



Your Right to Know

Safar 15, 1443 Hijri





"If they [Taliban] do not have an inclusive government, and gradually it descends into a civil war...that too will impact Pakistan." PAKISTAN PM IMRAN KHAN



"Less than one percent each of Alpha, Beta and Gamma are currently circulating. It's really predominantly Delta around the world." WHO'S TECHNICAL LEAD ON COVID MARIA VAN KERKHOVE

All legit in name of development!

Without compensating, acquiring lands, Gazipur city corporation encroaches on private properties, knocks down structures

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Several thousand residents of Gazipur city have lost valuable lands as the city corporation "encroached" on their private property and demolished their buildings to widen streets, drains and footpaths.

landowners Aggrieved allege that the city corporation employees earlier this year started either demolishing the structures or forcing the owners to knock down parts of their residential buildings and factories, shops and boundary walls without acquiring the lands in the first place.

Most of the residents did not get any compensation

and many had to hire workers to clean the rubble left on their properties by the city

Several hundred trees on the private lands were also chopped down, locals alleged. Properties in Gazipur city are as expensive as



"If you follow the government laws, you will not be able to do anything here."

GAZIPUR MAYOR **MOHAMMAD ZAHANGIR ALAM**

they are hard to get. The GCC, however, claimed that there was no provision for acquiring the lands and providing compensation. 800km of roads are widened, drains and footpaths are being constructed under two projects taken at a cost of Tk 2,200 crore.

The GCC's drive also disregarded two High Court orders to maintain status quo on possession of the properties in at least three

More than 100 people who lost their lands filed separate writ petitions with the HC since last year, challenging GCC actions. The court ordered that the

matter be disposed of as soon as possible. The GCC disposed of 95 of the 100 cases by handing out a measly amount in compensation, said locals and a GCC official

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MOTHER AND CHILD REUNION ... An overjoyed mother, Shirin, embraces her equally delighted son, Shanto, at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital yesterday. The mother and son were reunited after two and a half years. Shirin left home and spent those years in Saudi Arabia working to help pay for Shanto's treatment for kidney and liver diseases.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

HC freezes Evaly asset sale, transfer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued an injunction order restraining controversial e-commerce platform Evaly, which allegedly has liabilities of more than Tk 1,000 crore, from selling and transferring its assets until further order.

The company bench of Justice Muhamad Khurshid Alam Sarkar passed the order after holding the hearing on an application filed by an aggrieved Evaly customer Md Farhad Hossen seeking the necessary directives for winding up of the company and distributing the proceeds among creditors.

Hossen had ordered a washing machine from Evaly in May and made payment through mobile financial services provider bKash and Nagad.

He did not get the product nor a refund in the four months, which prompted him to take the legal route, said Sayed Mahsib Hossain, one of the lawyers fighting the case for Hossen.

The bench also asked the representatives of respondents to appear before it on September 30 to explain why SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Evaly has no money to pay back

Says Commerce Minsiter Tipu Munshi dealing a blow to aggrieved buyers, sellers; Govt has no plans to close Evaly, others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

requesting anonymity.

Evaly is unlikely to be able to return the amount it took from customers in advance payment for goods, said Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi yesterday -- in a crushing blow to the rogue e-commerce platform's hundreds of thousands of aggrieved buyers.

"I don't think Evaly has any money -- there is not much scope to recover any money from them," Munshi told reporters after a meeting to review the recent problem in the e-commerce

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Law Minister Anisul Haque, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud and Inspector General of Bangladesh Police Benazir Ahmed was present at the meeting among others at Munshi's secretariat office in Dhaka.

The platform owes about Tk 700 crore to customers and another Tk 250 crore to vendors, its incarcerated Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Rassel told investigators this week.

"It seems Evaly will not be able to return the money to customers. Because, either Evaly has moved the amount or it has spent most of it on advertisements. It sponsored sports and many other events," Munshi said. Evaly has run frequent advertisements in print and electronic media,

sponsored government activities such as Digital World 2020, the Bangladesh cricket team's tour of New Zealand, and funded Rapid Action SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

shrunk during pandemic Freedom House report says about Bangladesh

Room for free

speech online

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's internet freedom fared worse during the years of the pandemic than the years before, found a new report by international think tank Freedom House.

The "Freedom on the net 2021" report gave countries a score between 0 and 100, where 0 meant least free and 100 meant most free. Bangladesh was given 40, a two-point drop from the last year's score.

The country has been classified as having "partly free" internet because in the last one year it has blocked access to social media, blocked access to websites, shut down the internet, arrested

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

LOCAL BODY POLLS

Uncontested wins, rebels bug AL

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

from the race, intraparty feud takes the centre stage and where the party manages to field single candidates, they win uncontested, a practice

The AL has expelled dissidents for violating "party discipline" after they contested elections against candidates nominated by the party. The AL high-ups expelled the leaders without

But nothing seems to work. Rebels keep contesting the polls. In the meantime, AL leaders running against the party's very own symbol is creating division among the grassroots leaders which is ultimately weakening its organisational strength, something that concerns the party as the national

The insiders also said the AL-led government wants to avoid uncontested elections because those invite criticism.

Registration, guidelines for IPTVs soon

Info minister says

Bss, Dhaka

The registration for IPTVs will be given soon, and a guideline would also be formulated for this sector, Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud said yesterday.

"IPTV is a new media. We want it to be explored more. But it should be used for the protection of our culture and heritage," he told reporters after addressing an interministerial meeting on IP registration process at the secretariat.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, Information and **Broadcasting Secretary** Md Mokbul Hossain, Post and Telecommunication

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

WHO raises air quality standards

Bangladesh's challenges to be much harder

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh will face tougher challenges in ensuring safe air as the World Health Organisation yesterday announced stringent changes to the Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) to reduce health hazards caused by air pollution.

significantly lowered the safe average concentration limits of three key traditional air pollutants -- particulate matter (PM) 2.5, PM 10 and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) -- to curb

The new guidelines have

air pollution. PM 2.5 refers to ambient airborne particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter and has a range of chemical makeup and sources. PM 10 refers to particles with a diameter of 10 microns.

The new AQGs provided evidence of the damage inflicted by air pollution on human health at even lower concentrations than SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Hundreds of goods trucks blocking both sides of the road at Tejgaon in the capital yesterday. Bangladesh Covered-Van, Truck, Prime Mover Goods Transportation Owners Association and Bangladesh Truck Drivers Workers Federation had called a 72-hour strike from Tuesday to press home their 15-point demand. The strike was called off yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

The ruling Awami League finds itself in a strange predicament over local body polls. In most places where rebel candidates do not withdraw

or which the been drawing flak from different quarters.

even serving them with any show-cause notices. They also warned of not giving them any party nomination or portfolio in future.

election is approaching, said AL insiders.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

CHILD DEATH FROM 'NEGLIGENCE'

Family under pressure to compromise

Moudud Ahmmed Sujan

withdraw the complaints.

A family has allegedly been under pressure for a compromise, after they complained that their 11-month-old baby had died due to "sheer negligence" by doctors and staffers of a private hospital.

Abdullah Al Sayem and Tanzum Aktar lost their only child Azan around six hours after a surgery at Care Medical College Hospital in the capital on August 22. The baby boy was having breathing difficulties after his surgery for the reconstruction of cleft palate, they said. The inconsolable parents alleged that there were no

doctors either in the post-operative or in the general wards where their baby was kept after the surgery. When the baby was struggling to breathe, the parents

took him to the operation theatre twice, only to be "treated rudely" by the doctors there, they alleged.

Sayam's family submitted separate complaints to the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) and the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council (BMDC) on August

In the complaints, the family alleged that their child died due to "reluctance and negligence of the doctors" and "failure of the hospital authorities"

"But since then, we have been under pressure to compromise," Sayem told The Daily Star on Wednesday. 'Last week, I received a phone call from someone claiming to be a law enforcement official who asked me to

Besides, Sayem said, "The physician who conducted the







15,06,136



4,727,219



230,606,863 Total cases

PM woos US investors, offers attractive facilities

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought US investment in various potential sectors apart from the existing energy, banking and insurance sectors as Bangladesh is developing its infrastructure and power supply systems to facilitate foreign direct investment.

"The US is, of course, the largest investor in Bangladesh with stakes in energy, banking and insurance sectors. We invite US investment in other lucrative sectors like ICT, renewable energy, shipbuilding, automobile, light engineering, agro-processing, economy, tourism and blue knowledge-based hi-tech industries," she said, reports UNB.

Hasina made the call while delivering her speech at the Executive Business Roundtable of the US-Bangladesh Business Council at Lotte Palace in New York on Tuesday.

Hasina said Bangladesh is investing heavily on infrastructure development and power supply to facilitate FDI in those and other promising sectors in Bangladesh.

The prime minister also said Bangladesh is ready to start the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with the US at an appropriate time.

She said from its 100 economic zones, Bangladesh is ready to offer one exclusively for American companies, and also invites US investment in its 28 high-tech parks. "We're constantly improving our physical, legal and financial infrastructure, and also training their defence forces.

connectivity as with Padma Bridge and Dhaka Metro-Rail."

She also said Bangladesh is looking forward to US investment in renewable energy. "Our ICT sector is growing fast now with a billion-dollar export to 60 countries, with the US being the top destination. The ICT industry is expected to grow nearly five-fold to reach the five-billion-dollar mark with more than 600,000 free-lance IT professionals ... Bangladesh is the right place to invest in the ICT sector."

High-level representatives from leading US business companies, including Boeing, Coca-Cola, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and Mastercard were present at the roundtable.

KUWAIT PM SEEKS

COOPERATION ROADMAP

Meanwhile, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Khalid al-Sabah has proposed formulation of a roadmap on bilateral cooperation in a meeting with Sheikh Hasina, reports BSS.

"He [Kuwait PM] said they want to prepare a roadmap and an actionable programme [with Bangladesh] in the next five years," Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told a news briefing in New York following the meeting at the UN headquarters on Tuesday.

The foreign minister said the Kuwait's PM also expressed his country's interest to set up an oil refinery in Bangladesh while seeking to share Bangladesh's expertise in

Approach of 1990 won't work

BNP grassroots tell high-ups that planned, systematic movement is required

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A section of BNP's grassroots leaders said the party would not succeed if it tried to launch a movement like it had in 1990 to force the government to hold a free and fair election under a non-partisan interim government as the situation has changed.

They said in the movement of 1990, there was people's participation and that there was no alternative to a planned and systematic movement to oust the government.

committee executive member Farhad Hossain Azad said movement against Ershad in 1990 and movement against Sheikh Hasina in 2021 is not the same.

administration. So we have to wage movement systematically," he said.

The party's Chattogram, Sylhet, Rangpur, Mymensingh and Cumilla districts leaders said this to BNP high-ups during a meeting at the party chairperson's Gulshan office

The party is holding a series of closed-door meetings to learn what the grassroots activists think should be their strategy ahead of the next parliamentary polls.

In the second day of the second round of meetings, 129 party's executive committee leaders were invited and 85 leaders were present. In the six-hour-long discussion, a total "There was a huge change in the of 63 leaders expressed their opinions.

previously understood, according to the executive summary of the guidelines.

The most common diseases caused by air pollution include ischaemic heart disease, stroke, obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer and acute lower respiratory infections in children. Particulate air pollution has been

linked with strokes The report said since the last update of AQGs in the 2005 guidelines, there has been a marked increase in evidence showing air pollution's impacts on health and so the "WHO has adjusted almost all the AQGs levels downwards, warning that exceeding the new air quality guideline levels is associated with significant risks to health".

In 2020, the air quality of Bangladesh was the worst in the world, while air pollution in its capital Dhaka was the second worst, according to a report of IQAir published in March,

"We always want to achieve guidelines. If they become more stringent, it will be harder to achieve as we have lots of infrastructure work and industrialisation going on -- we are trying to accelerate our GDP growth," said Md Ziaul Haque, director (Dhaka division) of the Department of Environment (DoE).

He said they took some initiatives to reduce air pollution, such as reducing the number of brick kilns gradually and promoting the use of environment-friendly bricks in

constructing buildings. A draft regulation prepared by the DoE on controlling air pollution has already been sent to the law ministry and it could be circulated by next month, he added.

Rizwana Hasan. Sveda chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), told The Daily Star that the country's guidelines should be in line with the WHO ones.

"The lungs of a Bangladeshi is no different from the lungs of an American. I do not agree to shortening my life expectancy for the

government's negligence and failure." There should be laws instead of mere regulations for air pollution to

underline its importance, she said. While releasing the guidelines,

WHO raises air quality standards WHO Director-general Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "Air pollution is a threat to health in all

countries, but it hits people in low-

and middle-income countries the

"The new Air Quality Guidelines are an evidence-based and practical tool for improving the quality of the air on which all life depends. I urge all countries and all those fighting to protect our environment to put them to use to reduce suffering and save

The new guidelines recommend reducing the annual average of PM 2.5 concentration from 10 micrograms per cubic metre (mcg/m3) in 2005 to five mcg/m3. For PM 10, the guidelines recommended reducing from 20 mcg/

m3 to 15 mcg/m3. AIR IN BANGLADESH

In 2020, the average annual PM 2.5 concentrations, the most dangerous particulate, in Bangladesh was 77.1 mcg/m3 -- more than seven times the

WHO exposure recommendation. According to the new AQGs, that level is 14 times higher than the safe

Dhaka's Air Quality Index scores were 113, 108 and 113 on Sep 20, 21 and 22 respectively, according to IQAir -- a real-time air quality information platform

According to IQAir, a range of 0-50 points is regarded as good air quality, 51-100 as moderately good, 101-150 cautionary, 151-200 as unhealthy, 201-300 very unhealthy, and 301-500 as extremely unhealthy.

THE EFFECT Almost 80 percent of global deaths related to PM 2.5 could be avoided if current air pollution levels were reduced to those proposed in AQGs, according to a rapid scenario analysis performed by WHO.

The highest impact would be observed in the South-East Asia and African regions, the report said.

Implementing the AQGs would result in reducing the burden of disease, of which the greatest benefit would be observed in countries with high concentrations of fine particulates PM 2.5) and large populations.

Particulate matter is primarily generated by fuel combustion in different sectors, including transport, energy, households, industry, and from agriculture.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with other world leaders at the United Nations Headquarters in New York yesterday. Hasina is in New York attending the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

All legit in name of development!

MANAGE MONEY, WE'LL ACQUIRE

Rafiqul Islam, a resident of Harinal area, said he lost one and a half kathas of land and part of his house.

"My house was built on my fourkatha land. The city corporation did not acquire it, but demolished parts of my building and walls. I did not get anything in compensation," he told The

The mayor called us to his office through his aides. I along with several other affected people went there twice, but he did not meet us," Rafiqul added. Rafigul's frustration was echoed

by over two dozen affected people in Harinal, Baimail, Pubail, Bashugaon, Konabari, and Itahata areas. They expressed utter dismay while talking to this correspondent. Most of them requested anonymity fearing

backlash. Contacted, Mayor Mohammad Zahangir Alam said the lands were taken proportionately from both sides.
"Around 95 percent of the residents willingly gave up their lands for their own good. The remaining five percent might have been upset," he told The Daily Star on August 30.

The mayor said around 30,000 structures were affected.

Asked about the issue land acquisition and providing compensation, he said, "If you follow the government laws, you will not be able to do anything here.

.Get us the money. And we will acquire lands," he retorted.

We have 40 lakh residents and what we're doing is for their well-being... I am widening the roads for the people. You should rather look into whether any corruption and embezzlement ar happening.

He said the residents affected by expansion work of around 81km of road were compensated from the revenue collected by the city corporation. But there is nothing for those living by the 700km of streets being widened.

He added that they didn't get compensated because of constraints.

A GCC official versed in the projects said those who could use political connections got a lump sum amount in compensation.

Aminul Islam, chief executive officer of GCC, said the provisions for land acquisition and compensation were not kept when the projects were approved.

As per the rules, no development work can be undertaken without acquiring lands in metropolitan cities, but the two projects were taken before Gazipur was formally recognised as a metropolitan city in 2013, he said. The work for the projects began in March

Asked whether the GCC could expand roads work without acquiring lands, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Md Tazul Islam said, "It's not supposed to be like that."

"I've heard some such allegations earlier, but we never received any formal complaint," he said on Friday.

Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur SM Tariqul Islam admitted that a good

complaint.
HC STATUS QUO 'VIOLATED'

The HC issued status quo orders on the possession of lands of Quasem Lamps Limited and Quasem group's guest house at Baimail and the properties of Escort Packaging Factory at Itahata, Majlishpur.

Despite the orders, the GCC took over the lands of the factories of Quasem Lamps Ltd and the guest house in Ward No-12 at Baimail, Joydevpur, on August 19 and August 20. The corporation demolished the structures and boundary walls.

Upon two writ petitions, the HC on November 2 last year and February 1 this year ordered status quo regarding the land of the guesthouse and Quasem Lamps Ltd. The two properties are on 241.50 decimals and 2.34 acres of land

respectively.
Tajvir Ul Islam, chairman and managing director of Quasem Lamps, filed the writs over the arbitrary actions of the respondents and the threats of encroachment faced by the petitioner.

number of people spoke to him about the matters, but he had not taken any steps because no one filed any written the matters.

Ltd. But they demolished it at the mayor's order," said Tariq Abul Ala, deputy managing director of the factory. When his attention was drawn to

the HC order, Mayor Jahangir said, "I'm respectful to the High Court and have not violated any such orders.

Ward-12 Councillor Abbas Uddin Khokon, meanwhile, claimed that the city corporation made the move after the period of status quo was over.

The existing 2.5-km road between Baimile Primary School and Abbas Nagar is being developed to a 30-feet RCC road with drains at a cost of Tk 28 crore. He said there is no allocation for acquiring private land and providing compensation. Sĥamim Reza Khan, assistant general

manager of Quasem group, said soon after the incident, he went to Konabari Police Station to file a case, but police neither took a case nor a general diary.

Then his company filed a case with Gazipur court on August 29, he said. Officer-in-Charge of Konabari Police

Station Abu Bakar Siddique said the executive engineer of GCC informed him that the HC vacated the status-quo



An excavator of the city corporation demolishing homes in Gazipur. The photo was taken a month ago.

Upon another petition, a HC bench issued a rule on the mayor and two councilors on September 16 as to why contempt of court proceedings should not be launched against them for willful violation and disregard to the ad-interim status-quo order issued on February 1.

Making the rule returnable in two weeks, the HC also ruled as to why the contemnor respondents should not be punished in accordance with the law.

GCC employees took away lands of Quasem Industries Ltd, a sister concern of the group, in the same area on August 20. Officials of the company said their

43 decimals of land was being grabbed and 158 trees, including two 100-old banyan trees, scores of jhau, rubber and fruit bearing trees were cut down.

During a visit, this correspondent found bulldozed boundary walls and entry gates of two factories and the guesthouse of Quasem group. Holes were dug up and drains were constructed eight to 10 feet inside the long-demolished walls along the road.

