

AIR INDIA SALE
Tata takes over the struggling state-run carrier after winning 180b rupee bid
SEE PAGE 5

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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"The government won't take responsibility for those who incurred losses while trading on e-commerce platforms in the country."
COMMERCE MINISTER TIPU MUNSHI



"Those who contested elections defying party's command will not get party nomination in any polls."
AWAMI LEAGUE GEN SECY OBAIDUL QUADER



"Not to have equitable distribution of vaccines is not only a question of being immoral: it is also a question of being stupid."
UN CHIEF ANTONIO GUTERRES

SHIA MOSQUE IN AFGHANISTAN

Blast kills 55

IS suicide bomber attacks during Friday prayers

AGENCIES

A suicide bomb attack on worshippers at a Shia mosque in the Afghan city of Kunduz killed at least 55 people yesterday, in the bloodiest assault since US forces left the country.

Scores more victims from the minority community were wounded in the blast, which appears designed to further destabilise Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban takeover.

The extremist Islamic State group, bitter rivals of the Taliban, has claimed responsibility of the blast in a statement. The group has repeatedly targeted Shias in a bid to stir up sectarian violence in Sunni-majority Afghanistan.



There are conflicting reports about the number of casualties. A United Nations agency said the explosion killed or wounded more than 100 people.

"Initial information indicates more than 100 people killed and injured in a suicide blast inside the mosque," the UN mission to Afghanistan said in a tweet.

A medical source at the Kunduz

Provincial Hospital said that 35 dead and more than 55 wounded had been taken there, while Doctors Without Borders (MSF) hospital said 20 were dead and scores more wounded.

Matiullah Rohani, director of culture and information in Kunduz for Afghanistan's new Taliban government, confirmed to AFP that the deadly incident was a suicide attack and that 46 people had died and 143 were wounded.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid had earlier said "an explosion took place in a mosque of our Shia compatriots" in Kunduz.

Residents of Kunduz, the capital of a province of the same name, told AFP the blast hit Gozar-e-Sayed Abad Mosque during Friday prayers, the most important of the week for Muslims.

An international aid worker at the MSF hospital in the city told AFP there were fears the death toll could rise even further.

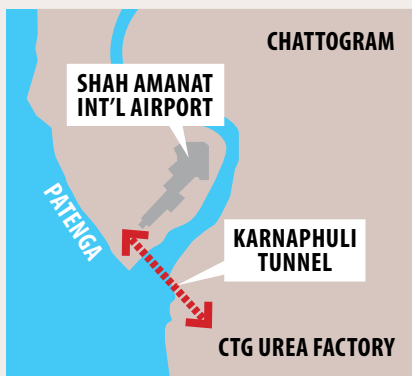
"Hundreds of people are gathered at the main gate of the hospital and crying for their relatives but armed Taliban guys are

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Carrying bags in his hands, a jaywalker crosses the central reservation on Dhaka-Mawa Expressway in the capital's Postagola. Jaywalking often jeopardises people's lives and disrupts the flow of traffic. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



LENGTH	3.32km
NUMBER OF LANES	4
COST	Tk 10,374cr
DEADLINE	Dec 2022
PROGRESS	73%
APPROACH ROAD	5.35km
FUNDING	EXIM BANK OF CHINA Tk 5,913.19cr BANGLADESH GOVT Tk 4,461.23cr

Tunnel of hope

Breakthrough achieved in construction of maiden underwater network connecting both sides of Karnaphuli

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

Construction of the tunnel under the Karnaphuli river reached a major milestone with completion of boring on Thursday afternoon.

Seventy-three percent of the physical work for the 3.32km tunnel is now done.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel will significantly reduce congestion on both sides of the river and shorten travel time.

Project officials said they might open the tunnel to traffic much sooner than the original deadline of December 2022.

A tunnel boring machine was used to complete the task in two years and four months.

The project authorities are now constructing 5.35km of approach

roads, building the road inside the tunnel, and setting up utility lines.

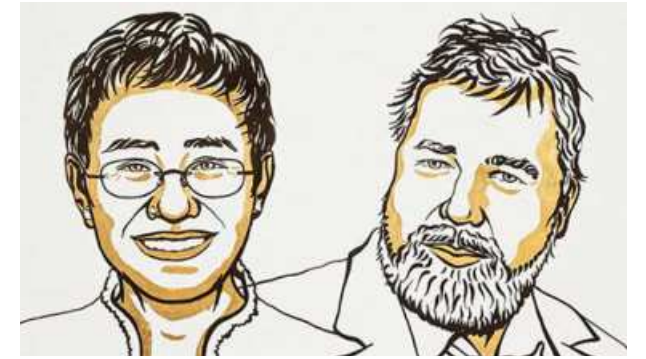
"The tunnel will connect the southern and northern parts of Chattogram district, opening up economic opportunities for people in the region," said Mahbul Alam, president of Chattogram Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"The Karnaphuli river divides Chattogram into two parts. The tunnel will connect the city and Anwara upazila. The tunnel will also be used as an alternative road to Cox's Bazar, Teknaf and Matarbari and northern Chattogram," he added.

Harunur Rashid Chowdhury, project director of the Multilane Road Tunnel under the River

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Journo pair share Nobel Peace Prize



Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov

AFP, Oslo

Journalists Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Dmitry Muratov of Russia yesterday won the Nobel Peace Prize for fighting for freedom of expression at a time when democracy is increasingly under threat.

Ressa, who is also a US citizen, is co-founder of Rappler, a digital media company for investigative journalism. Muratov is a co-founder of Russia's leading independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta.

The pair were honoured "for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace," said the chairwoman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Berit Reiss-Andersen.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

UK recognises Bangladesh job certificate

No quarantine required there after full vaccination

UNB, Dhaka

Fully vaccinated Bangladeshi nationals will no longer have to remain in self-isolation on arrival in the UK as the British government added Bangladesh to its list of countries with approved proof of Covid-19 vaccination.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said, "Bangladesh vaccine certification is now recognised by the British authorities. Our Mission contacted them and described our processes and now they recognise our vaccine certification."

High Commissioner for Bangladesh to the UK Saida Muna Tasneem said, "The decision is a reflection of warm bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the UK."

The decision is also a result of the High Commission's sustained diplomatic efforts to remove the remaining obstacles to business, tourism and essential travel between the two countries, she added.

"From 4:00am Monday, Bangladeshi nationals, fully vaccinated with UK-approved vaccines, will no longer require a 10-day hotel or home quarantine and a pre-departure Covid test."

However, a Covid test should be taken on or before Day 2 after arrival in the UK.

Also, Vaccination certificates issued by relevant Bangladesh authorities are required for all travellers as proof of inoculation status.

The travellers who have not been fully vaccinated with a UK-authorized jab must quarantine for 10 days, either at

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



A tea stall in the capital's Shyampur has put up a notice saying the price of a cup of tea has been fixed at Tk 7, an increase of Tk 2, as the prices of sugar and milk have gone up. Sugar now sells at Tk 90 a kg, up from Tk 75 about a month ago. The price of condensed milk has also soared to Tk 75 per 400gm can, an increase of Tk20 from a month ago. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Univ teacher loses arm on tragic travel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A university teacher travelling by bus lost his right arm as a truck coming



from the opposite direction scraped the side of the bus in Phulpur, Mymensingh, on Thursday night.

Hasan Morshed Ali, 35, assistant professor of animal husbandry at Bangladesh Agricultural University, was resting his right arm out the window of the moving bus when the crash happened, said Abdullah Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of Phulpur Police Station.

Nobody else was seriously injured, police said, quoting locals.

The incident took place in the Banshati area on Mymensingh-Sherpur road around 8:00pm.

The bus driver later abandoned the vehicle in front of Nakla Upazila Health Complex in Sherpur

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

BANGLADESH UPDATE



645

New cases in 24hrs



15,61,463

Total cases



27,654

Deaths



15,22,591

Recoveries



GLOBAL UPDATE



4,853,527

Deaths



237,835,220

Total cases

RESTRICTIONS ON HILSA FISHING

Mobile court comes under attack

52 fishermen jailed for ignoring ban

STAR REPORT

A mobile court came under attack by freshmen yesterday in Barishal while conducting drives to enforce the government's ban on hilsa fishing.

In another development, mobile courts in Munshiganj and Shariatpur sentenced 52 fishermen to jail for different terms for catching the fish during the 22-day ban.

The government imposed the ban from October 4 on catching, selling, hoarding, and transporting hilsa to allow hilsa breeding.

In Barishal, a mobile court led by Mehendiganj upazila nirbahi officer went to the Gazaria river to enforce the ban yesterday morning.

"We found many fishermen continuing hilsa fishing defying the ban. Our presence made them furious," said UNO Shahadat Hossain Masud.

"When our speedboat reached Sikder Bari Ghat area, the fishermen hit our speedboat by another fishing boat around 10:00am," he added.

Our speedboat partially sank and two Ansar members were injured, said Masud, adding that even the shotgun of an Ansar member drowned in the river.

Another nearby boat rushed to spot and rescued the UNO and the Ansar members. Later, the fire service members started searching for the shotgun, the UNO said.

Contacted, Shafiqul Islam, officer-

in-charge of Mehendiganj Police Station, said the process of filing a case against the attackers was underway.

In Shariatpur, a mobile court led by Raffey Mohammad Chhrha, executive magistrate and assistant commissioner (land) of Zajira upazila, sent 28 fishermen to jail for 21 days each for catching hilsa in the Padma after raiding different points in the upazila yesterday morning.

The drive began around 5:00am and continued for over three hours, said Mahbubur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Zajira Police Station.

Some fishermen have kept fishing at night to dodge the eyes of law enforcers, said the OC.

"We formed the mobile court in coordination of the district administration, fisheries department, police and Rab. Then, we conducted drives at different points in Pallerchar, Baburchar, Kunderchar and Chirachar areas," said the executive magistrate.

The mobile court also seized around 30,000 metres of banned current net, 20kg hilsa and a trawler, he added.

A mobile court in Munshiganj sent 23 fishermen to jail for 15 days each and another one for 10 days for hilsa fishing in the Padma.

Mahmud Ashik Kabir, assistant commissioner (land) and executive magistrate, led the mobile court in Lohajang upazila.

[Our Barishal, Shariatpur and Munshiganj correspondents contributed to this report.]



Vehicles queue up at Daulatdia Ferry Ghat in Rajbari's Goalanda upazila yesterday. Hundreds of vehicles were seen stuck at ferry ghats on the Paturia-Daulatdia route throughout the day on the weekend as more people hit the road ahead of Durga Puja next week. Over 500 vehicles were waiting to board ferries at Daulatdia ghat around 12:30pm.

PHOTO: STAR

Journo pair share Nobel

FROM PAGE 1

"They are representatives of all journalists who stand up for this ideal in a world in which democracy and freedom of the press face increasingly adverse conditions," she said.

Ressa, 58, said the prize shows that "nothing is possible without facts," referring to the links between democracy and freedom of expression. "A world without facts means a world without truth and trust," the outspoken critic of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte told a livestreamed interview with Rappler.

She told Norwegian TV2 the honour would give her and her colleagues "tremendous energy to continue the fight."

Muratov dedicated his half of the prize to his newspaper's six journalists and contributors killed since 2000, who include the prominent investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya.

"I can't take credit for this. This is Novaya Gazeta's," he was cited by Russian news agency TASS as saying.

The newspaper on Thursday commemorated 15 years since Politkovskaya's killing.

The Kremlin congratulated Muratov, with President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov telling reporters: "He is talented. He is courageous."

Ressa and Rappler, which she co-founded in 2012 and still heads, have faced multiple criminal charges and investigations after publishing stories critical of Duterte's policies, including his bloody drug war.

The former CNN correspondent is on bail pending an appeal against a conviction last year in a cyber libel case, for which she faces up to six years in prison.

The chairwoman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee said Rappler has "focused critical attention on the Duterte regime's controversial, murderous anti-drug campaign."

"The number of deaths is so high that the campaign resembles a war waged against the country's own population," Reiss-Andersen added.

Ressa and Rappler have also documented how social media is being used to spread fake news, harass opponents and manipulate public discourse.

Time magazine named her a Person of the Year in 2018.

Muratov, 59, has defended freedom of speech in Russia for decades, under

increasingly challenging conditions.

In 1993, he was a founder of Novaya Gazeta, which has a "fundamentally critical attitude towards power" the committee said. He has been its editor-in-chief since 1995.

Novaya Gazeta's opponents have responded with harassment, threats, violence and murder.

"Despite the killings and threats, editor-in-chief Muratov has refused to abandon the newspaper's independent policy," Reiss-Andersen said.

"He has consistently defended the right of journalists to write anything they want about whatever they want, as long as they comply with the professional and ethical standards of journalism."

24 JOURNALISTS KILLED IN 2021

Free, independent and fact-based journalism helps protect against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda, Reiss-Andersen said.

According to the latest rankings by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the situation for press freedom is "difficult or very serious" in 73 percent of the 180 countries it evaluated, and "good or satisfactory" in only 27 percent.

