sector has been left at the mercy of businesses. Education has become a product, to be bought for money -- those who have the means can access it, while those who don't are left behind.

PROF ANU MUHAMMAD, JAHANGIRNAGAR UNIVERSITY



During the pandemic, disparity in education has increased immensely. Many students have dropped out of school, which has led to increases in child marriage among female students. The state needs to find ways to bring back the students who have dropped out.

PROF KABERI GAYEN, DHAKA UNIVERSITY



Investments in education are being made for reaping profits, as a result of which discrimination continues to rise in the sector. If we can free the parliament from the grip of business-people, education too will be freed from the grip of commercialisation.

PROF MM AKASH, DHAKA UNIVERSITY

he also argued, "The government has to ensure everyone receives quality education equally. To this end, budget must be allocated to the education sector accordingly, and before finalising the national educational policy, elaborate discussions and analysis on all matters of education has to be conducted."

Meanwhile, at the programme organised by Bangladesh Students Union at the university's Teacher-Student Centre, Prof Kaberi Gayen of DU's mass communication and

journalism department said, "We have seen that the last National Education Policy's priority was to show how education can be bought for money."

"During the pandemic, disparity in education has increased immensely. Many students have dropped out of school, which has led to increases in child marriage among female students," she said.

"The state needs to find ways to bring back the students who have dropped out," she added.

Speaking at the same

programme, Prof MM Akash, chair of DU's economics department, said, "It's no wonder education is seen as just another product when 50 percent of parliamentarians are businesspersons today."

"Investments in education are being made for reaping profits, as a result of which discrimination continues to rise in the sector. If we can free the parliament from the grip of business-people, education too will be freed from the grip of commercialisation," he added.



While Bangladesh Students Union organised a discussion at Dhaka University's TSC area, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front marked the day with a student-gathering in front of the Raju Memorial Sculpture.

PHOTO: STAR

163 more hospitalised with dengue



Death toll 57

11 died in Sept so far

34 in Aug, 12 in July

163 more hospitalised yesterday

Total infected 15,228

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 163 patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Out of the 163 infected, 23 are from outside Dhaka. With the new cases, 4,872 have been diagnosed with dengue during the current month, out of a total of 15,228 infected this year. Of the total infected, 1,676 are from outside Dhaka.

Among the 163, 26.2 percent were aged between 31 and 40, 24.6 percent were under 10 years of age, and 13.8 percent were between ages 11 and 30.

At least 7,698 people were diagnosed in August, 2,286 were hospitalised in July, 272 in June, while 43 were infected in May, according to DGHS.

As per DGHS data, 57 people died of dengue in the country this year. Twelve died in July, 34 in August, and 11 in September so far.

A total of 53 have died in Dhaka division, two in Chattogram division, and one each in Rajshahi and Khulna divisions.

'Mothers play crucial role in tackling extremism'

Say speakers at ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mothers play a significant role in protecting children from social vices, terrorism and extremism, said speakers at a ceremony yesterday.

Community Participation and Development (CPD) in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) organised a four-month long training workshop titled "Parenting for Peace" for mothers. A total of 125 mothers received certificates after completing the programme.

"There is no scope to disregard the role of mothers in preventing radicalism and violence. Projects like this will play a significant role in this regard," said Advocate Sultana Kamal, former adviser to the caretaker government.

Lawmaker Aroma Dutta reiterated that

the training programme has created a new dimension in maintaining social harmony by involving mothers as a key stakeholder in the fight against extremism.

CPD Executive Director Moslema Bari said mothers who have received the training will become more conscious about such issues and play a leading role in their families and communities to counter hate and intolerance.

Those who participated in the programme said they will remain alert to protect their children from radicalism.

They said that they have learned how to monitor and analyse children's behaviour and deal with them.

Among others, executive director of Austria-based Women without Borders Dr Edit Schlaffer and executive director of MJF Shaheen Anam also spoke at the event.

Two killed, four hurt in Bogura road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

Two people were killed and four injured after a bus hit a battery-run auto-rickshaw on Dhaka-Rangpur highway at Bogura's Jhoggari area yesterday.

The deceased -- Anowara Begum (50) and Hamidun Begum (55) -- were from Namabala in Bogura Sadar upazila, said police.

The injured -- identified as Jui (16), Rakhimoni (13), Azhar Ali (60) and Abdur Razzak (50) -- were undergoing treatment at TMSS Medical College and Hospital, they said.

Anwara and Hamidun were declared dead at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital.

BRTC bus service for port city students to resume today

ARUN BIKASH DEY, City

Ever since schools started this week, Jayeta Talukdar, a tenth-grader at Chattogram city's Dr Khastagir Government Girls' High School, has found it difficult to get to school in jam-packed public vehicles during rush hour.

"It was easier last year [before the pandemic] after BRTC launched a bus service for students in January," she said. "We could travel anywhere for Tk 5 and finding a seat wasn't difficult as the service was dedicated to students."

Unfortunately, for her and more like her, the service had to be stopped once the lockdowns hit.

However, with educational institutions open once more, the Chattogram District Administration and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) have announced they are going to resume the service from today.

A total of 10 double-decker buses will be used for the service, said sources inside BRTC.

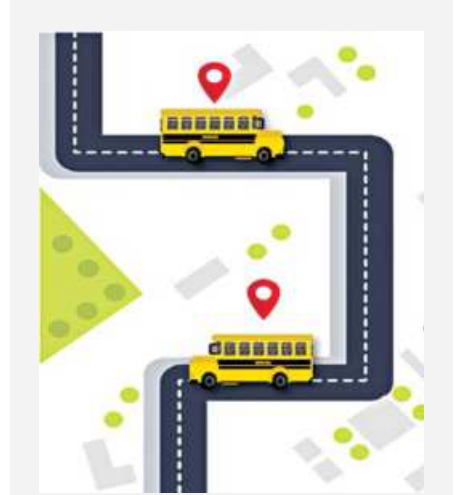
Only school and madrasa students will be able to ride the buses -- after showing their institutional ID cards to staffers -- when traveling to and from their campuses, the sources said. Initially, the buses will operate on two routes in the city in the morning and afternoon.

A student will have to pay Tk 5 for each trip. There will be two boxes on each side of the buses, called honesty boxes. Students will put their fare into these boxes on their own and get down to their respective destinations, said BRTC officials.

Contacted, Mahmud Ullah Maruf, additional deputy commissioner (Education and ICT) of Chattogram, said, "BRTC will operate the service while the district administration will oversee it."

"Nobody except the students will be allowed to use the service and we will take strict action against the driver and helper if any such allegation is found to be true."

BRTC officials said all buses have been fully prepared for the operation. BRTC's Chattogram Bus Depot Manager Abdul



ROUTE 1: From Bahaddarhat to New Market via Baduratata, Chawkbazar, Gani Bakery, Jamalkhan, Cheragi Pahar, Nandankanan and Amtal; from New Market to Bahaddarhat via Amtal, Nandankanan, Cheragi Pahar, Jamalkhan, Chawkbazar and Baduratata

ROUTE 2: Oxygen to Agrabad via Muradpur, Sholashahar Gate No. 2, GEC Intersection, WASA Intersection, Tiger Pass, Dewan Hat and Chowmuhani; from Agrabad to Oxygen via Tiger Pass, WASA Intersection, GEC Intersection, Sholashahar Gate No. 2, Muradpur and Aturar Depot



For the last two months, Nobab, an employee of a private organisation, has been waging a battle against dengue on his own volition. To raise awareness about the deadly disease, he picks a spot in the capital and stands with all his placards, which inform fellow residents about how to protect themselves from Aedes mosquitoes. Yesterday, he stationed himself in front of Jatiya Press Club.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Latif told The Daily Star that during the students' movement demanding safe roads in 2019, the prime minister pledged to launch a bus service for the benefit of the students.

In light of that commitment, the service started in port city in January last year, he said.

Hailing the resumption of the service, guardians expressed their gratitude to the authorities for coming up with such a timely initiative.

World meet on Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12
conference got off to a start, all the participants at the suggestion of the Chairman, Jayaprakash Narayan, stood in silence for two minutes as a mark of respect to those who had laid down their lives for the cause of Bangladesh.

BP Koirala, former Prime Minister of Nepal, called for setting up an international brigade to fight alongside the liberation forces in Bangladesh.

Dr Mohammed Roem, a former foreign minister of Indonesia, ably made the point that the Bangladesh problem was not a domestic issue of Pakistan and the UN had ample jurisdiction to intervene.

Dr Clovis Maksoud, editor of Daily Al Ahram, in an impassioned speech said mankind had been shocked by the brutalities of the Pakistani regime.

Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani in a message expressed the hope that the deliberations of the conference would strengthen the struggle for freedom in Bangladesh. Bangladesh was represented by a non-official delegation led by the Vice-chancellor of Chittagong University Dr A R Mallick.

Other distinguished personalities who attended the conference included Q Hadad (Afghanistan), Professor Tsuyosni Nara (Japan), Senarat

Gunawardana (Sri Lanka), Fred Evans MP (Britain), Professor DPO Connel (Australia), Acharya Kripalini (India) and Vijaylakshmi Pandit (India).

ON THE WAR FRONT
In the Kushtia-Jashore-Khulna sector, a number of Pakistani soldiers surrendered to the Mukti Bahini with four rifles. Mukti Bahini raided Pakistani troops in Dhopakhal area in Jashore district and they killed two Pakistani troops. They also destroyed one bunker of the enemy troops. In Tungi in Jashore district Mukti Bahini exchanged fire with Pakistani troops on the same day, killing two enemy soldiers.

In Mymensingh-Sylhet-Maulvibazar sector, Mukti Bahini raided and demolished a road bridge in Joyintapur area in Sylhet district. In this action two enemy soldiers were killed. On the same day they exchanged mortar fire with the Pakistan army in Farangipara area in Sylhet district, killing four Pakistani soldiers.

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini exchanged fire with Pakistani troops near Rangpur Town, killing three. On the same day Mukti Bahini ambushed enemy troops in Udoysee area and killed three. *Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com*

Nazrul Islam's death anniv

STAR REPORT

Today is the 50th death anniversary of Shaheed Engineer Nazrul Islam, a freedom fighter, said a press release.

On the occasion, Prof Hazera Nazrul, wife of the martyr, has arranged a Qurankhwani and milad mahfil before Maghrib prayers at 204/A Gulshan-Tejgaon Link Road, Dhaka. All his friends and well-wishers are invited to the programmes.

During the Liberation War, Nazrul conducted an operation to blow up five power stations in Dhaka. He was also an adviser on electrical and power issues to the then newly-formed Bangladesh government in 1971.

After independence, Hatkhola road was officially named after him, and Shaheed Nazrul Girls School was established in Shariatpur, his native district.

Indian PM

FROM PAGE 12
to new alignments, with Pakistan seen closely working with the Taliban again and China also coming into the picture by engaging with the new Taliban regime.

At the SCO summit, Russia and China's leaders also urged the new Taliban government to remain peaceful to its neighbours and combat terrorism and drug-trafficking.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping spoke via video link at the summit.

Putin said the organisation, holding its meeting in Tajikistan, should "use its potential" to "stimulate the new Afghan authorities" in fulfilling their promises on normalising life and bringing security in Afghanistan.

The hasty withdrawal of US-led forces had left behind "an open Pandora's box full of problems related to terrorism, drug trafficking, organised crime and, unfortunately, religious extremism," Putin said.

Partners should work with the new Afghan government, even if it was not representative, the Russian leader added.

China's Xi said it was necessary to "encourage Afghanistan to put in place a broad-based and inclusive political framework" and to "resolutely fight all forms of terrorism" and live in peace with its neighbours.



Dental braces

FROM PAGE 12

some develop from malnutrition and infective diseases of the mother during pregnancy and irregularities of jaw development like clefts of face and palate.

"There are some environmental factors too like forceps delivery," Dr Tanvir said.

If malocclusion is not treated timely and properly, it can affect facial appearance, risk of tooth decay, gum infection, and risk of trauma to surrounding soft tissues, the surgeon said.

Malocclusion can be solved using either a removable appliance or fixed appliance known as brace system, Dr Tanvir said.

"Braces are preferred as they have advantages like multiple tooth movement at a time. Hence, duration of treatment is reduced and more precise tooth movements and detailing of occlusion are also possible," he added.

Assistant Professor of Dhaka Dental College Dr Kamrun Naher Shomi said braces align and strengthen teeth and help to position them with regard to a person's bite, fix gaps and correct underbite, overbite, open bite, deep bite, cross bite and various other flaws of the teeth and jaw.

"Braces are therefore very versatile," she said.

The main objectives of the braces are functional efficiency, structural balance and aesthetic harmony, Dr Kamrun Naher said.

The fixed appliance traditionally has four basic elements: brackets, bonding material, arch wire and ligature elastic. The teeth move when the arch wire puts pressure on the brackets and

teeth. Braces exert constant pressure which over time move teeth into the desired position, she said.