The High Court status quo order was hung at the gate of Quasem Lamps

About not recording a case, the OC said the complainant requested him to investigate first and then take steps OTHER VICTIMS Quasem Group is not the lone victim

in Bimail area. Private lands of around 200 people have been encroached upon and parts of their houses, shops, and boundary walls razed down. Another instance of violation of the HC order can be seen at Escort Packaging

Factory in Itahata, Mailishpur, A relative of the factory owner wishing anonymity said people barged into the factory around 11:00am on June 10 with bulldozers and broke

five concrete pillars and parts of the The incident took place just two days after the court issued the status quo order on possession of the property on

June 8 following a writ petition filed by an owner of the factory "Our fundamental rights are being violated. We are dumbfounded and shocked," said the relative of the factory

Gazipur correspondent (Our contributed to this report)

Evaly has no money to pay back

Battalion's

"Operation movie Sundarbans", among others. It also brought on brand ambassadors like Tahsan Rahman Khan. The platform, which began its journey on December 16, 2018,

barged its way to public reckoning with implausibly deep discounts and aggressively broadcasting them, both of which cost Evaly money. And Evaly funded such expenses by taking advance payment from customers, many of whom never got

delivery of their orders. It also promised hefty returns to merchants and got them to provide goods on extended credit.

So, the longer Evaly is allowed to continue to operate the way it does, its liabilities towards customers and merchants will only grow bigger as more and more gullible people would be sucked in. Logic dictates Evaly should be shut down.

But the government has no such plans to close down Evaly and the others it has spawned like Dhamaka Shopping, Eorange and others, Munshi

Rather, the government will continue talks with the owners of the errant e-commerce business companies to come up with a favourable resolution, he said, adding that sending the top brass of the rogue e-commerce players to prison is not a solution.

Evaly Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Rassel and Chairperson Shamima Nasrin are in police custody since September 16.

The government would take a call on the companies after reviewing their business revival plans. "If we think they would be able to

pay back the money to the consumers and merchants, we may consider those cases with sympathy.' If Evaly is unable to, the government will take actions against the owners

according to the laws of the land,

Munshi said. The government also has a plan to form a separate board to run the errant e-commerce companies so that they can pay back the money of the consumers

To prevent unsustainable business

practices as well as for the proper functioning of the fast-growing industry, the government is mulling over forming a regulatory body for the e-commerce sector as well as Digital Commerce Act.

"Every e-commerce company will have to comply with those," Munshi said, adding that the companies would be given a unique registration number by the e-commerce authority.

The commerce minister also said the consumers have taken a lot of risk by handing over such large sums of money for heavily discounted goods with a deferred delivery.

Such big discounts are very unusual and implausible and the consumers should have been wiser, he said.

But after the introduction of the Standard Operating Procedure for the National Digital Commerce Policy 2018 on July 4, the instances of foul play in the e-commerce sector has come down.

Meanwhile, Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh said the Digital Security Act and Money Laundering Act needs to be amended to some extent for taking action against the owners of the rogue e-commerce players.

36 more die, 1,376 get Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The daily death toll caused by Covid-19 increased as the health directorate reported 36 deaths in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday.

Twenty-six Covid-19 patients died on each of the previous two days -- the lowest since the 22 fatalities recorded on May 27. With the latest count, the total

number of deaths have risen to 27,313, according to a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services

The overall death rate was 1.76 percent.

The Covid-19 case positivity rate also increased slightly to 4.79 percent from 4.69 percent the previous day.

In the same 24-hour period, the

DGHS reported 1,376 new cases of Covid-19 after testing 28,736 samples countrywide.

The total number of confirmed cases now stands at 15,47,176.

Of the 36 deceased reported yesterday, 17 were male and 19 were

Dhaka division saw the highest number of deaths, 18, followed by 10 in Chattogram, two each in Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet, and one each in Rangpur and Mymensingh divisions.

The second wave of Covid-19 started in the country from the second week of March this year.

Amid the spread of the more contagious Delta variant, the rate of daily infections and deaths broke all previous records in the country.

The all-time highest positivity rate of 33 percent was recorded on July 24.

With the Delta variant rampaging through the country, the government was forced to impose strict restrictions in different phases from early July to contain transmission.

From early August, the transmission of the virus started declining steadily.

Man killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A suspected drug dealer was killed in a 'gunfight" with Rab in Ukhia of Cox's

Bazar yesterday. A group of drug dealers started firing on Rab personnel when they were on a drug recovery operation near Jaliapalong Forest Beat Office around 8:30pm. Rab fired back in retaliation and later they found the body of Jahangir Alam on the ground, said Capt Azim Ahmed, wing commander

of Rab-15. Rab seized a gun, three bullet and 10,000 Yaba pills from his possession, the official claimed.

HC freezes Evaly

they should not be directed to wind up of Evaly, Sayed Mahsib Hossain, a lawyer for Farhad Hossen, told The Daily Star.

The respondents are Evaly, the Registrar of Joint Stock of Companies and Firms, the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit, the Consumer Right Protection Bureau, the managing director of Nagad, the chairman of bKash, the Bangladesh Competition Commission, the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services, the Bangladesh Bank and the commerce secretary,

Hossain said. In the order, the HC said the prayer for forming a board of directors to take control of Evaly's affairs, management and business will be considered after

the appearance of the respondents. The bench fixed September 30 for

passing further order on the issue. Meanwhile, Muzahidur Rahman, mother customer of Evaly filed a case against its Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Rassel and Chairperson Shamima Nasrin of embezzlement through forgery.

This is the fourth case against the couple, who were arrested from their home in the capital's Mohammadpur on Thursday.

Rahman had purchased an air conditioner for Tk 85,000 but he never got the product. He asked for a refund several times but in vain. The case was filed with the court

of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate

Debdash Chandra Adhikary, said Azad Rahman, a state lawyer. The magistrate took cognisance of the case, recorded the complainant's statements and directed the officer-incharge of Dhanmondi Police Station to

register the complaint as a regular case,

he added. In another development, two Supreme Court lawyers filed a writ petition with the HC to form a judicial committee to inquire into the alleged embezzlement of money, money laundering and fraudulence by problematic e-commerce platforms including Evaly, Alesha Mart, E-orange, Dhamaka, Qcom, Aladiner Prodip and Dalal Plus.

Lawyers Mohammad Humayun Kabir Pallob and Mohammad Kawser submitted the petition as public interest litigation to the HC requesting it to form the committee to ascertain the persons or the government authorities whose negligence or failure caused serious financial loss and damage to millions of customers.

229 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 229 new patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday, of whom 53 are from outside Dhaka.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with the new cases, a total of 6,095 were diagnosed during the current month, out of a total 16,451 infected this year.

According to the DGHS, 59 people have died of dengue infection in the country this year. Of the infected, 1,018 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 199 outside the capital, DGHS data shows.

Meanwhile, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) mayor yesterday claimed success in controlling the menace with the collective efforts of all, despite propaganda and negative politics.

He also said they brought down the number of infected to 10 percent of 2019, when the country saw the highest number of dengue cases.







On September 21, a photo was published in The Daily Star depicting students of Rajuk Uttara Model College jaywalking to cross the road in front of their campus (bottom right), as the nearby foot overbridge was removed more than a year ago (top right). Following this, Uttara traffic police put up a barricade and sign, and assigned personnel in the area yesterday to facilitate safer road-crossing for people. While this is indeed commendable, it still remains to be seen when the overbridge is reconstructed to put an end to this dangerous practice altogether.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'We're pursuing legal recourse'

Says Momen on repatriating killer of Bangabandhu from US

UNB, New York

Bangladesh is pursuing legal recourse in the US for the

repatriation of Rashed Chowdhury, the fugitive convicted assassin of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, said Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen.

"It is in the legal process. We're pursuing it. But the legal process is a timeconsuming matter in the US," he said, responding to a question at a press briefing in New York on Tuesday.

"(But) we are hopeful (of bringing back Rashed Chowdhury to Bangladesh). Our belief is that we'll be able to bring back the person to the country after completing the legal process," he added.

He said Bangladesh had earlier brought another killer back to the country from the US.

Amend tobacco control act

Urge speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To achieve a tobacco-free Bangladesh by 2040, the Tobacco Control Act needs to be amended, said speakers at a discussion

The existing act has weaknesses in at least six sections, and as such, needs to be updated as soon as possible, they stated at the discussion on the importance of stricter measures to control the spread of tobacco.

National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh organised the event in Dhaka in collaboration with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and Bangladesh Health Reporters Forum (BHRF).

Dr Ahmad Khairul Abrar, research coordinator of the National Heart Foundation Hospital and Research Institute, in his keynote speech, highlighted that smokers are more prone to spreading Covid-19 due to behavioral reasons.

"If a smoker gets Covid-19, the risk of it turning severe is 2.5 to 14 times higher compared to a non-smoker," said Dr Abrar, citing World Health Organization from last

Bangladesh, around 3.78 million adults use tobacco while another 38.4 million are victims of secondhand smoke in public places including workplace and public transport, according to Global Adult Tobacco survey 2017.

He said excessive use of tobacco products is one of the leading causes of heart disease, cancer, breast disease and many other preventable diseases and deaths.

Referring to different studies, he mentioned that more than 1.61 lakh people die due to tobacco related diseases

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ban smoking at public places, transport
- Prohibit display of tobacco products
- Stop CSR activities of tobacco companies
- Bar import, manufacture, sale, use of
- Stop sale of single stick cigarette
- Increase size of pictorial health warnings

every year in the country.

Speakers at the meeting demanded six important amendments to the Tobacco

Those include -- 100 percent ban on smoking across all public places and transport, ban on the display of tobacco products in stores, ban on CSR activities of the tobacco companies, ban on the import, manufacture, sale and use of e-cigarettes, ban on the sale of single stick cigarette, and an increase in the size of pictorial health

Mostafizur Rahman, lead policy advisor of Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, said, The existing act has many provisions in line with the WHO. However, there are weaknesses in some sections. If those are revised, the act will be more effective.

Toufiq Maruf, president of BHRF, said, "The BHRF has been working consistently on the importance of public health. Members of this forum regularly report on tobacco control."

GOODS TRANSPORT

One strike ends, another still on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The group of owners and workers of goods transport, who have been enforcing a 72-hour strike from Tuesday, withdrew their programme yesterday.

"We have withdrawn our work abstention following a fruitful meeting with the home minster at the secretariat today [yesterday]," Talukder Mohammed Monir, a top leader of the platform enforcing the strike, told The Daily

However, another group of owners and workers of goods transport, who had announced to enforce 48-hour strike from Monday, did not withdraw their programme till vesterday.

Bangladesh Covered-Van, Truck, Prime Mover Goods Transportation Owners Association and Bangladesh Truck Drivers Workers Federation on August 28 called the 72hour strike to press home their 15-point demand.

Their demands include withdrawing "additional" income tax, issuing "heavy vehicle licences" to those driving heavy vehicles directly (currently, a driver has to get light vehicle licence and then licence for medium vehicles



72-hr strike enforced from Sept 21 Called off after meeting with home minister Another faction called for 48-hr strike from Sept 27

Sundarbans can play vital mitigation

Says British envoy STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Sundarbans can play a major role in climate adaptation and mitigation, as it has been protecting the Southwest coast of Bangladesh from tropical storms for years, said British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson at a webinar yesterday.

Speaking as the chief guest, he said the largest mangrove forest in the world is an example for its role in climate adaptation and mitigation.

The webinar, titled "Addressing the Goals of COP-26 in South Asian Context", was organised by the Center For Governance Studies.

He also said they have in front of them extraordinary scientific evidence about the scale of the climate what could happen if the world can't keep the rise in global temperature under 1.5 degree Celsius, in line with the Paris Climate Agreement.

Dickson said over 2021 to 2025, developed countries are committed to deliver 16 billion dollars as climate fund, 50 percent SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Ensure 'climate role in climate justice' for migrants

Speakers tell workshop

>> Define needs, rights of climate migrants >> Create satellite cities for displaced people Improve coastal Develop climate resilien Embolden policymaking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers during a two-day workshop stressed for significant stride in social, economic and political dimensions to address issues of climate vulnerabilities and ensure "climate justice" for migrants.

They further stressed the need for robust collaboration among the government, public sector, NGOs, academicians, and professional bodies in this regard.

Bangladesh Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development (BPCMD) and WARBE Development Foundation jointly organised the knowledge-sharing workshop on "Climate Change, Displacement and in Sreemangal that ended yesterday, press release of the caucus.

The event was supported by PROKAS, British Council and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The workshop was inaugurated with special remarks by Anisul Islam Mahmud, chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, and Mujibul Haque, chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Moderated by Shirin Lira, senior IBP manager of PROKAS, the programme started with a brief presentation SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Can we call them elected?

Asks Election Commissioner Mahbub Talukdar on those who won unopposed

Participation of

many parties in an

election is a must

for a multi-party

democracy system.

It is essential to find

out the reason as to

why elections are

being held without

competition

and take steps

accordingly.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Changes in the current electoral system -- in which many are being elected unopposed and voters are showing apathy towards voting -- will not come unless there is a consensus political parties, among said election commissioner Mahbub Talukdar yesterday.

"Voters' apathy towards election is an ominous sign for democracy," he said during a press briefing at his office. "Participation of many

parties in an election is a must for a multi-party democracy system. It is essential to find out the reason as to why elections

are being held without competition and take steps accordingly," he said. Mahbub held the press briefing after the union parisahd

election was held on Monday. He said he performed duties as the acting chief election commissioner during the election. It was painful to see that three people died during the election, he said, adding that life of a person is more important than an election.

The EC has to take responsibility of every incident that takes place centring any election, he said. "People who were seen brandishing arms are being

arrested after watching video footage," he said. "We have also warned an MP for violating electoral code of conduct." Mahbub said voter turnout was sort of satisfactory, but that 43 persons being elected uncontested had demeaned the election. The purpose of an election is to select a person among many. "If anyone is elected unopposed, can we say

that s/he was actually elected?" he asked.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

'Conduct fair probe, punish those involved'

TIB on irregularities in recruiting medical technologists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has called for impartial investigation and punishment of those involved in bribery and irregularities in the recruitment of medical technologists, technician and cardiographers.

Saying that cancelling the recruitment is not enough, TIB said, "Since the irregularities has come to the fore, we apprehend that attempts are taken to cover up the matter and back corrupt syndicates by scrapping it."

The health ministry has cancelled the process for appointing 2,839 for the posts of medical technologists, technicians and cardiographers due to "ambiguity in the answer scripts of the written test".

On April 13, the ministry had postponed the appointment process and formed a four-member probe committee, led by Additional Secretary Nazmul Haque Khan, to investigate anomalies in the recruitment test, which came to light through a report run by Bangla daily Prothom Alo the previous day. SEÉ PAGE 4 COL 3 Pi Banking a mobile apps प्रवाली काश्क लिसिटिंड Google Play

2nd Edition

Robbers loot gold from capital, Savar then sell those at Old Dhaka's Tantibazar shops, says CID after arresting 8 members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Among the attractive jewellery items lining up the shelves of Tantibazar's gold shops, traces of an illicit trade are present, hidden from plain sight.

As the CID has found out, quite a few of these shops at the Old Dhaka's renowned gold hub are involved in a criminal ring that starts with looting gold and ends up in ornately designed jewellery items.

The Criminal Investigation Department of police identified members of the ring following investigation into the recent gold shop robberies in Ashulia and the capital's Rapa Plaza.

On September 16, seventeen jewellery shops in Savar's Noarhat Bazar were looted by at least 40 robbers, carrying firearms and locally-made weapons.

They looted gold, silver, and cash worth Tk 1.02 crore.

Earlier on February 6, 200 tola of gold ornaments, worth Tk 1.40 crore, were looted from a shop at Rapa Plaza shopping mall in Dhaka's Dhanmondi.

Following the incidents, CID launched an investigation and arrested eight people for their involvement.

The arrestees are - Anwar Dewan (39) his wife Sahana Akter (24), Delwar Hossain Khalifa (36), Abdur Rahim (55), Al Miraz (38), Kamal Kha (39), Sagar (40), and Sabuj Roy (32).

All of them have given confessional statements before courts.

Of the arrestees, Sabuj and Rahim used to buy looted golds from the robbers.

"We have arrested a number of robbers, all of whom said the looted jewelleries were being sold at Tantibazar," Mukta Dhar, special superintendent at the CID, told a press briefing yesterday.

In the statements, the arrestees mentioned names of three shops in Tantibazar, the official said.

The official also said a syndicate used to melt the looted gold ornaments, make gold bars, and sell them.

Of the looted gold from Ashulia, CID said they recovered Tk 2.44 lakh and 3-4 tola of gold from Sahana's house and 20 tola of gold worth Tk 14 lakh from Rahim's Noyabazar house.

Of Rapa Plaza's missing gold, CID recovered 12 tola of gold worth Tk 8.40 lakh from Sabuj's Noyabazar house.



There used to be a time when the smell of joss sticks permeated through Khulna city as dusk set in. But nowadays they're only used by a few people and for a few occasions. As demand shrunk, a lot of factories have closed down. These days. a kg of them go for Tk 90 to Tk 100, with each kg consisting of around 900 of the fragrant sticks. This photo was taken from Khulna Zero Point area recently.

Can we call them elected?

According to EC statistics, AL chairman candidates won in 119 unions. Of them, but results of four union parishads were 43 were elected unopposed in Monday's election. Party insiders said almost all of Party of Bangladesh contender bagged a

Elections were held in 160 unions,

withheld for various reasons, including violence, said EC officials. The polls were them were AL rebel candidates. A Workers the final part of the first phase of elections which were postponed due to the pandemic.

When TV serial leads to real life crime

3 ATM robbers held in Dhaka, Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a bizarre case of life imitating art, a group of robbers allegedly learned the techniques of breaking automated teller machine (ATM) locks from watching an Indian crime serial and looted Tk 24.25 lakh from a United Commercial Bank Limited (UCBL) ATM.

The incident came to light after the Cyber and Special Crime Division of police's detective branch (DB) managed to arrest three members of the group during a drive in Dhaka and Habiganj on Tuesday.

The arrestees are Shamim Ahmed, Nur Mohammad Sebul, and Md Abdul Halim. Police recovered Tk 10.08 lakh, two cell phones, a knife, and three pieces of cloths used to cover their heads during the drives.

After breaking into the ATM booth on the ground floor of Haji Yunus Ullah Market in Osmani Nagar Police Station area of Sylhet, they beat up the security guard, wrapped him with scotch tape, and used a black spray on the CCTV camera to neutralise it.

The incident occurred around 3:15pm on September 12. A case was filed with Osmani Nagar police on the same day, Harun-Ur-Rashid, joint commissioner of DB police, said while addressing a briefing at DMP media centre

Harun said the arrestees were quite adept at information technology. Upon request of the investigating officer, DMP DB's Cyber and Special Crime Division started a shadow investigation. 'Shamim, the main planner, used to watch the Indian

serial CID. He learned how to break into ATM machines from there and made plans for the heist," he said.

Of the arrestees, Shamim was an expatriate. Nur used to work as a tailor while Halim was a shopkeeper.

Harun said there were cases against Shamim and Nur.

'She was killed by a former student'

Say Rajshahi police on retired teacher's murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Retired schoolteacher Maya Rani Ghose was strangled to death at her Rajshahi city home by one of her former students -- apparently for her gold jewellery.

Police disclosed the information yesterday after they arrested Milon Sheikh (40) and recovered victim's jewellery and mobile phone from his Boro Kuthi home.

Milon is a former student of the victim. He went to the teacher's house on Tuesday morning with the excuse of finding a tenant for her room and made away with her jewellery after killing her," OC Nibaran Chandra Barman of Boalia Police Station said. Police recovered the body of Maya (70), retired headmaster of Munnujan Government Primary School, from her room.

The OC said that the teacher used to live alone and was looking for tenants for part of her house. For this, he sought help from Milon and some others.