According to RSF, 24 journalists have been killed since the beginning of the year, and 350 others are imprisoned.

From the murder of Saudi reporter Jamal Khashoggi in 2018 to the shutting of the pro-democracy Apple Daily in Hong Kong earlier this year, attempts to stifle the media abound.

Against that background, media watchdogs had been tipped as contenders for the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize ahead of yesterday's announcement.

Last year, the honour went to the UN's humanitarian agency fighting famine, the World Food Programme.

The award's image has been hit hard over the past years as one of its previous laureates, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, became embroiled in a war.

Another, Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi, was accused of defending the massacre of members of the Rohingya minority.

The prize consists of a diploma, a gold medal and a cheque for 10 million kronor (980,000 euros, \$1.1 million).

The Nobel season wraps up on Monday with the announcement of the Economics Prize.

Blast kills 55

FROM PAGE 1

trying to prevent gatherings in case another explosion is planned," he said.

Graphic images shared on social media, which could not immediately be verified, showed several bloodied bodies lying on the floor. Pictures showed plumes of smoke rising into the air over Kunduz.

A female teacher in Kunduz told AFP the blast happened near her house, and several of her neighbours were killed. "It was a very terrifying incident," she said.

"Many of our neighbours have been killed and wounded. A 16-year-old neighbour was killed. They couldn't find half of his body. Another neighbour who was 24 was killed as well."

Aminullah, an eyewitness whose brother was at the mosque, told AFP: "After I heard the explosion, I called my brother but he did not

pick up.

"I walked towards the mosque and found my brother wounded and faint. We immediately took him to the MSF hospital."

Kunduz's location makes it a key transit point for economic and trade exchanges with Tajikistan.

It was the scene of fierce battles as the Taliban fought their way back into power this year.

Often targeted by Sunni extremists who view them as heretics, Shia Muslims have suffered some of Afghanistan's most violent assaults, with rallies bombed, hospitals targeted and commuters ambushed.

Shias make up roughly 20 percent of the Afghan population. Many of them are Hazara, an ethnic group that has been heavily persecuted in Afghanistan for decades.

In October 2017, an IS suicide attacker struck a Shia mosque as worshippers gathered for evening

prayers in the west of Kabul, killing 56 people and wounding 55 including women and children.

And in May this year, a series of bombings outside a school in the capital killed at least 85 people -- mostly young girls. More than 300 were wounded in this attack on the Hazara community.

The United Nations in Afghanistan said it was "deeply concerned" by reports of very high casualties in yesterday's attack, calling it a "part of a disturbing pattern of violence".

UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi told reporters in Geneva the blast was "the symptom that the implosion (of Afghanistan) may also translate into renewed insecurity."

This, he said, means "more people killed, more terrorist attacks, more instability. And that is also something that we should all be worried about."



Afghan men carry the body of a victim to an ambulance after a bomb attack at a mosque in Kunduz, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

No party ticket for rebels

Warns Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader has said those who contested elections defying the party's command will not be nominated for any polls, both now and in future.

"Punitive actions will also be taken against those who will send or have sent names of aspirant candidates to the centre for polls by committing irregularities," he said at a press briefing at his official residence in the capital yesterday.

Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, said AL men who become rebel candidates this time will not get any post or party nominations in future.

About BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's comment that plans were underway to turn Bangladesh into a "subservient" state, he said people know it very well which party wants to see the country as a "subservient" state.

Those who frequently lodge complaints with foreigners, wait at the closed door of foreign embassies with flowers and sweets, want foreign interventions in the country's internal issues, want to see Bangladesh as a "subservient" state, he added.

Refuting the BNP's allegation that the government wants to enforce a one-party governing system, Quader said BNP has representatives in parliament.

"Then how can it be a one-party rule?" he questioned.

UK recognises

FROM PAGE 1

home or where they are staying and should undergo a Day 2 and Day 8 Covid test.

On September 17, Bangladesh was removed from the UK government's travel red list, which came into effect at 4:00am on September 22.

Meanwhile, Bahrain has decided to remove Bangladesh from red list countries starting from October 10, said the foreign minister.

He said every day hundreds of Bangladeshis who returned from Bahrain ask when Bahrain would open up. "Today we have good news."

Univ teacher

FROM PAGE 1

and fled, said the OC. The injured teacher was later taken to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and then to a hospital in Dhaka.

UN warns of consequences if Afghanistan aid delayed

AFP, Geneva

Only a third of the funds urgently sought for Afghanistan by the United Nations have been disbursed, the UN refugees chief said yesterday, warning of a potential humanitarian catastrophe.

Filippo Grandi urged donor nations to honour their financial pledges swiftly, saying: "can you please concretely pledge support where it is immediately necessary".

Tunnel of hope

FROM PAGE 1

Karnaphuli, said, "We have completed the boring on Thursday afternoon. Now we are concentrating on the rest of the work."

The Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel is the first underwater tunnel in South Asia.

It is being constructed by China Communication Construction Company Ltd.

According to the monthly progress report of the project, the work on 5.35km of approach road, construction of road inside the tunnel, and installation of utility lines are yet to be completed.

Over 360 acres of land have been acquired for it and the process of acquiring another 20 acres is

underway, the report also said.

In November 2015, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the much-hyped multi-lane road tunnel project involving Tk 8,446.64 crore. The cost later rose to Tk 10,374.42 crores.

The Exim Bank of China is giving Tk 5,913.19 crore at an interest rate of 2 percent, while the Bangladesh government is providing the rest.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a rally at Laldighi, Chattogram, spoke of constructing the tunnel before the 2008 national election.

The tunnel will play an important role in improving the Asian Highway Network, strengthening connectivity between Bangladesh and neighbouring countries.

AFP, Washington

Former president Donald Trump has told four former senior aides not to comply with a congressional probe into the January 6 attack on Congress, US media reported Thursday.

Politico and The Washington Post both reported that ex-advisors Mark Meadows, Kash Patel, Dan Scavino and Steve Bannon were told not to cooperate with the formal House investigation into the riot by Trump supporters, which critics have labelled an outright insurrection.

The reports came hours after the release of a damning Senate report detailing Trump's efforts to subvert the Justice Department and overturn his November election loss to Joe Biden.

Trump's lawyers argued in a letter to

the four that his communications and records are protected from disclosure by executive privilege and attorney-client privilege.

The Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack has called the four ex-advisors, and other people involved in the unrest, to help it piece together the ties between Trump's White House and the hundreds of Trump backers who forced their way into the Congress, halting a joint session meant to confirm Biden as president.

At the time Meadows was White House chief of staff, Scavino handled social media for Trump; Bannon was a former political strategist who remained active in Republican operations; and Patel was a White House national security advisor whom Trump named to a senior Pentagon

job following his election loss.

The four were ordered by the January 6 committee to hand over documents and appear for interviews with investigators next week.

Legal experts have raised doubts that Trump can claim executive privilege over his actions in his final weeks in office to prevent his aides from talking.

But the issue has not been tested much in courts and the White House has said it would waive privilege on Trump's records to an extent in order to help with the probe.

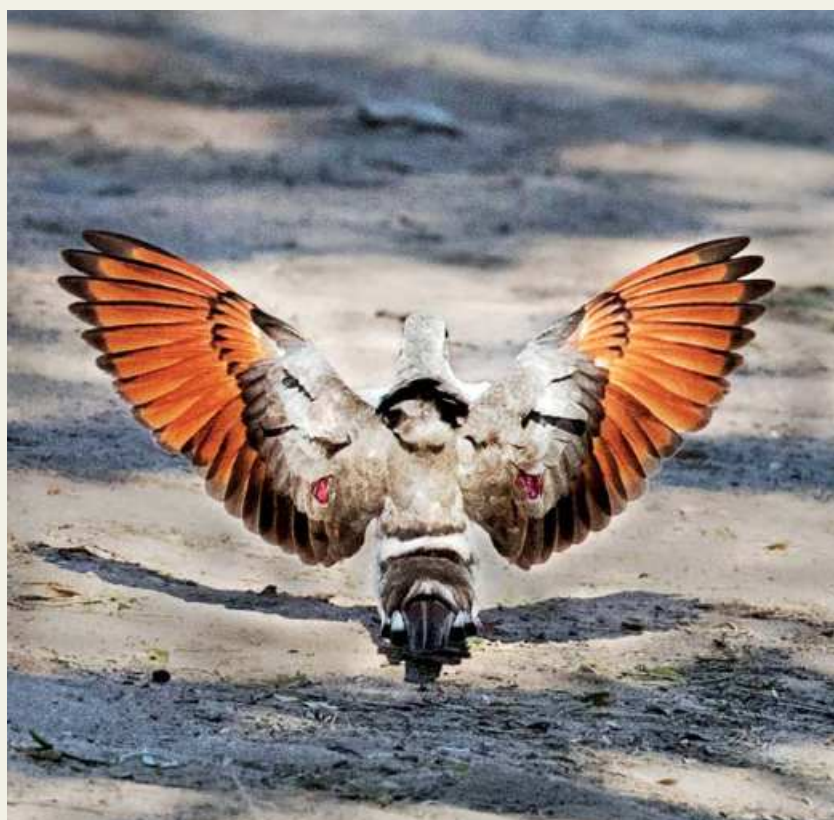
And Trump's defiance could force the committee into legal fights that could stretch out the investigation.

"The former president is still trying to stonewall subpoenas," said committee member Adam Schiff in a tweeted statement.

Trump tries to block testimony on January 6 uprising: media

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Namaqua Dove, Madagascar.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Doves and Pigeons

My most memorable encounter with a dove took place in Kalenga forest in Habiganj. After a long unproductive day I was about to exit the forest. Ahead on the trail was a small bridge. From nowhere a green Emerald Dove descended on the bridge and pattered around, perhaps ten feet from me. Here was a gorgeous bird, normally elusive, so close to my camera. In a minute or two it turned a dismal day into a joyful one.

Doves and pigeons of over 300 different species are spread around the globe. They belong to the bird family Columbidae. They are usually stocky, walk with a characteristic gait while rocking their head, and build flimsy nests from twigs. Eating fruits, seeds and plants, flocks often descend on trees such as banyan when they bear fruit.

Humans have a long history with this bird family. Along with religious significance, the white dove is also the international symbol of peace. Doves and pigeons are generally well-loved. Many species, such as Rock Pigeons, have adapted well to humans – almost too well when they nest in your home and become pests – but others such as Emerald Doves are shy and remain in the forest.

I grew up in Sylhet where Rock Pigeons (called *Jalali Kobutor* locally) were everywhere. Legend says they descended from a pair brought that arrived with the holy saint Hazrat Shahjalal. They nested in the eaves of the numerous bungalows in town and were never harmed in deference to the holy man. The Spotted Dove (*Tila Chughu*) was also found in homes with trees, its sweet song reverberating through the air.

Bangladesh has 14 species of doves and pigeons from common to rare. I have seen perhaps ten of these, the Orange-breasted Green Pigeon being the most beautiful. Some species such as Mountain Imperial Pigeon are very hard to find. Several green pigeons – Thick-Billed, Wedge-tailed, Yellow-footed, Orange-breasted Green Pigeons – look quite similar. One has to look at the feet, the tail, the breast or the beak to distinguish between these *Horials*.

Outside Bangladesh, I saw a dizzying variety of doves and pigeons in Australia. They could be colourful (Fruit Dove), elegant (Imperial Pigeon), cute (Crested Pigeon), intriguing (Top-knot Pigeon), mundane (Peaceful Dove) or familiar (Emerald Dove.) Some came quite close, but the Fruit Doves were high up on trees and uncooperative.

In Madagascar I found the Namaqua Dove with spectacular wings. I watched it feed on grass seeds in a semi-arid patch. It was smaller and friendlier than other doves I have encountered. The island also had the only blue pigeon I have seen.

The Passenger Pigeon of North America is the most thoroughly documented extinct bird in the world. During the 1800s there were millions if not billions of them. A flock was so large it could darken the sky. Farmers hated them because they decimated fields they landed on. Indiscriminate killing led to their extinction. The last Passenger Pigeon, Martha, died in the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914. Its body has been preserved and can be seen in the Smithsonian.

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

SHOT BY POLICE, INCAPACITATED FOR LIFE

RMG worker Kanchon's struggle to stay alive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kanchon Mia, a worker of Creative Collection Limited, an RMG factory owned by the conglomerate Ha-Meem Group, is fighting for his life at bed number five, ward-219 of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

While protesting for Eid holidays, Kanchon was shot with pellet guns at point blank range by police and became badly wounded.

The surgeons at DMCH removed as many as 101 pellets from his intestines, and a large part of his intestines and lower abdomen had to be removed surgically to save his life.

For the rest of his life, Kanchon will not be able to do any strenuous work, and since the first surgery, he passes urine and stool only through an external bag attached to his punctured abdomen.

The seven-member family, in which Kanchon was the only breadwinner, is fighting hard to gather enough money for Kanchon's treatment.