Braces are more common for teenagers because that is the age when people first notice their crooked teeth. But, there is no age limit on braces.

Unfortunately, wearing braces and being used to it is not a pain-free process. It creates new sensations and pressure against teeth, which cause soreness and aching.

The typical treatment duration for braces, a costly procedure, is around two years but it depends on how much work needs to be done and how early the process starts.

So, after identifying misaligned teeth, one should immediately start the treatment to protect oral health.

UK removes

FROM PAGE 12

the decision and thanked the British government for considering Bangladesh's request.

"It is good news. During my recent visit to the UK, I requested the country's government to remove Bangladesh from the red list," Momen said in a video message.

"We thank the British government. We are grateful," said the foreign minister, who is travelling abroad with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Passengers coming from "amber list" countries will also have to complete a passenger locator form, then bring a negative Covid-19 test to border checks.

Travellers from "amber" countries must also book and pay for Covid-19 tests to be taken on days two and eight of their home quarantine period.

Hamidur Rahman's death anniv today

STAR REPORT

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Dr AS Hamidur Rahman Khan, former medical officer of Sonachora Dockyard of BIWTC.

He died of lung cancer on this day in 1993, said a press release.

His relatives and well-wishers are requested to pray for the departed soul.



Bruzon replaces

FROM PAGE 12

The decision came after most of the executive members of the federation had expressed their dissatisfaction over the team and the coach's performances in recent times.

Bruzon, who is currently the head coach of Bashundhara Kings, will be in charge for two months, overseeing the engagements at the SAFF Championship, the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers in October and four-nation Invitational tournament in Sri Lanka in November.

BFE, however, mentioned that it is not relieving Day from his role entirely yet as the British coach still has a year to go on his contract.

"I think it is a bit unprofessional that I found out [about the decision] through the media," Day told The Daily Star when contacted.

Bruzon, meanwhile, said that he would speak to the media on Monday after the Kings' last match of the Bangladesh Premier League against Abahani.

New Van Gogh drawing

FROM PAGE 12

museum to authenticate it and experts confirmed that it was indeed a "new work" by Van Gogh.

"This one has never been seen before anywhere. It's the first time that this drawing is out in the open," Teio Meedendorp, senior researcher at the Van Gogh Museum, told AFP.

"It comes from a Dutch private collection where it has been for a very long time. And this the first time and occasion that the world is able to see it."

The new drawing will be on temporary display at the museum until January 2 before returning to the

owners.

"It's quite rare for a new work to be attributed to Van Gogh," added Emilie Gordenker, the director of the Van Gogh Museum.

"We're proud to be able to share this early drawing and its story with our visitors."

The drawing depicts a bald, elderly labourer from a pensioners' home dressed in a waistcoat, trousers and boots, sitting on a wooden chair with his head in his hands.

The Van Gogh museum already owns a similar drawing called "Worn Out", which the artist made at about the same time and said he preferred.

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on going at Exclusive Price having all modern Features and Amenities at prime location of Bashundhara D Block. Apartment Size: 1675 SFT. Free air ticket of Dhaka-Cox's Bazar-Dhaka on Apartment Booking. Contact-01730372646

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Chinese astronauts return to Earth after 90-day mission

AFP, Beijing

Three Chinese astronauts returned to Earth yesterday after completing the country's longest-ever crewed mission, the latest landmark in Beijing's drive to become a major space power.

The capsule carrying the trio deployed its parachute and landed in the Gobi desert at 1:34 pm local time (0534 GMT).

Bullet-hit body

FROM PAGE 12

in Bagaichhari, said Suresh was killed by the MN Larma faction of PCJSS.

Gayanojit Chakma, president of the faction, refuted the allegation and said the murder was the result of an intra-party conflict.

Can face ban

FROM PAGE 12

September 14 delivered the order in the open court, directing the respondents to ban the operations of all unregistered news portals across the country.

In the full text of order, the bench asked the respondents to file an affidavit on September 28 after complying with the directive.

The HC bench delivered the order during hearing a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyers Rasida Chowdhury Nilu and Zaren Rahman.

Rasida Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the HC bench has ordered to ban the operations of all unregistered online news portals except for 92 registered news portals.

The unregistered news portals are harmful for the citizens of the country as they run defamatory and character assassinating reports, comments and photographs about people, she said.

Following the same writ petition, the HC bench on August 16 this year issued a rule asking the information secretary, and chairpersons of BTRC and Bangladesh Press Council to explain why they should not be directed to formulate an ethical code of conduct for newspapers, form a broadcasting commission for electronic media, and ban operation of all unregistered online news portals.

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on going at prime location of Bashundhara D Block at Exclusive Price having all modern Features and Amenities. Apartment Size: 1645 SFT. Free air ticket of Dhaka-Cox's Bazar-Dhaka on Apartment Booking. Contact-01730372632



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following services:

- RFP/BAN/2021/011:** Provision of Clearing and Forwarding Agent Services for imported/exported consignments for WHO Bangladesh under Long Term Agreement.
- RFP/BAN/2021/012:** Training need assessment, manual development and conduction of TOT for Health sector personnel on climate change and health.

Deadline for the submission of RFPs: **14:00 hrs, 05 October 2021.**

Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP documents from: <https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice>.

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Country Office for Bangladesh, United House, 10 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

Invitation to submit proposals for two (2)

Request for Proposals (RFPs) issued by UNICEF Bangladesh

RFP No. LRPS-9170075: To provide services related to Interior Branding and Landscaping design including implementation for UNICEF Cox's Bazar Field Office

RFP No. LRPS-9170080: To provide professional Electrical, Mechanical (Air Conditioning), Plumbing, Elevator, IBMS and other facility maintenance related services for UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office (BCO) under Long Term Arrangement (LTA).

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

Site Visit and Pre-bid Meeting date: **Please see the schedule mentioned in the RFP.**

The deadline to submit the proposal is **Monday, 18 October 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs.**

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process. www.unicef.org.bd

unicef for every child

Date: September 18, 2021



Save the Children is the world's leading, independent organisation for children

Invitation for Tender

Save the Children International (SCI) is hereby inviting the tender from interested manufacturers/ authorized dealers/ experienced and bona fide vendors for supplying, installation and commissioning of Medical Equipment and Supplies. For details please see the IFT schedule, which is available on <http://procurement.scibd.info/> under tender notification. Downloaded copy is acceptable for tender participation.

Description, submission time & date

SL	Name of IFT	Reference No.	Pre-Tender Meeting Schedule and Place	Last date of Tender Submission
I	Medical Equipment	IFT/SCI/BDCO/FY-21/00003	20/09/2021 at 3.00 PM https://zoom.us/j/94482630915?pwd=U2ZsUUVQYTY0U3NDZmlveG0xNkdZdDZ09	September 27, 2021 at 2.00PM

Special Instruction: (a) All activities in connection with the said procurement of Goods/Services will be guided as per the SCI's Procurement Policies. **(b)** If it is not possible to receive & open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received and opened on the following working date at same time and same place.

Senior Manager, Procurement & Supply Chain

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 8181658-61, Fax: 8181678, Website: <http://www.pksf-bd.org>

Request for Expression of Interest for Selection of Individual Consultant

Memo No. 53.23.0000.001.03.037.21.3698 Date: 17-09-2021

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for Implementing the Bangladesh Rural Water, Sanitation & Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the 'Individual Consultant' services.

The Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), now invites eligible applicant ("Consultant") to indicate their interest in providing the Services as 'Individual Consultant'. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualification and relevant experience to perform the Services as follows:

Contract Package Number	Name of the Position	No.	Required Minimum Qualification, Experience and Job Responsibilities
Package No: RWSSP-SD-01	Program Support Consultant	01	<p>a. Qualification: The ideal candidate will be a Post-graduate in social or environmental sciences or business studies and have specialized knowledge of project operation, finance and management; respective policies of GoB</p> <p>b. Experience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum fifteen (15) years of general experience in social development sector especially in WASH sector, out of which at least ten (10) years of working experience in Project management team having dedicated/core leadership role against the designated post. Experiences in the projects of World Bank, AIIB or other development partners will be preferred. Should have strong interpersonal and communication skills. Ability to work individually or in a team to deliver services with strict deadlines and in a cross cultural environment. Experience related to preparation of policies, reports, presentation and documentation. Managing work plan and budget implementation, off-site and on-site monitoring. <p>c. Detailed job responsibilities are given in the ToR.</p>
Package No: RWSSP-SD-09	Financial Management Consultant	01	<p>a. The ideal candidate will be a professionally qualified accountant from any of the IFAC accredited bodies such as CA, ACCA, CMA, CPA etc with a minimum of 8 years post qualification experience. Post-graduation in Accounting or Finance or Management or Economics will be an added advantage. Preference will be given to those candidates who hold similar experience for more than 5 years.</p> <p>b. Detailed job responsibilities are given in the ToR.</p>
Package No: RWSSP-SD-11	MIS & Documentation Consultant	01	<p>a. The ideal candidate will be a Post-graduate in Management or Management Information System or Statistics or Development Studies or English. The candidate must have minimum 5 (Five) years of full time job experience in preparing reports, presentation and documentation. Experience in database management of community driven projects, especially projects of World Bank, AIIB or other development partners is preferred.</p> <p>b. Detailed job responsibilities are given in the ToR.</p>
Package No: RWSSP-SD-12	Technical Consultant (Engineer)	01	<p>a. The ideal candidate will be a Post-graduate in Water Supply Engineering or Environmental Engineering or suitable equivalency with Graduation in Civil Engineering.</p> <p>b. The candidate must have minimum 5 (Five) years of experience in preparing design and implementation of WASH infrastructure including safely managed water supply system and sanitary latrine at community and household level. Working experience in preparation of treatment process/hydraulic design of water supply system.</p> <p>Strong familiarity with the National Water Supply and Sanitation Projects, National Water Policy (NWP), National Environmental Acts/Rules/Guidelines</p> <p>Experience related to preparation policies, reports, presentation and documentation.</p> <p>Experience in community driven projects, especially WASH projects is preferred.</p> <p>c. Detailed job responsibilities are given in the ToR.</p>

The Applicants are invited to provide information in details indicating their qualification to perform the services (complete CV along with description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions and general qualifications).

The Consultants will be hired and contracted as per the "Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)" method of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers", Fourth Edition, November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"). Duration of the consultancy services will be approximately for 55 months or project closing date, whichever is earlier. The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignments can be found at the following link; tender.pksf-bd.org.

Expressions of interest must be submitted in a written form to the PKSF office (in person, or by mail) in a sealed envelope along with a softcopy (CD/DVD/Pen-drive) by **11 October, 2021 within 3:00 PM** and clearly marked "Expression of Interest", contract package number, name of the position applied for and name and address of the individual consultant.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the EOIs or cancel the EOI process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected applicant(s).

For Further information and clarification, intending applicant may contact the PKSF office during 9:30 am to 4:30 pm (Except holidays) or through email to rwashpksf.proc@gmail.com.

AQM Golam Mawla, Deputy Managing Director & PE

MORE NEWS

Africa Covid job shortfall could take world 'back to square one' Africa faces a 470 million shortfall in Covid-19 vaccine doses this year after the Covax alliance cut its projected shipments...

Myanmar junta to put Suu Kyi on trial for corruption Myanmar's junta will put ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi on trial for corruption, her lawyer said yesterday, adding to a raft of ongoing cases that could see her jailed for decades...



Blinken urges more normalisation with Israel US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday called on more Arab nations to recognise Israel as he met four ministers on the anniversary of a normalisation accord...

Work-related accidents, illnesses kill 2m each year: UN Work-related illnesses and injuries kill nearly two million people annually, largely because of long working hours, the UN said yesterday...

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Activists of the youth wing of India's main opposition Congress party protest against what they say is rising unemployment in the country, while marking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 71st birthday as the "National Unemployment Day", in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Quotes of the day



It's long overdue. I'm not out to punish anyone. I'm a capitalist... All I'm asking is you pay your fair share. It's about the super wealthy finally beginning to pay what they owe...

US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN CALLS FOR MASSIVE TAX HIKES TO PAY FOR SPENDING PLAN

Border troop pullback needed for better ties

Indian FM tells China at SCO summit in Dushanbe

REUTERS, New Delhi

India has told China that their bilateral relations will only develop when both countries pull their troops back from a confrontation on their disputed Himalayan border, the Indian foreign minister said.

Tso lake, a contested area near the site of last year's clashes. But troops backed by artillery remain dug in in close proximity in other sectors.

More US troops to come: Australia

Eyes missile work with allies amid concerns over rising China

AGENCIES

Australia has announced that more US troops will rotate through the island nation and that the allies will cooperate on missile development, the latest joint steps amid shared concerns about China's increasing assertiveness in the region.



Taliban moral cops replace women ministry

REUTERS

Workers in the Afghan capital Kabul replaced signs for the country's women's ministry with those for the Taliban's moral police yesterday, as female former employees of the department said they had been locked out of the building.