<u>SPACE AVAILABLE FOR SHORT TIME RENT</u>

Looking for commercial space in Gulshan-1 for short time? A well protected single house 13000sq.ft. at south ave, will be ented out with 3 floors of office space with power load 150KVA backup with auto start generator & space for 20-22 cars. preferable multinational Co, NGO, Liaison /Project off Contact: 01811408400, e-mail: salek.1256@gmail.Com



CITY DESK

Dr Mohammad Sakhawat Husain, a professor of the Department of Physics at Dhaka University, died from old age complications at his apartment on early Monday. He was 74, said a press release.

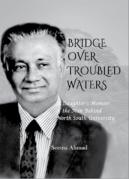
He left behind his wife Rokeya Minakshi Husain and two daughters --



Prof Sakhawat Husain passes away

acclaimed Manipuri dancer Samina Husain Prema and singer Sajia Husain Proity.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Dhaka University Central Mosque and he was laid to rest in Azimpur graveyard.



"What an extraordinary achievement and labor of love. It is more than a phy - it is a work of history with great literary merit. Rizvi, International Affairs adviser to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Inspired by Bangabandhu during the Liberation War, Muslehuddin Ahmad defected from Pakistan, and opened the embassy of Bangladesh in Paris. Soon, Bangabandhu appointed him as the first Chairman of Bangladesh TROUBLED Biman Airlines. For Ahmad, Bangabandhu and Bangladesh were inseparable He saw Bangabandhu's assassination in 1975 as an attempt to destroy Bangladesh's identity as a nation. On the day Bangabandhu was so tragically killed, Muslehuddin Ahmad made a pledge to serve Bangladesh to keep the dream of the Father of the Nation alive.

He kept his promise to Bangabandhu and to Bangladesh, even against the tides of betraval that were a constant theme in his life. In 1992, after a storied career as a diplomat and freedom fighter, Muslehuddin Ahmad founded North South University, the first private university in Bangladesh. In Bridge Over Troubled Waters, his daughter Seema Ahmad weaves her own recollections

with those of friends and family to present a unique account of the history of North South University and the man who shepherded its formation to become the "father of the private university movement in Bangladesh." This book takes us through Muslehuddin Ahmad's early years, his time in the diplomatic service, his role during the 1971 Liberation War, and his crowning achievement forming North South University. His daughter offers new insight into the devotion to country, family, and education that fueled her father's work and shares the guiding force he left to serve as a beacon for others.

appl Academic Press and Publishers Library, ISBN: 978-984-8045-65-7, Price: Tk. 1000. bKash: 01857800513. Price (US residents): \$100.US residents please visit www.parisforjustice.org to get a copy of the book.

Invitation to submit Request for Proposals (RFPs) in response to the bid issued by UNICEF Bangladesh

RFP No. LRPS-2021-9170227: Construction of one additional floor on existing office building, new parking shed for 4 cars, driver's waiting space, security posts and towers modifications of UNICEF Cox's Bazar warehouse

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"

Pre-bid Meeting date: Please see the schedule mentioned in the RFP.

The deadline to submit the proposal is Monday, 11 October 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs. Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation

www.unicef.org.bd

unicef less for every child





Meghna Petroleum Limited

(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation) 58-59, Agrabad Commercial Area, Chattogram



e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Portal for the procurement of the following goods, details are given

S/N	Tender ID	Procurement title	Tender last	Tender closing	Procurement					
			selling (date &	& opening	method					
			time)	(date & time)						
1.	613602	Procurement of 2"	06 October,	07 October,	One Stage Two					
	(Pur: 012)	Dia Petroleum	2021;	2021;	Envelopes					
		Product Flow Meter	17:00 Hrs.	15:00 Hrs.	Tendering					
2.	613625	Procurement of 3"	06 October,	07 October,	Method					
	(Pur: 013)	Dia Petroleum	2021;	2021;	(OSTETM)					
		Product Flow Meter	17:00 Hrs.	15:30 Hrs.						
Th	This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal. GD-1707									

Ensure 'climate justice'

FROM PAGE 3

activities accomplishments of the caucus by Mahjabeen Khaled, former MP and secretary general of the caucus.

WARBE chairman Syed Saiful Haque pointed out the importance of defining the needs and rights of climate migrants and displaced

Atiq Rahman, executive director

who end up in slums in Dhaka were better in their villages.

Prof Tasneem Siddiqui, founding chair of Refugee and Migratory Research Movements (RMMRU) said, "If we plan our cities in terms of climate change and target employment and connectivity well, climate related migration could become an opportunity."

RMMRU executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advance Prof CR Abrar described the Studies, mentioned that migrants contemporary traits hindering agriculture and food security project.

migration justice, mentioning the critical scenario of migrants' wages amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Tanvir Shakil Joy, MP and member of BPCMD, said the country need to create alternative living conditions like satellite cities for climate migrants.

As adaptation options, he stressed for the improvement of coastal embankment and afforestation project as well as climate resilient

BPCMD member Aroma Dutta reinstated the importance of joint collaboration among lawmakers and CSOs in risk mitigation and prospects. In the concluding session, BPCMD chair Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary specified that in Bangladesh's context, it's quite tough to create a conclusive environment for policymaking. The caucus is trying to embolden the current environment in favour of policymaking, he said.

One strike ends

before getting licence for heavy vehicles), and changes in the Road Transport Act-2018. The strike halted the operation of goods transport from

major sea and land ports since Tuesday morning. Monir, president of Bangladesh Truck Drivers Workers Federation, said the home minister agreed to meet their

14 points and sought time to meet another -- regarding withdrawal of additional income tax. A feud between two major factions of road transport owners and workers led to the calling of the two separate

strikes of goods-laden vehicles in the span of a week. Although their demands are almost the same, they still called "work abstention" from different platforms because they are locked in the long-standing conflict.

On August 25, Bangladesh Truck-Covered Van, Tank Lorry, Prime Mover Owners and Workers' Coordination Council called a 48-hour work abstention from September 27 to press home their 10-point demand.

against drivers under section 302 of the penal code for road accidents, solving driving licence-related complexities, withdrawing the "additional" advance income tax and allowing them to update their vehicles' documents without having to pay any fine amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Contacted, Rustam Ali Khan, convener of the platform,

said the home minister will hold a meeting with them on September 26 to discuss about their demands.

"If the meeting ends successfully we will withdraw our programme, otherwise we will enforce our works abstention," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Conduct fair probe

Based on the report of the investigation committee, the ministry issued the circular cancelling the appointment process.

In a press release, TIB's executive director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said the circular did not specify whether any corruption had taken place and how accountability of responsible persons will be ensured.

There was specific corruption allegations against the top government officials in the media report that prompted the ministry to scrap the recruitment, he said adding, "It's not illogical to raise questions whether the allegations were true or any action had taken against the culprits."

"There was a hint of an appalling spread of corruption in the report and it was expected that stern action would be taken following acceptable investigation," reads the press

He called upon the government to take wholesale approach to reshuffle the health sector. TIB believes the implementation of "zero tolerance" policy of the government against corruption will begin from the health

Besides, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) needs to take visible and effective steps to prevent corruption.

On June 29, the health directorate published the job circular to appoint 889 medical technologists, 1,800 medical technicians, and 150 cardiographers.

50,000 for the post of medical technicians. The written tests were held on December 12, 18, and 19 last year. The viva-voce for those who passed the written tests was held on February 22 and March 10 this year.

test for the posts of medical technologists and around

A total of 23,522 candidates were picked for the written

Sundarbans can play

of which will be spent for adaptation.

However, Prof Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, of DU's development studies department, said climate fund pledges from developed countries without any effective measures won't help vulnerable countries tackle climate change.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said the world is faced with the climate disaster simply because rich countries opt to make money without considering the environment.

Environmentalist Atik Rahman, Al Mobasshar Hussain, and Iqbal Habib from Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon also spoke at the webinar, chaired by CGS chairperson and entomologist Manjur A Chowdhury.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer Feni PWD Division, Feni Phone No. 0331-74038, Fax No. 0331-73626 Email: ee_feni@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No. 25.36.3000.135.14.101.17—200

Date: 21-09-2021

e-GP Re-Tender Notice (2nd Call)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for procurement as follows:

ı	Tender	Invitation Ref. No.	Method	Description of works	Tender closing
ı	ID No.			2 document of traine	date and time
	613649	Feni PWD/2021- 2022/Tender number-026	ОТМ	Installation of 800 kg 5- stop lift at the 5-storied police officers dormitory building with 8-storied foundation at Feni.	05-Oct-2021 16:00

Their demands include withdrawing murder cases | This is an online tender and this 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 e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any branch of the banks registered in the e-GP System.

Further information and quidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). For more details about procurement package, please contact the official inviting the tender.

> Saad Mohammad Andaleeb **Executive Engineer** Feni PWD Division, Feni

GD-1697

ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED

395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area Dhaka- 1208



LOCAL TENDER NOTICE

Ref. No. EDCL/PUR/Vehicle/LT/2021/356

Dated: 22/09/2021

Purchase of Vehicles for EDCL, Dhaka Plant Well reputed authorized Vehicle dealers/importers/manufacturers are invited for

submission of best competitive price offer for supply of following vehicles on urgent basis.

SL.	Name of Vehicle	QTY.
01.	Private Car (Recondition)	03 (Three) Nos.
02.	MicroBus (12 Seated Recondition)	01 No.
03.	Brand New Cover Van (Capacity: 03 Ton)	01 No.
04.	Brand New Cover Van (Capacity: 05 Ton)	01 No.

Tender schedule will be sold from the Accounts Department of Essential Drugs Company Limited (EDCL), Dhaka on cash payment basis @ schedule value Tk.2100.00 only as stated above during office hours on all working days from 26/09/2021 to 05/10/2021(except Friday, Saturday and Govt. Holidays). No tender schedule will be sold on the opening date of the tender.

The offer with required papers may be dropped in the tender Box kept at the Procurement Departments, EDCL, Dhaka office till 12.00 PM on 06/10/2021 which will be opened on same day at 12.30 PM. Price should be kept valid for 60(sixty) days from the date of opening of the tender. Tender should accompany an Earnest Money @ 2.5% through Pay Order/Bank Draft in favour of Essential Drugs Company Limited, Dhaka from any schedule Bank. The successful bidder shall furnish an unconditional performance Bond/ Bank Guarantee to the tune of 10% of the contract price within 03(three) days after the receipt of Purchase order. It shall remain valid for 12(twelve) months after the completion of the

EDCL authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

> Syed Jahir Uddin Zamal General Manager Procurement Department.

> > For: Managing Director

Size: 7 x 3

2.5km canal in illegal occupation for 10 years

Our Correspondent, Patuakhali

In the backdrop of rampant encroachment of waterbodies or land across the country, encroachers in Rangabali upazila have been depriving farmers of irrigation water for ten years -- by turning a 2.5-km-long public canal into forty large ponds.

The criminal act came to light on July 8 when 10 affected families on both sides of Nayabhanguni canal, in Nayabhanguni village of the upazila, made written allegations in this connection with the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Rangabali.

Upon receipt of the complaints, the UNO on July 11 visited the area and asked the upazila agriculture officer to investigate into the allegations and submit a report to his office. The investigation report, however, has yet to be submitted till date.

According to the complainants, several influential locals -- including Harun Hawlader, Babul Hawlader, Sohel Hawlader, Bachchu Chowkidar and Shahidul -- illegally built forty separate barrages across the canal to cultivate fish.

The accused had been using the Nayabhanguni canal for fish farming this way for at least past 10

As a result, farmlands along the canal could not be irrigated with its water in dry seasons while croplands as well as houses in low-lying areas had remained waterlogged in monsoon seasons.

Throughout the 10 years, farmers have been incurring losses and residents facing immense sufferings due the situation that has been created by the encroachers, alleged the complainants.

Locals said the Nayabhanguni canal, 40 to 60 feet in width at places, used to have flowing current as it was connected with the Darchhira

A waterbody that once used to be brimming with large boats is now nothing but large fishing ponds, they lamented.

Villager Akbar Ali said like waterlogging in the area, rotting of crops due to stagnant water is also a common phenomenon in the monsoon.

Homemaker Lina Begum said flooding of their houses even after a short spell of rain is also a common occurrence in the village.

Bachchu Chowkidar, one of the accused, said he has been using the canal for fish farming by building barrages in it, as others started doing the same before him.

Contacted, Rangabali upazila agriculture officer Monirul Islam said he inspected the Nayabhanguni canal on July 10 and found the allegations to be true.

He would soon submit his investigation report to the UNO, he added.

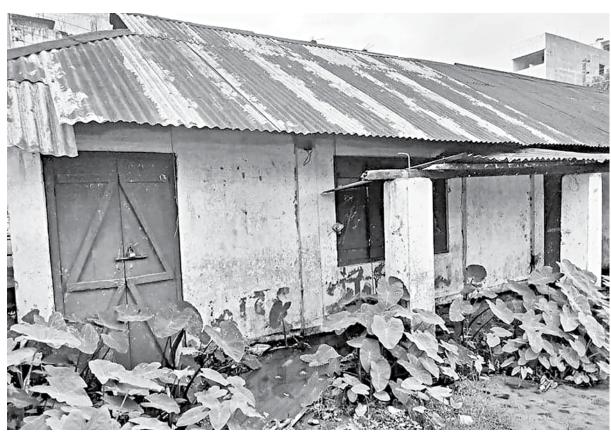
UNO Mashfaqur Rahman said the flow of water in a government canal cannot be obstructed and necessary action would be taken against all accused once the investigation report is received.



Though it may look like a narrow strip of land separating two ponds, but in reality, it is a barrage made through Nayabhanguni canal in Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila. As many as forty such barrages were built in the public canal over the last ten years.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

Date: 21.09.2021



Due to lack of preservation, Kulaura Public Library has now become a garbage dump and waterlogged. The collection of valuable books written by eminent authors has also been completely destroyed.

Once a Lighthouse, now a garbage dump

Established in 1984, Kulaura Public Library has been lying abandoned for four years

MINTU DESHWARA

The public library in Kulaura has remained abandoned for four years. Due to lack of preservation, it has now become a garbage dump and waterlogged. The collection of valuable books written by eminent authors has also been completely destroyed.

According to sources, the 'Kulaura Public Library' was established about 37 years ago in a building on the premises of the then post bungalow (now the Independence Monument), the heart of the town. It was inaugurated on 26 June 1984 by the then UNO Sirajul Islam. A librarian and an assistant librarian were appointed by the committee. The cost of book collection and other expenses were met from the monthly subscriptions of the members of the Upazila Parishad and the library. To this end, a bank account was also opened for the library.

On a recent visit to the library, it was seen that a furniture shop had Rainwater has submerged the library used to enjoy a good number



veranda and the inner floors of the dilapidated building.

The books, shelves and furniture of the library have been ruined due to waterlogged condition inside the library.

Khurshid Ullah, a former librarian of the library, said, "I was the librarian from 2010 to 2015. In my absence Assistant Librarian Shamsuddin used to carry out the duties. He died in 2017. No action has been taken to save it since then."

Sanjay Debnath, a member of the library, said, "I collected the under construction in the premises membership card of the library in 1994. I used to read a lot of books been set up in front of the building. collecting from the library. The

of memberships. But the library is now lying abandoned and has turned into a garbage dump. I demand its renovation.

Mazharul Islam, a professor of history at Longla Modern Degree College in Kulaura, said, the role of a library in enriching the culture of an area is immense. The Kulaura Public Library was once the beacon of light in the region. Now it has become a symbol of the decay of our values.

It is necessary to bring the new generation on the path of literature and culture by reviving the library. Otherwise the generation will fall into the abyss of moral degradation, he added.

Kulaura Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) ATM Farhad Chowdhury said, "I have taken sincere initiative to revive Kulaura Public Library. This has already been discussed in a meeting. The dilapidated building cannot be moved. There is a building of the Independence Memorial. Arrangements are being made to renovate it and move the library



Sculptors are busy giving the finishing touches to idols ahead of the Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community. The photo was taken from Sahabari area in Tangail's Basail upazila.

Idols vandalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Unidentified criminals vandalised idols of Hindu gods and goddesses, constructed for the upcoming Durga Puja, in Kushtia town.

Police suspect that the incident might have occurred early yesterday. The idols were found

broken this morning, said Advocate Anup Kumar Nandi, president of the district puja celebration committee.

It is a temporary mandap in Aruapara area in the town, which is built every vear ahead of the Durga Puja under the banner of Aika Jubasangha.

Rintu Pal, a junior artisan, said they left the idols to dry after coating them with clay on Monday.



RAJSHAHI KRISHI UNNAYAN BANK

Head Office, Common Services Department 272, BANALATA C/A, AIRPORT ROAD, RAJSHAHI TEL: 0247860502

E-mail: dgmcsd@rakub.org.bd, Website: www.rakub.org.bd

Tender Ref. No. RAKUB/CSD/2021-2022/02

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for Design, Printing, Binding & Supply of Wall Calendar for the year 2022 and related services as stated below:

- 1	SI.	e-Tender	Tender Reference No.	Description of Work	Last selling	Closing Date
	No.	ID No.			Date & Time	& Time
	01.	611428	RAKUB/CSD/2021- 2022/02	Design, Printing, Binding & Supply of Wall Calendar for the year 2022 and related services.		10 OCT,2021, 11:31 am

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no o ffline/ hard copies will be accepted. To Submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of the following package/tender from the e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' branches up to above mentioned Date and Time.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd)/

GD- 1702

(Md. Mizanur Rahman) Assistant General Manager (Department in charge)



মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি

গুলফেশাঁ প্লাজা (৭ম তলা), ৮ শহীদ সাংবাদিক সেলিনা পারভীন সড়ক. বড় মগবাজার, রমনা, ঢাকা-১২১৭, বাংলাদেশ।

বাংলাদেশে ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগলেটরী অথরিটির সনদ বাধ্যতামূলক।

সূত্র নং-৫৩.০৪.০০০০.০০২.০৭.০০৫-২১-১৫৭২

মাইকোরাস ভাড়ার দরপর রিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখঃ ২০/০৯/২০২১