Kanchon's wife Fatema Begum said, "Since the first surgery, we've already spent more than Tk 3 lakh for his treatment, and we've sold our last belongings to collect this money. Every day, we have to change his stool bag, which costs Tk 1,000."

"Besides, he needs expensive medicines and nutritious food to recover. How can we buy him those when we don't have enough money to eat a square meal? My husband has become so thin that he looks like a skeleton," said a weeping Fatema.



The surgeons at DMCH removed as many as 101 pellets from his lower abdomen.

PHOTO COURTESY: TASLIMA AKHER



Kanchon Mia is fighting for his life at DMCH.

PHOTO: STAR

On May 10 this year, workers of Creative Collection Limited were protesting at Tongi's Millgate area to extend their Eid holidays.

Police allegedly started firing pellets at the protesters without any provocation. Twelve workers of the factory, including Kanchon, were

injured by pellets.

According to Kanchon, he was shot twice. The second shot was fired from point-blank range and pierced his lower abdomen.

Kanchon recounted this horrific incident, "After getting hit by pellets for the first time, I fell on

the ground and then crawled to flee from the spot. Suddenly, a cop came to me and fired at my lower abdomen. Then some people picked me up and locked me inside a toilet of the factory. After many hours, I was rescued by my colleagues, who took me to the hospital."

Contacted, Khandaker Lutful Kabir, commissioner of Gazipur Metropolitan Police, said, "Police never fire shots without provocation. We had to shoot only to control the situation. You should also ask the factory authority about why the situation deteriorated in such a scale."

When asked to clarify what unruly activity they had to "control", he said workers were "blocking the highway".

According to duty doctor at DMCH, huge number of pellets remained stuck in his intestines for a long time, which caused internal bleeding, blood clot and infection. As a result, a large part of his intestines and lower abdomen had to be removed surgically.

Kanchon again got admitted to DMCH on September 2 for gut reconstruction surgery. However, the doctors are hesitating to operate on him due to his severely malnourished condition.

"His heart is not functioning properly. Once the surgery is done, he will be able to pass urine and stool normally, but any type of strenuous work will not be good for him. But, the main problem is he is extremely malnourished," said the duty doctor.

Initially, Kanchon's family received Tk 75,000 during the first

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Demanding due wages for jute mill workers, reopening of jute and sugar mills, and bringing out properly designed battery-rickshaws, Sramik Krishak Chhatra Janata Oikya Parishad organised a rally at Khulna city's Khalishpur area yesterday. Hundreds of workers of jute mills that are currently closed and rickshaw pullers in Khulna participated in the rally.

PHOTO: STAR

Four arrested over killing of univ student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested four people on Thursday over the killing of a 24-year-old university student. The student died after a mugger stabbed him at Tejgaon on Tuesday night.

Police said Keshob Ray Papon, who studied at Sonargaon University, was attacked as he grabbed one of the five muggers soon after they snatched his cellphone.

Police said this on Thursday, hours after Jewel (18), Jahangir alias Mutto Jahangir (35) and Nuruzzaman alias Mamun (23).

Besides, Rab arrested another Md Tuhin at Tongi, Gazipur.

Mohammad Shahidullah, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division of Dhaka police, told a press briefing that they had identified five snatchers from CCTV footages.

Keshob, from Taraganj in Rangpur, used to work part-time at a courier service office to support his studies, said Keshob's younger brother Sumendra Chandra Ray.

Sumendra, a construction worker, told The Daily Star that his brother came under attack near Purnima Cinema around 9pm while he was returning to his Monipuripara residence by his bicycle after work.

No Durga Puja at Kalabagan field this year

DSCC cites development project as reason; Puja committee to protest if decision not altered



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) will not allow Dhanmondi Sarbojonin Puja Committee to organise Durga Puja festivities at the capital's Kalabagan playground this year.

Although the Hindu community received permission from the LGRD ministry, the supervisory body of DSCC, to construct a makeshift temple at the grounds, the city corporation authorities have stated otherwise, citing that a development project is going on there.

"We got permission from the ministry on October 3, after which we arranged equipment and other materials to set the puja mandap on the playground. But officials from DSCC did not allow us to enter," said Shyamal Shaha, organising secretary of Dhanmondi Sarbojonin Puja Committee.

"We are currently in a state of confusion regarding whether we will be able to hold

the puja there. We only have a few days remaining before the puja," he told The Daily Star.

DSCC spokesperson Md Abu Naser, in a press statement yesterday, said they withheld permission as they have been developing the playground and beautifying surrounding areas since 2018 and have a target to complete the work by December.

DSCC will set up a kids' zone with 29 rides, and will name the park Sheikh Shaheed Russel Shishu Park, he stated.

The statements and allegations of the puja committee are misleading, and clearly show ill-motive to tarnish the image of the city corporation, he argued.

The claim of the committee, that it received permission from the LGRD ministry, is misleading, as the permission was contingent upon the condition that the establishment will not be harmed in any way, he said.

Naser said they had given permission for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

President leaves for Germany

BSS, Dhaka

President M Abdul Hamid is scheduled to leave Dhaka today for a 12-day visit to Germany and the United Kingdom for health checkup and treatment.

"A VIP flight of Qatar Airways carrying the president will depart Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport early tomorrow [today]," president's press secretary Md Joynal Abedin told BSS yesterday.

Abdul Hamid is scheduled to undergo his health checkup at Charite University Hospital in Germany and Eye Hospital in London.

"The head of the state is expected to return home by an aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines on October 22," the press secretary added.

DENGUE UPDATE

Death toll 73

4 died in Oct so far

23 in Sept, 34 in Aug, 12 in July

150 more hospitalised yesterday

Total infected 19,694

SOURCE: DGHS

BALASHPUR MADHYAPARA IN MYMENSINGH CITY Waterlogged for four months a year!

MD AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

For around four months a year -- from June to September -- thousands of residents of Balashpur Madhyapara area in Mymensingh city have to sit through debilitating waterlogging.

"I have been living in this area for 35 years. The waterlogging is a yearly phenomenon here during monsoon," said grocery shop owner M o h a m m a d Sultan.

After every spell of heavy or moderate rainfall, the entire area gets flooded with ankle or knee-deep water for several days, said Sultan.

If the showers continue for a few days, then the courtyards of most houses go under water, said sand trader Abdus Samad. Locals alleged the situation took a turn for the worse after the construction of the Balashpur Madhyapara road in 2013, which they say was done without proper planning.

They said the area's water used to go down a drain which was connected to the neighbouring Kewatkhali area's Railway Power House Colony's drain. From there, the water used to flow into the Brahmaputra river.

But with the passing of time, the drain got blocked for various reasons and has remained that way for many years.

"No one has taken an initiative to free up this important pathway for

rainwater," said Md Saidur Rahman, a BAU employee.

The area hosts 2,000 families, with the total population numbering around 10,000, locals told this correspondent.

The situation is so dire that residents have to travel to the main road on rafts made of banana leaves before they can get on rickshaws, said Golam Mustafa, an employee at Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU).

Abdul Jobber, president of local Baitul Aman Jame Mosque, said the flooding makes it difficult for devotees to attend prayers and students to attend classes on time.

Locals said before every national and local election, candidates visit and throw around pledges to solve the crisis, but none of them have followed up. They said they have informed incumbent ward commissioner Abbas Ali Mondol several times, but to no avail.

Contacted, Mondol did not hesitate to admit the chronic problem, but said a project is underway to mitigate it.

However, Md Anwar Hossain, chief executive officer of Mymensingh City Corporation, laid a part of the blame on the construction of unplanned houses in the city's new areas.

"Our engineering department has started a feasibility study on waterlogging in the city. Necessary steps will be taken after that," said the CEO.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

The simplest

FROM PAGE 12
will provide a visual means to see their progress.

Perhaps it will start as a basic stroll around the neighbourhood, or the park nearby. As you begin to build endurance, you will notice that you're able to go further and further.

Gradually, you may add additional time or distance to your walking routine.

Walking gets you outdoors. Most of us who live in cities are indoors throughout the day. We breathe re-circulated air and have lighting that's not natural. Walking gives us a chance to get some fresh air.

When you have progressed to where you want to go beyond walking, it is easy to incorporate various forms of exercise along with walking.

One can develop a circuit of body weight exercises to do at various timed intervals to develop strength, speed, and accelerate weight loss.

For example, one can walk for two-three minutes, then do a set of 10 body weight squats, then go back back to walking for two to three minutes and then do 10 push-ups.



A Palestinian uses a sling as demonstrators clash with Israeli forces during a protest against Israeli settlements, in Beita, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Shot by police, incapacitated for life

FROM PAGE 3
surgery from Ha-meem Group, although they had to spend at least Tk 156,000 during their stay in hospital from May 10, 2021 to June 5, 2021.

Kanchon and his family alleged that they did not get any response from the factory authority despite repeated calls.

When The Daily Star contacted Ha-Meem Group -- one of the largest local clothing manufacturers, which has international clients like Gap and H&M -- about Kanchon's condition, its authorities claimed they did not know about Kanchon's second time admission to the hospital and added that they would pay for his entire treatment.

Maj (ret'd) Khairul Basher, executive director (compliance) of Ha-Meem group said, "Kanchon and his family members probably contacted the former managers of Creative Collection Limited, who did not convey the message to us, as they are not with us anymore. Once we learned about his condition from you and some of our workers, we then sent our officials to DMCH to see him and to get an estimation of his treatment cost. We shall pay for his entire treatment as promised. As long as he is our employee, he will also be getting his salary regularly."

"If Kanchon is declared not

fit for work, we shall pay all his dues immediately and arrange a compensation for him, as per the labour law. But, we hope that Kanchon will recover and join our team soon," Basher added further.

The Daily Star confirmed that Kanchon's wife had received Kanchon's due salary, amounting to Tk 64,950, and Tk 81,000 treatment cost. The family will also receive their due of Tk 41,484 for treatment today.

However, the amount is hardly enough to meet his ever-increasing treatment cost. And, as Kanchon was the only earning family member, Fatema is seeing a bleak future waiting for her, especially as there is little hope that Kanchon can get back to work.

According to the labour law, a permanently disabled worker is only entitled to Tk 1.25 lakh.

She said, "My eldest son is an SSC examinee. I have four young children. My husband's income was our only means of sustenance. We sold all our assets for his treatment. I don't know how I shall take care of my young children and ailing husband at home."

"I had a dream of educating my children. But, I cannot see any way to continue their schooling anymore. It's unlikely that my husband will be able to work again," said Fatema, with tears in her eyes.

According to labour rights activists,

Kanchon should get at least Tk 50 lakh to Tk 1 crore as compensation.

Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, labour rights researcher and head of the research and public campaign of Drik, has been following Kanchon's case from the very beginning.

He said, "Kanchon and his colleagues were protesting peacefully. The factory authority failed to convince the workers, called the police and Kanchon was shot. So, the factory authority cannot avoid responsibility."

"Kanchon Mia has been made incapacitated for the rest of his life, and it was no accident. The factory authority and the government both should compensate Kanchon for the irreparable loss they caused. Considering the time Kanchon could serve the factory, the treatment cost and physical and mental trauma he suffered, the compensation should be no less than Tk 1 crore," said Mahtab.

Shahidul Islam Shabuj, coordinator of Garments Sramik Adhikar Andolon (RMG Workers' Rights Movement), said, "If Kanchon becomes disabled for the rest of his life, he should get compensation that will be equal to his income for the number of years he was supposed to work for but could not do due to his disability. So, the amount of compensation should be at least Tk 50 lakh."

Nothing short of complete independence

FROM PAGE 12
the programme.
NO POWER WILL BE ALLOWED TO DICTATE INDIA: INDIRA

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today emphatically said no foreign power would be allowed to dictate to India what "we should do to deal with the Bangladesh issue". She also made it clear that the Indo-Soviet treaty had in no way fettered India's freedom of action in respect of the Bangladesh developments.

The Bangladesh problem, the Indian prime minister said, had given rise to serious political and economic problems and affected the security of the eastern region. She warned that India was facing a grave situation on its borders and whatever steps the government might take in dealing with the Bangladesh issue, the people might have to face economic and other difficulties. She stressed the need to build up the necessary strength to overcome these difficulties.

NEW PAKISTAN ORDER TO REGULATE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
Pakistan President Yahya Khan issued a martial law order tonight regulating political activities in Pakistan. The order forbade a range of political activities, from propagating any

opinion prejudicial to the integrity of Pakistan to carrying weapons at political rallies.

Military officials, however, said the move amounted to "de facto" removal of the March 26 ban on politics issued after the arrest of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The order also cancelled a martial law regulation issued on March 26 prohibiting political procession.

ON THE WAR FRONT
In the Mymensingh-Sylhet sector, a party of Mukti Bahini guerrillas ambushed a Pakistani patrol near Kalshindur killing today, two soldiers.

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, the occupation army attacked Sona Mosque area, but it faced retaliation from Mukti Bahini. In this action seven Pakistani soldiers were killed and many were wounded. During this action one razzakar surrendered to the Mukti Bahini. On the same day Mukti Bahini ambushed an enemy patrol on the road between Joymonirhat and Anderjihar Khamar, killing three and injuring 10 enemy soldiers. They demolished Chandijan bridge on the road between Chalma and Kurigram.