Migrants seeking asylum in the US walk in the Rio Grande river near the International Bridge between Mexico and the US as they wait to be processed, in Del Rio, Texas, US on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



SEPTEMBER 18 1961 - Dag Hammarskjold, Swedish statesman and Secretary-General of the United Nations, was killed in a plane crash in what was then Northern Rhodesia.

SOURCE: REUTERS

World's biggest tree gets blanket

AFP, Los Angeles

The world's biggest trees were being wrapped in fire-proof blankets Thursday in an effort to protect them from huge blazes tearing through the drought-stricken western United States.

measures to protect these trees," said park resource manager Christy Brigham, according to The Mercury News.

Park Provence Redefining Comfort & Style At Khilbari adjacent to Baridhara Block-J 3 bedroom Apartments with high-end amenities...

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গোপালগঞ্জ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার অধ্যক্ষের কার্যালয় পটুয়াখালী টেকনিক্যাল স্কুল ও কলেজ



PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

'Imaginary of the Common: 50 years of Sultan's Oeuvre' underway at Bengal Shilpalay

MORMEE MAHTAB

Commemorating revered artist Sheikh Mohammed Sultan's legacy, Bengal Shilpalay has organised the exhibition, "Imaginary of the Common: 50 years of Sultan's Oeuvre". The exhibition, which began on September 10, features a wide variety of works, starting from the maestro's earliest charcoal drawings to his most famous paintings on watercolour and oil.

Sheikh Mohammed Sultan, fondly known as 'Laal Miah', was one of the most influential pioneers of modern art in Bangladesh. The visionary artist usually chose the peasants



of the country as his muse. He was for the symbolical portrayal of their indomitable spirit and inner strength through his larger-than-life images of their muscular figures.

Sultan was an avant-garde artist, whose work revolved around socio-economic parity, focusing on the Liberation War of Bangladesh, genocide, land grabbing, and migration that took place against the vast agricultural setting around him.

The exhibition also contains photographs

and memorabilia, including films, interviews and installations that shed light on Sultan's process of art making and his love for the common people. Some works by Sultan are being publically displayed for the first time, at the event.

Sultan was influenced by western techniques and forms, particularly the impressionism movement. This influence was evident in his works about his travels to Shimla, Lahore, Karachi and parts of Europe. In his later paintings, he shifted his focus to figures against the rural backdrop, creating a unique contrast between the themes of life and death, migration, and land grabbing.

Sultan's work weaved a fine connection between universality and local possibilities, which was apparent in his transformation of traditional forms, through a revival of the Renaissance reflected in his exaggerated figures of men and women in his paintings. This quality was also apparent in his use of natural colours on raw jute or brown

coloured wrapping paper, which he discussed in Tareque Masud's documentary film, "Adam Surat: The Inner Strength".

The film, where Sultan wanted to remain merely as a catalyst rather than having the focus on himself, portrays his life in light of his surroundings where he recounts the tale of Bangladeshi peasants.

The whimsical, reclusive personality and Bohemian lifestyle of Sultan is on display at the exhibition as captured by renowned photographer Nasir Ali Mamun, who spent ten years in the pursuit of exploring the inner spirituality of the artist.

With Sultan's paintings and sketches, as well as literary pieces on his life and work by various contemporary writers of different times, the exhibition offers an inner passage into the mind of the great artist.

The exhibition will be open for spectators till December 4, 2021 from 3 pm to 8 pm at the Quamrul Hasan Exhibition Hall of Bengal Shilpalay (except Sundays). Visitors must follow all Covid-19 safety guidelines.

OTT platforms are a blessing for our entertainment industry: Afran Nisho

SHAH ALAM SHAZI

Afran Nisho is one of the most celebrated names in the showbiz industry. The multi-talented actor has become popular among the audiences over the years, for his accurate portrayal of diverse characters on the television screen. Recently, the "Chirokal Aaj" actor has also become prominent in the world of OTT, with his breakthrough performances.

In a candid interview with The Daily Star, the versatile actor opened up about his journey as an artiste and how he believes that OTT can be the next big platform for the entertainment industry.

Some people want to be stars, while others want to be known as artistes. What do you truly want to become?

That's a good question. Earlier on acting was only my passion, but now it has turned into my profession. Acting is what I do to earn my livelihood and that is something that I want to pursue further.

As I chose this path of acting, I used to ask myself in the beginning of my career whether I wanted to be a hero, a star or simply just an artiste. And in that moment I immediately knew that I wanted to be an artiste by heart. I am in love with acting and that's something that has been fervor till date. Now its upto the audience how much they truly appreciate my acting.

You started your career as a model, and then shifted to acting. Within last few years you were able to enact a range of diverse characters. How were you able to do so?

There is a major misconception that models cannot act. As I had no experience in theatre, I felt like I have faced a major setback in my acting career already.

The turning point in my career came when I got to meet the legendary actor and my idol, Humayun Faridee, and interact with him on a personal level. He was the first person to observe that I was not expressive at all!

One day he gave me an advice that totally changed me as an actor. He told me to observe anything and everything that went on around me. Since

then, I started to address him as my "acting institute". His words gave me the inspiration to work hard and get into the skin of the character by observing the part thoroughly. Through my persistence and determination, I was finally dive deep into my roles.

With the current surge of streaming platforms in Bangladesh, what do you think about OTT's future?

OTT platforms are opening new opportunities for the production of big budget projects and films. I will say that it is a blessing for our industry. And I am hopeful that it will revolutionise the showbiz industry for good by showcasing quality productions.

Directors consistently try to cast hit pairings together in television, to generate more views. Your pairing with Mehazabeen is one such pairing that is popular in tele-fictions. What is your take on the idea of portraying popular pairs together for work?

Pairing is a crucial part planning any project. If you are a good actor, but your co-artist is not able to deliver the dialogues properly, then you will not be able to engage the audience as much. If you have a good understanding and co-ordination as a reel life pair, then the acceptance of your performance doubles up among the audiences.

Notable pairs such as Afzal-Subarna, Razzak and Kabori, Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol have left an indomitable presence into the mind of the viewers. People remember them for their spellbinding chemistry. The art of pairing is something that's very sweet and special and through it, one is able to create unforgettable memories for the audiences.

Many have speculated that the television viewership has declined drastically. What are your views about it?

While it is true that most of the people are turning away from television, one cannot outright claim that we do not have television viewers all together. There are many who are still eager to watch quality content on television. We still have a good number of viewers who watch our projects on TV.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Keeping hope alive through storytelling: Why 'The Breadwinner' is a timely watch

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

In the past few weeks, we saw our feeds being flooded with posts and messages from Afghanistan as the Taliban once again took over the country. They were messages filled with feelings of looming fear, uncertainty and helplessness, so much so that these feelings hovered around us with a certain sense of unease as well, even though we are miles away from the occurring.

War is always the hardest on women and children. Setting all the geopolitical discussions aside, it is not brand new information that the Taliban rule proved to be the worst for the women of Afghanistan in particular. "The Breadwinner" (2017) is a timely watch to comprehend the horrors that Afghan women are now anticipating with each passing moment. Based on a novel by Deborah Ellis, this one and a half-hour long animated feature film from Irish animation studio Cartoon Saloon is written by Anita Doron in collaboration with Aman Mojadidi, and directed by Nora Twomey.

The story circles around a young Afghan girl named Parvana, who is compelled to take the identity of a boy to sustain her family consisting of her mother, an elder sister and a little brother after her father is wrongfully arrested by the Taliban. In the



process, she rekindles her friendship with Shauzia, an old school friend who too, takes up the identity of a boy to sustain herself and her family.

Parvana not only has to play the role of the sole breadwinner of the family after her father's arrest, but also takes up the role to keep the feeble spark of hope burning in the household with her stories, just like her father used to. Her father, Nurullah Alizai, a school teacher who lost a leg in the Soviet-Afghan War, is seen to be teaching his daughter history with his spontaneous way of storytelling, before getting arrested by the Taliban. He describes the history and heritage of the Afghans with his vibrant stories, visualised even more beautifully with the animation. This is the role that Parvana has to play for her little brother Zaki, as well as her mother and her sister.

One particular frame that stayed with

me long after I finished watching the film is when Nurullah describes how the country landed itself where it is now, with the Taliban taking the autonomy away from Afghan women in the name of the Sharia law and imposing the veil on those who would otherwise be unwilling to wear one.

In the particular frame that I'm talking about, Nurullah's narrations are accompanied by a visual of a woman behind closed doors and a veil, where the veil is made to look like the bars of a jail gate. This single frame, with its visual appeal, was able to render the message clearer than ever. Women were not being protected under the Taliban rule, they were being caged.

Apart from the visuals, the writing of the film stands out as well. The most well-written character in the film, according to me, is that of Razaq – an individual

with strongholds among the Taliban who forms a peculiar friendship with Parvana, dressed as Aatish, in the face of grief of losing a loved one. This grief that binds the two together also brings out the more humane side of Razaq, who eventually helps Parvana to rescue her father, risking his own life.

Even after knowing Parvana's whole truth, Razaq doesn't punish her with the authority that he holds, rather he deals with it through empathy. That is one brilliant and beautiful example of character development in the face of adversity.

Storytelling becomes a coping mechanism for Parvana, which is evident in how, when Parvana and Shauzia are faced with a crisis, Parvana once again takes solace in storytelling in her process of trying to comfort Shauzia, or perhaps herself.

Shauzia, however, takes a different approach with it altogether. While Parvana's story, as mythical as it is, contains the grim realities of the life they were living, Shauzia, with the spirit of a dreamer, tends to turn every element of the story into a light and heartwarming one.

Parvana even conquers the most gut-wrenching challenge of rescuing her father amidst a looming threat of war and uncertainty with the power of a story, and in the process comes to terms with a long-suppressed trauma of losing her elder brother Sulayman to the war.

With all the brilliant portrayals of suffering, grief and trauma, I think this is the very reason that the film stands out. It is a timely watch not because of its contextual relevance, but because it generates hope, and talks about real courage, all of it through the power of a single story taking different turns. It reminds us how powerful storytelling can be, and no matter how difficult it gets to carry on, one can always come through by keeping hope and courage



Stills from the film.

alive. "The Breadwinner" is available to stream on Netflix.

The author is a sub-editor at Toggle, The Daily Star.



Vaccine registration builds antibodies: Study

Voting registration creates democracy, gym memberships generate fitness

TECHNICALITY CORRESPONDENT

In a revolutionary new study conducted last week – meaning it started and ended last week, the rpm was off the charts, experts say – by Chapasthan scientists offers the potential to solve all problems.

Titled “Life Hacked”, the study found that merely intending to do something produced the desired outcome, but this is only applicable for

Chapasthanis.

When the country was in a rush to open universities but at the same time faced with an insufficient vaccination rate, the scientists stumbled upon this discovery. The government had said students need to be vaccinated for universities to reopen amid the Covid-22 pandemic, but with the reopening date approaching, not enough had gotten the doses.

Government scientists however

discovered that just by registering for the vaccination, students were building antibodies.

This triumphant discovery led to other areas of inquiry.

“We found that a full and functioning democracy in Chapasthan can be achieved simply if people are registered to vote,” said the lead author of the study, Kolpona Bijoy. “And this will change our country and take us to the top of the world, because this

intention-means-reality business is unique to us.”

Students were delighted because according to the study, just by registering for their courses they had obtained degrees.

Chapasthan is also set to become the fittest country in the world as millions have registered for gym memberships.

Meanwhile, elated homeless people have been applying for home loans. “I submitted my application, and

now I am living in this posh house,” a previously homeless man said while lounging in the living room, while the couple who already lived there was busy applying for gun licences.

The source of all these auspicious developments, Kolpona Bijoy, was asked how he stumbled upon this world-changing discovery.

“I just intended to find it and there it was,” he said, and registered for a plane ticket out of the country.

Research finds proof of male students’ existence despite continuous absence on news

MAHBUB ALAM MUNNA

“Every day, before going to my office, I drop my son off at his school. But I have never seen a male student on the news or newspapers, let alone my son. Does my son really go to school?,” a father of a class 5 student asked.

He wondered whether male students really exist in the country or if he is practising a futile exercise (dropping son at school before office) as he has never seen a male student’s photo or in the news.

Like parents, male students actually started to doubt themselves.

After watching thousands of videos and reading millions of news articles, male students are in despair at failing to find their existence at least once.

“Do we really exist or are we in a parallel universe where we pretend to go to school but in reality, we are not even students? Are we dreaming?” a boy, claiming to be a student, said.

This disbelief seems to be serious as a female student expressed a similar concern.

“My classmate Hasan is a boy. We have been seeing photos of us, not boys. While journalists were capturing videos, these boys were there. But in news, they are nowhere near us. How is it possible? Are they some sort of aliens who are actually invisible to the camera?”