			<u> মাহে</u>	<u>ক্রাবাস ভাড়ার দরপত্র চ</u>	বজাপ্ত				
٥.	সংস্থার ও সংগ্রহকারী সতার নাম	:	মাইক্রোক্রেডি	<u>উট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি</u>					
২.	সংগ্রহকারী সন্তার জেলার নাম	1:1	ঢাকা						
೨.	যে জন্য দরপত্র আহবান	1:1	: মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়া						
8.	বিবরণ		মডেল-২০১৫	১ এর নীচে নয়, আসন নূন্যত	ম-১২, ডুয়েল এসি উন্নত মানের হাইয়েস বা সমমানের মাইক্রোবাস				
œ.	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	1:1	সূত্র নং-৫৩.	08.0000.002.09.00৫-২১	-১৫৭২, তারিখঃ ২০/০৯/২০২১				
৬.	সংগ্ৰহ পদ্ধতি	:	: উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র						
٩.	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	:	সরকারী						
ъ.	দরপত্র বিক্রয় এবং দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	o@/5o/২o২	১, বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত					
৯.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:		১, বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকায়					
50.	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তিস্থান, দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও দরপত্র খোলার অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	:		উট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি, গুল ের, রমনা, ঢাকা-১২১৭।	ফেশী প্রাজা (৭ম তলা), ৮ শহীদ সাংবাদিক সেলিনা পারভীন সড়ক,				
55.	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	টিআইএন সং পারমিট, ফি দরদাতাদের ২) দরপত্র সরকারী/স্বায় (কার্যালয়/ক সমাপ্ত/চলমা ৩) দরপত্রের অনুকূলে সেব জন্য প্রত্যয়ন	নদ, ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদ, গাড়ী টনেস সনদপত্ৰ, বীমা সনদপ দলিলে বৰ্ণিত অন্যান্য যোগ্য দাখিলের নির্ধারিত সর্বশে রত্ব-শাসিত/আধা-স্বায়ত্ব-শাসি রখানা) ইত্যাদিতে স্টাফ ন) কমপক্ষে ০১টি অভিজ্ঞতা া সাথে দাখিলকৃত তথ্যাদি স বা গ্রহণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের উপ্য পেত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি দাখিল	পরিবহন সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে ০১(এক) বছর মেয়াদী (কার্য সম্পন্ন প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী এবং সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে হবে। টিক ও বৈধ কাগজপত্র দ্বারা সমর্থিত হতে হবে। এছাড়া অভিজ্ঞতার যুক্ত কর্মকর্তার ইস্যুকৃত সন্তোষজনক কার্যসম্পাদনের/চলমান কাজের ল করতে হবে।				
52.	সেবার বিবরণ	:	(সাপ্তাহিক ও নির্ধারিত সম	্ব সরকারী ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত ময়ে অফিস হতে নেয়ার জ	বছর মেয়াদে অথরিটির কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদেরকে সকল কর্মদিবসে) সকালে অফিসে আনা এবং অফিস ছুটির পর অথবা অফিস কর্তৃক ন্য ন্যূনতম ১২ আসনবিশিষ্ট শীতাতপ নিয়ন্ত্রিত মানসম্পন্ন (মডেল নর মাইক্রোবাস এবং দক্ষ ও অভিজ্ঞ চালকসহ সরবরাহ করতে হবে। বর্তমান রুটের বিবরণ আসা: সাভার (এনাম মেডিকেল)-মিরপুর-১-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর (মিরপুর-১) ছাপড়া মসজিদ (ষাটফুট)-ফার্মগেইট- অফিস (মগবাজার) যাওয়া: অফিস (মগবাজার)-শ্যামলী-মিরপুর-১, সাভার (এনাম মেডিকেল)				

			ক্রঃনং	রুটের নাম		বর্তমান রুটের বিবরণ
			05	সাভার হতে অফিস রুট	অধিদপ্তর (বি অফিস (মগব	ার (এনাম মেডিকেল)-মিরপুর-১-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা মিরপুর-১) ছাপড়া মসজিদ (ষাটফুট)-ফার্মগেইট- রাজার) ফস (মগবাজার)-শ্যামলী-মিরপুর-১, সাভার (এনাম
			οż	মোহাম্মদপুর হতে অফিস রুট	সলিমুল্লাহ রে (শিয়া মসভি ১১ (আদা পিসিকালচার (মগবাজার) যাওয়া: অযি বাসস্ট্যান্ড-র্বা মোহাম্মদীয়া বায়তুল আ	র বাজার হাইস্কুল (ধানমন্ডি ১৫) বসিলা চল্লিশ ফিট- রাড (মোহাম্মদপুর)-মোহাম্মদীয়া হাউজিং রোড ৩, রদ মোহাম্মদপুর) বায়তুল আমান হাউজিং, রোড- বের-মোহাম্মদপুর)-সূচনা কমিউনিটি সেন্টার- র (মোহাম্মদপুর)-আসাদগেইট-পান্থপথ-অফিস কিস (মগবাজার)-পান্থপথ-আসাদগেইট-মোহাম্মদপুর সিলা চল্লিশ ফিট-সলিমুল্লাহ রোড (মোহাম্মদপুর)- হাউজিং রোড-৩, (শিয়া মসজিদ মোহাম্মদপুর) মান হাউজিং, রোড-১১ (আদাবর-মোহাম্মদপুর) নিটি সেন্টার-পিসিকালচার (মোহাম্মদপুর)
			೦಄	উত্তর খান হতে অফিস রুট	জসিমউদ্দিন অফিস (মগব যাওয়া: ত খিলক্ষেত-এ	খান (কুড়িপাড়া)-আব্দুল্লাহপুর-উত্তরা ৯নং সেক্টর- -এয়ারপোর্ট-খিলক্ষেত-শাহজাদপুর (উত্তর বাঙ্ডা)- বাজার) যফিস (মগবাজার)-শাহজাদপুর (উত্তরবাঙ্ডা)- য়ারপোর্ট-জসিমউদ্দিন-উত্তরা ৯নং সেক্টর- উত্তরখান (কুড়িপাড়া)
٠.	দরপত্র সিভিউলের মূল্য	:	১৩০০/-(টাকা তিনশত মাত্র)। (সিডিউল ক্রয়ের জন্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাডে আবেদনপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে)			
	দরপত্রের জামানত		ক্রঃনং	রুটের নাম		দরপত্র জামানত (পে-অর্ডার/ ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি)
			0)	সাভার হতে অফিস বাট		Sa aga/-

এক্সিকিউটিভ ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদনাম গুলফেশী প্রাজা (৭ম তলা), ৮ শহীদ সাংবাদিক সেলিনা পারভীন সড়ক, বড় মগবাজার, রমনা, ঢাকা-১২১৭। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা ই-মেইলঃ evc@mra.gov.bd

মোহাম্মদপর হতে অফিস রট

উত্তর খান হতে অফিস রুট

১৫.

দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম

(ক) কর্তপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে। (খ) আলোচ্য দরপত্র পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ অনুযায়ী উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে।

(গ) অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নির্ধারিত তারিখে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা সম্ভব না হইলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই সময় ও একই স্থানে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা হইবে।

মোঃ ফসিউল্লাহ্

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Pak PM warns of Afghan 'civil war'

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has warned of the risk of a "civil war" in Afghanistan if the Taliban is unable to form an inclusive government there.

"If they do not have an inclusive government, and gradually it descends into a civil war, which if they do not include all the factions sooner or later [will happen], that too will impact Pakistan," Khan told the BBC network during an interview aired on Tuesday.

Khan said his country was primarily concerned about the possibility of a humanitarian and refugee crisis if a civil war breaks out, as well as the possibility of Afghan soil being used by armed groups that are fighting the Pakistani government.

"It will mean an unstable, a chaotic Afghanistan," he said. "[That is an] ideal place for terrorists, because if there is no control or if there is fighting going on. And that is our worry. So terrorism from Afghan soil, and secondly if there is a humanitarian crisis or a civil war, a refugee issue

The Taliban has previously rejected Khan's calls for changes to the current interim Afghan government, with Mohammad Mobeen, a Taliban leader, saying the group does not "give anyone the right to call for an inclusive

"We have got freedom. Like Pakistan, we reserve the right to have our own system," Mobeen told Afghanistan's Ariana TV, adding the current system was "inclusive". The Taliban's deputy information minister Zabihullah Mujahid said the group would address international human rights concerns only after formal recognition by those countries.



Burga-clad women look at secondhand household items at a stall in a market in Kandahar, Afghanistan yesterday. As Afghanistan faces an economic crisis after the Taliban's takeover, some cash-strapped residents have resorted to selling their household items. Across Kandahar, people have been selling off anything they can, including bedding, furniture and cooking appliances, to buy food and other basic goods.

Iran's Raisi berates US

Voices support for reviving nuclear accord as sanctions bite

AFP, United Nations

Iran's new ultraconservative president voiced support Tuesday in his international debut for reviving a nuclear accord even as he berated the United States, hailing what he described as its failures.

President Ebrahim Raisi, a hardline cleric who succeeded a government that sought better relations with the West, called on the United States to fulfill its promises to end sanctions under the 2015 nuclear accord.

"The Islamic Republic considers useful talks whose ultimate outcome is the lifting of all oppressive sanctions," Raisi said in a recorded speech to the UN General Assembly.

Indirect talks brokered by the European Union have been on hiatus since June after months of negotiations with the previous government failed to secure a path forward.

Raisi repeated the clerical state's stance that nuclear weapons are religiously prohibited, a position that

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Nuclear weapons have no place in our defense doctrine: Raisi

Iran expects a resumption of indirect talks 'in the coming weeks'

Biden renewed his willingness to return US to nuke accord, lift sanctions

has been met with skepticism notably by Israel, which has carried out a sabotage campaign to delay Iran's nuclear work.

Nuclear weapons "have no place in our defense doctrine and deterrence policy," Raisi said.

Raisi is notorious among human rights advocates for his role as a judge during mass executions in 1988 when the Islamic republic was solidifying with some activists control, encouraging the West to shun him.

But Western powers, as well as and lift sanctions.

China and Russia, say they see the value in restricting Iran's nuclear program peacefully under the 2015 agreement, from which US President Joe Biden's predecessor Donald Trump withdrew the United States.

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas of Germany, which remains in the nuclear accord, said it was urgent to resume negotiations, amid Western concerns that Iran could advance nuclear work.

"We're not going to wait two or three months for the Iranian delegation to return to Vienna. It has to be quicker," Maas told reporters.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh, traveling with Raisi, said he expected a resumption of the indirect talks "in the coming weeks," without giving an exact date.

President Biden, appearing in person in his own maiden UN speech, renewed his willingness to return the United States to the nuclear accord

China won't build more coal plants abroad: Xi

China will stop funding coal projects overseas, President Xi Jinping announced Tuesday, all but ending the flow of public aid for the dirty energy contributing to the climate crisis.

Xi made his announcement at the UN General Assembly where US President Joe Biden, seeking to show leadership in a growing competition with China, promised to double Washington's contribution to countries hardest hit by climate change.

China is still investing in coal, reducing the impact of Xi's commitment, but it is by far the largest funder of coal projects in developing countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam and Bangladesh as it goes on a global infrastructure-building blitz with its Belt and Road Initiative.

Xi vowed to accelerate efforts for China, the world's largest emitter, to go carbon neutral by 2060.

This requires tremendous hard work and we will make every effort to meet these goals," Xi said in a recorded address.

"China will step up support for other developing countries in developing green and low carbon energy and will not build new coalfired power projects abroad," he said.

China's announcement follows similar moves by South Korea and Japan, the only other nations that offered significant funds for coal

The climate advocacy movement 350.org called Xi's announcement "huge," saying it could be a "real game-changer" depending on when it

MORE NEWS

Bats with Covid-like viruses

found in Laos: study

Scientists have discovered another clue to the origins of the virus that causes Covid-19, with bats living in caves in Laos found to be carrying a similar pathogen that experts suggest could potentially infect humans directly. The virus has killed millions since it emerged in China in late 2019, and controversy continues to swirl around where it came from. Some experts say it is animal-driven but others have pointed to the possibility the pathogen leaked from a lab. Researchers from France's Pasteur Institute and the National University of Laos said their findings showed that viruses genetically close to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Zelensky vows 'strong response' after attack on aide

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday promised a "strong response" after gunmen opened fire on a car carrying his senior aide, in what officials said was retaliation for a push to rein in oligarchs. Sergiy Shefir, a 57-year-old former scriptwriter and longtime associate of comedian-turnedpolitician Zelensky, was reported to have escaped without serious injury. "Saying 'hello' to me by shooting out of the forest at my friend's car is weak," Zelensky said in a video statement from New York. "The response will be strong." Zelensky, who is in New York for the UN General Assembly, said it was not yet known who was behind the attack.



Bodies of 7 migrants and child found off Spain coast

The bodies of eight migrants, including three women and a child, have washed up on the shores of southern Spain over the past two days, local authorities said Tuesday. "Between Sunday and Tuesday morning, eight bodies were found along the shore... who came from one or more boats," the Almeria authorities said, indicating they were found along a 20-kilometre stretch of coastline. The Guardia Civil police were investigating, they added. The boats had likely set off from Morocco or Algeria, a journey of at last 200 kilometres (130 miles) across the western Mediterranean, in the hope of reaching Europe. So far this year, a total of 10,701 migrants have managed to reach the southern coast of mainland Spain or the Balearic Islands by sea, an increase of 1,680 on the same period last year.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



We plan to present the Paris climate agreement to our parliament's approval next month...Unlike the past, this time no one has the right to say: I am powerful, I do not pay the bill. Because climate change treats mankind quite fairly.

TURKISH PRESIDENT RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN

Biden pledges 500m more doses to developing world

President Joe Biden was set to push world leaders yesterday to do more to curb the Covid-19 pandemic, and announce a US pledge to buy 500 million more vaccine doses to donate to other countries.

Holding a virtual summit to boost global vaccination rates, Biden hopes to show he is leading by example with the pledge, which will bring US donations to the rest of the world up to more than 1.1 billion doses.

The vaccines from Pfizer Inc and BioNTech SE will be made in the United States and shipped to low and lower middle-income countries starting in January, a US senior administration official said ahead of the announcement.

"This is a huge commitment by the US. In fact, for every one shot we have administered in this country to date, we are now donating three shots to other countries," the official told reporters.

A source familiar with the issue said the government would pay some \$7 per dose. In June, the Biden administration agreed to buy and donate 500 million doses of the vaccine. Under the terms of that contract, the United States will pay Pfizer and

BioNTech around \$3.5 billion or \$7 a dose for the shots.

The United States has come under criticism for planning booster shots to fully vaccinated Americans while millions of people around the world still do not have access to the life-saving vaccines.

Deliveries of the initial 500 million doses began in August, and the total one billion doses are expected to be delivered by the end of September 2022, according to a statement from Pfizer and BioNtech. The dose will be made in Pfizer's US facilities, and delivered to 92 low- and lower-middleincome countries and the 55 member states of the African Union.

Secretary-General United Nations Antonio Guterres reprimanded world leaders on Tuesday for the inequitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines, describing it as an "obscenity" and giving the globe an "F in Ethics."

The virtual summit will focus on vaccinating the world, saving lives by tackling an oxygen shortage and making medicines more available, and preparing for another pandemic in the future, another administration official said.

Targets include getting 70% of countries' populations vaccinated by this time next year.

Government of Peoples republic of Bangladesh Farmers Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project Department of Agricultural Extension Khamarbari, Dhaka-1205

Memo no. 12.01.0000.000.43.077.20-237

Date: 22.09.2021

e-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited through national e-GP portal for the procurement of works as stated below:

Sl.	Package No.	Brief Description of Works	Tender ID	Tender Publishing & Closing Date
1	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-8	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Pabna Sadar, Dist: Pabna, (ii) Upazila: Bangura, Dist: Pabna, (iii) Upazila: Chatmohor, Dist: Pabna, (iv) Upazila: Bera, Dist: Pabna under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project.	606267	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 14:00
2	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-7	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Fulbari, Dist: Kurigram, (ii) Upazila: Aditmari, Dist: Lalminirhat, (iii) Upazila: Kaligonj, Dist: Lalminirhat, (iv) Upazila: Kishoregonj, Dist: Nilphamary, (v) Upazila: Nilphamari Sadar, Dist: Nilphamary under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project.	606266	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 14:00
3	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-6	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Badalgachi, Dist: Naogaon, (ii) Upazila: Shapahar, Dist: Naogaon, (iii) Upazila: Atrai, Dist: Naogaon, (iv) Upazila: Mahadevpur, Dist: Naogaon under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project	606260	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 14:00
4	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-5	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Parbatipur, Dist: Dinajpur, (ii) Upazila: Birgonj, Dist: Dinajpur, (iii) Upazila: Bhurungamari, Dist: Kurigram, (iv) Upazila: Chilmari, Dist: Kurigram under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project	606259	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 14:00
5	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-4	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Anwara, Dist: Chattogram, (ii) Upazila: Hathazari, Dist: Chattogram, (iii) Upazila: Lohagora, Dist: Chattogram, (iv) Upazila: Teknaf, Dist: Cox's Bazar under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project	606257	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 12:00
6	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-3	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Begummganj, Dist: Noakhali, (ii) Upazila: Subarnachar, Dist: Noakhali, (iii) Upazila: Sonaimuri, Dist: Noakhali under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project.	606249	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 12:00
7	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-2	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Bholahat, Dist: Chapai Nawabgonj, (ii) Upazila: Shibgonj, Dist: Chapai Nawabgonj, (iii) Upazila: Gurudaspur, Dist: Natore, (iv) Upazila: Singra, Dist: Natore under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project	606243	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 12:00
8	DAE/FTUT TP/21-22/02/ WD-1	Repair and Renovation for Upazila Farmers' Training Centres at (i) Upazila: Shibgonj, Dist: Bogura (ii) Upazila: Nandigram, Dist: Bogura, (iii) Upazila: Dhunat, Dist: Bogura, (iv) Upazila: Akkelpur, Dist: Joypurhat, (v) Upazila: Panchbibi, Dist: Joypurhat under Farmers' Training at the Upazila level for Transfer of Technology (3rd Phase) Project	605837	22/09/21 17:00 11/10/21 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Registration in National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required to submit the tender. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited through online at any branch of registered schedule bank. For further information and guidelines are available in national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

> @ 800 page (Md. Tajul Islam Patwary) Project Director Phone: 55028306

FIGHTING BETWEEN ANTI-JUNTA DISSIDENTS AND MILITARY

Thousands flee Myanmar town

Thousands have fled a town in west Myanmar after days of fighting between anti-junta dissidents and the military, during which soldiers bombed civilian homes, residents and local media said yesterday.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since Aung San Suu Kyi's government was ousted by the military in February, sparking a nationwide uprising that the junta has tried to crush with a bloody crackdown.

Attacks on junta troops and assets have increased after lawmakers ousted by the generals called for a "people's defensive war" earlier this month.

Soldiers fought a gun battle with around 100 members of a local defence group after being "ambushed" in Thantlang in remote Chin state near the India border on September 18, junta spokesman Zaw Min Thun said Tuesday.

He did not give any casualty figures. Residents began to flee en masse



on Monday after soldiers "began to randomly shoot out the windows" of houses in the town, according to one

local who did not want to be named. "Almost everyone has left," he said, adding he was sheltering in a nearby village with around 500 people, and that several hundred had already fled

towards the India border. Thantlang has a population of around 7,500 according to the most recent census.

Another resident said she travelled for three days with her elderly parents to reach India after soldiers bombed

her house and fighting escalated around the town. "I never thought of running from

my own house even after the military bombed it... but as things got worse... I finally had to flee," she told AFP on condition of anonymity. Videos and pictures published by local media showed buildings

in Thantlang they said had been destroyed by the military, and domestic animals roaming deserted Military spokesman Zaw Min Thun

said 20 homes and a government building had been destroyed in a fire after the September 18 clash, without specifying a cause. In recent weeks anti-junta fighters

belonging to the military-owned Mytel across the country, including in Chin state. The UN warned renewed fighting in the region was sending more people

required food and shelter.

have attacked communications towers

GD- 1704 fleeing into India, where they urgently

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

A song of identity and fate

YAAMEEN AL-MUTTAQI

ordained to be nothing, while that of her

Identity is mercurial: it shifts and morphs into a new being at the change of a breeze. That change is glacial, and often happens on its own volition; but one can also grasp a new identity, hold it tight till it engulfs the old, and thereby change the trajectory of their life completely. We saw this in Disney's *Mulan* (1998),

and thus is also the tale told in Shelley Parker-Chan's *She Who Became The Sun* (Tor Books, 2021).