Two enemy soldiers were killed in Kajaldighi area due to a mine

explosion. Mukti Bahini also demolished a culvert in Bhelapur on the road between Churlai and Keta.

There was a raid on Pakistani defences near Guthuma BOP in Feni. One Pakistani soldier was injured and a militiaman killed.

Mukti Bahini today demolished two railway bridges between Zoraganj and Feni disrupting railway communication between these two places.

Another group of Mukti Bahini raided Pakistani troops guarding Bala bridge in Sylhet district and killed two enemy soldiers. In another encounter with the occupation troops in Tookocha area, Mukti Bahini inflicted heavy casualties on enemy soldiers. Two razzakars surrendered to the freedom fighters on the same day in Dakshinku.

Mukti Bahini ambushed Pakistani troops near Sadekpur in Comilla district, killing 23 Pakistani soldiers including a captain. The freedom fighters captured six enemy rifles and some ammunition. One Pakistani soldier was also captured in this action.

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

No Durga Puja

FROM PAGE 3
puja in 2019 even though renovation work had begun.

However, a part of the playground, where the temple was set up, was harmed, causing damages worth around Tk 25 lakh, he stated.

They did not give permission to hold Eid Jamaat of Muslims either, he added.

The city corporation authorities have been dilly-dallying over this issue for over one month. We submitted the application asking for permission on August 26. At that time, the authorities assured us that they would grant us permission. But later, they stepped back from their decision," said Shamen Saha, general secretary of the Dhanmondi Sarbojonin Puja Committee.

Residents of Dhanmondi, Kolabagan, Hazaribag, Mohammadpur, New Market and its adjoining areas have been celebrating their Durga Puja at the Kalabagan field since 2007. There is no temple nearby for approximately 60,000 hindu devotees at the area, according to Shamen.

"We are still hopeful that the city corporation authorities will allow us to hold the puja considering our religious sentiment," said Shamen.

"If authorities do not give us permission to arrange their makeshift temples in the next 24 hours, we will conduct a peaceful movement across the country," he added.

DSCC authorities, however, stated that the committee's claims that there were no temples in the area are "totally false and misleading" as Fazle Noor Taposh, member of the parliament in Dhaka-10 constituency, renovated eight temples in Dhanmondi and Hazaribagh.

Covid death toll

FROM PAGE 12
samples were tested across the country and the current positivity rate is 2.77 percent. The overall positivity rate stands at 15.75 percent.

At least 814 Covid-19 patients have recovered during this period. The total number of recoveries now stands at 1,522,591 and the recovery rate is 97.51 percent.

Among the seven dead, three were men and four women.

Of them, two aged between 41 and 50 years, two between 61 and 70, and three between 71 and 80, added the release.

The coronavirus was first detected in December 2019 in China. Within months, the virus spread around the world.

Bangladesh first detected the presence of novel coronavirus in the country on March 8.

The infection rate began to shoot up in April this year and drop from mid-May.

The country then saw a steep rise in infection in July. The infection rate started dropping in September.

BSF enters Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12
despite him saying that no smuggler was there. They misbehaved with him and his family members.

However, BSF members told Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) at a flag meeting yesterday that they entered Bangladesh by mistake while chasing smugglers in the darkness.

Lalmonirhat-15 BGB Battalion Commander Lt Col SM Touhidul Alam PAC said the situation was brought under control after the flag meeting.

The BSF guards have admitted their wrongdoing, he said.

India, China troops face off

FROM PAGE 12
the situation is managed according to established protocols and mechanisms agreed upon by both sides.

"Physical engagement can last for a few hours prior to disengaging as per mutual understanding," one of the sources said.

Peace and tranquillity in these areas of differing perceptions has been possible due to adherence to existing agreements and protocols between the two countries, the source added.

However, the effectiveness of these protocols came into question following the stand-off in eastern Ladakh last year ensuing ingress by Chinese troops into Indian territory at multiple locations, which is still under way.

The latest face-off occurred as the two sides are set to hold the 13th round of Corps Commander talks for disengagement and de-escalation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. The two sides have so far undertaken disengagement from Pangong Tso and Gogra areas.

Last week, during a visit to forward areas of eastern Ladakh, Army chief General Manoj Naravane expressed

confidence that through talks the two sides would be able to reach a consensus on how disengagement is to take place and, by and by, all the friction points get resolved.

At the same time, he said that China had deployed troops in considerable numbers all across eastern Ladakh and northern frontiers right up to our Eastern Command.

"Definitely, there has been an increase in their deployment in the forward areas, which remains a matter of concern for us," General Naravane said, adding India was well poised to meet "any eventuality."

Chinese troops have often transgressed along the LAC. In August, over 100 Chinese troops transgressed nearly 5 km into Indian territory at Barahoti in Uttarakhand and returned after a few hours.

New species

FROM PAGE 12
Researchers have linked the new species, named *Paradoryphoribus chronocaribbeus*, to the modern tardigrade superfamily Isohyphobioidea and said that it could help them to map the creatures' progression through history.

RJ Nirob arrested

FROM PAGE 12
Tarin, Qcoom Chairman Ayub Ali, Chief Operating Officer Sajedir Rahman Sajid and Delivery Executive Tanvir Chowdhury Veer.

The plaintiff, Abdullah Khan Shoisob, said he along with some of his friends paid Qcoom Tk 56.57 lakh in advance for 23 motorbikes in June last year. They were assured that the motorbikes would be delivered in 30 days of the payment.

The delivery has not been made yet, he said, adding that Qcoom officials blamed the Covid-19 for the delay.

On September 29 this year, Shoisob and other customers went to the Qcoom office to know when they would get their deliveries. However, Ripan and Nirob misbehaved with them. At one point, they dragged them out of the office, the plaintiff said in the case statement.

He also said payment gateway Foster Payments was supposed to transfer customers' money to Qcoom only after the delivery of products.

He alleged that Foster Payments was involved in the scam. The Daily Star could not reach it for comments on the matter.

On October 3, the Detective Branch of police arrested the Qcoom owner on charges of fraudulence in a case filed under the Digital Security Act with Paltan Police Station.

The DB said that the company owes its customers at least Tk 250 crore.

Besides, at least Tk 397 crore that Qcoom collected from customers through orders for motorcycles is stuck with payment gateways, said AKM Hafiz Akter, the DB chief.

The company offered mind-boggling discounts on motorcycles, which tempted many to hand over their money in advance.

Unable to deliver the motorcycles, Qcoom started to give cheques of Tk 1.3 lakh against each order.

On realising that Qcoom was not

providing products to customers but was instead handing them cheques, the payment gateway Foster froze the money, Akter said.

Police says at least two dozen e-commerce platforms are under their radar.

Among the cases filed over e-commerce scam, the Criminal Investigation Department of police is investigating 24 cases filed by customers for fraudulence.

'GOVT NOT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSSES'

The government will not take responsibility for those who suffered losses while trading on different e-commerce platforms in the country, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said yesterday.

He made the comment while speaking as the chief guest at a programme in Rangpur.

He also said they received complaints of corruption and irregularities against 10 to 12 such platforms and that they were looking into the matter.

There are 20,000 e-commerce organisations in the country, and many are directly or indirectly involved with them. People incurred losses as they went to buy products from the platform at cheaper rates, he said.

The minister then claimed that the government was previously unaware of the tactics used by the platforms as nobody informed it about the matter. So, the government will not shoulder any responsibilities, he said.

But the government will act against the corrupt organisations, he said, without naming any of the platforms.

About the hike in onion prices, Tipu said the prices started soaring in local markets after onion prices increased in India due to torrential rain. He said the government was monitoring the market and the prices will go down if they drop in India.

[Our correspondent in Dinajpur contributed to this report.]

Carried by flash

FROM PAGE 12
Indigenous rights leader Andrew Sholomar, a resident of Rajai village and a member of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon's (Bapa's) Sunamganj chapter, said: "Visiting the Khasi Hills in Meghalaya in the last few years, I saw mining of stone, limestone and coal going on. That's causing the landslides there."

On August 23, a Bapa delegation, led by its Secretary Sharif Jamil, visited the area in Tahirpur and expressed grave concern over the situation.

Mohammad Amran Hossain, director of DoE in Sylhet, said, "These residues of the landslides are having an impact on the environment. We have no plan to assess the environmental loss there, but we will try to conduct a study."

Md Shamsudduha, executive engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board in Sunamganj,

said they were conducting a survey on filled up land as directed by the administration.

Asked about saving water bodies, he said they were planning a Tk 1,547 crore project to excavate the district's 14 rivers, including the Jadukata, the Maharam and the Patlai in Tahirpur.

Md Mahmudur Rahman, member of India-Bangladesh Joint River Commission, said there was no initiative to save the Jadukata and its tributary and distributary rivers and canals from being damaged.

Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner Md Zahangir Hossain said they would raise the issue of damages to Bangladesh's rivers at the next conference of the deputy commissioners (Bangladesh) and district magistrates (India) of the bordering districts of the two countries.

The next meeting is yet to be scheduled.

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ কলেজ ট্রাস্টের মালিকানাধীন বহুতল পুলিশ প্রাজা ভবনের ৯ম ও ১০ম তলায় নির্মাণ (সিভিল, ইকিউইটাস ইন্সট্রাকশন এবং সেন্টারি) কাজ করা হবে। উক্ত কার্য সম্পাদনের জন্য অস্থায়ী এবং সীমিতকালীন অতিরিক্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিয়োগ হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র জ্ঞানদানের শেষ তারিখ আশামী ১৯/১০/২০২১ খ্রিঃ, দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা। দরপত্র সরিহসহ বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য যোগাযোগ- বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ কলেজ ট্রাস্ট, ৫ম তলা, পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, ৬, ফনিজ রোড, ফুলবাড়িয়া, ঢাকা-১০০০। ০১৩১

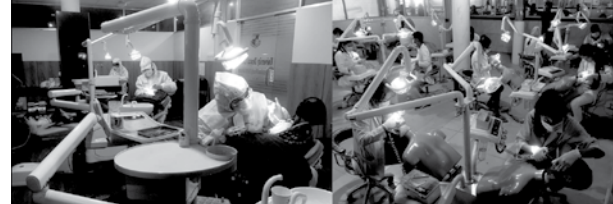
UDC University Dental College
Approved by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Bangladesh Medical & Dental Council
Affiliated With University of Dhaka Bangladesh

BDS Admission 2020-2021 26th Batch

আবেদনপত্র বিতরণ শুরু : ০৫-১০-২০২১ খ্রিঃ হতে যাত্রা/ছাড়ী ভর্তি পরীক্ষা শুরু : ২০-১০-২০২১ খ্রিঃ
আবেদনপত্র জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ : ১৪-১০-২০২১ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত যাত্রা/ছাড়ী ভর্তি পরীক্ষা শেষ : ২৪-১০-২০২১ খ্রিঃ

প্রাপ্ত আবেদনের কোটাভিত্তিক পূর্ণাঙ্গ তালিকা (Merit A-Z) প্রকাশ ১৮-১০-২০২১ খ্রিঃ

প্রতিদিন সকাল ৯:৩০ টা থেকে দুপুর ২:৩০ টার মধ্যে আবেদনপত্র সজ্ঞহ ও জমা দেয়া যাবে।



Dr. Md Wahiduzzaman Chairman
Prof. Dr Hosne Ara Begum Principal
120/A, Siddeshwari Outer Circular Road, Century Arcade, Moghbazar, Dhaka-1217. Ph.: 02-58314074, 01707079898, 01707079899, 01841477775, 01841477776

brac
Invitation for Tender (IFT) for Printing BRAC Diary

Project name	BRAC Diary Printing and Supply
Source of Funds	Own fund
Tender Items	Lot 01: BRAC Staff Diary – 2022 Lot 02: Complimentary Diary – 2022
Tender package no.	BRAC/BPD-BPD/21-09 (Diary)
Reference no. and date	IFT/BRAC/BPD/FA- BPD/21-09 Date: October 06, 2021
Time of delivery	All Diary to be delivered within 45 days from the date of signing Contract Agreement
Price of the tender documents	BDT. 1,000.00 (Non-refundable)
Tender security	As per Tender Documents.
Availability of tender documents	BRAC Procurement Dept, Gulshan Tower, 4th Floor, Plot # 355, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.
Date & time of Selling Documents	October 10, 2021 to October 24, 2021 Between 10.00 a.m to 4.00 p.m
Tender dropping place, date & time	Tender Box-3, BRAC Procurement Department (Ground floor), BRAC Center, 75, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212. October 25, 2021 Between 10.00 am to 2.00 pm
Tender opening place, date & time	BRAC Staff Canteen (4th Floor), BRAC Center. October 25, 2021 at 3.00 pm

BRAC Procurement Department, BRAC Centre, 75, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212. Mobile: 01700797237

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Manikganj PWD Division
Manikganj
www.pwd.gov.bd
Corrigendum
Date: 07/10/2021

Memo no-465

e-Tender Notice-e-Gp Tender OSTETM)
e-Tender is invited in the e-GP System Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>

S.L No	Tender ID & Reference No	Name Work	Last selling Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1	608630, 25.36.2600.002.03.301, 22.05(2334)(3/2) date 1/9/21	Establishment of Colonel Malek Medical Collage & 500 bedded hospital at Manikganj (Sub-head Construction of 450 m3/day capacity Sewage Treatment Plant). Financial Year: 2020-2021	17-Oct-2021 17:00	18-Oct-2021 11:30

This is an online tender. Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted to submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered bank's branches within due time.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) or (email: ee_manik@pwd.gov.bd) and call to 02-7710401) interested person can be communicated with the undersigned during office hours.