This has also been of serious concern to social media intellectuals. Every time educational institutes are covered in the news, people tend to check whether there



Our photographer had to chase after this bakery van to capture the rare footage of a male student.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

are any boys in the photos or videos.

Meanwhile, a group of researchers after decades of non-funded hectic research showed glimpses of hope by unearthing some men who claimed to have been students at some point.

They said, “What media and journalists are showing is totally misleading. There are male students here. We have some photos and videos that were captured when we were students.”

Researchers collected those evidences for further research. They called some

well-known photo and video journalists of the country to validate their findings as journalists possess the pool of photos and videos of different educational institutes. After several attempts, finally a journalist agreed to comment under the cloak of anonymity.

“Male students aren’t invisible or aliens. They are here, but we don’t show them as we are trying to compensate for centuries of patriarchy,” he said. “And really, which sex do you think is actually learning these days?”

READERS’ CORNER

Aurangzeb’s crown found in a local tea-stall

ZEESHAN MAHMUD

According to news circulating on the internet, the crown of the late 18th-century Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb has been found in a local tea stall.

A beautiful, bejewelled crown with opals, garnets and rubies instantly caught people’s attention, although no soul was seen in a *panjabi* with sword and *nagra*.

It is not every day some Mughal prince leaves a dazzling headset in your local Tongi tea-stall.

The stall-owner who did not want to be identified for the sake of any attention jubilantly declared in a statement: “At first I looked for notes, tags or any piece of identifiers tucked inside the seam of the crown so as to track down the owner and return it.

“Then I thought why not have my nephew Vysta make a Go-Fund-Me page so that I can make twice the money from that goodwill?”

When the editors at News Team inquired if it is unusual that such an item was left behind, the stall-owner, Akbar, who later changed his mind about being identified pointed out: “No, it’s not at all out of the ordinary. You must remember it was Friday and happened right after Juma prayers. So, it is entirely possible some wealthy individual from Gulshan could have mistakenly left it, who is desperately searching for it after proposing a hefty reward.”

It was not long before reporters and government agencies as well as the customary Dhaka crowd formed around his store with offers pouring in from appraisals to curators wanting to “authenticate” the item.

Vysta wanted to upload the item to “Kinbay?” but cooler heads prevailed when they detected the tag “100% Polyester Do Not Machine Wash” on the item. They realised there is much more profit to be made by ripping off the tag and reporting the fake news to one of the notable papers with a large audience.

A man carrying a begging bowl and a loincloth uttered: “*Nehi, nehi, sab bhagavan ki lila hai, sab maya hai...*” and claimed it was a collective



hallucination. When he was asked why he was speaking Hindi for no reason, the man who identified himself as *Sadhubaba* revealed that he has been living here for 2,500 years ago after he missed his flight back home!

Police promptly entered the premises trying to “secure” the item as one spokesperson wearing a mask said: “We are temporarily holding the item. Let no man think we are some venal officials.” No one knew why that latter part had to be pointed out.

A man desperately used the password: “*Apne jamen ami kay?*” to gain access to the item but were denied by the “honest” officials. And after a roundtable at a nearby square table, it was decided that it should be raised in parliament as it may need to be returned to any possible country of origin which could be the rightful owner.

Finally, a student of PUB (Prominent University of Bangladesh) drove to the area, got down, took the item and drove away with the crown jewel without speaking a single word... or shedding any sweat driving his latest brand-new olive-green Audi TT model newly imported from Germany.

Why was he able to get away with it without him or anyone else uttering a single word? Well, because he was driving his latest brand-new olive green Audi TT model newly imported from Germany.

Or was the *sadhubaba* right? Was it all a collective hallucination?

Is the social safety net becoming a bottomless pit?

The government must fix poor targeting and unplanned deployment to make it work better

IT'S a classic case of contradictions central to how Bangladesh approaches its major problems. The country, according to a new report, has a commendable social safety net programme on paper, with substantial allocations that place it among the top four countries in the Asia-Pacific region. To that effect, the government spends more than Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, China and others in terms of the share of GDP. Yet, like many other centrally undertaken people interventions, the social safety net programme suffers from myriad challenges that have the effect of cancelling out its benefits, making it all but cosmetic.

The report, unveiled by the World Bank on Thursday, offers an insight into what's keeping the programme from delivering expected results. It identifies poor targeting and unplanned deployment among the major roadblocks to success. The targeting problem has various components. For example, 49-66 percent of the beneficiaries of allowance and food support programmes in Bangladesh are not poor, the report says citing the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. The implication of this is not difficult to comprehend: the inclusion of so many undeserved beneficiaries can only mean the exclusion of so many deserved beneficiaries, which is a frightening thought. In some cases, the problem of poor targeting results in areas with higher poverty rates receiving less coverage than areas with lower poverty incidence. Reallocating existing transfers to the poorest could reduce poverty by 24 percent, the report says. It also underscores the gap between urban and rural populations and different risk groups in terms of the benefits received. Although rebalancing geographic allocations (with a greater focus on the urban poor) and using a comprehensive social registry could help identify the most deserved beneficiaries, the lack of flexibility, coordination and accountability in the system means that these problems persist.

The delivery/deployment problem is another major challenge. A huge number of poor beneficiaries could benefit from the programme if its resources were deployed properly and fast. For example, according to the World Bank report, central allocations for the Food for Work programme were released relatively fast, but delays of up to 100 days were noted between receipt of funds, project approval, implementation and payments. This is unacceptable. Ideally, if the multiplicity of steps in the process could be cut down, it wouldn't take more than 10 days to transfer funds from the treasury to the beneficiaries. We are told that digitising the payment system is on the cards, and that by June next year, all social safety net payments would be done through the government-to-person scheme. We only hope that this will be done as planned and with the urgency it deserves.

The pandemic has exposed the underbelly of our social safety net programme like nothing else in the past. It has pushed many new categories of people into poverty and many existing poor into further destitution, which calls for a system that is robust, efficient and adaptive. Even though the government announced a number of schemes to help them, the benefits of those have eluded the most vulnerable because of the lack of proper planning and execution, as well as corruption. We urge the government to take the World Bank report seriously and implement its recommendations.

Take proper action to stop dengue spread

Precaution is everyone's responsibility, but enforcing preventive measures is the authorities' job

THE reports of dengue infections have been increasing at a worrying rate, and new data shows that the disease has started to spread beyond Dhaka, which has been the dengue hotspot for the past few months. According to the health directorate, at least 14,831 dengue cases have been reported in Bangladesh between January 1 and September 15 this year. Of those cases, 1,601—around 10.79 percent—were reported outside Dhaka. But of the 307 dengue cases reported in the 24 hours between Tuesday and Wednesday, 63 patients—20.52 percent—were not in the capital.

The surge in the cases that Bangladesh is seeing now is similar to what Dhaka experienced in the last few months, which means dengue is spreading across the country alarmingly. If this trend is allowed to continue, experts fear that the rest of the country may face a situation similar to Dhaka's by mid-October.

According to LGRD Minister Md Tazul Islam, most patients from outside Dhaka were infected when they visited the capital. That could have been prevented if, as entomologist Dr Saifur Rahman suggested while speaking to *The Daily Star*, intense fogging had been conducted in and around major bus stations in Dhaka and inside public transport vehicles themselves.

Given that dengue cases are just beginning to rise outside Dhaka, the authorities concerned still have some time to put preventive measures in place and stop the situation from getting worse. There's plenty to learn from our past experiences of dengue outbreaks—some of which were very recent.

We urge authorities to act fast in preventing the spread of dengue. Raising awareness among the citizens and urging them to adopt preventive measures—i.e. wearing clothes that cover most of their skin, cleaning up stagnant water regularly, using insecticides and mosquito nets, etc.—are certainly crucial. But the authorities themselves have the responsibility to prevent the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes, which include spraying (effective) larvicides in dengue hotspots, carrying out regular fogging, and keeping the water bodies of their respective areas clean.

Because of the seasonal nature of dengue infections, we hope that the city corporation and municipality authorities in the urban areas and the union and upazila parishads in the rural areas have taken adequate preparations to prevent Aedes breeding. Our healthcare system is already overwhelmed with Covid patients; the authorities need to do what they must, while there's still time, to contain dengue infections to avoid putting more burden on the healthcare providers.

With Covid, there's no easing back into campus

Undertaking this mammoth task requires a comprehensive strategy



BLOWN' IN THE WIND

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

IT is as refreshing as watching flowers of urban forestry in bloom or the roadside plants glisten after a bout of rain.

Children in their uniforms, heading to their schools, have brought back memories of a life that came to a standstill for over 18 months. A little boy with a school bag and a water bottle, hugging his dad from the back on a motorbike, a sleeping girl in her mother's arm under a rickshaw hood, or a caregiver feeding a restless child breakfast in a speeding car—all this is a morning vista that we greatly missed. In the last year and a half, my niece grew up and became a teenager; her teacher could hardly recognise her when she returned to school. It was quite an emotional reunion, from what I hear.

The institutions are starting to be abuzz with life. The tiny masks worn by our young ones, however, remind us that not everything is normal. And to minimise the physical stay in the compound, many schools are offering half of their classes online. Hybrid learning is the new absolute.

The Ministry of Education has always maintained that they would not reopen schools unless the infection rate dropped under 10 percent, adding that they would not hesitate to shut down if there was any sign of a viral spike. It is a prudent decision. The parents, too, are cautious, as suggested by the low turnout in schools. If the rise and fall of the viral curve is any indicator—that, too, based on only those who have volunteered to be tested—the cautiousness of the students and their parents is also understandable. They need complete assurance that their children will be in a protected environment. The reality is we are far from an ideal situation where we can claim normalcy.

At my university, ULAB, we conducted a survey to assess the vaccination status as well as the student preference for online/in-person classes. While most of our teachers and staff are vaccinated, only one-third of our students have been able to get the jobs. The absence of national ID cards seems to be a hindrance; only recently, the option of birth certificates and a dedicated link for university students have been introduced. Priorities have been given to medical students and public universities with residential dorms;

private universities like ours did not make the cut. If our students manage to avail themselves of this lately given window of opportunity, we expect two-thirds of our students to receive at least one dose of the vaccine by the end of this month, when we are supposed to resume face-to-face learning.

The rate of being infected after two doses throws another spanner in the works. There is a three-way split among our students: 39.7 percent are comfortable in continuing classes online, 33 percent want to return to physical classrooms, while 27.3 percent have no preference. Given the adversity aired against online teaching, it is interesting to see how an age-old system of in-class lecturing can undergo a serious revision with the advent of the new.

Another interesting find in the survey was that almost all students would move to Dhaka once the campus reopened, which means even if we adopt a hybrid or a blended model, our students from outside of Dhaka (about 25 percent) would like to relocate. This is understandable as universities are required to hold exams and laboratory classes in a physical setting.

There is no clear-cut solution to the imbroglio that we are facing. To adopt a hybrid model—where teachers will be streaming classes with half of their students present in the classroom, with the remaining half in their homes—will need massive investments. All classes will need high-resolution cameras and microphones, and teachers will be required to have basic training on addressing two different audiences at the same time. Such a model will allow the university administrations to control the crowd: for example, the odd roll numbers attending the Sunday slots, while the even roll numbers coming in on Tuesdays.

This is an example of a hybrid model where face-to-face and online activities are integrated. In a blended learning model, class sessions are mostly held in traditional classrooms with the online platforms used for activities, lecture sharing, and assessment. With just weeks to go before the reopening, the government directives for universities have been very flexible. It has asked the academic council and syndicate concerned to decide on the teaching modalities.

As the split in our survey shows, the situation is unlikely to yield any consensus. We will need decisive actions. The government's vaccination programme is directly linked with the campus visit policies. For instance, as an institution,

can we declare a campus policy that says "no vaccine, no entry"? We submitted the list of our registered students in February, but only last week did we have the introduction of a university vaccination service. We cannot bar students from entering their campus. We can always endorse basic health protocols, such as wearing masks, using sanitisers, checking temperature, classroom airflow, and disinfection of public places. Then again,

strategy is required. Leaving it to the local authority or agency will mean that each institution will set its own bar: some will lower the net to play tennis, while others will set it so high that it will be unrealistic. The country is already experiencing a digital divide where the access to and the affordability of procuring technological devices and the internet have been an issue. The pandemic has exposed the gap between developed



We want to see our universities come alive with the chatters and laughter of students—like Bottola in Dhaka University—again, but not in a haphazard manner that jeopardises their lives and learning.

FILE PHOTO: HASAN MAHMUD PROTTOY

who will bear these additional expenses? What will be our protocol for a "panic shutdown" if there is a rise in the number of infections? We have already seen a similar instance in the US.

The key challenge in reopening our institutions and adapting to a new model is making sure that all our students have the same experience. We cannot have one set of teaching/learning experiences or assessments for one group of students, while another set of experiences for the others. How can we ensure that, outside our protected area, the students are moving with similar health and safety standards? The public bus in which a student is travelling may not have the luxury of our spaced-out classroom seating arrangements. To what extent can we police our students in maintaining health protocols? Is that a reminder of the Bangla idiom of a tight bundle with a loose knot?