The novel is set in a vaguely fictional 1300s' China, as a reimagining of the rise of the Ming Dynasty. It follows two tales inextricably connected. The first is the tale of a peasant girl whose destiny is

brothers is to be great. When bandits kill her family, she dons her brothers' name, Zhu Chongba, and joins a monastery to survive, hiding from the powers above. But when the monastery is razed by the occupying Mongol armies, she realises there is no safety in hiding, and embarks on a path to seize her brothers' destiny too. The second tale is that of the eunuch general Ouyang, the very general who burns Chongba's monastery to the ground. Born Chinese, but raised by the occupying Mongol nobles, Ouyang's tale is one of grappling with identity, with insecurities, and shaping one's sense of self against the preconceived notions of those around them. Throughout the book, Chongba and Ouyang act as narrative foils for one another, asking similar questions but reaching wildly different answers because of the different eyes through which they see the universe. Neither are right, neither are particularly good or bad people either, but their flaws are what make them interesting, and human.

For those familiar with *Mulan* (1998), *She Who Became The Sun* follows similar beats, albeit more nuanced, evolved, and far darker. Do not, however, expect the grand action set pieces in the beloved Disney classic. Like Tolkien, Parker-Chan is not concerned with the grand battles and heroic moments. They happen,

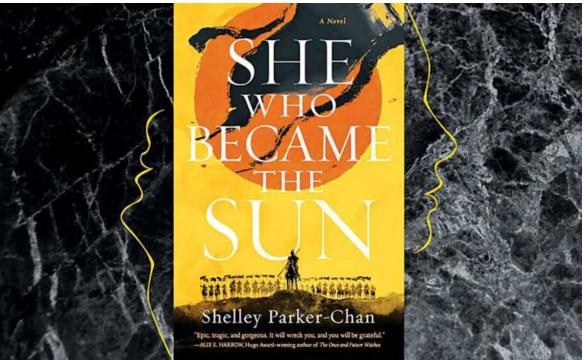
but they are dwarfed by moments of character and introspection. The novel is quite transparently a tale of identity: shaping your own space in a world that does not want you, and making that shape yours despite what others think you should be. It is a tale of gender identity: what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman, and what it means to be both at different times, or neither, or beyond gender itself. This it does brilliantly through the many viewpoints of characters, none of whom fit into the world they live in. It is a tale of how, with enough ambition, one can wrestle destiny into the palm of their hand. It is about legacy, about having a tale to leave in your wake, and the cost of achieving such greatness. It is about defiance and revenge against a universe that wanted you gone, and against the people it used to enact its will. It is most of all about being true to yourself, no matter what the world wants of you.

If this description makes the book sound sombre, then your assessment would not be too far from the truth. While there are a few dry jokes and a smattering of beautifully heartfelt moments, Parker-Chan keeps the tone mostly subdued, without crossing the line into morose. For someone like myself who is more used to fast paced fantasy, this was hard to get used to. The gravity of tone is also exacerbated

by some spectacularly gruesome deaths. Suffice it to say, this is not a book for the squeamish. But the heaviness is offset by the sheer beauty of the descriptions, and how they often mimic the characters' inner states. The prose swells into poetry in those moments, captivating the audience with gorgeous vistas that are mirrored in deep personal reflection. As Zhu contemplates the nature of "greatness" from the top of a mountain, we are drowned in the world she sees, "where chaos and violence boil[ed] under the tidy patterns of green and brown, and [she] knew that as much as that world contained the promise of greatness, it contained the promise of nothingness". Parker-Chan, however, makes sure not to never overdo it, for there is only so much poetry one can take before the writing is bogged down.

As someone who has been clamouring for more fantasy stories set in Asian settings, this is a breath of reprieve, even though the fantasy elements in the story are small, and the tale itself is more historical fiction than fantasy. *She Who Became The Sun* is the first in *The Radiant Emperor* duology, and we cannot wait for the finale of this epic tale.

Yaameen Al-Muttaqi works with robots and writes stories of dragons, magic, friendship, and hope. Send him a raven at yaameen3112@gmail.com.



DESIGN: SARAH ANJUM BARI

TV SHOW REVIEW

Cosy comedy-drama 'The Chair' does right and wrong by English departments

MEHRUL BARI

Netflix's new comedy-drama, The Chair (2021), should fit right up the alley of any and possibly every lit major or graduate. The six-episode series which premiered on August 20, 2021 takes us through the campus doors of the fictional Pembroke University, where Professor Ji-Yoon Kim will start her tenure as the first-ever female English chair in the glaringly white-andmale history of the university. The Chair, fronted by the always-great Sandra Oh, is the rare campus drama centred on the teachers and administrators, the Chaucer spouters and Melville-thumpers, the New Critics and the failed-writers. Somehow and this occurs as early as the first episode the show makes glamorous and addictive television out of it all.

For all the college-goers who saw their professor, dishevelled and out of sorts, bent over a mountain of paperwork at their desk, and never wondered to themselves what lives they may lead outside university walls, this series is the one to open eyes. The spectacularly un-magnificent and captivating human lives of faculty members are presented here almost like bildungsromans. We are shown a core group of teachers, each touching upon archetypal 'literature professor' types, from the sleep-inducing kind to the 'cool teacher', along the way.

Jay Duplass of Duplass Brothers fame plays the latter, with his Professor Dobson, a grieving, charming, slovenly wreck who instigates the large arc of the first season when he half-drunkenly Sieg Heils in front of a packed classroom, which in his defence was a harmless if unwise gesture to illustrate a philosophical point. The scene wherein this occurs is shot masterfully. We are at first drawn into a narrative of self-recovery for the grieving professor, with Dobson fumbling and mumbling through the beginning of a promising lecture—or so it seemed. The admittedly "white" and "not Jewish" professor spontaneously throws up the inappropriate salute, which his students—who we are routinely told all "love him"—catch the awkward moment on their phones, spreading within minutes a meme that will bring about a reckoning.

Where *The Chair* excels most is how much it makes one root for its characters—the ones we are meant to like anyway. It is hard not to sympathise when rampant acts of misogyny clutter the paths of its female lecturers, all of whom seem grossly more qualified than their male counterparts. It is easy to feel sympathy for overwhelmed Dobson, who really can't seem to "get his [act] together." Just as well, the hordes of



COLLAGE: MEHRUL BARI

students with scrunched-up faces that picket the campus lawns seem loathsome and ignorant—painting Dobson, for us viewers, as the real victim in the whole matter.

It must be said that in building mostly unnuanced "us and them" distinctions between the two sides, there is some weightless storytelling here. The manner in which the enraged students are portrayed had to have been intentional. There wasn't a scene in which I saw a student speak that didn't make my teeth grind (save for maybe Ella Rubin's Dafna, who seems poised for a larger role in the second season). The nameless cluster of fashionably offended students, with all their pith and vinegar, seemed to encapsulate some vague sort of comment on cancel culture, that took more than it added to the show.

Its treatment of the elderly is similarly a little muddled. Deployed as either comic relief or villainous foils, the older characters don't get the fairest shake in *The Chair*. Only Joan Hambling, played excellently by small screen-veteran Holland Taylor, is exempt, showcasing a character beyond that of a tsk-tsking grump. That being said, the increasing senescence of Professor McHale is quite hilarious.

It goes without saying that *The Chair* is one for literature majors. If its plot points and visuals weren't enough, its soundtrack sounds ripped from the playlist of any self-serious sophomore. Though fitting, a soundtrack filled with Vampire Weekend, The Smiths, Elvis Costello, and Vivaldi—and maybe two artists of colour—might be a little too white. In other words, it is the complete college experience.

Mehrul Bari S Chowdhury is a writer, poet, and artist. His work has appeared in Blood Orange Review, Kitaab, and Sortes Magazine, among others.

WORTH A RE-READ

Many shades of a golden season

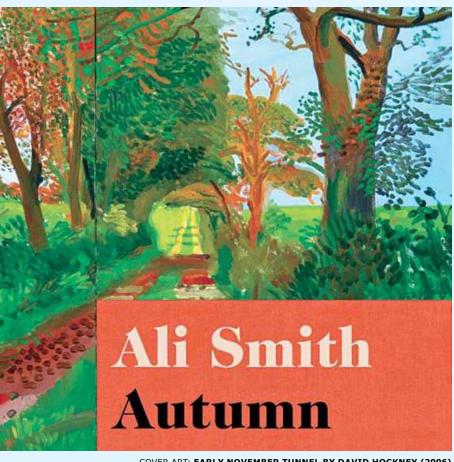
MINHAZ MUHAMMAD

Fifteen pages into Ali Smith's *Autumn* the first installment of the Seasonal Quartet, we are introduced to the protagonist (to the extent they exist in her books), Elisabeth. She's standing in a long line to renew her passport. Seeing the slow progress, she goes over to a bookshop next to the post-office, and buys herself a copy of Brave New World—a dystopian novel where humans are manufactured in assembly lines and essentially treated as consumer goods. Elisabeth comes back, only to fall behind in the queue, and this time, forced to purchase new tickets, as the old ones are no longer valid. When she finally reaches the counter, she's made a sizable dent in this otherwise fat book. Her passport renewal form is eventually rejected after a series of back and forth with the officer in charge, as the photos she attached do not meet the requirements.

Much of the novel takes place in these encounters between individuals, who are trying to communicate with each other, but often more unsuccessfully than not. The external world has made it difficult for words to have meanings that they can both comprehend. Elisabeth Demand is a 30-something-year-old art student at a London university. Daniel Gluck, now 100 and in a hospice, is her childhood neighbour, under whose care Elisabeth's mother often left her. He has been a huge influence on her, so much so that she often sits by his bed silently and remembers the conversations she has had with him. Daniel, while unconscious, searches through his fractured memory, trying to recall what life was like when he was young.

Conventional literary devices are rarely present in Smith's novels. We have a residue of a plot, if one can call it that. Her characters do not feel like real people and are never fully fleshed out; they are at best teased, to get at something larger. Here, it is time. Autumn itself is a period of transition. Daylight becomes noticeably shorter; nights increase in length. Leaves announce with their colour that they are prepared to shed. Smith punctuates the book named after this season with lush descriptions of temporality of nature, but starts it with an invocation of Charles Dickens and alters it to her purpose. "It was the worst of times. It was the worst of times."

And indeed it was. *Autumn* (Hamish Hamilton), written in 2016, takes place under the long shadow of the Brexit referendum. Across the pond, Donald Trump is running for the presidency of the United States. The world is



COVER ART: EARLY NOVEMBER TUNNEL BY DAVID HOCKNEY (2006)

changing, and changing in a way that's hard to understand, and the tools that are supposed to help make sense of this change are futile, if not complicit. At one instance, Elisabeth's mother says,

"I'm tired of the news. I'm tired of the way it makes things spectacular that aren't, and deals so simplistically with what's truly appalling. I'm tired of the vitriol. I'm tired of the anger. I'm tired of the meanness. I'm tired of the selfishness. I'm tired of how we're doing nothing to stop it. I'm tired of how we're encouraging it. I'm tired of the violence there is and I'm tired of the violence that's on its way, that's coming, that hasn't happened yet. I'm tired of liars. I'm tired of sanctified liars. I'm tired of how those liars have let this happen. I'm tired of having to wonder whether they did it out of stupidity or did it on purpose. I'm tired of lying government. I'm tired of people not caring whether they're being lied to any more. I'm tired of being made to feel this fearful. I'm tired of animosity. I'm tired of pusillanimosity."

If *Autumn* is about anything, it is the banality of daily life, which increasingly

seems to be the grand subject of contemporary fiction. But what sets Smith apart from the likes of Karl Ove Knausgaard, Rachel Cusk, and Deborah Levy in their shared chronicling of late stage capitalism is her interest in outside forces. The external world is explored through the characters' interiority. Elisabeth's kafkaesque experience with bureaucracy is a prime example of how major political events change minute details.

But Smith's vision for the world in this novel also includes tenderness as a response to cynicism. Her omnipresent narrator is able to negotiate the difficult with real vulnerability. A fearful Daniel, at one point in the novel, is contemplating the afterlife: "He has made something, something of himself. His mother would be pleased at last. Oh God. Is there still mother after death?"

Certainly a grim topic to think about in a rather grim setting, but in Smith's prose it becomes a wondrous and exuberant moment. It's not Daniel's mother, or the mother. It's just mothers. She invites the reader, at least yours truly, to think about death and what and who remains with them afterwards, from a fresh perspective.

Minhaz Muhammad is a contributor.

8 | The Baily Star



LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, ASHWIN 8, 1428 BS

Lost in the la-la land of Bangladesh e-commerce

We must not allow rogue firms to continue victimising customers and investors

THEN e-commerce firms first began to spring up in Bangladesh over 10 years ago, they were hailed as a positive development—a crucial part of the vision for Digital Bangladesh. However, a complete lack of oversight and the absence of a standardised set of regulations meant that these firms were allowed to operate as they please, culminating in the rise of rogue companies that exploited unsuspecting customers and investors, and expropriated their money

Why was this sorry state of affairs allowed to come about? In all these years, why did the government not feel the urgency to come up with a definitive e-commerce policy, or assign a regulatory body for the fast-growing industry? While we have a national digital commerce policy, it was not until July this year that the commerce ministry came up with the standard operating procedure and guidelines. To this day, an e-commerce regulatory authority does not exist in Bangladesh, despite the fact that its formation is mandated in the policy. An e-commerce cell within the commerce ministry was only formed in February this year—about six to eight months after the complaints began to pour in against Evaly, which owes over Tk 1,000 crore in liabilities.

What's even more shocking is that, even after allegations against Evaly surfaced last year, and a multipronged investigation was initiated by several government agencies, the company was allowed to continue its operations and ensnare many more customers and vendors. Not only was there a significant delay in holding Evaly accountable, new players with similar strategieslike Dhamaka Shopping, which did not even have a permit from the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms—were allowed to begin operations as well.

It's truly frustrating that, when questioned on these disastrous decisions, the relevant government agencies, instead of taking responsibility for their oversights, seem to be engaging in a blame game. Some of them have also suggested that the onus lies on the customers to protect their interests, and that when complaints are made, they are investigated accordingly. If that is the case, how were these firms still allowed to continue operating, even after the complaints poured in?

There is no denying the fact that the relevant government agencies have failed to carry out their duties responsibly, and their laxity created immense sufferings for customers and investors who became prey to these rogue companies. If these firms are not held to account, there will be a significant dip in trust in the e-commerce sector, which will ultimately have economic

The consequences for the victims of these firms will be far graver if they are not compensated for their losses. We urge the government to immediately ensure that justice is served, and in the long term, to set up a commission with representation from all relevant stakeholders to ensure smooth functioning of the e-commerce industry, within a standardised set of rules and regulations that protect the rights of customers and investors.

Save our schools from the rivers

Help all at-risk schools to rebuild or relocate to ensure learning continuity

■ ROSION is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh, particularly in its northeastern region, where much ✓ of the annual flooding occurs. The question, thus, is why this is not factored into the plans of our authorities, when they approve construction of permanent structures in areas that are prone to river erosion. We broach this issue because, according to a report in this daily, 11 primary schools in the districts of Kurigram and Lalmonirhat were recently washed away by the Teesta and Dharla rivers. As a result, classes are now being conducted in makeshift tin-shed structures. Needless to say, such structures lack the basic facilities of a school and are not conducive to conducting classes. Both students and teachers face considerable distress in the schools. One can imagine the dismay of these students, who, after a break of more than a year and a half due to the Covid-19 pandemic, went back to their schools—only to find them devoured by the river.

While the locals and the teachers of the respective schools deserve our compliments for taking the initiative to raise funds and put up the tin-shed classrooms for temporary schooling, we wonder why the administration is absent in it. One would have expected that the primary education officers of the districts would come forward with not only resources and manpower for construction, but also suitable plots of khas land for the temporary schools.

That being the case, the more important aspect of the issue is: What should be done to ensure that education is not disrupted during emergencies such as floods, cyclones, and erosion? It's worth noting here that, while other areas of post-disaster mitigation action have received attention, the issue of children's access to education in the midst of a disaster or after a disaster has not been adequately addressed. The local authorities need to consider the problem of erosion and keep it in mind while selecting spots for construction of school buildings.

We also suggest that the government initiates an emergency education support system, so that schools in the areas vulnerable to erosion or other natural phenomena can rebuild or relocate when such disasters occur, without having to worry about funds or continuation of their activities. Responsible sections of society can also join such an initiative. That would, hopefully, lessen the distress that students face following such accidents.

Time to address the growing wealth gap in Bangladesh

Urban poverty and national inequality are two issues that demand our immediate attention





N a recent report, the World Bank stated that better targeted social protection programmes and reallocation of existing transfers to the poorest segment of society could reduce poverty from 36

percent to 12 percent in Bangladesh. The report, unveiled on September 16, 2021, found that the government's social safety net programmes were mostly focused on rural areas, even though almost one in five of the urban population is currently living in poverty. As a result, the World Bank report advised the government to rebalance geographic allocations between rural and urban areas.

The pandemic-induced lockdowns and resultant economic slowdown over the past year and a half have undoubtedly pushed many people into poverty. According

during the pandemic, over three percent of the labour force lost jobs, while 16.8 million people became newly poor. Around 69 percent of the employed population in urban areas have been put in the high-risk group by pandemicrelated factors. Among them, the most affected groups were the labourers in urban areas who were engaged in construction, informal services, rickshaw-pulling, and launch- and boat-driving. Self-employed people like street vendors, hawkers, tea sellers, food stall owners and repairmen were also among the worst-hit. The urban informal sector lost about 1.08 million jobs, which was over eight percent of the total urban employment during FY 2016-17. Moreover, workers' wages declined by 43 percent in Dhaka and 33 percent in Chattogram.

The increase in unemployment forced people to reduce their expenditure on food, according to the findings of the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and the Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD). The food



The economic slowdown due to Covid-19 has further widened the gap between the rich and the poor in Bangladesh, while pushing a significant number of people below the poverty line. ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

to several studies done by various organisations, the number of poor and extreme poor have risen significantly although the figures vary. A survey done by the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem) found that a person living below the poverty line in the rural areas would be spending less than Tk 2,260 to Tk 2,916, while in the urban areas, it ranged between Tk 2,516 and Tk 3,295, because of higher living costs.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) conducted a study, which revealed that

that was surveyed declined by 17 percent from the pre-Covid stage, when it was Tk 66 per day, while, surprisingly, the food expenditure in rural areas increased by Tk 1 to Tk 53. The decline could have long-term health implications for the urban poor.

The PPRC-BIGD survey also revealed that, for urban slum households, the significant increase in rent, utility, health, and transportation costs accounted for a 98 percent rise in the non-food burden for this group. Unable to cope with the crisis, 27.3 percent of urban slum dwellers had to migrate over the past year, and 9.8 percent of them had not yet returned.

While all these happened, the planning minister in May announced that the per capita income in the country had increased by nine percent—from USD 2,064 in FY 20 to USD 2,227 in the FY 21. This increase in per capita income at a time when a large number of people have fallen below the poverty threshold—because of the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic—suggests a growing gap

> Covid-19 has not only exposed widespread corruption in the healthcare sector, but also created new opportunities for it.

between the rich and the poor.

The disparity between the rich and the poor has widened because of an unequal distribution of economic growth benefits, and because of a development model that has made Bangladesh one of the top countries for the quickest growth of ultrawealthy individuals. According to data from the Bangladesh Bank, accounts with more than Tk 1 crore went up by 10,051, and deposits in such accounts rose to Tk 5,95,286 crore in 2020 from Tk 5,67,585 crore in 2019.

Even during the pandemic, we have seen big businesses getting substantial government support, while small businesses have continually struggled to get their share. Moreover, government aid programmes, which were intended to bring relief to the poor, have been repeatedly abused by people in power to further enrich themselves.