(Md. Abu Zafar)
Executive Engineer
Manikganj PWD Division
Manikganj.
E-mail: ee_manik@pwd.gov.bd.

GD-1806

MORE NEWS

India sells Air India back to Tata conglomerate

Tea-to-software Indian giant Tata is buying back Air India, 89 years after founding it as Tata Air and half a century following its nationalisation, the government said yesterday. The 180-billion-rupee (\$2.4-billion) deal marks the end of a lengthy effort to privatise the heavily-indebted flag carrier that according to the government has eaten up 1.1 trillion rupees (\$14.7 billion) in public money since 2009. The airline was founded in 1932 with the first flight piloted by Tata's eponymous chairman himself JRD Tata, flying mail and passengers in a single-propeller de Havilland Puss Moth from Karachi to Bombay, as the city was known then. The airline was nationalised in the 1950s and in the decades that followed the "Maharaja of the Skies" became synonymous with the hopes and ambitions of the newly independent country.

S Korea to raise emissions cut goal to 40pc by 2030

South Korea's government yesterday said it would raise its greenhouse gas reduction goal from 26.3 percent to 40 percent by 2030, as part of efforts to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The revised nationally determined contribution (NDC) was proposed by the ruling party in June and will be officially introduced at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November, with a government plan presented to the United Nations in December. Seoul-based Solutions for Our Climate said the provisional target is still insufficient to meet Paris Agreement goals and irresponsibly relies on overseas reductions.

Saudi talks on 'right track': Iran

Discussions between Iran and Saudi Arabia are on the right track but it will take more time to restore bilateral ties, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said in Beirut yesterday. Shia-majority Iran and Sunni kingdom Saudi Arabia, on opposing sides in multiple regional conflicts, have been engaged in talks since April with the aim of improving relations, for the first time since cutting ties in 2016. "We have achieved results and agreements, but we still need more dialogue," Abdollahian said. "The two parties will announce these agreements at the appropriate time. We welcome the continuation of the talks and the results that benefit both sides and the region," he added.

US special forces quietly training Taiwanese: official

US special operations forces have been quietly training Taiwanese troops for months, a move which China yesterday warned could cause "serious harm" to relations between Washington and Beijing. A contingent of around 20 special operations and conventional forces has been conducting the training for less than a year, the Pentagon official, who declined to be identified, told AFP Thursday, adding that some of the trainers rotate in and out. The US supplies weapons to Taiwan, including missiles for defense and fighter jets, in a bid to counter Beijing, which views Taiwan as its own territory and has threatened to forcibly retake control of the island. Washington also maintains an ambiguous commitment to defend Taiwan.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



People shout slogans during the funeral procession of slain government school principal Supinder Kour in Srinagar yesterday, a day after suspected anti-India militants shot dead two school teachers in Indian-administered Kashmir. PHOTO: AFP

SHORTAGES OF ESSENTIAL FOODS

Crisis-hit Sri Lanka ends price controls

AFP, Colombo

The Sri Lankan government yesterday ended price controls on essential foods in a bid to end black market trading as food shortages worsen amid a foreign currency crisis.

The cabinet decided to free prices for milk powder, wheat flour, sugar and liquefied petroleum gas hoping it would increase supplies.

"Prices could go up by as much as 37 percent across the board, but it is hoped dealers will not make unconscionable profits," a trade ministry official told AFP.

A shortage of foreign currency caused by a pandemic recession has unleashed the shortages of food, medicines and other essential items for the island nation of 21 million.

The government declared a state of emergency over the food shortages on August 31 and imposed rationing.

It forced farmers to sell their rice to a state agency and seized some from private warehouses. But the shortages worsened and last week authorities lifted controls on rice hoping to get supplies into markets.

During rationing, state stores sold only one kilogramme (2.2 pounds) of rice for each person. Sugar and lentils were similarly rationed. Virtually all private traders withdrew from the market.

With price controls removed from yesterday, a kilo of imported milk powder was increased by more than a third to 1,300 rupees (\$6.5), traders said. The price of gas is also due to go up by about 35 percent.

Sri Lanka was already suffering from heavy foreign debt repayments. Sri Lanka's foreign reserves stood at \$3.55 billion at the end of August. It has to repay about \$2 billion in foreign debts before the end of the year.

Some analysts and opposition politicians say it may be forced to seek a bailout.

Unequal Covid-19 jobs roll-out 'immoral', stupid

Says UN chief, appeals for \$8b to equitably vaccinate 40pc of world in 2021; daily cases rising again in UK

AGENCIES

UN chief Antonio Guterres on Thursday branded rich nations' vaccine hogging as immoral and stupid, saying choking off poorer countries' access to jobs risked undermining their own defences against the pandemic.

The World Health Organization said every country that had fully immunised more than 40 percent of its population was doing too little to stop the Covid-19 crisis, as they should be ensuring doses go to nations left wide open to the virus.

The WHO wanted 10 percent of the population in every country fully jabbed by the end of September -- a target missed in 56 countries, "through no fault of their own", said the organisation's chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The UN health agency said 1.5 billion vaccine doses were now being manufactured every month -- with less than one week's production needed to reach the 10 percent target.

"Vaccine inequality is aiding and abetting the Covid-19 pandemic," Guterres told a virtual press conference alongside Tedros.

"It is allowing variants to develop and run wild,

condemning the world to millions more deaths, and prolonging an economic slowdown that could cost trillions of dollars."

"All the vaccination effort made in developed countries to vaccinate the whole of the population, one, two or three times -- all that effort will fall apart. And these people will not be protected."

"So not to have equitable distribution of vaccines is not only a question of being immoral: it is also a question of being stupid."

He appealed for \$8 billion to help equitably vaccinate 40% of people in all countries by the end of the year, reports Reuters.

Tedros said more than 6.4 billion vaccine doses had now been administered, and almost a third of the world's population was fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Meanwhile, Britain recorded 40,701 new cases of Covid-19 on Thursday, up 12% on a week ago and marking the biggest total since September 6, government data showed.

The figures also showed an additional 122 people had died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test, compared with 143 a day earlier.



MILITARY BUILD-UP IN MYANMAR'S CHIN STATE

UN fears 'imminent attack'

REUTERS, Geneva

The United Nations human rights office yesterday said it is concerned the military in Myanmar could be preparing an imminent attack aimed at its opponents amid a build-up of heavy weapons and troops in areas of the country where the internet has also been shut down.

Ravina Shamdasani, UN human rights spokeswoman, said that it had documented intensifying attacks by the army in the past month in Chin state and other areas, with killings and burning of houses, in an apparent attempt to seek out armed resistance.

"What has happened now over the past few days, we have seen a real reinforcement,

a substantial deployment of heavy weapons and troops in these areas," Shamdasani told a UN briefing in Geneva, referring to townships in Chin, Sagaing and Magway.

The violence and build-up have led to the office of UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet becoming "very alarmed and concerned that there may be an imminent attack, a very serious attack against the civilian population."

Two high-level commanders have been deployed to the area, she said.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since a Feb. 1 coup led by military chief Min Aung Hlaing that ended a decade of tentative democracy. The return of military rule has prompted outrage at home and abroad.

'A tribute to journalism'

Congratulations pour in for Nobel Peace Prize winners

AGENCIES

Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov, journalists from the Philippines and Russia respectively, have received congratulations from around the world on winning the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to protect freedom of expression.

The United Nations human rights office yesterday said the award was "recognition of the importance of the work of journalists in the most difficult circumstances."

"Throughout the years we've seen an increase in attacks in journalists during the Covid lockdown as well," spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani told journalists at a UN briefing in Geneva.

"I think I'd speak for the High Commissioner [Michelle Bachelet] when I say congratulations to all journalists out there who are doing their job to keep us informed and to amplify the voices of victims everywhere," she added.

Media rights group Reporters Without Borders celebrated the announcement, expressing "joy and

urgency" in reaction to the news. "Joy because this is an extraordinary tribute to journalism, an excellent tribute to all journalists who take risks everywhere around the world to



defend the right to information," the group's director Christophe Deloire said from its Paris headquarters.

The group, known as RSE, has worked with Ressa and Muratov to defend journalism in their countries, and comes under regular criticism from authoritarian governments.

"And also urgency because it will be a decisive decade for journalism. Journalism is in danger, journalism is weakened, journalism is threatened," Deloire said. "Democracies are weakened by disinformation, by

rumours, by hate speech." "This prize is a great signal a very powerful message to defend journalism everywhere."

The award will give both journalists greater international visibility and may inspire a new generation of journalists, said Dan Smith, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Muratov co-founded the Russian newspaper, Novaya Gazeta, in 1993 and has been its editor-in-chief for 24 years. It is today one of the very few independent media outlets in Russia and has seen six of its journalists murdered during that time.

Ressa, who founded investigative journalism website Rappler, has focused much of her work on Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's controversial and violent war on drugs. The former CNN correspondent is on bail pending an appeal against a conviction last year in a cyber-libel case, for which she faces up to six years in prison. Two other cyber-libel cases were dismissed earlier this year.

Quote of the day



Taiwan does not seek military confrontation. It hopes for a peaceful, stable, predictable and mutually-beneficial coexistence with its neighbours. But Taiwan will also do whatever it takes to defend its freedom and democratic way of life.

TAIWAN PRESIDENT TSAI ING-WEN

NO TIME TO DIE

QUIZ CONTEST

The Daily Star | STAR CINEMAS

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

Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

QUIZ - 01

How many movies were released before 'No Time To Die' in the James Bond series?

James Bond's Aston Martin goes electric

REUTERS, Silverstone

Daniel Craig may be saying goodbye as James Bond, but his iconic Aston Martin is about to be given a new lease of life, for an ultra-cool \$1 million.

Bond actually drove a DB5, which features again in the latest Bond movie, "No Time To Die". But the DB6 is regarded by many as the epitome of British motoring style since it was first unveiled in 1965.

In a modern twist, the DB5 and DB6 are now being retrofitted to reappear in limited numbers as electric cars. "For the women and men of tomorrow this, electrified, is what you should be driving," said David Lorenz, CEO and founder of Lunaz, which specialises in making classic cars electric, at the wheel of a DB6.

"You've got the aesthetic beauty which you will never get in a modern vehicle yet the aesthetics can now be combined with a modern powertrain," Lorenz said.

Lunaz, based near Silverstone, home of the British Grand Prix, is producing limited numbers of an electric DB6. Each electrified Aston Martin DB6 will undergo an exhaustive bare-metal restoration that Lunaz calls 're-manufacturing'. The electric powertrains give the car a range of 255 miles.

Let's Build A Beautiful Tomorrow

ASSET DEVELOPMENTS

Owners of Land Plots Are Invited To Discuss Their Proposals

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of Jail Super Faridpur District Jail

Memo No. 58.04.2900.104.04.009.2021-3628 Date-07.10.2021

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the national e-GP portal:

SL No	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Publishing, Closing Date & Time
2.	618271	Supply of Unnatamaner Mashur Dal (Mota) for the period of October/21 to September/22	07-October-2021 08:00:00, 20-October-2021 11:30:00
	618272	Supply of Unnatamaner Cholar Dal for the period of October/21 to September/22	07-October-2021 08:00:00, 20-October-2021 11:45:00

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

(AI Mamun)
Jail Super
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GD-1805

Bangladesh will always be my first priority

Jaya Ahsan

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Jaya Ahsan is undoubtedly one of the most beloved film and television stars in our country. The National Award winner is also extremely popular in Tollywood, and is the recipient of many Indian film awards as well.

The diva is currently busy with multiple projects, and is presently residing in Kolkata for work. In a conversation with The Daily Star, she shared her upcoming plans and ventures.

There have been discussions about Tollywood actresses not getting enough roles because of the high demand for Bangladeshi artistes in the industry. What do you have to say about it?

This is absolutely not true, and I haven't heard anyone talking about this. Everyone is bound to receive praise if they make earnest endeavors, and I think good efforts should be appreciated.

Recognition is always given to those who truly deserve them. Tollywood has equally praised me and assigned me the work that I deserve. The producer of "Bishorjon" and "Bijoya" said that I had deserved those roles and this is why he worked with me.