I believe that a comprehensive

and developing countries, urban and rural populations, young and educated versus older and less-educated individuals, public and private, and men and women. One consequence of the digital divide is isolation, which can cause psychological disorders. Gender discrimination is another issue as parents prefer investing more in the education of a male child than that of a female one. It is important that we go back to the campuses to bridge these gaps.

In an ideal world, we would like to see the campuses and compounds filled with the liveliness of our students, freed from their screen times and Zoom boxes. We would like to get involved in activities that will hone their social skills and practical knowledge. But letting the policy balloon fly at the last second with a lot of holes in it is sure to spoil the party.

Shamsad Mortuza is acting vice-chancellor of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), and a professor of English at Dhaka University (on leave).

The great 'tamasha' of California recall election



ASHFAQUE SWAPAN

IT was a political circus almost as outsized as America's largest state: California.

This was a recall election where the result should have been a foregone conclusion—and in the end, it was. California

Governor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, ran a robust campaign to turn the election into a cakewalk in this overwhelmingly Democratic state.

But not before he spent some sleepless nights, and the state went through the sort of drama that would make a soap opera screenwriter blush.

First, let's have a quick primer on that odd political confection: the California recall system. A legacy of the progressive tradition of direct democracy, California has a relatively low threshold of petitioners that can trigger a vote to recall a governor.

A lofty idea, perhaps, but it has more holes than a piece of Swiss cheese. Take this year's gubernatorial recall election. A voter had to make two choices. The first was whether you want to recall (read "sack") the current governor. If you don't, then the governor gets to keep his job. End of story.

But if you do, then things get weird. In that case, anyone who wins a plurality among a colourful assortment of candidates—this year there were 46—wins. I am not joking. So hypothetically, even if 49 percent voters vote for keeping the governor (which means 51 percent don't and he/she has to go), anybody among her/his opponents with a plurality—Newsom's opponent Larry Elder won 38 percent at last count—gets to oust him.

Another wrinkle in the mix—which gave the Democrats a real fright this time around—is that a recall election is often a one-off effort with very low turnout. Important Democratic constituents like the minorities and young people are notoriously inconsistent voters.

In the end, however, the Republican-

fevered dreams never did pan out—nobody's surprise. But before I elaborate on that, let's take a quick recap on how this recall circus came about.

Like most of the awful things that are happening around the world during this terrible time, it was the pandemic that almost cost Newsom his job. California was hit hard by the pandemic, and Newsom's tough restrictive mandates made many voters chafe. What's worse, while he imposed draconian restrictions,

ago. President Joe Biden trounced former President Donald Trump last year by a whopping 29 points.

Republicans likely wistfully looked back at the last time California tried to recall a governor and succeeded. In 2003, just like in one of his "Terminator" movies, macho movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger appeared to come out of nowhere and beat sitting Democratic Governor Gray Davis.

Things have changed since then. The



California Governor Gavin Newsom makes an appearance after the polls close on the recall election, at the California Democratic Party headquarters in Sacramento, California, US on September 14, 2021.

PHOTO: REUTERS

he was caught schmoozing—maskless—in a party in one of the most expensive restaurants in California named French Laundry (I'm still scratching my head about that name).

Angry voters organised, and conservative media and the Republican Party were only too happy to egg them on.

At first glance, you may be wondering: What on earth were Republicans thinking? In California, Democrats outnumber Republicans by a margin of 2-1; Democrats have a supermajority in the legislature, and the last time Republicans won a statewide race was over a decade

state is far more Democratic, and while Davis was very unpopular, Newsom is not. The key difference, however, is the diametrically opposite political strategy to unseat the governor. In 2003, Schwarzenegger hewed to a moderate, localised political message—his focus was on a widely loathed vehicle tax. (The fact that he was a celebrity didn't hurt—this is, after all, the land of Hollywood.)

The Republican strategy this time around was the exact opposite—with catastrophic electoral results. Their frontrunner, conservative radio talk show host Larry Elder, is a hardcore unabashed

Trump-like candidate who basks in riling up the base: a doomed strategy in a state where Republicans are so outnumbered.

CNN reports that Elder has said that "the ideal minimum wage is USD 0.00." He once called climate change "a crock," argued slave owners should receive reparations, and opposed mandating masks or vaccines during the Covid-19 pandemic. He has also written that "women know less than men." Good luck winning California with that.

Yet, the fact of the matter is that in the summer, polls did show that the recall vote could be close. Newsom hauled in a torrent of campaign cash and simply drowned the airwaves. Republicans, for all the noise they made, failed to convince donors with deep pockets to back them.

There is also a rather Trumpian twist in all this. The former president continues to cast a long shadow on the party, which is utterly in thrall with his brand of toxic, take-no-prisoners, own-the-libs politics. In California, that's poison.

Elder helped Newsom frame the election as a choice between him and a Trump clone that helped galvanise Democratic voters. The lopsided Democratic advantage did the rest.

In the end, voters backed Newsom for stoutly defending robust measures to battle Covid-19. More than 67,000 Californians have died in the pandemic, and despite the Republican attacks, Newsom has stood firm, and California has one of the nation's highest vaccination rates and lowest rate of new virus cases.

"It appears that we are enjoying an overwhelmingly 'no' vote tonight here in the state of California, but 'no' is not the only thing that was expressed tonight," a jubilant Newsom told reporters on September 14.

"We said yes to science. We said yes to vaccines. We said yes to ending this pandemic. We said yes to people's right to vote without fear of fake fraud and voter suppression. We said yes to women's fundamental constitutional right to decide for herself what she does with her body, her fate, her future. We said yes to diversity."

Ashfaq Swapan is a writer and editor based in Atlanta, US.

Why Bangladesh needs agricultural microinsurance

Small farmers in rural areas need the protection of insurance to recover from the damage caused by weather events

ABDULLAH AL-MARUF and J CRAIG JENKINS

BANGLADESH needs to adopt policies to promote agricultural microinsurance for small farmers. Small farmers are the backbone of the rural areas, where two-thirds of the population of Bangladesh live. Despite recent progress, many live at or below the poverty line and are exposed to major weather-related crop risks. Climate change is exacerbating these weather risks, causing extreme rainfall and temperatures that destroy crops and leave these farmers vulnerable. Annually, 10-20 percent of crops are lost to severe flooding, drought, flash floods, storm/cyclone surges and other weather events. The lack of insurance discourages these small farmers from investing in better seeds, fertilisers and farm equipment by "self-insuring"—basically storing some of last year's seeds. Studies show that insured farmers are more likely to invest in new crops, improved seeds and fertilisers, and land improvement.

Bangladesh has seen a wave of pilot experiments in agricultural insurance over the past decade. We now have the evidence to show that insurance works, it will be accepted by small farmers, and can be fine-tuned to protect against major weather risks. Brac and Islamic Relief are providing insurance against livestock deaths. Sadharan Bima Corporation (SBC), Green Delta Insurance Company Ltd, and Pragati Insurance Ltd have joined forces with Oxfam, World Food Programme (WFP), and Swiss Re to pilot-test weather index-based crop insurance (WIBCI). The SBC, Oxfam and the International Water Management Institute recently collaborated with the Sacred Heart Foundation, a local NGO in the country's haor area, to provide WIBCI for smallholders in this highly vulnerable region. Over 600 small farmers were recently delighted to receive payments when flash floods



Small farmers are one of the communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in Bangladesh.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

destroyed their crops in the last few days of the enrolment period. The WIBCI is a novel system in which "bad weather" measured by satellites, automated weather stations and drones triggers payments based on damaging events, reducing the need for adjusters and the likes, reducing business costs and speeding up payments to the affected farmers. Using digital platforms and insurance-bank-NGO partnerships, these projects have been able to provide timely compensations to small farmers within weeks of a damaging weather event, allowing the farmers to replant or make other timely decisions.

Today, fewer than 30,000 out of the

1.2 crore small farmers—under 0.003 percent—have participated in one of these WIBCI pilot projects. These pilot experiments required a roughly 50 percent subsidy from donors and/or the Ministry of Finance, but evidence suggests that the amount of subsidy can decrease as farmers become more familiar with insurance and more farmers are covered, improving risk pooling. The foundation of insurance is pooling risks. Crores of farmers need to participate to thin out these risks and protect this smallholder backbone of our rural society. Green Delta has shown that a private insurer can operate profitably using tailored insurance for smallholders in specialty

crop production.

Legal reforms are needed to make it easier for banks to cooperate with the insurance companies and NGOs engaged in local development. Licensing standards need to be preserved while making one-stop processing available for this broader set of insurance partners.

Bangladesh needs more trained actuaries and specialists in insurance operations, along with agronomists and meteorologists who understand insurance—and this should be addressed by the universities. Improvements are needed in the geographic details and accuracy of the weather data released by the

Bangladesh Meteorology Department. Better quality and accessible crop yield data, along with inexpensive and timely terrain maps relevant to monitoring flooding and drought, are needed to support this effort. Networking platforms that will allow insurance people, interested NGOs, the SBC, agronomists, geodesic science specialists, digital specialists, and relevant professionals from universities and governmental agencies to mingle and generate new partnerships are needed to spur this industry. Agricultural extension specialists should become knowledgeable partners in these efforts.

Does agricultural or crop insurance need to become a public responsibility? Does it require the type of heavy public subsidies that exist in the US and Western Europe? Government intervention is certainly required along the lines outlined above. Public or charitable subsidies may be necessary in the pilot stage and the early start-up. But our argument is that effective upscaling, use of new digital and remote sensing technologies, and effective partnering of private, NGO and governmental agencies should be sufficient to launch sustainable crop and other insurance schemes.

We already have over a decade of pilot experiments and accumulated knowledge on what is required to create a sustained crop and a broader agricultural insurance system. It is time to put a stop to endless pilot projects, and move forward to create weather protections for the smallholders of rural Bangladesh, who will have to confront the growing weather challenges in the future due to climate change.

Abdullah Al-Maruf is an associate professor at the department of geography and environmental studies in the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. J Craig Jenkins is professor emeritus at the department of sociology in the Ohio State University, US.

Bangladesh has seen a wave of pilot experiments in agricultural insurance over the past decade. We now have the evidence to show that insurance works, it will be accepted by small farmers, and can be fine-tuned to protect against major weather risks.

Can the UN play a central role in reshaping Afghanistan's future?



AS the world debates on the ways to deal with the serious challenges faced on multiple fronts after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, one issue that has received much less attention than the others is the kind of template based on which the

solutions are to be found. The challenges relate as much to Afghanistan's internal dynamics as to the external ones.

It is against this backdrop that one has to view the speech delivered by India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar at the United Nations high-level meeting on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan on September 13. Jaishankar's remarks revolve around the UN Security Council's Resolution 2593, adopted on the final day of India's

for centrality of the United Nations' role in shaping the future of Afghanistan, and how this centrality is the best option in the current circumstances.

Jaishankar's main argument is that "a multilateral (UN) platform is always more effective than small groups in building global consensus and encouraging united action" in Afghanistan. It is in this context, he said, that the UN Security Council Resolution 2593 should guide the international community's approach in the coming days as Afghanistan goes through a critical phase.

The UNDP reckons that Afghanistan faces the threat of sliding further back into poverty—from 72 percent to 97 percent—which not only has serious consequences for that country, but will also have a severe impact on regional stability. As humanitarian aid is crucial, it is important to keep in mind that the issue of travelling and safe passage has the potential to emerge as an obstacle to delivering assistance, and it needs to be sorted out at the earliest.

cannot be expected to do anything to assist Afghanistan. The SCO is a mechanism whose member-countries have differing perspectives and conflicting interests on Afghanistan—so much so that it makes Singapore-based Indian strategic affairs expert C Raja Mohan to comment in an article in *The Indian Express*: "It is unlikely that the SCO can come up with a regional solution for the Afghan crisis." Complicating the matter further is the divergences between the US and the European Union where Afghanistan is concerned. It remains to be seen how much the UN can be effective in bringing the world together on the Afghan issue.

But there are certain common things that can be easily agreed on by the international community to provide humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan by creating an enabling environment besides the need for an end to terrorism and radicalism in the country. This can have some salutary effects on the country's security situation. Efficient logistics, according to Jaishankar, is one such common issue for which unfettered and direct access to Afghanistan is required.

Another important thing that the Indian foreign minister points out is the non-discriminatory distribution of humanitarian assistance across all sections of Afghan society. Only the United Nations has the capacity to monitor humanitarian efforts and make assurances to the donor countries and organisations, Jaishankar contends.