According to a Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) survey, the pandemic has not only exposed widespread corruption in the healthcare sector, but also created new opportunities for corruption in the country. For example, in the case of just one government relief programme, each affected family who were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the system had to pay an average bribe of Tk 220 to get a cash assistance of Tk 2,500. In addition, over 12 percent of the beneficiaries for government cash assistance were victims of irregularities and corruption, while 10 percent of Open Market Sales (OMS) card holders faced the same, according to the TIB findings.

Towards the beginning of this crisis, many government authorities claimed that the increase in the number of new poor was only "temporary." However, more than one year into the crisis, we see that a large number of people who went below the poverty line are yet to come out of it. Some top government officials have even gone on record to deny the poverty figures compiled by various independent organisations, while failing to collect or show their own data as evidence. This shows how little they care about the plight of the poor, as acknowledging it may prove the inadequacy of their own efforts and require them to take corrective action.

The government claims that it has spent more than three percent of the national budget as a percentage of GDP on social protection. However, if we focus only on poverty alleviation, that figure comes down to less than one percent. Therefore, in reality, pro-poor support from the government has not been sufficient to compensate for the losses incurred.

Returning to the World Bank's suggestion of rebalancing geographic allocations, we see that there is actually no need to rebalance between rural and urban areas. However, there has been a need to rebalance between the rich and the poor for a long time, but very few institutional steps have been taken to this end. It is here that government policy must change, and government rhetoric and action must match.

In the short run, it will require the government to increase its allocation for poverty alleviation and make social safety net programmes more impactful through better targeting (so that the most at-risk groups are prioritised), fast-tracking cash deployment and, equally importantly, by addressing corruption. Involving the local community could also make a huge difference. In line with that, the government should opt for a more bottomup approach, instead of its usual top-down outlook. The government could also involve civil society members and NGOs in its relief programmes to reduce corruption in their delivery.

In the long run, development has to be more inclusive. And for that, there has to be some serious restructuring when it comes to the state and how it functions. Unfortunately, given our deeply politicised structure of governance, with its poor accountability mechanisms, that could be a huge challenge. Overcoming this will require a massive pushback from the citizens demanding greater accountability and greater reforms in how anti-poverty policies are made and pursued.

Eresh Omar Jamal is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. His Twitter handle is: @EreshOmarJamal

Learning recovery is a long battle but we must keep at it



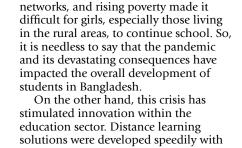
⊢ if looked beyond its conventional boundaries, forms the very essence of all our actions. The necessity of education cannot be overstated it is not just a fundamental right, but an

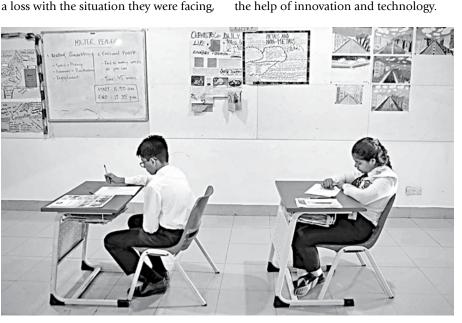
enabling right with a direct impact on the realisation of other human rights. Education is the primary driver of progress across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a bedrock of an equal and peaceful society.

But the Covid-19 pandemic has compelled us to compromise on education. It has presented unprecedented global challenges to the schooling system, and Bangladesh has been no exception. According to a UN report issued in August, Bangladesh was the only country in South Asia and one of only 14 in the world that kept schools fully closed since March 2020—when the disease was first detected in the country— to curb the spread of the coronavirus, until the government decided to reopen schools in phases from September 12.

Last year, with the rise of the novel coronavirus, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an international public health emergency. Due to its high infection rate, countries worldwide, including Bangladesh, implemented lockdowns with the hope of flattening the curve. With schools, colleges and universities closed, nearly 38 million students in the country missed out on the opportunity to receive learning experiences and interact with their peers, according to a World Bank report released in April this year. Apart from the devastating health consequences associated with the virus, the pandemic holds major implications for the students' lives and work, affecting them profoundly.

The disruption in education has continued to have substantial effects beyond learning. The outbreak impacted the students' health and economic situation, as well as their mental and psychosocial well-being. Due to the lockdowns and movement restrictions, students had constrained access to socialisation, human interaction, and physical contact, which is vital for their psychosocial well-being and development. Therefore, studentsespecially children—felt confused and at a loss with the situation they were facing,





The long closure of educational institutions has had an adverse effect on the mental and social well-being of the students in Bangladesh. FILE PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

leading to frustration and anxiety. This situation could potentially get worse with overexposure to mass and social media, mainly among adolescents.

Closure of educational institutions also exacerbated pre-existing education disparities among the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults by reducing the available opportunities—such as those living in rural or poverty-stricken areas, girls, people with disabilities, and forcibly displaced persons who find it difficult to continue their education. Moreover, shuttered schools, isolation from support

However, the solutions have also demonstrated that the promising future of learning and the accelerated changes in modes of delivering education cannot be executed without leaving anyone behind. For example, students affected by a lack of resources or a proper environment to access learning faced major challenges during the closure of schools. The digital divide is likely to decrease with physical classes resuming again.

As schools are reopening, providing face-to-face classes alone is not enough to mitigate the losses caused by the deadly

virus. Our students require a tailored and sustainable support system to help them readjust and catch up, eventually embracing the new normal. Schools must prepare to deliver that support and meet the enormous challenges of the months

Most children have lost considerable instruction time and may not be prepared to adjust to the curriculum and syllabus that were age and grade-appropriate before the pandemic. Students must receive effective remedial learning and comprehensive learning services that will improve their overall welfare, and meet their learning requirements.

Apart from that, reducing additional dropouts and absenteeism should be given the highest priority via communication campaigns and stipends. Stipends will help bring and retain students from underprivileged families, while campaigns designed for communications through different mediums will play a significant role in ensuring that learning continues amid the

Parents, educational institutions, and teachers must join forces together to take all necessary steps possible to plan, prioritise, and ensure that all students are learning again. Incorporating digital technologies to teach foundation skills could assist teachers in the classroom to gradually phase out the distance learning chapter of the students' lives. We should make it our priority to enable a supportive learning environment, which also addresses students' health, psychosocial well-being, and other needs.

When education systems collapse, a peaceful and prosperous society cannot oe sustained. The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly hampered the education system and the entire student body. However, with schools reopening, we have the opportunity to create a sustainable and robust education system that will potentially kick-start the process to recover from losses induced by the pandemic.

Thomas Van der Wielen is the director of International

As climate change worsens, riparian management holds the key to our survival



cyclones, flooding, riverbank erosion, salinity intrusion, and increased waterlogging are among the typical climateinduced adversities affecting Bangladesh. Addressing these issues requires establishing

a link among adapting to climate changes, improving community livelihood, and sustaining biodiversity and ecosystems. However, relevant adaptation plans and projects often concentrate on one or two social or ecological issues, instead of looking at the overall situation. Such an approach is insufficient to deal with climate-induced socioecological problems. One way to effectively address multiple socioecological issues—all at the same time—is to advance riparian management. It will also help to make the country green—a call made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the inauguration ceremony of the National Tree Plantation Campaign 2021. Hence our national adaptation and biodiversity conservation plans need to have a focus on riparian management.

To understand riparian management, let me clarify that the areas around the vast networks of rivers, canals, and streams that crisscross Bangladesh are riparian habitats. Riparian vegetation filters sediments and pollutants. The fallen leaves and litter from riparian plants support healthy aquatic communities, including shrimp and fish. The roots of riparian vegetation hold the soil tight, protect the river and canal banks from erosion, and provide the muchneeded river and canal bank stability. We have witnessed the collapse of many coastal embankments during Cyclone Yaas. What did not get much attention was the fact that most of the collapsing dams had little or no riparian vegetation, making those embankments inherently fragile. Meanwhile, many plants and wildlife species—including mosses, amphibians, and reptiles-live primarily in the land-water interfaces. So, riparian management should help conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services essential for climate change adaptation.

Globally, riparian habitats are treated as areas of ecological significance. The relevant authorities in many environmentally sensitive countries often maintain a 30- to 100-metrewide belt of intact vegetation around water bodies. Unfortunately, the idea of riparian management has yet to take proper hold in Bangladesh—a significant gap in our nature management or climate change adaptation planning. Although we lack hard statistics regarding the extent of the loss of our riparian ecosystem, there are plenty of reports regarding the encroachment of river and canal banks and the clearing of vegetation around water bodies. A recent report by the UNDP Bangladesh also shows a significant loss of riparian mangroves in selected southwestern coastal districts. All these reports imply that our riparian ecosystems and biodiversity are in grave danger.

That being said, the government's current

The effectiveness of riparian management towards tackling complex socioecological issues, including climate change adaptation, has been proven scientifically and are preferred by local communities worldwide.



Proper riparian management and restoration of riparian vegetation will not only help prevent river erosion, but will aid in tackling climate change as well. PHOTO: UNDP

initiative to restore the congested rivers and canals is praiseworthy. However, past experiences suggest that many restored rivers and canals are likely to return to their previous congested conditions within a few years. Establishing riparian plantations around the rivers and canals is likely to minimise river or canal congestion, as riparian vegetation traps sediment. Moreover, riparian vegetation can also reduce river or canal bank erosion by holding the soil tightly.

The effectiveness of riparian management towards tackling complex socioecological issues, including climate change adaptation, has been proven scientifically and are preferred by local communities worldwide. Local communities in some southwestern districts in Bangladesh are also raising riparian mangroves along the riverbanks as a second line of defence against

natural disasters and collapsing coastal embankments. We need to capitalise on these community-led initiatives to restore the degraded riparian vegetation, and create new plantations around rivers, canals, or water

Since rivers and canals are spread all over the country, effective riparian management would also spread greenness and simultaneously make the country climate-resilient. However, one should not confuse riparian management with a one-time tree planting programme around dams. We need to designate at least 30-100 metres of buffer zones around water bodies, and keep the buffer zones undisturbed and managed by local communities. Our vast experience in social forestry can be handy in designing a community-based riparian management model that can offer climate resilience and community livelihood. We

must keep in mind that the engagement of local communities and providing them with livelihood diversification opportunities are mandatory for the success of riparian management.

One underlying challenge in this regard is the lack of policy guidance. However, Section 18(A) of our constitution calls for the protection of wetlands and biodiversity. Relevant authorities need to specify policies to safeguard our riparian ecosystems and integrate them into land and water management plans. Although the Forest Department under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change is responsible for managing vegetation, the Ministry of Land and the Ministry of Water Resources have jurisdiction over riparian habitat as well. Inter-ministerial coordination is, thus, essential.

We should not forget that the Bay of Bengal sea level rises by 0.6-2 cm per year due to global warming. Riverbank erosion has been increasing over the past two decades as well. Areas vulnerable to cyclone and tidal surge-related hazards in Bangladesh will increase by 13.8 percent by 2050. A 30cm increase in the Bay of Bengal sea level will lead to the sinking of about 5.4 percent land area in the country. The intrusion of saline water into agricultural lands, increasing land erosion, loss of biodiversity, and displacement of people are expected to

Our preparedness to adapt to those situations is the key to our survival and development. To that end, the Bangladesh government, in partnership with UNDP, is currently updating its National Adaptation Plan. I sincerely hope that our national adaptation and conservation plans focus on riparian ecosystems and utilise green ingredients to save the people, nature, and biodiversity of the country from natural disasters, and build a greener Bangladesh in the process.

Shekhar R Biswas is a professor of ecology at East China

PROJECT **■** SYNDICATE

The corporate capture of the UN food summit



is at the core of the protests. South Africa

Growing hunger is creating volatility in

social and economic impact of the Covid-19

pandemic and the climate crisis. According to

recent United Nations figures, the pandemic

has increased the number of hungry people by

as many as 161 million—to 811 million. Nearly

one in three people—almost 2.4 billion—lack

Given the lack of progress towards ending

global hunger and malnutrition by 2030,

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will

York today. The meeting has been billed as an

opportunity to discuss bold new measures that

convene the Food Systems Summit in New

will transform the way the world produces,

But the summit has been marred by

controversy from the outset, largely owing to

the influence of corporate interests in framing

the agenda in what critics have described as an

attempt to privatise decision-making. The UN

set the pre-summit agenda in partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF), placing key

corporate players in leading roles. For example,

the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

(GAIN), a Swiss-based foundation, leads the

consumes, and thinks about food.

many countries, compounding the devastating

experienced similar turmoil in July.

access to adequate nutrition.

up and down the

summit's work on eradicating hunger. One of visited my parents in GAIN's donors is the pesticide producer BASF, which seeks to portray itself as a "Food Systems Bogota last month, UN human rights experts have been I witnessed how people in their neighbourhood went

damning in their criticism of the process, which has sidelined the UN's Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Discussions at the streets begging for help CFS include hundreds of representatives of to survive. Since the smallholder farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous people, and civil society groups. Michael end of April, Colombia has experienced one Fakhri, the UN special rapporteur on the of its biggest waves right to food, has echoed the complaints of of social unrest in recent times—and hunger grassroots farming groups—more than 500 of

which are boycotting the summit—likening the corporations' excessive influence over the gathering to "inviting the fox right into the

Smallholder farmers, peasants, fisherfolk, pastoralists, and indigenous people feed most of the world's population with little or no access to corporate supply chains. About 80 percent of farms are smaller than two hectares, and cover about 12 percent of the world's farmland, while the largest one percent of agribusiness farms control more than 70 percent of farmland.

Transnational corporations have a clear



World leaders must focus on ending the corporate capture of food and promoting a transition to agroecology to tackle global hunger. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

conflict of interest when it comes to preventing land grabbing, malnutrition, tax avoidance, and pesticide overuse. The same is true of addressing demands for a move away from intensive farming and towards more socially equitable, resilient, and sustainable agroecology. Because these firms are accountable to their shareholders, profit is a more important interest than protection of the common good. But food is a common good, and access to it is a fundamental human right. That is where discussions should begin.

The increasing corporate capture of food should concern us all. If left unchecked, we will face a grim future where a handful of large firms will control what we eat and how it is produced. The increased consumption of ultra-processed edible products—a major contributor to the pandemic of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and related diseases—exemplifies the danger.

This corporate takeover reflects the belief that large agribusinesses are essential for providing food, have interests aligned with those of the public, and are better equipped than governments and civil society to set the rules and policies that shape our food systems. It allows corporations to expand their control of land, water, and fisheries, quasi-monopolise commercial seeds, and use pesticides and chemical fertilisers intensively, while failing to recognise—much less address—the attendant harms. Permitting this outlook to dominate major international forums like the UN Food Systems Summit will further undermine democracy and self-determination.

Consider pesticides. Despite the harm they cause—including the poisoning of agricultural workers and rural communities, increased pollution, and decreased soil biodiversity—their use has soared in recent decades. Manufacturers market these products aggressively and deny the extent of the damage they cause, insisting that they are safe if

used properly. The industry also claims that pesticides are necessary to meet the food needs of a growing population, especially in the context of climate change.

Brazil is a case in point. Between March 2020 and May 2021, the government extended tax exemptions on commercial pesticides and approved 613 new products—even though the country was already a world leader in pesticide use. President Jair Bolsonaro wants to increase industrial production of agricultural commodities for export, despite the lethal consequences this will have for Brazil's ecosystems and people.

Likewise, transnational corporations will not save Colombians protesting about hunger or malnutrition. These people need a government capable of taxing large firms properly in order to generate enough revenue to sustain a robust social safety net. And they need a government determined to reverse the extreme inequality in access to land that disadvantages peasants, afrodescendants, and indigenous people.

Instead of looking to global corporations to solve the growing hunger and malnutrition crisis, the UN and national governments must end the corporate capture of food and promote a transition to agroecology. They should start by ensuring that multinational firms pay their fair share of taxes, and are held accountable for the environmental and human rights consequences of their activities.

In 1948, the UN recognised that food is a human right. Sadly, the UN summit is more likely to feed corporate profits than provide hope to hundreds of millions of hungry people.

Sofia Monsalve, secretary-general of FIAN International, is a member of the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems.

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(Exclusive to The Daily Star)

QUOTABLE



JAMES BALDWIN (1924 - 1987)American novelist

It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Farm sight 5 Barber-shop offering 10 Reclined 11 Hot, in a way 12 Fairy tale monster 13 Lamented loudly 14 Arrogant folks 16 Kitchen appliances 20 Parade site 23 Compete 24 Pens for hens

25 Constructed

27 Radius setting

28 Popular trees

29 Poultry buys

32 Table protectors 15 Low digits 36 Big lummox 39 Region 40 Brings to bear 41 Fight site 42 Prom crowd 43 Head, to Henri

DOWN 1 Messy person 2 Othello's betrayer 3 Old Italian coin

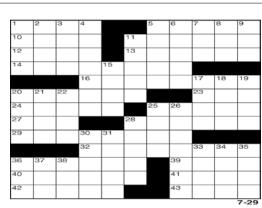
4 Easy dance 5 Flag features 6 Raise 7 Completely 8 Neckline shape 9 Finale 11 Work byproduct 38 Sheltered side

17 Diabolical 18 Irritate 19 Collections 20 Wound remnant 21 Matador's foe 22 Capital of Italia 25 Cell feature 26 Parvenu 28 Ham and lamb

30 Ridicule 31 Horn output 33 Lake near Buffalo

34 Monthly bill 35 Cook's mint 36 Attain 37 Fire

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



TUESDAY'S ANSWERS

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BEETLE BAILEY





BABY BLUES

BY MORT WALKER



Pakstani soldiers continue

parties such as the Moslem League and homes and villages and people who had helped the guerrillas.

BANGALEE EMPLOYEE ESCAPES PAKISTAN CHANCERY

high commission in New Delhi, SM Nurul Huda, today made a daring escape when he scaled the chancery wall to free himself from confinement in his official residence.

Shortly after his escape from what he described as prison life, Huda, 27, contacted the Bangladesh mission to declare his allegiance to the "legitimate government of my motherland". He was attached to the high commission as a supervisor in the telephone exchange. When he met newsmen later, he betrayed his concern for his wife now in Bangladesh.

armed West Pakistani guards inside our quarters. But I had no choice; I just could not bear it any more. I

period would start," he said, wishing

In 2010, the government decided to

But it changed the decision in 2014

The authorities then made more

lay a 128-kilometre metre gauge rail

track to link Chattogram with Cox's

and decided to go for a dual gauge

track for better connectivity, raising the

changes as they shelved plans of the

first phase to construct the track up to

Gundum, near the Myanmar border,

in April, 2016, the deadline was set at

June 2022, and, after a lot of hurdles,

the construction work for the track

from Dohazari of Chattogram to Ramu

This is one of the eight fast track

projects. This project is jointly

funded by the government and Asian

minister expressed hope that Cox's

Bazar will come under the rail network

at the Cox's Bazar end and said the rail

line would be open on December 16

next year, said a press release issued

The deadline of the project is June

next year but the pandemic-related

problems and delay in getting lands

from some government agencies have

delayed the project implementation,

has been set in December next year,

deferring the deadline for six months,"

the press release quoted the minister as

This 100-km single line dual-gauge

rail line is a part of the Trans-Asian

Railway. "If Myanmar constructs a

rail line up to Gundum in future, we

minister visited

construction station at Cox's Bazar and

a part of embankment where around

6km of the line have already been

"So, the date to inaugurate the line

In March this year, the railways

Yesterday, he visited the project site

started in March 2018.

Development Bank.

within December 2022

from his ministry.

he added.