People from Kolkata cherish me greatly, and they have invited me to go there. However, as I am first and foremost a representative of my country, Bangladesh will always be my first priority.

Film stars are often subject to various rumours surrounding their personal lives. How do you react when you are faced with baseless rumours as such?

I do get upset by such false news, as both an artist and a human being. However, I have learned to ignore such rumours. It is everyone's responsibility to be mindful of such news.

From Babita apa's era, an amicable relationship between journalists and artistes has persisted, and it should always be that way. A country's cultural image is harmed if an artist's image is tarnished, so it is necessary that journalists are more mindful of what they report.

According to you what are the qualities of an accomplished director?

I don't have the perfect definition of an 'accomplished' director. If one can stay true to their culture and can reach their audience sincerely, he or she is an accomplished director in my opinion. In the end, it does not matter how many people have watched the movie, or how much money the movie has earned.

All that matters is that the movie has a compelling story and is able to make history. For example, even after decades, we still tell the story of Ritwik Ghatak. Only time will tell whether the work of a director will be remembered or not.

The Bengali film industries on both sides of the border are going through tough times. Many cinema halls have already shut down. Do you think that the scarcity of good movies and the introduction of other platforms have anything to do with this?

I actually think the primary reason behind this crisis is the pandemic. It has not only affected our country, but the whole world has come to a standstill because of Covid-19.

I will not say that there aren't any good movies, but priorities change during such an intensely worrying situation.

People firstly need to fulfil their fundamental needs such as food, accommodation, clothes, before they can enjoy entertainment.

I am an optimistic person and I do believe that everything will gradually become normal. I have a lot of projects under my belt, and I'm currently trying to concentrate on those.

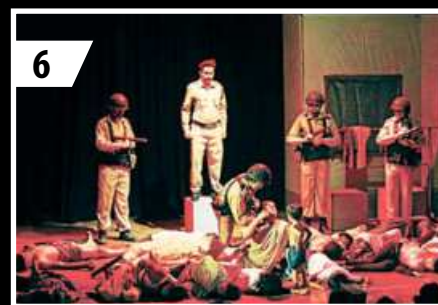
"Bini Sutoy" is being shown here in numerous cinema halls in Kolkata for the past 50 days. Though it is not a commercial movie, the audience is has received the film with open arms.



PHOTO: JAYA AHSAN'S FACEBOOK



The ninth installment of the Ganga Jamuna Cultural Festival kicked off at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) on October 1. Even though the event could not feature theatre troupes from India this year owing to the pandemic, renowned and upcoming troupes from all over the country are showcasing their talent in the festival. Here is a photo gallery from the event, which will run till October 12.



"Jonoker Mrittu Nei" by Zela Shilpakala Academy paid homage to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

(1) "Jyotisingita" by Jibon Sonket Natya Goshti. (2) After months of inactivity, the audience got to enjoy live theatre in a major capacity. (3) Swapnadal performing "Hellen Keller". (4) Bhager Manush" by Somoy. (5) "Shoto Nari Ek Purush" by Rangana Natya Goshti. (6) "Bornochora" by Moitri Natya Goshti. (7) Aranyak Natya Dal's "Kohe Facebook".

PHOTOS: MONON MUNTAKA

Translating Sultan through medium and philosophy

MORMEE MAHTAB

Dinar Sultana Putul is a contemporary artist based in Bangladesh whose art practices focus on the quasi-scientific research and documentation of organic mediums and materials that explore various themes surrounding the nature.

In the ongoing exhibition "Imaginary of the Common: 50 years of Sultan's Oeuvre" at Bengal Shilpalay, Dinar is exhibiting an installation project, which provides a unique tool to delve into the psyche of the revered artist, S M Sultan. Her project, "Madhyom O Darshon" (Medium and Philosophy) consists of a repertoire of organic elements extracted from nature, including clay, jute, and charcoal, which S M Sultan extensively used for his art.

"Not much has been recounted about the specific materials and mediums that Sultan used for his paintings in the available films or interviews. Bearing that in mind, I have attempted to provide a visual representation of these elements to help the viewers understand the depths of his colour-making process," says Dinar. "His unique philosophy of opting for elements available in nature to overcome the barrier of the limitations of medium and material is evident in the earthen colour palette that is central in most of this works. His use of flower extracts and jute define his simplistic approach to life along with his relationship with the ordinary people of Bengal."

The installation provides an essence of the process and philosophy of Sultan's greatest art works, making his paintings more alive while stretching the parameters of imagination of its viewers.

"Through this project, I didn't aim to provide my own interpretation of Sultan's work; rather, I merely consider myself as a translator of his practice, philosophy, and beliefs to the viewers," adds Dinar. Owing to his earlier influence her



Dinar Sultana Putul. PHOTO: COURTESY

my work, she began revisiting Sultan upon coming back to Bangladesh, going through his paintings and his interviews as his philosophy aptly resonated with hers.

"I noticed that the inherent value of art didn't require me to look for external subjects. Rather, it was present in nature itself. Believing in the philosophy that nature cannot be tamed by humans and that nature that holds power over us, I began translating the materiality of nature into my work taking exploring within the richness of my own history and culture," she explains.

After finishing her Bachelor's in Painting from Visva Bharati University of Santiniketon and her Post-Graduate at Maharaja Sayajirao University in Gujrat, she researched and experimented in the preparation of organic colours extracted from nature, including seeds, barks, roots and flowers. Using the same organic techniques, she learned to make paper from different natural fillers from flower-based pulp, agricultural crops, paper pulp, earth colours and the wasted parts after extraction of colour. Moreover, using the motifs from

Kantha and Terracotta, she developed a process of researching the various hues, textures, surfaces that is found in nature documenting it all in her work.

"During my years at Santiniketon, the co-relationship that I formed with the nature automatically generated ideas in my mind that influenced the subjects for my painting. My gradual pursuit towards preparing organic art materials developed into an art movement that stood against using material and medium that went against the nature."

Dinar has exhibited her work in Korean Youth Festival, Asian Art Biennale, National Art Exhibition at Shilpakala Academy, Kochi Art Biennale, Pune Art Biennale and



In "Imaginary of the Common: 50 years of Sultan's Oeuvre" at Bengal Shilpalay, Dinar is exhibiting an installation project, which provides a unique tool to delve into the psyche of the revered artist, S M Sultan.

many more events. Along with that, she has participated in the Sonalika Residency Programme at Delhi, Kalakriti Art Programme in Hyderabad, and International Environmental art camp at Rajasthan. She has also received the Lalit Kala Gujarat State Art Award in 2016.

The author is a student of Political Science, and a freelance journalist. Email: mormeeahatab23@gmail.com.



Facebook's global outage creates new poor: The influencer class

STAR ON THE EBB

Facebook's global outage has created a new kind of poor, the influencer class. In the six hours, a huge number of social media influencers have lost money after being unable to promote their products on Facebook's suite of apps, especially Instagram. Some of the big names, who make

anywhere from \$10 per post to even a million dollars for a single post, were also counting big losses after failing to post or promote any of their products for a whopping six hours. "Everyone is talking about how Mark Zuckerberg lost 7 billion dollars during the global outage. No one is looking at us or counting our losses. Because of these few hours of blackout, I now

do not have any money for my already booked trip to Tuscany," says one young influencer not willing to be named after her obvious fall from the riches. "I was supposed to promote some wine from the vineyard where I would get a free stay and would be paid but I lost that window," she added, now inconsolable. Bloomberg's senior reporter has also

weighed in on this phenomenon saying not only has the blackout resulted in Mark Zuckerberg falling down to the 5th spot in the Bloomberg billionaire's index, it has also created something that they have coined the "influencing poor". This is a class of people, who otherwise live a lavish life, but will be deeply affected if social media ceased to exist and would not know how to make

themselves useful or generate income without their "influence". In related news, fashion brands are already working on new lines called Poor Chic. It has also been learnt that Facebook is working on a new algorithm to target influencers with advertisements of cheaper brands as it has picked up words like "discount outlets" and "vouchers" on their phone microphones.

Bombshell reporting shows rich and powerful are corrupt, and nobody cares

BLEEDINGLY OBVIOUS CORRESPONDENT

The Investigative Consortium of International Journalists (ICIJ) recently shocked other journalists by revealing that powerful politicians and top executives around the world have been hiding their money away in offshore shell companies. The ICIJ are however disappointed because this revelation, while grabbing headlines and primetime news coverage around the world, has shocked none of the general public. "Where are the Facebook statuses bemoaning the degradation of the global moral fabric, the unchecked cannibalising effect of rampant capitalism?" an ICIJ journalist who was part of the Pandora investigation asked while talking to this correspondent on condition of anonymity. "And don't tell me Facebook was down for six hours... that is all I am hearing about. "I mean, we went through nearly 12 million documents. Do you understand that number? 12 million documents!!" This correspondent could only respond with silence, contemplating the 400 words he would have to write about this story. "We implicated Tony Blair, Sachin Tendulkar, the King Abdullah II, Shakira... what's wrong with the world?" The ICIJ had previously come up with similar "bombshell" reports -- the Panama Papers and the Paradise Papers. When asked why they were sticking with the letter P for their big bombshells



PHOTO: AFP

that really haven't been bombshells, the journalist hung up. Anyway, back to Pandora's box, this correspondent's supervisor told him that the box was important because it showed how the powerful -- which includes the likes of the Qatari ruling family, the Kenyan president, the Czech prime minister, major donors to UK's ruling party, etc. (zzzzz) -- have been avoiding paying taxes and hiding their wealth, costing their governments billions and potentially concealing criminal activities. It shows the failure of governments worldwide as politicians tasked with making sure that billionaires pay their

due are themselves stashing cash in tax havens. "It's a big deal!" he said. But a member of the Aam Janata -- who desperately wanted his name to be published but it was too common and does not fit in with the other exotic names in the article -- said, "We already knew this. There is a reason people want to be powerful. I think there are lessons from the pandemic papers we can all take -- if you want to be rich, you have to be corrupt. But that lesson too is one we all know about. "Stop saying obvious things. Next thing you'll tell me is Donald Trump is the president of America."

All international indexes are conspiracies: Minister

SHOAIB AHMED SAYAM

Chapasthan has landed at the bottom of yet another international index, but the country's top officials, like every other time, are not convinced by the report. "A vested quarter is behind all this," said Disinformation Minister Mahmudul Hossainullah Rocky, and all citizens totally believed him and definitely did not groan after hearing the response. The minister said this during a press conference centring the Freedom to Dissent Index, published recently. When asked to identify the vested quarter, Rocky said, "There are so many quarters, man. You expect me to remember all of them? Just know that it's vested." One not-so-bright journalist asked, "Sir, what do you mean by vested? Do they wear vests?" And the official replied, "They might wear vests, but we don't know for sure. These people scheme from the shadows, and shadows indicate darkness, which means it's hard to decipher whether they wear vests in absence of adequate lighting." Other dumb back-and-forths like this took up a major part of the conference. "If these useless indexes, which always put us at the bottom, are so accurate, how come we are developing the country at break-neck speed? Other countries are just jealous of our sexy development," Rocky remarked. When asked whether economic development is all that matters, the minister said, "Like, duh."

"And what's all this about dissent? We allow DNP, the opposition party, to say the stupidest things every day. They should be jailed for their comments, but like good guys, we tolerate their existence," he said. One brave journalist disputed Rocky's remark on the report's accuracy, to which the official replied, "Are you implying that these international organisations know Chapasthan better than us Chapasthanis?" He went on to say that Chapasthan Bureau of Statistics (CBS) produces the best reports on the country, way better than global ones, and revealed that CBS has published an index on how bad international agencies are at making indexes. "The CBS report found that they are really, really bad," Rocky stated. The CBS report gave CBS and its affiliated bodies a full score of 100, that too with stickers of stars and smiley faces, and gave all international agencies negative 100. The minister urged all citizens to only believe CBS for the country's good and their own wellbeing. "If you hear anything bad about us, remember that it's all part of a conspiracy," he said. The brave journalist could not be found after the conference.

Vested quarters are behind everything wrong with the country. I don't know who they are, but they probably wear vests.



Must we pander to every whim of transport owners?

Waiver of late fines for vehicles shows the extent of power held by transport lobbyists

WE are disappointed to learn of yet another concession made by the authorities to transport associations in the form of late fine waiver for vehicles and drivers without updated documents. According to a report by this daily, the government, apparently under pressure from transport owners' associations, has waived the fines for failing to update necessary documents in time. This is the fourth time that it has announced such waivers since January 2020. Although the benefit would extend to all motor vehicles, private or commercial, it is the latter—buses, trucks and lorries—that have the most to gain from this as, according to insiders, a good number of the 450,000 commercial vehicles (and their drivers) don't have proper documents. The documents include a vehicle's fitness certificate, tax token, route permit, driver's licence, etc.