The assessment in New Delhi is that, given the current situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan's ascendancy in that country, only the UN umbrella can provide a way out for India to resume its own efforts to meet the humanitarian requirements of the Afghans. India provided more than one million tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan over the past decade, and also partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP) for distribution of high protein biscuits for school-going children for several years. India is also keen to see its 500 development projects in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan remain intact. These projects—spanning power, water supply, road connectivity, healthcare, education, and agriculture sectors—have in the last two decades created the image of a soft-power country, which has never sought the role of a security provider in Afghanistan. As the former Indian envoy to Pakistan TCA Raghavan suggests, India should not wean itself away from Afghanistan just because of the changed situation in the country.

The UN's centrality on the Afghan issue can also help India regain some of the influence it has been enjoying in Afghanistan for the last two decades before the Taliban takeover.

The UN is often criticised for its inability to resolve conflict situations and humanitarian crises around the world. Afghanistan provides an opportunity for it to redeem itself.

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



The United Nations Security Council meets to discuss the situation in Afghanistan at the UN Headquarters in New York, US.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

month-long leadership of the world body in August. The resolution is a strong reflection from the Security Council and the international community on its expectations regarding Afghanistan. It iterates the importance of combating terrorism in Afghanistan, including those individuals and entities designated pursuant to Resolution 1267 adopted by the Security Council in 1999, and asked the Taliban to facilitate safe passage for people wanting to leave Afghanistan, allow humanitarian operation in the country, uphold human rights—including for women and children—and an inclusive political settlement.

But where he departs from the UNSC resolution is his unambiguous suggestion

This, Jaishankar said, warrants the resumption of regular commercial flight operations at the Kabul airport to ensure regular flow of humanitarian aid to complement domestic relief measures.

Why is the central role for the UN needed in Afghanistan, from where the world body has been missing since the US-led international forces ousted the Taliban from power in 2002? This is mainly due to the lack of a viable regional grouping that could help Afghanistan, which is a member of both Saarc and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a security group led by China and Russia.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) is moribund and

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

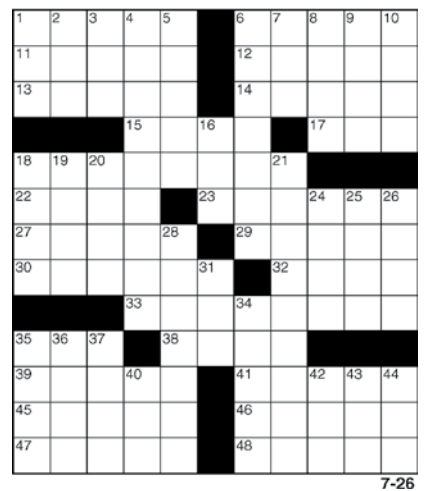
ACROSS

- 1 Field enclosure
- 6 Sneaker features
- 11 Even a little
- 12 Precise
- 13 High-muck-a-muck
- 14 Towel material
- 15 Weeps noisily
- 17 Groom's wear
- 18 Independent sort
- 22 Sweeping story
- 23 Skewed views
- 27 Car sticker
- 29 "Coming up next" ad
- 30 Short sock
- 32 Go under
- 33 Admire
- 35 Touch lightly

- 38 Cooped (up)
- 39 City on the Mohawk River
- 41 Luminous glows
- 45 Back tooth
- 46 Old car part
- 47 Change, as the Constitution
- 48 Singer Rogers

DOWN

- 10 River of Hades
- 16 Move up and down
- 18 Helen's mother
- 19 Ready for business
- 20 Shaving mishap
- 21 Years and years from now
- 24 Shower need
- 25 Radiate
- 26 Song for one
- 28 Spotted cat
- 31 Sock part
- 34 Aptitude
- 35 Mountain lion
- 36 Physics bit
- 37 Mosaic piece
- 40 Soup buy
- 42 Sprinted
- 43 Columnist
- Landers
- 44 Cloud setting
- 9 Beige



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



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

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Upazila Engineer

Upazila: Naldanga

District: Natore

www.lged.gov.bd.

Memo No-46.02.6955.000.14.06.18. 690

Date: 16/09/2021

e-Tender Notice-01/2021-22

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

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Name of Work	Tendering method
01	610070	Supplying of Medical Instruments of Upazila Health Complex Naldanga, under Naldanga Upazila, Dist: Natore. (Project: UGDP, Sub-project No. INF-2019-20-506955-01) (Package no:INF-2019-20-506955-10.)	OTM

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.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to up to 03 September 2021, 17:00PM. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

স্বাক্ষর
SK. MD. A.S Mostafizur Rahman
Upazila Engineer (A.C)
LGED, Naldanga, Natore
ue.naldanga@lged.gov.bd
Phone No: 07732-51165

GD-1669

POETRY

Lines from Fuller Road

SABIHA HUQ



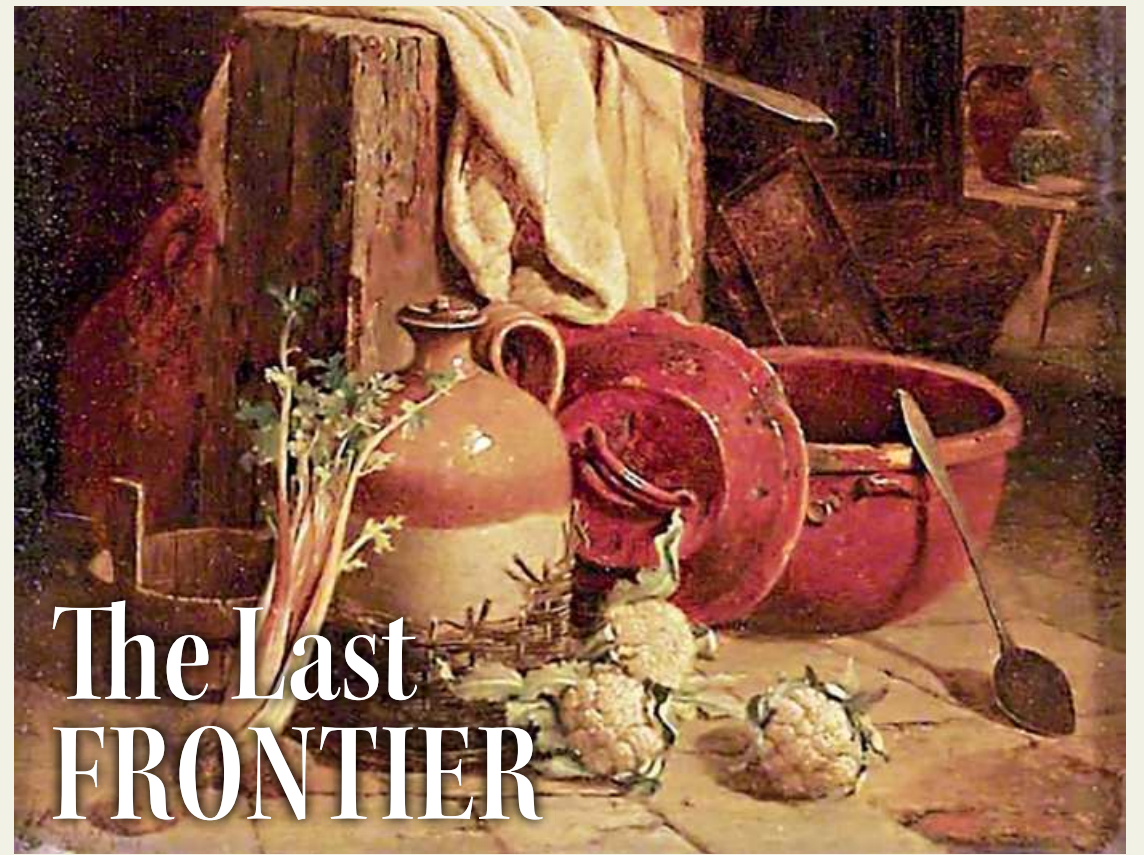
a. Morning

This dawn is unvarying, lovely, peaceful, dewy,
Morning sky has opened its store of breathing clouds,
Street lights had fought with the golden aggression
Of half opened casket of sun's burning glimmers;
The streets seemed unusually dry and desolate!
The call for morning prayers is soft, sonorous.
Looking up at the heavens one searches for signs
Of divine grace and love for the ecosphere below.
Cease fire, smaller number of people dying of covid;
Lovely women sleep peacefully as men look on;
Closed eyes, toothless gums giggle even when dreaming;
Far away, the boatman sings of Acheron's divine flow
I, Tiresias, on my Fuller Road balcony in this unreal city,
Amidst all my muddled thoughts of ternary spheres,
Look through a chink between high-rises that lean on,
Trying to bargain solace among unbrushed May flowers.

b. Evening

The sky looked appalled as the sun's rays fell on a beggar
Holding a pack of masks for cars with locked windows,
The slush of the roadside canal smelled of rotten mice,
Evening prayer was nigh as the muezzin hurriedly passed,
I, Tiresias, felt tired as my eyes looked at the burnt horizon,
Wondering at the enormous energy vibrating down the road
Muscles, ribs, hands, tongues, lips, voices, marching feet -
All seemed distant and foreign to my depleted vision
Past office hours, robust traffic horns don't sound now.
I searched for that dog-eared familiar landscape
Painted by the city lords of expanding imagination;
Came nothing except murmuring Shishu and Pipul leaves
Vibrating in the kite-flying summer sky silhouette.
Doors are ajar; the wind refused to cross the threshold;
How could I leave my balcony, O woman of my life,
Until I see you return in that crisscrossed red silk scarf?

Sabiha Huq teaches English at Khulna University. These lines were inspired by photos shot by Fakrul Alam, which are published with the photographer's permission.



The Last FRONTIER

BIPASHA HAQUE

Meanwhile I looked for space, for a new frontier.
The blows, when they came like torrential rains
brought healings too, much to my resistance.
A poem is not merely poetry, often it is the
spokesman of truth.
Truth flaps its wings in the guise of poetry,
then it falls off me onto this piece of paper
and lo! this translucent monologue begins --
.....
And I went to war unprepared.
I knew my rank would be that of a kitchen hand or
lower,
but still it was a war and I was summoned to fight.
When I'd come home as a war veteran,
and serving the country as a kitchen hand
through all the posthuman warring strategies,
through famine, deluge, through avalanches
and melted glaciers,
through chemical cum biological weapons
and, and being a mercenary, being counterfeited,

being gassed and gagged I'd outlive my fellow species
and, above all I'll keep earning my medals..
O my medals, it's medals made of onion rings
and garlic, sages, and thymes.
I'd wear them all.
I'd wear them all upon coming to you,
I might take short service leave
to show you that there's no shame in being a kitchen
hand.
No shame at all in being a kitchen hand.
I'm the kitchen hand by daylight like the daylight
and by night just like the night.
Meanwhile I'll keep looking for new frontiers
as for the blows, when they come left and right
I'll surely survive.
I'd be the guerrilla of all last frontiers.

Bipasha Haque is a diaspora writer with particular interest in life-the way it is. By profession she is a university teacher.

REVIEWS

A Review of *The Silence of the Girls*

Pat Barker. ISBN: 0385544219. Hamish Hamilton, 2018

BY NUSRAT HUQ

My first reaction to the knowledge that someone would attempt to re-tell the story of *The Illiad* appeared to be a foolhardy venture-one that was doomed to failure because it seemed too challenging and gargantuan a task, but within the first few chapters I could see Pat Barker's skill in bringing the story of the *Iliad* to a modern context. The values, emotions and characters are as relevant today as they were during the Trojan War that is portrayed in the ancient text.

The story is supposedly about Briseis, a Trojan queen and about the women in the war who remained unnoticed and were regarded as pawns in the war game. Their story is told successfully, but the character that stands out as the most fascinating, complex, powerful and larger-than-life is Achilles. The first line of the story describes him as "brilliant," "shining" and "god-like," but the narrator Briseis also calls him a "butcher." The first sentence makes us think: it is all about perspective; a war hero causing the largest number of deaths to his enemies is a butcher to them, but a god-like hero to the side he is fighting for. In a single day, he could kill sixty men with his sword or spear. Briseis watched him kill her brothers and then she had to line up with other Trojan women to be distributed as war booty among the Greek men. She states matter-of-factly that she was "chosen" by Achilles. Her silence and the silence of girls like her is the title of the book.

As Achilles' companion she was only expected to be there. She found some solace in his friend Patroclus who was sensitive to her plight. If ever there was anyone who Achilles had deep feelings for, it was for Patroclus and there are hints in her narration that their friendship even bordered on obsession. Psychoanalysts call it "a platonic warrior-bond." Achilles was human only in Patroclus' company and yet when it came to the crunch, he allowed Patroclus to don his armour and go into battle despite the high risk of facing Hector, the greatest Trojan warrior. He would rather risk Patroclus' life than relent and fight for the Greeks because he was furious with Agamemnon. His ego, pride and hatred made him blind to all reason.