After the first revision of the project

cost tenfolds to Tk 18,034.47 crore.

from Ramu, due to fund shortages.

Bazar at a cost of Tk 1,852.35 crore.

appeal to you to rescue my colleagues who are being treated like prisoners

He added that Bangalee employees in the Pakistan high commission had been held as hostages and were being subjected to all kinds of indignities. ON THE WAR FRONT

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini raided Pakistani troops near Khanpur, killing three enemy soldiers and injuring two others. In another operation, Mukti Bahini ambushed a mixed patrol of Pakistani troops and Razakars near Hilli-Panchbibi area killing six soldiers and two Razakars. Another group of Bangladeshi guerillas fired on Pakistani troops near Karia and

In the Mymensingh-Sylhet sector, one boat carrying Pakistani troops was sunk by Mukti Bahini while attempting to cross near Lubhachra. In this operation, they killed 10 enemy

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

Room for free speech online shrunk

and physically assaulted internet users and conducted technical attacks on the internet.

Bangladesh was classified as 'partly-free" both in 2019 and 2018. In those two years, it had scored 44 and 49 respectively.

According to the report, Bangladesh is one of the 38 countries where government authorities initiated legal or administrative reforms affecting tech companies' management of user

A new data protection bill proposed in October last year in Bangladesh would also require domestic data storage, said the report.

"Bangladesh's draft Data Protection Act includes data localisation and data mirroring provisions. It also includes extremely broad and far-reaching investigative powers, including the power to obtain access to all personal data and access to any premises," said the report.

It states that Bangladesh's 2020 draft National Cloud Policy includes explicit data localisation for all personal and government data.

"[According to the draft policy] transfers of data is only allowed for backup purposes, but only if the data doesn't include any personal

or sensitive data or data that is otherwise 'not detrimental to the security of Bangladesh and important infrastructure' and if the transfer is to a country where Bangladesh can fully enforce its laws through bilateral or multilateral agreements," pointed out the Freedom House report.

The report scores countries across three wide categories: obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights.

To score obstacles to access, the report looked at the infrastructural, economic, and political barriers to access; government decisions to shut off connectivity or block specific applications or technologies; legal, regulatory, and ownership control over internet service providers; and independence of regulatory bodies.

To assess how content is limited, the report examined legal regulations on content, technical filtering and blocking of websites, and how digital tools are used for civic mobilisation.

Violations of user rights examines legal protections and restrictions on free expression; surveillance and privacy; and legal and extralegal repercussions for online activities, such as prosecution, extralegal harassment and physical attacks, or

To score a country in this criteria, questions are asked such as whether there are criminal penalties on online activities protected under international human rights standards, and whether state surveillance of internet activities infringe on users' right to privacy.

Bangladesh was given the least possible scores in those two questions. It also fared extremely poorly in the question: "Do online journalists, commentators, and ordinary users practice self-censorship?"

The report said, "More governments have introduced problematic rules on removing users' speech from internet platforms. Some of the laws are designed to suppress content that is critical of the government, rather than protecting users from harmful

Other countries that scored in the same range as Bangladesh include Iraq and Rwanda.

"Democratic governments have an obligation to craft regulations that enable users to express themselves freely, share information across borders, and hold the powerful to account. Otherwise, new technologies may serve to reinforce and hasten democracy's global mentioned the report.

Uncontested wins, rebels bug AL

Experts and right bodies have recently slammed such polls saying this trend will leave a long-term negative impact on the country's democracy.

In a statement on Tuesday, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) said people's right to choose their representatives by casting votes has been curtailed and many "qualified" candidates have lost interest in taking part because of the trend of winning elections uncontested.

"It is an ominous sign for democracy," ASK said in the statement. Yesterday, Election Commissioner Mahbub Talukdar said in a multiparty democracy, it was expected that multiple political parties would join

"Finding out why competition is missing from elections and taking required steps to overcome it is extremely essential. Voters' apathy towards election is an ominous sign for democracy," he said.

In Monday's election to 160 union parishads, 43 chairman candidates were elected uncontested, which means around 29 percent contestants were elected without even getting a single vote.

It was the second and final part of the first phase of the UP polls. Results of four UP polls were withheld. Independent chairman aspirants

sealed victory in 36 unions, meaning they constituted 29 percent of the winning candidates in 113 unions, where poll results were available. Results in the rest four unions were suspended for various reasons, including violence.

Most of the victorious independent candidates were AL rebels.

AL insiders think giving party nomination to the wrong candidates, command in the party grassroots are bagged 4,849 votes.

the main reasons why many leaders In Gazirhut UP, AL candidate Kamal were contesting the polls ignoring the party's decision.

And those rebels gave AL candidates a tough time on Monday although no candidates were fielded by other major political parties like the BNP, they said. Joint General

Mahbubul Alam Hanif, however, thinks the dissidents were not a "big headache" for his party. "Earlier, local government polls

were not held in partisan manner. The partisan polls were introduced for the local government bodies in 2015 and many grassroots leaders have not yet become habituated with the new system. It will take some time," he told The Daily Star.

"But our party's tough stance against party rebels will remain the same in future," he warned.

Asked why many of the rebels were winning, the AL leader said, "They got votes of those who are against the ruling party. A section of Awami League's votes also went into their bags as those were cast by the supporters of the rebel candidates.'

On June 21, 204 union parishads went to polls in the first part of the UP polls' first phase. Forty-nine independent chairman candidates, mostly AL rebels, won while 28 were elected unopposed.

AL rebels proved their worth in some places in that election.

Take the example of Khulna's Dighalia. AL dissidents secured victory in five of the six UPs in the upazila. The party candidate won only in Barakpur

In Dighalia union, the AL candidate secured the third spot bagging 3,965 votes. AL dissident Haider Ali Morol

Uddin Siddique bagged 4,745 votes while AL rebel Mofizul Islam got 4,900

In Arongghata UP, AL candidate Mofizur Rahman got 2,896 votes while AL dissident Farid Akter got 3,453 votes. In Senhati UP, AL candidate Farzana Naznin got 6,395 votes while AL rebel bagged almost double votes

AL candidate Gazi Zakir Hossain secured 6,903 votes in Barakpur UP polls while party dissident Sheikh Ansar Uddin bagged 5,915 votes.

The highest number of independent candidates winning was from Satkhira. They won in 11 UPs while AL candidates in nine unions under two

Of the 11 independents, six were leaders from the ÂL, three from the BNP, one was from Jamaat-e-Islami and the other from Workers Party.

In Cox's Bazar, elections to 14 unions were held and results in two others were withheld. AL candidates won in six UPs, party rebels sealed victory in two while the other four chairman posts were won by leaders from the BNP.

Voting in 13 UPs in Subarnachar and Hatiya upazilas under Noakhali were held where nine AL candidates won while AL dissidents got elected in

In Bagerhat, voting was held in 65 UPs and 38 AL nominees won unopposed. Twenty-five AL candidates won while AL dissidents were elected as chairman in two unions.

In Chattogram, election to 12 UPs under Sandwip upazila was held. AL candidates won in 10 UPs while party rebels were elected in two, show polls

Registration, guidelines for IPTVs soon

Secretary Md Afzal Hossain and heads of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) and Press Information Department, among others, were present in the meeting.

"We are formulating some guidelines. In fact, our aim is to flourish the sector... We are working that broadcasting media can protect the interest of the country and materialise the dream of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

He said the meeting also discussed the OTT (Over the Top) platform policy and other new media. "We've

decided that registration for IPTV been completed. Other ministries, would be given soon. But, before this, a guideline would be completed for the sector," said Hasan, also Awami the sector, said rader, League joint general secretary.

Bangladesh" was achieved under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and directives of Premier's ICT Affairs Advisor Sajeeb Wazed Joy.

The ministry has already received about 600 applications, said the minister, adding, "Now, we have taken an initiative to give registration as scrutinies of many applications have

especially ICT and telecom, are also involved in the process.

Information and Broadcasting Ministry additional secretaries Md Mizan-ul-Alam and Khadiza Begum, PID principal information officer Md Shahenur Mia, BTCL managing director Dr Md Rafiqul Matin, BTRC director Lieutenant Colonel Reza, Information and Broadcasting Ministry joint secretary Md Abdus Sattar Sarker, deputy secretary Rozina Begum, and legal officer Md Saidur Rahman, among others, were present

46 go to the UAE on trial expatriates are waiting to re take measures in line with their work in the UAE.

under-

Covid-19 protocol. "In that case, the UAE authorities

might send the passenger into

isolation or quarantine. Sources at the Dhaka airport said the UAE will examine the standard operating procedure (SOP) of the respective healthcare facilities at the

If it approves the SOP, expatriate Bangladeshis will be able to return to their workplaces on a regular basis, added the source.

Sazzad said DMFR Molecular Lab and Diagnostic, one of the seven healthcare facilities permitted to set up labs at the HSIA, have so far installed a mobile lab to conduct Covid-19 test for UAE-bound passengers.

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

then, the expatriate Since Bangladeshis in UAE, who sent home about 10 percent of the \$24.8 billion of the remittance the country received in the last fiscal year, have country's three international airports.

35,000

General Hospital Morgue for autopsy.

superintendent of Patuakhali police,

said a three-member probe body was

The team would be headed by

Additional Superintendent of Police

Mahfuzur Rahman, he said, adding

that a separate probe body was also

A day earlier, members of

Banatibazar Naval Police Outpost, led

by ASI Mamun, chased the fishermen

formed by the district police.

formed by the naval police.

Mohammad

6 policemen withdrawn

Shahidullah,

expatriates are waiting to return to

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 6 instructed the ministries concerned and the Health Directorate to set up labs at the international airports in Dhaka, Chattogram and

facilities to set up labs at the HSIA.

The following day on September 16, Civil Aviation Authority of

The representatives argued that it would not be possible for them to set up labs in an open space due to various complications. CAAB, however, remained rigid on their stance.

On September 21, Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad and Health Minister Zahid Maleque said the venue designated by the CAAB is not suitable for setting up labs for

In the presence of top officials

Family under pressure to compromise

surgery kept on creating mental pressure

on us by making repeated phone calls. I do not want this; I only want justice.' Cleft palate problem is fairly

common among newborns. It is a condition whereby a child is born with an opening in the roof of the mouth, making it difficult for children to eat and speak as food and liquid go up through the opening into the nose instead of going down the throat into the stomach. For a child to be able to speak and

swallow normally, the palate needs to be surgically sealed off WHAT HAPPENED WITH AZAN

Sayem's son was one of the seven children who had cleft palate surgeries conducted by Dr BK Das Bijoy on August 22 at the hospital. It was part of a free campaign funded by a US-based

Dr Bijoy conducted the surgery on Azan from 2:30pm to 4:15pm, said Sayem and Tanzum. After the surgery, the unconscious

boy was kept in the post-operative ward, and was shifted to the general ward around 7:00pm.

"There was no doctor either in the post-operative ward or in the general ward. As our baby continued to have breathing difficulties, we took him to the operation theatre twice. Each time, the doctors, including Dr Bijoy, misbehaved with us," the parents alleged in their written complaint.

The duty nurse forced us to feed our unconscious baby medicine syrup, after which our baby's condition turned severe. But this time too, Dr Bijoy

rudely said this is not a problem and drove us from the operation theatre around 9:00pm. "After we took our baby back to the

general ward, he died around 10:00pm. "As our child had previous neurological complications, we showed all previous prescriptions and test reports to Dr Bijoy. But he said there is no link between the surgery and those issues.'

The family alleged that the admission date of their child has been mentioned in the death certificate as August 22, instead of August 21. In the death certificate, the cause

of death was written as "aspiration pneumonia", a lung infection caused by inhaled oral or gastric contents.

Dr Bijoy, however, told The Daily Star that the baby died after developing "laryngospasm", a spasm of the vocal cords that temporarily makes it difficult to speak or breathe. Laryngospasm typically lasts less

than 60 seconds, but in some cases can last up to 20 to 30 minutes and cause a partial blocking of breathing in, while breathing out remains easier, according to medical experts.

Three physicians, including a child specialist, told this correspondent that laryngospasm is not fatal while aspiration pneumonia can become serious if left untreated.

Laryngospasm aspiration pneumonia cannot lead to the death of any baby within several hours. There must be some associated reasons," Dr AKM Shafayat Lashkar, a child physician at Modern Hospital Shofipur in Gazipur, told The Daily Star.

Another child specialist, who works as an assistant professor at the National Cancer Institute Hospital in the capital,

There might be some other reasons behind the death of the baby. Maybe the baby was not fit for the surgery, but the anaesthesiologist was unaware of it," the physician told this newspaper, seeking anonymity.

Contacted on September 11, Dr Bijoy said, "I admit that the issue could have been handled differently if a doctor was present there [at the general ward] at the moment.

He, however, dismissed the allegation of misbehaving with the parents.

Talking to The Daily Star again on Sunday, Dr Bijoy said he has no idea about the phone calls from any other person to Sayem. About his repeated phone calls to Sayem, he said, "I have nothing but to offer condolences to them. That was my only purpose."

Contacted on Tuesday, Dr Golam Murshed Sumon, a director of Care hospital, declined to comment. "The issue is under investigation. We have no comment at this moment."

Meanwhile, the BMDC on September 9 issued a notice to Dr Bijoy asking a written explanation within 15 days.

Besides, the DGHS has directed state-owned Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital to investigate the issue and submit a report.

Dr Khalilur Rahman, director of Suhrawardy hospital told The Daily Star yesterday, "We have formed a committee earlier this week. They have been asked to submit the investigation report within 10 working days.

Third grader gets

FROM PAGE 12

and the mother tested Covid-19 positive on September 17. But we came to know about it on September 19 as the child did not join school after the first school day. The child is now doing well in home isolation, the headmaster added.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the student's mother said, "The child went to school on September 12. The following day, the child had a fever. I gave medicine after taking advice from local physician. Later, the child and had cough and fever. So we gave samples at the Upazila Health Complex on September 16 for Covid testing and got the results on September 17. We have been staying home since then." She said schoolteachers, the upazila

nirbahi officer and the upazila health and family planning officer had been in contact with them and they were providing all kinds of support to

According to school sources, it has total of 310 students. Of them, 58 are in class-III.

Due to the pandemic situation, the school now holds classes once a week for students of classes-I to -IV. For fifth graders, it arranges classes six days a

Assistant Teacher Arpita Mandal "We teach our students maintaining hygiene rules. There is no panic among the students and parents about coronavirus. Our school attendance rate is about 80 percent."

Sushanta Vaidya, Kotalipara apazila health and family planning officer, said they were monitoring the health of the infected student.

Kotalipara UNO Ferdous Wahid said all schools in the upazila were running their academic activities complying with health safety rules.

"We are constantly monitoring these schools. The body temperature of the students is being checked in every school every day. If any student is found showing Covid symptoms, he or she will be tested immediately," he added.

I'm scared

FROM PAGE 12

and Tarek. Sub-inspector Bellal Hossain, investigation officer of the case, said rejecting their bail prayers, the court

sent the three to jail. According to the case statement, the teen stopped his study due to poverty when he was a sixth grader and started learning and singing baul songs in different places with some bauls of his area. During his baul incarnation, he started wearing white dresses, including lungi and fatua, and grew

long hair. The accused became angry and threatened the teen. Besides, the accused also insulted other bauls who used to visit his house often. One day,

the teen protested it. On the night of September 18, five to seven people went to his house, woke him up and dragged him out of his house and shaved his head. They also threatened him with expulsion from the village, the teen said in the

case statement. He told this correspondent, "When I was screaming, they started beating me up. Later, locals came and saved me.'

He said in fear, he took shelter in another village that night.

The teen alleged that the attackers told him that "by wearing white dresses (dhuti) and lighting candles, you are becoming a Hindu and you have to be a Muslim again by reciting Kalema.

Contacted, Sirajul Islam, officerin-charge of Shibganj Police Station, said in primary interrogation, the three accused told them that the teen wears white dresses, lights candles and incenses which is against the Islam. Therefore, they wanted to give him a

Asked about the teen's fears, Tanvir Hasan, assistant superintendent of police (Shibganj circle), said they were taking steps.

Saarc FMs meet

FROM PAGE 12

representation in the government in Kabul. Saarc is the regional intergovernmental organisation of eight

countries of South Asia--Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. It is learnt that the majority of members in Saarc agreed that an empty

chair can be kept for Afghanistan during the meet. However, Pakistan did not agree and the meeting was called off. Saarc Secretariat told ANI that the

meeting was cancelled due to the lack of concurrence from all member states

US Space Force

FROM PAGE 12

"Every winning team needs a uniform! We started with the female design and then created the male prototype, wrote Chief of Space Operations General Jay Raymond. Launched officially in December

2019, the Space Force was organised to address challenges of fighting war in the exosphere, seen as a distinct theater from the air force.

Similar designs with diagonal outtons holding down breast flaps have been seen for centuries in European and American uniforms, and are donned with large amounts of braid by marching band drum majors today. But the designers for the Space Force

seemed aware of the sleeker uniforms seen in "Star Trek", "Battlestar Galactica" -- where uniforms also had the diagonal buttons -- and "Star Wars" Indeed, the force's service badge and

ogo are difficult to distinguish from that of the Starfleet Command from Star Trek.

Jamaat-e-Islami. The collaborators inside the chancery. acted as intelligence agents and enforcers for the army by pointing out

A Bangalee employee in the Pakistan

"I know it is a big risk dodging two

Trains to run from 2022

TWO-YEAR TIME EXTENSION

The project authorities, citing different problems, wrote to the BR requesting an extension of the deadline to June

2024 without raising the project cost. The BR then forwarded the revision proposal to the railways ministry on August 23 and the ministry on August 31 said it would take further steps and hold necessary meetings, BR sources

The project authorities cited delay in land acquisition, giving compensation to the land owners, getting lands from several government agencies, shifting electricity poles from project sites, and lately the Covid-19 pandemic as reasons behind seeking time extension,

Áround 1,365 acres of land was acquired in Chattogram and Cox's

Bazar for the project. But the project authorities could not hand over the land to the contractors as the acquisition could not be completed in time and thus, the expected target for civil work could not be achieved,

read a project document. Most of the land was handed over to the contractor in late 2018 and some land in early 2019, so additional time is necessary to implement the project. Moreover, the project authorities

faced different types of problem to get

control of the land, and the district

administration, due to filing of cases and manpower shortages, could not complete giving compensation to land Project implementation faced major hurdlés and four inter-ministerial

meetings were held to shift electricity

poles of different power agencies. The shifting has not yet been completed and the contractors cannot do their work without hassles, and thus additional time is required, read the

The project work remained suspended for around one and half

will build a line up to that point," the months last year due to the pandemic. absence of Chinese nationals working for the contractors. Covid-induced Besides, the

lockdown delayed transportation of

imported goods at project sites.

Sylhet within two to three days. The expatriates' welfare ministry on September 15 announced that on the basis of the recommendations made by the Health Directorate, it has given permission to seven healthcare

Bangladesh (CAAB) at a meeting asked the representatives of the seven organisations to set up their labs at the rooftop of the two-storey car park building at the Dhaka airport.

of Prime Minister's Office, the two been demanding test facilities at the ministers in a new decision said labs will now be set up temporarily inside Bangladeshi the airport.

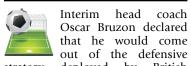
> and his trawler on the Ramnabad Later, Sujan was beaten by the naval police, alleged locals.

> At one point, Sujan fell unconscious on the trawler net. News spread that Sujan had

died. Hundreds of agitated people, including fishermen, confined policemen with their trawler. Unconscious Sujan was taken to

Kalapara Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead.