The threat that unfit vehicles and unlicensed drivers pose to road safety is not lost on us. The question is: Why would the government agree to such waivers? The chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has brushed aside the allegation of concessions and defended the decision, saying it would give vehicle owners who could not update their papers because of the Covid-19 lockdown a chance to do so now. But what makes it highly suspect is its timing, coming as it does mere weeks after a two-day transport strike organised to press home a 15-point demand, including the waiver of late fines. The repeated nature of waiver decisions—such periods of remission were also announced several times between 2015 and 2020—also shows that there is more to it than meets the eye.

Experts say the latest waiver decision cannot be seen in isolation from past concessions made to transport owners and workers, notably the inordinate delay in the implementation of the Road Transport Act, 2018, which remains ineffective even after three years. The law stipulated hefty fines on vehicles with outdated papers, among other punitive measures meant to bring discipline in the transport sector and curb road accidents. Its non-execution and the continued attempts to amend its more stringent provisions are proof of the enormous power exercised by transport owners and lobbyists, many of whom are directly linked to the ruling party. In essence, what we are witnessing is a helpless surrender to the transport associations at the expense of public interests.

It's worth recalling that it is largely because of noncompliant owners and drivers that the country witnessed a 40 percent rise in road accidents and deaths till July this year, compared to the same period last year, according to police data. As many as 3,095 people were killed in 3,259 road accidents in the first six months of this year alone. The numbers of accidents and deaths were 2,609 and 2,635, respectively, in 2018. The numbers rose to 4,198 and 3,918, respectively, last year. If the government continues to pander to the transport owners, allowing unfit vehicles to ply the roads and their drivers to get off scot-free, the number of casualties will only increase. We must not allow this to happen. The government must protect public interests, stop giving concessions to transport businessmen, and bring discipline in the sector.

Illegal arms trade in the southwest must stop

Authorities must hold politically connected criminals to account

IN the aftermath of the arrest of Jashore-based Bangladesh Chhatra League leader Akul Hossain on September 2, and the subsequent interrogation by the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, disturbing revelations have come to light about the prevalence of illegal arms trade in the country's southwestern region. According to a report published by this daily on Thursday, Akul, until his arrest, had been smuggling firearms from India and selling them to political leaders of different districts (including Jashore and Khulna) in the last few years.

However, this arrest could have come about two years earlier, in June 2019, when two cases were filed against Akul under the arms and explosives laws after police recovered 12 magazines, three rounds of bullets, one bomb, six locally made weapons, and phensedyl bottles from his Benapole home. It was allegedly due to Akul's connections with influential politicians, such as the Benapole municipality mayor, that he was able to evade arrest for so long. Given the culture of impunity enjoyed by politically connected criminals in Bangladesh, such arrests seldom happen, but what is even rarer is their conviction. So, while those said to be connected with Akul have been quick to distance themselves and deny their involvement in his crimes, there can be no denying that such an illegal trade could not have gone undetected for so long without a little inside help.

In such cases of politically motivated crimes, it is the protection that criminals receive from their political masters that allows them to operate with impunity and carry on with their nefarious businesses. If, as police and local politicians have said, influential Awami League leaders did help Akul conduct his illegal arms trade, then they too need to be dealt with—not just by their party, but also by the law enforcement. Of course, it is first and foremost the responsibility of the law enforcement bodies to deal with such criminal activities impartially and continuously. However, the party itself—the ruling party, in this case—must also keep its own members in check and hold them to account, so that others like them are also discouraged from conducting such illegal activities, which may have a huge destabilising effect on local law and order situation, especially ahead of elections.

A momentary lapse of reason

Some enjoy more 'equal rights' than the others on our city roads



BLOWN' IN THE WIND
SHAMSAD MORTUZA

RECENTLY, while I was driving to my office, an SUV full of security men whooshed past me on the wrong side. I slowed down and let the car come to my lane near Ganabhaban. It took me a while to realise that there was a small motorcade behind. There was no flag stand or any other insignia to indicate the protocol or the commercial barometer of the "private" caravan.

When I got on to Mirpur Road, I indicated to move to the right lane as I needed to turn near the Residential Model College. The pilot SUV, flashing emergency lights, suddenly veered right and came

Those who drive in Dhaka would find my logic banal and my retorts insane. It's not only a private security team, but also a CNG-run autorickshaw or a city bus that could have "sided" me without any warning. Then why am I expressing my frustration over such a trivial issue? Having studied psychoanalysis for my academic training, I can locate my repressed frustrations in the unconscious from where they were trying to make a return. My attempt to talk back to security men was foolish, and can perhaps be explained in Freudian terms. The father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, has told us how the feelings and emotions that we cannot process or negotiate get transferred to the unknown territory of our mind. They remain deposited there, but can make a return in displaced or transformed form—like in an outburst or in a dream or a creative outpouring.

"unknown" authority was conditioned by a series of interactions that took place during my short drive from Banani to Mohammadpur. I was stuck near the newly designed U-loop at Mohakhali, as the extended funnel narrowed the thoroughfare. Any chance to widen the road and to have all four lanes for the incoming traffic from Uttara has been snatched by the construction of some government offices, including that of the roads and bridges authority. On the other side of the road, there is a market dangerously close to the rail track, which has created a similar effect of a bottleneck.

Then you come to the flyover only to find that some flag-bearing or insignia-ridden vehicles are blocking the approach road under the watchful eyes of traffic sergeants. Anyone without a badge is, however, punished. You get down from the flyover and hit the congestion near the Old

Even common men who have the platform to unite and create nuisances, such as the ride-sharing service motorcycles or the CNG autorickshaws, are there—all nonchalantly waiting for the signal to be cleared. Their body language is simple: if I can't travel from this side of the road, how dare you move freely on the other side? A game of patience is initiated. We wait because they wait. We will pass, only when they can pass. What does it tell us about a nation? Is there any sociological study of Dhakaites who own the city without any ownership?

By the time I reached the side alley of the Ganabhaban complex, there was a wave of pent-up anger in me. I was frustrated by the irresponsibility of my fellow citizens. The power nudge of the motorcade, thus, made me react without thinking of any consequence. And I was lucky to have none.

Wasn't there an incident where a lawmaker's son got into trouble for getting into street rancour? The battle of the four wheels and two wheels ran a full course. Epic! When I was a student at a public university, our bus driver used to drive like a Formula 1 driver in Dhaka. We used to feel like the kings of the streets. I heard one day that one of my university's bus drivers got into an altercation with a microbus belonging to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). This was in the 90s. The microbus driver bragged, "Can't you see the sign of my office?" The other one quipped, "You work for one prime minister. In my bus, everyone is a potential prime minister." Ah, democracy. It is nice to know about such an egalitarian theory.

It is nice to hum Tagore, for instance, "We all rule as kings in the kingdom of our King. Why else would we join hands with him?" But how many of us can internalise such principles, let alone practise them?

I will end with an incident that took place about two weeks ago. A driver of a ride-sharing motorbike set fire to his own vehicle when a traffic sergeant was about to fine him for wrong parking. The man could not take it anymore. He had had enough of the daily routine of systemic abuses. The smothered fire in him came out as a return of the repressed, and in that momentary lapse of reason, he destroyed the very vehicle that he depended on for his livelihood. The police later quizzed him to learn that the man was already at a tipping point as he was under huge debt.

Speaking of which, I must return to my viewing of *Squid Game* on Netflix, the Korean survival drama on class disparity. Sometimes, illusions are the only way to handle reality. They are the therapeutic antidotes to momentary lapses of reason. Happy weekend!

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



Will we ever get over our unruliness on the streets of Dhaka?

FILE PHOTO: STAR

in front of me. The other two of the fleet wanted to overtake from behind. I was in no mood to give them room for a second time. They would go straight, yet they came to the first lane to block me. The cars behind started honking, and one of the drivers started yelling. I guess my formal attire and shades did not allow their words to turn into invectives. But judging from their testosterone levels, I guess they were short by a minor notch. I had to tell the guy, "If you are going straight, why do you have to block the right lane?"

For a split second, I had the fallacy of having equal rights to the road. I am a tax-paying, law-abiding member of society. I have every right to be on the road without the infringement of any other force, as long as I am not violating the traffic rules. The reality is something else, however, and not acknowledging that reality could be lethal. Then why, on a sane mind, did I react? Did I really have control over that momentary lapse of reason? This is where Freud's psychoanalysis comes in.

My conscious act to defy the

Airport as some provosts are making sure that their bosses get priority treatment. Once you enter the link road, you have to negotiate motorbikes coming from the wrong sides, buses stopping mindlessly to pick and drop passengers, potholes and puddles, clueless pedestrians, ambulances, speeding over-takers, and angry flashes of lights from the vehicles of uniformed men to finally reach the BNCC crossing.

And then you encounter two extra lanes of incoming vehicles from the wrong side, most featuring some signs of authority.

In the guise of rules, let's not kill the golden goose

The e-commerce sector needs to be regulated in a way that does not hamper growth

SAYED ARAFAT ZUBAYER and MD GIAS UDDIN KHAN

LOCAL e-commerce platforms have experienced exponential growth in recent years due to improved living standards and changing shopping behaviour. The fast rate of internet adoption, improvement in logistics and communications, and the rise of online banking and mobile financial services have played crucial roles in this trend. The tech-adaptable younger generation (over 50 percent of the population are under 35 years) and the growth of the middle and affluent classes are also contributing factors. While the Covid-19 pandemic has had massive repercussions on most other businesses, it has helped the e-commerce sector expand dramatically. According to the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (eCAB) and industry insiders, sales on e-commerce platforms rose by about 70 percent in 2020, and the industry's market size stood at nearly USD 2 billion in August 2020, as opposed to USD 654 million in 2016.

However, the steady growth of e-commerce platforms has also brought with it numerous complaints and accusations of irregularities. According to several law enforcement agencies, between January 2016 and August 2021, about 20,000 e-commerce-related complaints had been lodged with the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection. The most common complaint is of the products not delivered on time, even after the payments have been cleared. While these complaints have tarnished the e-commerce sector's progress, it has also led to questions on the role and effectiveness of the relevant regulatory bodies. There have been concerns over the business model, transparency, and operational conduct of various e-commerce companies for quite some time, but there has also been a total absence of a proactive role among the regulators of this industry.

The usual charade of attempting to conceal the mistakes made by the authorities concerned, which is commonly observed in most such cases, is now being witnessed again after various controversies related to the e-commerce sector came

to the surface. Instead of acknowledging their faults, the regulators are busy pointing out the flaws in the existing laws and system, and even shifting the blame onto the victimised customers and the media houses that previously promoted these platforms. Undoubtedly, gullible consumers and media houses do bear a certain responsibility for falling for the recent scams. However, the authorities cannot deny liability for their mismanagement, as well as the complete lack of collaboration among regulatory agencies, which heavily contributed to this state of affairs.

The guidelines provide proper instructions for the delivery, pricing, and showcasing of products. Following these new directives, the Bangladesh Bank has already started applying the escrow service, where it acts as a third party by receiving the payment against the transaction and transferring it to the selling party after the delivery of the product. However, this service has also been blamed for delays in clearing the payments due to the manual method of verifying receipts. Nevertheless, the introduction of these operating guidelines has, to a certain extent, brought the mismanaged e-commerce sector under

do not have the unintended effect of hampering growth. Standing on the brink of LDC graduation with the possibility of reaping demographic dividends, there are still a number of issues plaguing the country, of which unemployment is a core concern. The e-commerce sector has the potential to create a significant number of jobs to overcome this challenge. According to eCAB, 100,000 new jobs were created in the e-commerce sector during the pandemic, and within the next three to four years, there will be 500,000 jobs in this sector. Many young entrepreneurs are also becoming self-reliant through trading their products on social media platforms like Facebook (there are around 100,000 Facebook-based digital shops). These numbers are likely to continue to increase.

The recent turmoil in the e-commerce sector was a long time coming. Many experts had been making predictions about such consequences and had issued warnings, most of which were ignored. As a result, the accused companies continued to exploit loopholes in the system, while the regulatory authorities failed to take timely actions. Now, the confidence of consumers in e-commerce companies is shaken. Regaining this confidence should be the topmost priority, since the sector cannot function without it. There is no point in passing new rules or issuing guidelines if they are not going to be implemented. For this, cooperation among the relevant bodies, such as the Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh Bank, eCAB and the law enforcement agencies, is mandatory. In addition, the authorities need to focus on faster clearance of payments made through escrow services by incorporating advanced tools to check invoices.

Finally, consumers also need to be more cautious when offered unrealistic lucrative deals by dodgy e-commerce companies. With collective efforts from all stakeholders, we can ensure that the prospects of this burgeoning sector, and the gains that it has made so far, do not simply vanish.

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The e-commerce industry, despite all its problems, has a huge potential to contribute to the growing economy of Bangladesh.

ILLUSTRATION: COLLECTED

It is incomprehensible that a sector, which is predicted to achieve a market size of a whopping USD 3 billion by 2023, has been operating without any specific operating guidelines for such a long time. Although a digital trade policy was enacted in 2018, it did not have clear guidelines for e-commerce sites. Last year, when complaints of misconduct and consumer rights violations started to emerge against numerous companies, this absence of proper e-commerce guidelines sparked much debate. In July 2021, the authorities finally issued the Digital Commerce Operation Guidelines, as well as numerous additional rules, in an attempt to stabilise

some control. But the damage has already been done.