Yet the death of Patroclus broke him. He was like a furious, blood-thirsty lion determined to avenge Patroclus' death. He puts aside his anger at Agamemnon and decides to fight again only for the purpose of killing Hector. In his blind rage we are

thankful that he was not foolish enough to think that he could fight Hector without a magical armour from his mother, a sea-goddess.

What makes this part of the book sensational is the uncontrolled, obsession-filled emotions and actions of Achilles. He ties Hector's body to his chariot and drags it around the town for several days till his body is mutilated beyond recognition. Nobody dared to stop him as his god-like fury was unleashed. And Patroclus was dead. His mood swings swayed between rage and depression. He wanted proper burial rites for Patroclus and on his pyre, he had to have more than adequate sacrifice-- he killed twelve Trojan youths for the purpose and Patroclus' horses and dogs had to burn too. He ordered that the urn holding Patroclus' bones should be large enough to hold his own bones after his death.

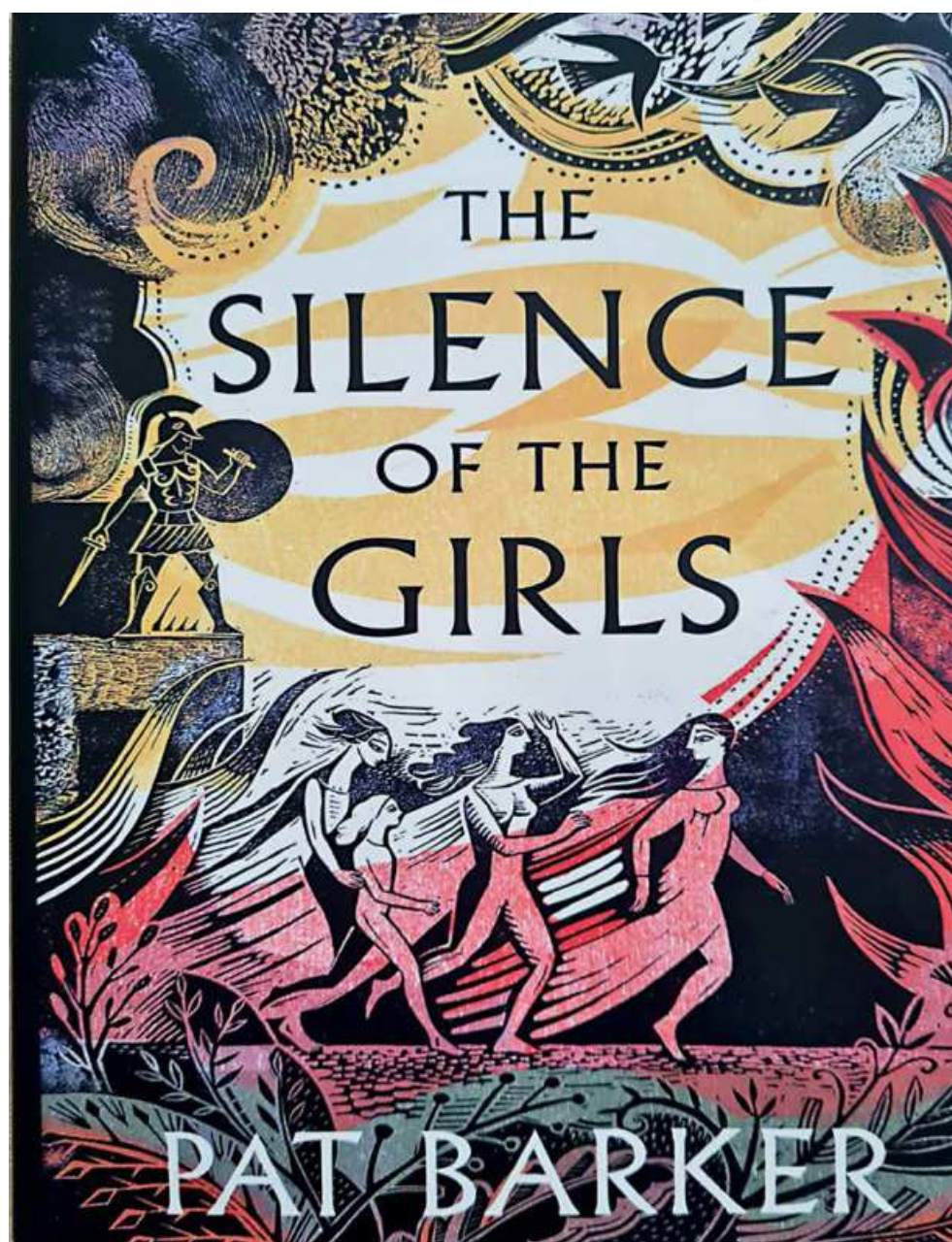
The descriptions of Achilles' psyche, obsession and unnatural feelings contrast heavily with complete lack of emotion or total disregard for Briseis or for any other woman, except for his mother, the sea-goddess Thetis. He would go for walks on the beach at night with Patroclus, but mostly saunter off alone to meet his mother who would swim to him to provide love and encouragement and finally the armour that he so badly needed.

Another humane gesture on his part was when Priam, Hector's father came to Achilles and begged him to return Hector's body for proper funeral rites. The scene of Priam bending before Achilles and saying "I do what no man before me has ever done, I kiss the hands of the man who killed my son" pierces our hearts and we wring our hands in anticipation. Thankfully, Achilles' sense of decency and honour compel him to bathe and clean Hector's mutilated body before returning it.

I cannot get enough of the complexities of Achilles' character. Do we love Achilles? Do we hate him? The answer is that we admire him as a mighty warrior, but through him we also know the cost of cruelty, arrogance and pride.

The next character who appealed to me is Patroclus; a devoted friend, philosopher and guide to Achilles and everyone else. He made Briseis' life bearable. His subservience to Achilles is infuriating at times, but to him, the hierarchy was never to be breached. When duty towards his country called, he bravely donned Achilles' armour and faced the mighty Hector.

Some aspects of the book are informative.



Burial rites: If one is denied funeral rites, one cannot enter Hades and is condemned to haunt the living for all eternity. The cremation of the body must be done before sunset on the day following the death. The fire cleanses the soul. The ashes are preserved in an urn and buried in a grave. Briseis mentions that mirrors are a threshold between our world and the world of the dead. That is why they are kept

covered between a death and a cremation.

Burial rites also include the funeral feast and funeral games. The games honour the deceased and propitiate the spirits of those who died. The funeral games include the discus and javelin throw, wrestling and the chariot race which modern day film-makers love to portray.

The worst ritual was the sacrifice of a young

virgin on the grave of the deceased. In *The Silence of the Girls*, Polyxena, Queen Hecuba's youngest daughter was literally slaughtered in public view. Before dying Polyxena consoled her mother saying "It is better to die on Achilles' burial mound than live to be a slave." And that statement really sums up the plight of women in a heroic world.

Captured women: They lived like slaves among their captors and were expected to visit the huts of their captors at night when summoned. Their chores included cleaning, grinding herbs, pouring libations for their masters and serving them at all times. However, even the slaves had their own hierarchy. The kitchen slave was on the lowest rung of the ladder. Becoming a concubine of a lord was a rise in status. Sometimes the slave girl's mistress, no more useful to her lord would be seen scraping for food around the fires. All that mattered for a woman was youth, beauty and fertility.

The roles of gods, goddesses and fate: The ultimate fascination of the book lies in their influence on the characters. One critic wrote that the gods were pettier and more vindictive than the humans. But they are also there to intervene for good causes...to win a battle or to punish a King like Agamemnon for not returning Chryseis to her father, Apollo's priest. Chryseis had to be returned because Apollo sent the plague to punish Agamemnon for insulting his priest. Along with the return of Chryseis the sacrifice of a hundred bulls was compulsory. Along with influence of the deities, fate brought about the inevitability of occurrences and death.

The book makes for easy reading. In some parts, the writer uses crude words, but that is intentional to convey how a woman is demeaned when she is a war trophy.

We can almost hear the clash of sword upon steel and see the glint of the sun on the steel blades. The writer's skill also enables us to see and hear the gore of guts spilling out and blood squirting. In the battle scenes, Pat Barker manages to create the glory of the mighty Achilles with his fearsome battle-cry, killing by the hundreds and raising his sword in triumph. At the same time, she manages to convey the brutality and senselessness of deaths caused by war leaving us with many points to ponder over.

Nusrat Huq is a teacher at Sunbeams and a member of The Reading Circle, (TRC) Dhaka.

T SPORTS

La Liga
Rayo Vallecano vs Getafe
Live from 6:00 pm
Atletico Madrid vs Athletic
Bilbao
Live from 8:15 pm
Elche vs Levante
Live from 10:30 pm

Alaves vs Osasuna
Live from 1:00 am
(Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League
Liverpool vs Crystal Palace
Live from 8:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
English Premier League

Wolves vs Brentford
Live from 5:30 pm
Manchester City vs
Southampton
Live from 8:00 pm
Aston Villa vs Everton
Live from 10:30 pm
SONY SIX
Bundesliga

Augsburg vs Borussia
Mönchengladbach
Live from 7:30 pm
TEN 2
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich vs Bochum
Live from 7:30 pm
FC Köln vs RB Leipzig
Live from 10:30 pm



Brunzon replaces Day for next three events

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) appointed Spanish coach Oscar Brunzon as the national team's interim coach after relieving Jamie Day of his duties for the next two months, handing the mastermind behind the Bashundhara Kings' domestic dominance the task of guiding Bangladesh in the upcoming SAFF Championship.

It was inevitable that Day would be replaced ahead of the regional football extravaganza -- scheduled to begin in Maldives from October 1 -- after BFF president Kazi Salahuddin told an executive committee meeting on Thursday's about a possible change of head coach in the coming days. But the National Teams Committee (NTC) acted fast, finalising the decision the following day.

"We have engagements over the next two months: the SAFF Championship, the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers in October and a four-nation tournament in Sri Lanka in November. We played two



"I think it's a bit unprofessional that I find this (being replaced for the job) out through media."

JAMIE DAY

tournaments in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan recently but the results were not satisfactory," NTC chairman and BFF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed said after the meeting at the BFF House yesterday.

"We discussed it with Jamie Day and were unsatisfied by his explanations. We also discussed it with the BFF president and discussed the matter at today's [Friday's] meeting, which decided

to release Day of his duties from the national football team for the next three events over two months. Bashundhara Kings coach Oscar Brunzon was appointed as interim coach."

Brunzon has coached his side to two Bangladesh Premier League titles, as many Federation Cup titles and one Independence Cup title in the past three years. This season, the Kings finished second in Group D of the AFC Cup under his guidance. The Spaniard also has prior experiences coaching in Maldives and India.

"Over the past two years, Oscar has been the most successful coach in the domestic circuit and we were following his coaching methods. Besides, he has vast experience with the local players and good knowledge about opponents [in the SAFF Championship]," Nabil said. "Oscar will take charge on September 21 but will pick a 35-member preliminary squad tomorrow to submit to the SAFF secretariat."

Nabil, also Abahani's acting director-in-charge, hoped the national team would reach the final of the five-team round-robin tournament under Brunzon's

guidance.

It is not the first time the BFF have removed the head coach ahead of a tournament.

They axed Brazilian Adson Silva Dido and Italian Fabio Lopes ahead of SAFF Championships to appoint local coaches Shahidur Rahman Shantu and Marful Haque respectively but success eluded them then.

Replying to a query, Nabil said: "Whether our decision is realistic or not will be proven through the performance of the players. We are not considering the training period short because all our players have been in action recently. Most national players will even get a chance to play on September 20. Besides, the coach already has observations of the players because of his coaching in the domestic circuit. There are no questions over players' fitness and nine days is enough time to settle on the tactics for the matches."

When contacted, Jaime refused to comment. Nabil later Jamie Day's future would be decided after two months. Meanwhile, Brunzon is set to face the media on Monday after Bashundhara Kings' last league game against Abahani.

Pakistan disappointed over NZ's tour abandonment

REUTERS, Islamabad



New Zealand abruptly abandoned their tour of Pakistan on Friday citing a security alert in a massive blow to the South Asian country's hopes of staging regular international cricket.

The tour was to get underway with the first of the three one-dayers in Rawalpindi on Friday but New Zealand did not travel to the stadium.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) then issued a statement announcing their decision to call off the tour. "Following an escalation in the New Zealand Government threat levels for Pakistan, and advice from NZC security advisors on the ground, it has been decided the Blackcaps will not continue with the tour," it said.

NZC declined to share details of the security threat and said arrangements were being made for the team's departure.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said NZC had "unilaterally decided to postpone the series" despite "foolproof security arrangements" made for the matches.

"The Pakistan Prime Minister spoke personally to the Prime Minister of New Zealand and informed her that we have one of the best intelligence systems in the world and that no security threat of any kind exists for the visiting team," the PCB said in a statement.

"PCB is willing to continue the scheduled matches. However, cricket lovers in Pakistan and around the world will be disappointed by this last minute withdrawal."