Bruzon sets sights on SAFF final



out of the defensive deployed by British coach Jamie Day in the upcoming SAFF Championship, which gets underway on October 1 in Maldives.

Spanish coach was introduced before the media yesterday, five days after the announcement of his appointment in place of Jamie, who left

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Anisur Rahman, Shahidul Alam, Ashraful Islam Rana

Defenders: Bishwanath Ghosh, Topu Barman, Tariq Kazi, Tutul Hossain Badsha, Rahmat Mia, Riyadul Hasan, Yeasin Arafat, Atikuzzaman, Mehedi Hasan, Razaul Karim, Mohammad Hridoy

Midfielders: Atiqur Rahman Fahad, Sohel Rana, Saad Uddin, Manik Hossain Molla, Jamal Bhuiyan (C), Rakib Hossain

Forwards: Biplo Ahamed, Mahbuibur Rahman Sufil, Mohammad Ibrahim, Eleta Kingsley, Matin Miah, Jewel Rana, Suman Reza

defend title

Hockey Stadium yesterday.

few hundred supporters.

"Our squad will fight

to defend the title. After

retaining the service of

senior players, we also

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending

Koushik,



Bangladesh yesterday morning.

The 44-year-old coach disclosed a 26-member preliminary squad with the inclusion of Nigerianborn Bangladeshi Eleta Kingsley, who is still waiting for clearance from FIFA and AFC to represent Bangladesh. Later in the day, Abahani's young defender Mohammad Hridoy was added to the squad, making it a 27-member

Abahani winger Jewel Rana, who was ignored by Day despite his brilliant performance in the Bangladesh Premier League, was recalled by Bruzon. Alongside Suman Raza, Rana was the top

the league.

Apart from Jewel, defender Tutul Hossain Badsha, goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana, defensive midfielders Atiqur Rahman Fahad and Manik Hossain Molla were also recalled in the preliminary squad, which will be trimmed to 23 members before national team fly out for Male on September 28.

Of the 23-member final squad that played the Three Nations Cup in Kyrgyzstan earlier this month, goalkeeper Mitul Marma, midfielders Rahbar Wahed Khan and Tahmid Islam were dropped while 20 others were picked by Bruzon, who has set his sights scorer among the local players in on reaching the final of the SAFF

Championship.
"I told my club that I am a winner and play to win, not to avoid world number one, or to play defensive, or to play scared. The reality is that all of us are thinking of the possibility of going well. I am here to play in the final of the SAFF Championship. So I am not going to hide it," Bruzon said during his presentation at the Bangladesh Football Federation headquarters.

"We are going to play with a 4-3-3 formation which is the continuation of what we played for Bashundhara Kings. All of the players know about the formation and I feel the players are going to gel as quickly as possible," Bruzon added.

"Regarding the rivals, the reality is that we are the second bottom team of the tournament and are ahead of Sri Lanka and we can win against Sri Lanka. The reality is Maldives and Nepal can beat us, draw us and we can also beat them, so we are going to do what is possible to beat them. India is a higher ranked side and let's see what happens against them," said Bruzon, who also picked all his coaching staff of Bashundhara Kings alongside the national team's fitness trainer Ivan Razlog.

'I play to win, not to avoid defeat'

Following a frenetic ascension to the head coach's role of the Bangladesh national football team on an interim basis, Oscar Bruzon met the media at the BFF House on Wednesday, speaking about challenges and expectations at the SAFF Championship as well as his football philosophy. The salient excerpts from that press conference are below:



ON HIS PHILOSOPHY: Usually when you see a game of the national team, you see a team trying not to concede goals, but we're going to change that. I am fully confident and I don't feel pressure. What we're going to do is continue the work that we're doing at the club [Bashundhara Kings]. I have the advantage of having 10 players from the Bashundhara team [in the national team] who totally understand our style and methodology.

If I am here, it's because everyone around me think that things can change. Things may work or may not but at this point, I say it is going to work. I play to win, not to avoid defeat or play defensively. I am here to play

Tactically I am very calm and the players will adjust to the work I have been doing for the last 13 months at our club. We're not losers. We're not coming into the pitch to know how many goals we're going to concede. If we can play high block, we will try to play it. I am not going to be suicidal. In one week, we can't change football. I am not a magician. If we think these changes are automatically going to bring success, we are wrong. But if we think these changes are going to bring determination, confidence and something new to the national team, that is going to happen.

We will go with a 4-3-3 formation to our players and doing a good job. He ran give continuity to what we have done at into some troubles in recent months and going to adjust quickly because some have played against Bashundhara. We're going to challenge them through training sessions. I feel we're already in the competition

period. Physically there's nothing else to work on. Let's see what happens in 50-50 games when we play team ranked higher than us. We're initially going to try a middle block to minimize the risks. For the players, it's about performance.
WHAT HE BRINGS TO THE TABLE AND

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PLAYERS: From my side, it's about continuity but that needs to be understood by the players. I have the help of my coaching staff and the manager. From the very first moment the players are going to enjoy. We are going to do lot of exercises with the ball and try to increase the speed of the circulation of the ball because am a coach who tries to control the game by controlling the ball. Then we can think about working on positioning and other tactical details. But before that we need to settle many things like intensity of the game, circulation of the ball, finishing.

I don't know if Eleta [Kingsley] is going to start, but he's going to be the reference of the team [as a No. 9]. I already have a backup plan of maybe playing with two strikers. I have heard that Bangladesh players can't hold the ball, can't pass and can't play attacking football but that is absolutely false. HIS TRIBUTE TO JAMIE DAY: I want to start by praising the work done by Jamie Day. He was a colleague and was in touch ON THE PLAYERS AT HIS DISPOSAL: with me for the past three years, monitoring Bashundhara Kings. I feel that the players are maybe results were not as desired. I'm sure he did a good job and tried his best. So for me it's sad to replace a colleague but I totally understood the situation and stepped forward to take responsibility.



Bangladesh ended their Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign with a 5-0 defeat to Iran in Tashkent yesterday, repeating the scoreline from their opening defeat to Jordan on Sunday. For the women in red and green, playing their first competitive matches in two-and-a-half years, it proved to be a learning experience.

roped in some new ones, who will give their best on the turf, we believe," said Mohammedan coach Moududur Rahman Shuvo.

"We've signed better players compared to last season. With players for every position, the squad is balanced and the inclusion of foreign players will only strengthen us," Shubho added.

Manager Ariful Haque Prince informed that they would bring three Indian players who were part of Mohammedan during last season and they are also in communication with players from Malaysia, and Pakistan European countries.

Experienced campaigner Rasel Mahmud Jimmy is pleased with the local collections but urges the players to deliver their top performance to defend the league title. "This squad is even more balanced than the one that emerged champions three years ago. It's our responsibility now to make Mohammedan champions again," said the national forward.

'Black and proud'

AC Milan goalkeeper Mike Maignan on Tuesday blasted those who racially abused him before his team's 1-1 draw at Juventus at the weekend and the football authorities' attempts at tackling the problem, saying that he was "black and proud".

Juventus confirmed to AFP that they had launched an investigation into the abuse, caught on a video which spread quickly on social media.

It showed an off-camera fan launch a stream of racist insults at the France international while he warmed up ahead of Sunday's match at Juve's Allianz

In an Instagram post, the 26-year-old Maignan said that "as long as these events are treated as 'isolated incidents' and no comprehensive action is taken, history is bound to repeat itself over and over and over again".

"Do the people who make decisions know what it feels like to hear insults and chants reducing us to animals? Do they know what it does to our families, to our loved ones who see it and who do not understand why it's still happening in 2021?" he continued. "I am not a 'victim' of racism. I'm Mike, upright, black and proud."

A Juve spokeswoman told AFP that they were working to identify the person who insulted Maignan. Italian media report that the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) is also considering opening its own investigation into the incident.

This is the second incident of racism in a Serie A stadium since football grounds were re-opened to the public at 50 percent capacity at the start of this

On Friday the FIGC opened an investigation into alleged racist chants by Lazio fans towards Milan midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko earlier this month.



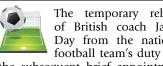
The temporary release of British coach Jamie

Day from the national football team's duty and the subsequent brief appointment of Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon ahead of the SAFF Championship has brought Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) professionalism under heavy scrutiny, however, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin reckons that his decision was entirely focused on the betterment of the

national team. "There have been such instances in world football, at the club level at Chelsea for example who however face no financial problem, but you must understand our reality. Not unprofessional, what I've done was out of necessity for my country, for my team and for my federation," Salahuddin told The Daily Star on

"If there's no scope for improvement of the national team, then tell me, why should I spend 25000 dollars per month behind them," said Salahuddin who watched the Tri Nations Cup in which Bangladesh lost 0-2 to Nepal in the final after playing out a draw in the group stage.

thorough understanding' When asked why the contract the national team only in SAFF was not reviewed during August Championship. after the completion of one year



"After the Tri Nations Cup in Nepal in late March, along with Nabil [Vice President Kazi Nabil Ahmed], I sat with Jamie [Jamie Day and assistant coach Stuart Watkiss, who told us that the team is what they performed in Nepal. I told Stuart that we had beaten Nepal in Dhaka, to which his reply was that whatever you do behind the national team, you can't improve more than one percent even.

of a two-year contract, the BFF boss replied: "What will happen anything about it but right now after the completion of the SAFF Championship? I can't bring any foreign coach at the moment due to the pandemic but I have to play

'Decision was based on

"Now because of the two-year the contract, if terminated, I must pay

other tournaments.



him [Day] whether he stays here or abroad. So I kept him to take care of the team whether they perform well

"My decision was based on thorough understanding. I can now give him [Day] the U-23 national team commitment, according to the contract, and he can continue trying the youth players.

"If he [Day] refuses to take charge of the U-23 side, then it becomes a breach of contract from his side. I couldn't sack him because of our U-23 tournament commitment."

The former national striker further informed that he is not Oscar Bruzon, who will guide I believe.

"If Bruzon fails to bring the expected results, we can't do Bruzon has been assigned for only the SAFF Championship.

"There was no discussion with Bruzon about the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers and invitational Four-Nation tournament in Sri Lanka," said Salahuddin.

The BFF president also mentioned that he had been trying to find Day's replacement for more than a year.

"I was trying to change the head coach for about one-and-a-half vears but that time I couldn't bring any foreign coach here because of the pandemic.

"That time I told my coach [Day] to watch the league matches but I must admit that the contract [with Day wasn't done properly as he was entitled to enjoy 100 days vacations under the contract and invariably he went away [London] to enjoy it as soon as the national team's tournament engagement ended.

"And he didn't watch the domestic matches afterwards. That time, I felt things must change because he doesn't own the national team. But, the circumstances didn't allow me.

Salahuddin believes the existing group of players can shine under a capable coach.

"If someone tells me that this generation of footballers are less talented and skilful compared to previous generations, I won't agree. If we can provide the national team a good coach who can organise the worried about the outcome under boys properly, the results will come,



Jamie Day departs in silence

SPORTS REPORTER

Jamie Day, the long-term coach of the national football team, departed quietly for England yesterday following his temporary release from the position.

The 41-year-old, who took charge of the team in May 2018, left with goalkeeping coach Les Cleeveley after Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon was handed the reins for the SAFF Championship.

While there is almost a year left on Day's contract, there is no indication if he will be recalled after Bruzon's assignment in Maldives. However, while talking to local media on the eve of departure, Day said things could have panned out much better than they did, adding that he was willing to discuss his future if the BFF knocked

him after two months. Cleevely, who worked with the team on assignment-basis, football will not develop until youth development is worked upon and this sort of change will only lead from one disaster to another.



Bangabandhu Tunnel is being built with BSRM





MATARBARI POWER PLANT Cox's Bazar

PROUD CONSTRUCTION

PARTNER



CHATTOGRAM-COX'S BAZAR RAIL LINK

Trains to run from 2022 December

Says railways minister; project officials say it is unlikely

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The under-construction rail line between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar would be opened by December next year, said Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan yesterday. Project documents, however, tell a different story.

The current deadline for the long-drawn out project is June next year, including one year defect liability period, but the project authorities have sought a two-year extension, citing several reasons.

The physical work of the project started in March 2018, around eight years after approval in July 2010, with 62 percent progress so far.

If the Bangladesh Railway (BR) wants to open the rail line by December next year, the project authorities have to complete the rest of the work (38 percent) several months before the deadline. "Because other works, including installing the signalling system, appointing manpower, preparing stations and carrying out a trial run, have to be

done to make the line operational," a rail official said. A project official said they sought two-year time extension. One year was asked for completing the work and the other year was for completing defect liability.

We are trying our best to complete at least the civil work by December next year. But it may take up to June 2023 to complete all of it. Then the one-year defect liability



Most of the Bir Muktijoddha Sohrab Hossain Bridge over Gajikhali river in Manikganj's Singair upazila lies submerged after it gave way to fierce floods in recent months. Due to this, the communications between the upazila and Dhaka's Dhamrai remains snapped. The photo was taken yesterday.

JAHANGIR SHAH

6 policemen withdrawn after 'killing' of fisherman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhai

Four policemen of Banatibazar Naval Police Outpost have been withdrawn in connection with the death of a fisherman at Charbaliatli village in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila.

Sub-inspector Shahidul Islam, in-charge of the outpost, confirmed it to The Daily Star yesterday. Besides, Patuakhali

district police and naval police have formed two separate probe bodies to investigate the incident.

The committees were asked to submit their reports in two days.

The withdrawn policemen are ASI Mamunur-Rashid, constables Sajjad, Sumon and Riaz. All of them are currently in the custody of Kalapara Police Station.

Meanwhile, after the inquest by the magistrate, the body of the slain fisherman Sujan Hawladar, 30, was sent to Patuakhali

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

I'm scared of returning home

Says teen baul after his head was shaved; court sends 3 accused to jail

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

A Bogura court yesterday sent three people, including a high schoolteacher, to jail in a case filed in connection with torturing a teenage baul and shaving his head in Bogura's Shibganj upazila.

Some locals did this to the 16-year-old for "singing baul songs and lighting candles in his house" in Jurimajhpara

The accused are Mezbaul Islam, 52, English teacher of a local high school, Shafiul Islam Khokon, 55, and Tarek Rahman, 20, of the same village.

Meanwhile, the victim has taken shelter to a relative's house in another village after police arrested the three. He told The Daily Star yesterday, "I fear

to return my village as the accused are very influential persons and they are arbitrators of my village. They repeatedly threatened me and told me to give up my baul songs

On Tuesday night, the teen lodged the case against the three arrestees and Fazlu Mia, 40, Abu Taher, 45, and two other unknowns.

Police then arrested Mezbaul, Shafiul, SEE PAGE 10 COL 6 ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Pakstani soldiers continue to kill, loot, burn

SEPTEMBER 23, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MALIK RULES OUT UN **DEBATE ON BANGLADESH**

Adam Malik, president of the 26th UN General Assembly, said the East Pakistan crisis should be resolved through

bilateral talks between India and Pakistan. He ruled out a debate on the East Pakistan situation in the UN General Assembly. The situation was an internal political matter and as such should not be discussed in the world forum, he said.

PAKISTANI ATROCITIES CONTINUES The New York Times, quoting refugees from East Pakistan, reported today that the Pakistani army and its civilian collaborators were continuing to kill, loot and burn despite the central government's public avowals that it was bent on restoring normalcy and winning

the confidence of the Bangalee people. The newspaper pointed out that nearly all the latest arrivals were Hindus and they came from Faridpur. The refugees said the military regime was still making the Hindu minority its particular target. They said the guerrillas were active in their areas and that the army carried out massive reprisals against civilians after every guerrilla

According to the refugees, continued The New York Times, the army left much of the "dirty work" to its civilian collaborators -- the Razakars -- and to the supporters of right-wing religious political

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Third grader gets Covid

School suspends class-III

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A third grader of a government primary school has tested Covid-19 positive in Gopalganj's Kotalipara upazila.

Following the incident, the authority of Ferdhora Government Primary School suspended the classes of third grade on September 19.

Headmaster Soheli Pravin Panna said, "We reopened our school on September 12 after about 17 months. As per schedule, the students of classes three and five attended classes on the first day. The student, who tested Covid positive, was also present in the class. The child showed no symptoms of Covid that

Soheli said they check body temperature of all students before allowing them into classes.

The class-III student SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

US Space Force gets new uniform



The US Space Force unveiled its new dress uniform design Tuesday, aiming to make a future-forward mark for the Pentagon's newest uniformed service.

The prototype for the new uniform for the Space Force's Guardians, as they have been officially designated, is a short navy blue jacket with a large flap over the right breast, secured by a diagonal line of six silver buttons.

It has a standing collar, and the service badge, with a delta-shaped rocket pushing into a star, is worn below the left breast. The jacket is matched with grey trousers or

skirts. "Modern, distinctive, professional" the Space Force called it in a tweet.

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BUSINESS

Transport strike withdrawn

Operations at the country's premier Chattogram port have resumed yesterday afternoon after around 35 hours with the calling off of a countrywide work abstention enforced by a section of logistics service providers. But the strike disrupted the port's recent developments in reducing vessels' waiting periods which worsened after an acute container congestion in late July. Bangladesh Covered-Van, Truck, Prime **Mover Goods Transportation** Owners Association and **Bangladesh Truck Drivers Workers Federation jointly** enforced the countrywide work abstention.

STORY ON B1



Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 4-40 12-45 4-30 JAMAAT 5-15 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

46 go to the UAE on trial

They're tested for Covid within 6hrs of departure

RASHIDUL HASAN

Around 46 Bangladeshi expatriate workers flew to UAE last night on an experimental basis following Covid-19 tests in a mobile RT-PCR lab within six hours of their

Carrying the workers, an Emirates plane departed Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 7:30pm, Shahriar Sazzad, a health official at the airport, told The Daily

After landing at Dubai International Airport, the UAE authorities will conduct another Covid-19 test on the passengers at the airport's RT-PCR lab.

"If the two results [of Dhaka and Dubai tests] are same [and negative], then the expatriate passengers will get access to enter the Gulf country," Sazzad also

In case of any difference in the results of any individual, the UAÉ will SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



For the first time in the country, a leopard cat has given birth to three kittens at the Chattogram zoo. Mostly due to an unsafe and unfavourable habitat, and being confined, this breed of cats do not want to mate or give birth. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Saarc FMs meet in NY cancelled

Report says most member states refused to entertain Pakistan's request on Taliban participation

A meeting of foreign ministers of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) countries, slated to be held on Saturday in New York, has been cancelled.

It is learnt from reliable sources that Pakistan wanted the Taliban to represent Afghanistan in the Saarc meet. India along with some other members objected to the proposal and due to lack of consensus or concurrence, the meeting was cancelled.

Nepal was the host of the meet, which is annually held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly. An official letter sent by the Saarc secretariat to the foreign ministries of the eight countries on Tuesday said it received a note verbale or unsigned diplomatic correspondence from Nepal's foreign ministry that stated the informal meeting of foreign ministers "will not take place" because of the "lack of concurrence from all member states".

Taliban has not been recognised by India to date. The new regime in Kabul is still not recognised by the world and top cabinet ministers are blacklisted by the UN.

Amir Khan Muttaqi is the acting foreign minister of the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan and he is unlikely to attend any UN and affiliated meetings.

In fact, last week Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meet said that the Taliban is a non-inclusive government, the world must think before accepting or recognising the regime in Afghanistan.

He also pointed out that women, minorities have no