Newly-appointed PCB chairman Ramiz Raja's tone, a former Pakistan captain, said they would approach the International Cricket Council (ICC) over what transpired

on a "crazy day".

"Walking out of the tour by taking a unilateral approach on a security threat is very frustrating. Especially when it's not shared!! Which world is NZ living in?? NZ will hear us at ICC," Raja tweeted.

New Zealand, minus several frontline players, were visiting Pakistan for the first time in 18 years and were also due to play five Twenty20 matches in Lahore.

"I understand this will be a blow for the PCB, who have been wonderful hosts, but player safety is paramount and we believe this is the only responsible option," NZC chief executive David White said.

New Zealand Jacinda Ardern backed NZC's decision to end the tour.

"I know how disappointing it will be for everyone that the game hasn't gone ahead, but we totally support the decision that's been made. Player safety has to be paramount," she said in a statement.

More disappointment could be in store for the PCB with England now reconsidering what was to be their first Pakistan visit in 16 years to play two Twenty20 matches in Rawalpindi next month.

"We are liaising with our security team who are on the ground in Pakistan to fully understand the situation," an England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) spokesperson said.

The ECB Board will decide in the next few days if the tour should proceed.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam summed up the sentiments in Pakistan where fans have been starved of live action involving top teams.

"Extremely disappointed on the abrupt postponement of the series, which could have brought the smiles back for millions of Pakistan cricket fans," tweeted the batsman.



Napoli's Victor Osimhen celebrates scoring their second goal with Giovanni Di Lorenzo during their Europa League fixture against Leicester City at the King Power Stadium on Thursday. The Nigerian scored two second-half goals to salvage a point for the Italian side.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Joytu Sheikh Hasina GM Chess from Sunday

SPORTS REPORTER

To mark the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) is all set to organise a grand tournament titled Joytu Sheikh Hasina International Grand Master Chess Tournament with the participation of 12 GMs from 10 nations.

A total of 60 players including 16 international masters are expected to take part in the 15000-dollar tournament starting from Sunday at Hotel 71 in Palton. The champion will receive 4000 dollars as prize money, speakers informed at a press conference yesterday.

Canadian University, Bangladesh is sponsoring the tournament for the second time after they sponsored the first edition of online Joytu Sheikh Hasina Chess tournament held last year.

"Our aim was to improve the standard of this tournament named after the Prime Minister. We are determined to hold this

tournament every year and will try to keep the standard intact in future," said Chowdhury Nafees Sarafat, chairman of Canadian University, Bangladesh and vice president of the chess federation.

It is the first time in a decade that the chess federation is organising a grandmasters' tournament. The last time the federation held a GM tournament was in 2009 even though GM Niaz Murshed, under the banner of Six Seasons, held a GM tournament while Chattogram Jella Krira Sangsha (CJKS) held another GM tournament in recent past.

"It is a big stage for all of us, including those chess players who are in the pipeline. Even if none of our promising players get a GM norm this time, I hope they will get norms in future if the tournament is held regularly," said Murshed, who attended the press conference alongside GM Ziaur Rahman and GM Enamul Hossain Razib. BCF general secretary Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim was also present at the event.

'Need to be smarter in our approach'

In modern-day cricket, Performance Analysis has become the most essential tool in strategising for any team in world cricket as it provides a detailed idea of their opponents. Bangladesh cricket team's performance analyst Srinivas Chandrasekar, who has remained a vital component in the Bangladesh team over the past three years, spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin during an interview in which he shares his experience along with a few other topics. The excerpts of the interview are given below:

The Daily Star (DS): What are the areas of the Performance Analysis can the players utilise to improve?

Srinivas Chandrasekar (SC): Like me, there'll be someone else sitting in the opposition dugout analysing our team. So it's important for our players to know what the opposition bowlers are up to, such as -- what are his defensive deliveries or which one is the go-to ball under pressure or what he does in the backend of the innings. They have to be well aware of what they're going to face in the game to avoid getting surprised. Even if they come up with something different, I have to anticipate it and inform our players. I normally have conversations with the players in simulating a situation like -- if I was in the opposition, what could I come up with. So it's my duty to inform them of all possibilities.

DS: Bangladesh have an over-the-board fascination with different-handed batting combination and with the ball as well. Does that come from data gathering or it's just something they feel that will upset opponents?

SC: It's not a fascination, rather it's the idea, executed all around the world, of forcing the left-hander to go against the spin by facing an off-spinner. Tell me, why did Tom Latham and Henry Nicholls bat at number five and six in the early stage of the series? It's because they knew off-spinner Mahedi Hasan will open the innings while left-armers Nasum and Shakib will come in

the middle overs, and so they tried to play more with the spin. I think cricket has undergone an evolution where the teams started to realise the importance of having leg-spinners, who could turn the ball both ways, and also deploy left-handers in the middle, just to disturb the opponent's game-plan.

DS: You've worked with big-named

the experience they've gathered playing big pressure matches is more than ours, and they can make the right decisions. We've a relatively young and inexperienced bunch of players, who'll also learn with more experience.

DS: Are you already in the process of analysing world cup opponents? How do you rate Bangladesh's chances in the World Cup?

SC: Yes, I had already started working, with the world cup in mind, a long time back and as far as our chances are concerned, I think we need to take one game at a time. First, we play the qualifiers and then evaluate our chances. As this format is very unpredictable, we don't want to think too far ahead.

DS: What would be the most crucial aspect in performing well in the World Cup and are there any glaring weaknesses that can be worked on?

SC: It'll be to assess the condition as quickly as possible because the pitches can be a bit tricky in Dubai and Abu Dhabi as well as in Oman, considering my experience in the previous edition of the IPL. The grounds over there are relatively bigger and even though we're not a big-hitting team, we can still be a bit smart in finding the gaps and work hard on the running between the wickets. I think we've got an all-around bowling unit irrespective of the surfaces so if we can consistently pile up a good score, we can do well. But for that, we need to be smarter in our approach.



T20 players in the IPL [Indian Premier League]. How strong are the Bangladesh players compared to IPL's?

SC: I won't say there's a big difference in terms of mind-set. It's just that,

Mankading earns Afghan U-19s maiden win

SPORTS REPORTER

Afghanistan Under-19 skipper Nangeyalia Kharote celebrated wildly after Mankading non-striker Mushfik Hasan as the visitors ensured a 19-run victory against Bangladesh Under-19 in the fourth Youth ODI at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

This was the visitors' first victory in the five-match series after the young Tigers had already bagged the series with three wins on the trot.

Chasing a competitive total of 210 for eight posted by Afghanistan, the hosts were bundled out for 191 in 44.2 overs.

Before the last man was Mankaded, a confident Tahjibul Islam was apparently on his way to helping Bangladesh to their fourth win.

Unfortunately, that did not happen due to the Mankading incident as Tahjibul was left stranded at 50 off 75.

Bangladesh, however, had started steadily in their response to Afghanistan's competitive total. Openers Mahfijul Islam (26 off 30) and Ifukher Hossain (18 off 35) stitched together a 52-run stand before the latter fell prey to Faisal Khan Ahmadzai in the 10th over.

Despite a decent start, the young Tigers could not keep up the momentum, losing wickets in clusters with only Tahjibul hanging tight at one end.

Earlier, electing to bat, Afghanistan amassed their highest total in the series.



Bangabandhu Tunnel is being built with BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM** building a safer nation



Aktaruzzaman Flyover Chittagong

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SCO SUMMIT IN TAJIKISTAN

Indian PM flags 'radicalisation'

Draws attention to Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan; China, Russia urge the Islamist group to keep security promises

AGENCIES

Increasing extremism and radicalisation are the biggest threat to global peace, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday at the nine-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, and drew attention to the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan.



Modi highlighted India's concerns over regional stability and asked the SCO member states, which includes China and Pakistan, to ensure the grouping works closely together on issues like connectivity and trust.

"Today, we can see what is happening in Afghanistan. As SCO members it is a must for us all to ensure that there is no radicalisation and extremism on the rise there," he said at the summit held online amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"If we take a look at history, we will find that Central Asia has been a bastion of moderate and progressive cultures and values. Sufism flourished here over the centuries and spread throughout the region and the world. We can still see them in the cultural heritage of this region," the Prime Minister said.

"Based on this historical heritage of Central Asia, SCO should make a common template of fighting radicalisation and extremism. In India, and in almost all the countries of the SCO, there are moderate, tolerant and inclusive institutions and traditions associated with Islam," Modi said.

The US pull-out from Afghanistan after a 20-year war on terror has led

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



A timber-laden truck stuck on a Bailey bridge on the Tangail-Aricha regional highway in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila. Locals said a part of the surface of an already worn-out bridge was damaged when the truck was crossing it yesterday. Local administration officials said vehicles weighing more than eight tonnes were barred from using the bridge but that rule is flouted regularly. All 12 bridges on the regional highway are in varying stages of degradation.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Football head coach Bruzon replaces Jamie Day for 'two months'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) replaced head coach Jamie Day with Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon ahead of the upcoming SAFF Championship, scheduled to be held in the Maldives between October 1 to 16.

The decision was revealed to the media following a meeting of the National Teams Committee (NTC) held at the BFF headquarters yesterday.

"The meeting decided to release Jamie Day from his duty from the national football team for next three events for two months and appointed Bashundhara Kings' coach Oscar Bruzon as the interim coach," NTC chairman Kazi Nabil Ahmed told the media after the meeting.

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New Van Gogh drawing of old man discovered



AFP, Amsterdam

A newly discovered Vincent Van Gogh drawing that has been hidden in a private collection for more than a century went on display for the first time at an Amsterdam museum on Thursday.

"Study for 'Worn Out'", which depicts an old man sitting in a chair, was sketched by Van Gogh in November 1882 when he was just starting the career that would later produce masterpieces like "Sunflowers".

The owners, a Dutch family which bought the pencil drawing in around 1910, asked the Van Gogh

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

UK removes Bangladesh from travel red list

Will put the country on lower-risk category from Sept 22

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will be removed from UK's travel "red list" from September 22.

The country will be moved to the lower-risk "amber list" from 4:00am on September 22, which means travellers from Bangladesh will no longer require 10-day quarantine as part of Covid safety measures in a government-sanctioned hotel from that day.

Travellers from countries rated "amber" must also quarantine for 10 days on arrival in the UK. However, there is no requirement to do this in a government-sanctioned hotel; one can self-isolate at home or where they are staying.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen welcomed

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

World meet on Bangladesh opens



Jayaprakash Narayan inaugurating the international conference on Bangladesh in New Delhi on September 18, 1971.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE TO FREE BANGLADESH
The three-day conference on Bangladesh began today in New Delhi. It was organised by the Gandhi Peace Foundation. The conference was a major international attempt to draw attention to the Bangladesh issue which had been hitting the headlines all over the world since March 25, 1971.

Distinguished citizens from many countries joined the conference to condemn the genocide against the Bangladesh people and to support their rights of self-determination. Before the

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NEWS WEBSITES

Can face ban for unethical practice: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Directing that all unregistered news portals be banned, the High Court in the full text of its order has ruled that even if any registered news portal is involved in unethical practices like spreading disinformation, the government can ban its operation.

"The respondents [chairpersons of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission and Bangladesh Press Council] are directed to take immediate step to ban all unregistered news portals except for the news portals described in Annexure- 'B' to the writ petition [92 registered news portals] within seven days from the receipt of the order copy.

"However, if the respondents find even the news portals mentioned in Annexure- 'B' to the writ petition to have involved in any unethical practice -- spreading disinformation, they are at liberty to ban such a news portal or portals," the bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Hossain Mollah said in the full text of its order.

The two-page full text of order was released on Thursday as the HC bench on

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RANGAMATI Bullet-hit body of PCJSS man recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Police recovered the bullet-hit body of a 60-year-old member of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samicity in Rangamati's Bagaichhari yesterday.

Suresh Kanti Chakma's body was found at an empty house in the remote Bongoltoli area, said Anwar Hossain Khan, officer-in-charge of Bagaichhari Police Station.

"No one is giving us any information about the criminals who killed him," he added.

However, Tridip Chakma, secretary of PCJSS

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Huge heaps of garbage accumulated near the footbridge in front of the Suritola Model Government Primary School at the capital's Syed Nazrul Islam Sarani. Pedestrians have stopped using the footbridge because of the piles of garbage surrounding the steps.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 18

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:30 6:09 7:45
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 4:45 6:12 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Star HEALTHLINE

DENTAL BRACES

not only about

AESTHETICS

FARHANA AHMED

Proper alignment of teeth is not only important for appearance; it also contributes to oral health.

If a person has malocclusion (having crooked teeth or a poor bite), braces are generally very effective in realigning teeth and correcting improperly positioned jaws.

Dr Md Tanvir Hossain, dental surgeon at Dhaka Dental College Hospital, said some factors behind malocclusion are hereditary and

Hyginex
instant hand sanitizer

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