After the embezzlement and irregularities of various e-commerce sites came to light, numerous cases were filed by aggrieved customers demanding reimbursement. The authorities are now carrying out investigations related to suspicious transactions, and have formed a 16-member panel to make recommendations that will help to establish a properly regulated e-commerce sector.

While a well-regulated e-commerce sector is definitely the need of the hour, we must also be careful so that the regulations

How to fix the mess in the power sector?

Bangladesh could learn some lessons from recent power crises in China and the US



ABDULLAH SHIBLI

AN OPEN DIALOGUE
THE power sector in Bangladesh could be considered a success story. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognise energy as a key enabler for development (cf. Goal 7). Bangladesh and all SDG

participants have promised to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services for all by 2030. And Bangladesh appears to be ahead of the game. In his budget speech in June this year, the finance minister claimed that "through integrated development of production, transmission, and distribution systems, 99 percent of the total population of the country has been brought under the electricity coverage." In July, the country cancelled 10 coal-powered power plant projects to reduce its future carbon footprint. According to an official of the power and energy ministry, "There is a concern globally about (the use of) coal and we have to adhere to that. The government is committed to reducing carbon emissions."

All this is good news, but a deeper inquiry reveals some unsettling and worrisome ailments. The most important puzzle for many observers is the coexistence of surplus and shortage in power supply. According to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), while we have an installed capacity of 25,000MW, the maximum power generated is a mere 13,000MW due to fuel shortage, distribution glitches, and other issues. It is estimated that USD 40 billion would be needed for the construction of 120,000km of distribution lines to support power supply for all. Bangladesh overinvested in generation, but fell short in setting up power transmission and distribution infrastructure, creating this current morass.

In sum, Bangladesh has idle capacity to the tune of almost 60 percent, but lacks the institutions and power lines to utilise it. Another way of viewing our failures is that we face a "paradox of surplus," paraphrasing a famous line from Nobel Prize-winning economist Ronald Coase.

Grappling with this everlasting conundrum, the government initiated a revision of its five-year-old Power Sector Master Plan (PSMP), but the work on this project has been postponed. "June was the month when the new PSMP should have been introduced. The public anticipated the plan because it should have addressed the country's power generation overcapacity issue. However, the PSMP has been delayed, and Bangladesh is now back to the drawing board," writes Viktor Tachev of the US-based

retired, utilisation will drop below 40 percent, unless a very high rate of power generation growth is maintained," says Simon Nicholas of IEEFA in a briefing note.

Various studies have questioned the reliability and quality of the generated electricity, which has affected the financial viability of our small and medium enterprises. On paper, while 95 percent of the population has access to power, the actual number of households which have dependable juice is far smaller than the target. The smaller towns

than 16 hours of supply per day. Similarly, only about 11 percent are in Tier 3, receiving more than eight hours of supply. "Evening availability of supply is the main problem, affecting about 70 percent of rural households and 73 percent of urban households. Reliability of supply is the second most pressing issue, forcing people to count on fossil fuel-based backup systems. Quality of energy service is also a major concern in both rural and urban areas. Issues with reliability and quality have caused commercial and industrial customers' share of consumption to decrease over the years," the USAID critique adds.

We have known for some time that, outside the big cities such as Dhaka and Chattogram, the quality of power is poor. Rural people are the worst sufferers of frequent load-shedding or brownouts. According to the data *The Business Standard* collected from rural and semi-urban areas of 21 districts on June 5 and 10, many of these places remained without electricity for six hours on average, and the longest duration of power outage was 12 hours. My own sources from the Chattogram region—including Rupkania and Rangunia under the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB)—paint a similar picture.

A report in *The Daily Star* published on September 9, 2021, titled "Frequent power cuts make life unbearable in Tangail," indicates that production in the mills and industries has also been badly hit by the disruption in power supply. Dr Ahsan H Mansur, executive director at the Policy Research Institute, said he had a voluntary organisation in a rural area serviced by the BREB that remains without electricity for almost 12 hours a day.

"We are paying Tk 12.5 per unit of electricity, but we are not getting the benefit compared to what we pay. We have to run generators all the time... Industries are incurring losses because of voltage fluctuation and destabilisation," he said.

"We suggested that the authorities focus on this issue so that people can trust the grid line; otherwise, the power sector will continue to be a loss-maker," Mansur added.

In my view, another major weakness has been the back and forth with policy decisions. While it is commendable that the CO2-emitting coal-fired plants were scrapped, it has adversely affected the government's credibility.

Decisions on fuel mix have been a measure of the indecision, lack of transparency, and the haphazard nature of power sector planning at the top. For example, in summer, the government bought liquefied natural gas (LNG) on the spot market, but decided to stop this practice as spot prices shot up. The government has consistently subsidised the power and energy sector due to ill-advised pricing policies.

"The energy system is not a light switch," said Daniel Yergin, author and vice-president of consultancy IHS Markit. "When you go too fast, you hit the bumps."

Incidentally, the current power crises in China and in Texas, the US, should be an eye-opener for our energy planners. In China, there has been widespread power rationing in September triggered by a shortage of coal and increased prices. In the US, during extreme winter weather in February earlier this year, a surge in electricity demand collided with declining generation, forcing the state's grid operator to implement rolling blackouts.

In a recent memo titled "What the Texas energy crisis means for Bangladesh's energy security," experts at the IEEFA pointed out that the price volatility of LNG could exacerbate Bangladesh's energy insecurity and lead to further underutilisation of LNG-powered capacity.

My research of the gas market leads me to believe that price volatility is likely to get worse. Natural gas prices have surged globally after some unforeseen events—including bad weather, maintenance catch-ups, and supply bottlenecks. Russia and the US have cut back production, and Bangladesh is likely to be vulnerable to shortages or even a calamity in the coming years.

As a World Bank report on Bangladesh's power sector said, "Consumers will enjoy the full benefits of electrification only when both the quality and the availability of power in the system increase—through savings from enhanced energy efficiency, through investment in new generation and new sources of power, (and) through improvements in the system's ability to transmit and supply power at the consumer end."

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The double trouble of power overcapacity and underutilisation is causing Bangladesh a massive loss.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).

To compensate the power plants for idle capacity, the national budget this year alone allocated Tk 9,000 crore for "capacity charges," on top of the Tk 5,000-6,000 crore for fuel subsidies. The old PSMP envisages a 25 percent reserve capacity, rather than the 60 percent that now exists. This is way more than the best practices of power generation followed in other developing countries.

Unfortunately, capacity additions over the next five years will cause the utilisation rate to decline even further. "With another 21,000 megawatts (MW) due to come online by 2025 and only 5,500MW of old capacity due to be

and particularly rural areas are vulnerable with no assurance of uninterrupted supply on a reliable schedule with adequate voltage.

A US Department of Commerce publication recently listed poor transmission and distribution infrastructure, inadequate thermal efficiency in a large number of ageing power plants, and a mismatch between the types of energy needed by existing plants and the fuel mix available, as key areas of concern. These constitute the proverbial Achilles heels of the power sector.

In its report "Power Sector Reform in Bangladesh," the USAID points out that only 11 percent of grid-connected households are in Tiers 4 and 5—i.e. they are receiving more

Build forward fairer in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic



WINDI ARINI

CITIES have been the epicentre of Covid-19 pandemic since 2020. City authorities have been the frontline responders—from running testing stations, to managing food distribution, to disposing of corpses. Yet, they are often under-resourced and their critical role in policy implementation is often overlooked.

Now a growing movement of Human Rights Cities is charting the way forward through pandemic recovery plans to not only "build back better," but also to "build forward fairer."

In many cities, structural inequalities that existed before the Covid crisis resulted in sprawling slums, traffic congestion and pollution. Poorer residents have limited access to water, sanitation, clean cooking fuels, and other amenities; Covid and lockdown measures exacerbated those inequalities. Loss of income opportunities and confinement to substandard housing, for example, have made this a worse pandemic for some than the others. Local authorities should now take concerted action to include marginalised groups such as slum residents, women, migrants, and minorities in pandemic response and recovery efforts—as some are already doing.

In the southern city of Birgunj, Nepal, bordering the Indian state of Bihar, many were cut off from access to basic amenities when the city went into lockdown. The city authorities set a target that no one should lack food, and undertook 45 days of relief distribution. They also made household deliveries of oxygen to Covid patients, to

reduce the load on the city's hospitals.

In Nagpur, India, to tackle rampant profiteering, the city authority introduced a single-vendor system for sales of remdesivir, a drug used to treat Covid patients.

In Baguio City, Philippines, the city has surpassed the testing average, and has now set an ambitious target of vaccinating 95 percent of its residents.

These cities have all allied themselves with the growing movement of Human Rights Cities in the region. Their commitment is to reframe their policies and practices to align with human rights principles and norms that originated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If the approach can be summed up in one phrase, it would be "No one left behind"—the slogan popularised by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the international community in 2015.

Asian governments are often viewed as laggards in the implementation of international human rights standards. This is unfair. While social and development challenges loom large, city authorities are often in the forefront of action for change.

The pandemic has brought opportunity for local governments to better protect human rights—as the cities mentioned here have chosen to do. However, many local government authorities need capacity-building and practical guidance to "localise" human rights in ways that are relevant to their own post-pandemic context. In this effort, national authorities can give important signals and support.

In 2016, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of Indonesia established a national platform on Human Rights Regencies/Cities. The platform enables voluntary assessment of the city authorities' performance in



The city of Gwangju in South Korea is one of the leading examples of Human Rights Cities in Asia.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

fulfilling people's economic, social, and cultural rights—such as the right to water and sanitation, or the right to food—while also giving attention to some civil and political rights—such as the right to information, non-discrimination and, more recently, participation in governance.

As of 2020, 439 of 514 regency and city authorities in Indonesia participated in the programme, and 259 of them were recognised as Human Rights Cities or Regencies. City authorities derive prestige from the award, and have taken steps to

connect international human rights norms with national laws and city by-laws, policies, and programmes. The East Lampung Regency in Sumatra, for example, has highlighted its commitment to achieving an inclusive, democratic, and solidarity-based society through dialogue with urban dwellers.

A mayoral decree emphasises the city's role in safeguarding human rights, and identifies the responsible units within the mayor's office, their tasks, and the scope of their budgets.

In Gwangju, Republic of Korea, local

authorities decided to tackle the issues of poverty, high suicide rates, out-of-school children, and mobility-impaired residents. Through open forums and consultations, they sought to understand the situation of migrants, undocumented workers, and other marginalised residents. Based on the outcomes, they devised several action plans that included educating citizens on migrant rights, and establishing a comprehensive support network for migrants.

In October 2021, the city of Gwangju convened local government authorities from around the world at the annual World Human Rights Cities Forum. Gwangju has been at the forefront in the promotion of the Human Rights City concept, and emphasises the importance of local government authorities taking active and responsible roles in promoting and protecting human rights.

In this year's forum, city authorities will discuss the emergence of new social contracts for the post-pandemic recovery, and 11 local authorities from Asia will present their own projects for integrating human rights-based approaches into local policies and programmes for more resilient, fair, and sustainable cities.

Throughout the region, there is a growing realisation that protecting human rights makes for safer, greener, and better places to live. Adopting a human rights-based approach helps prioritise vulnerable groups that would otherwise be overlooked, and addresses local needs and challenges through participatory processes. City authorities hold the keys to embedding good practice and "building forward fairer."

Windi Arini is a programme officer at the Jakarta office of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

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QUOTABLE Quote

LOIS MCMASTER BUJOLD
(born November 2, 1949)
American fiction writer

The dead cannot cry out for justice. It is a duty of the living to do so for them.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Reduce to extreme hunger
- 7 Forum wear
- 11 Right away
- 12 Spoken
- 13 Wicker material
- 14 Gambler's giveaway
- 15 John of music
- 16 Kelly's former cohort
- 17 Mailbox part
- 18 Like cows and sows
- 19 Flock reply
- 21 Take home
- 22 Michigan city
- 25 Sought a seat

DOWN

- 1 Going rates
- 2 In any way
- 3 Words to live by
- 4 All told
- 5 Checkout swipe
- 6 Brood tender
- 7 Clan symbol
- 8 Pizzeria herb
- 9 Pisa genius
- 10 Ready to go
- 16 Kidney-related
- 18 Largest bone
- 20 Stable mothers
- 22 Pakistani port taverns, e.g.
- 24 Light breezes
- 25 Meal
- 28 Note from the boss
- 30 Places last
- 31 Happened
- 32 Comfy spots
- 34 Reasonable
- 36 Total

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BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER

YOU'RE FINALLY BACK! WHAT IDIOTIC MESS DID YOU CREATE THIS TIME?
SLAM!

YOU ALWAYS STICK UP FOR THE TREE OR THE WALL OR THE LIGHT POLE!
YOU NEVER SYMPATHIZE WITH ME!

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

M	A	N	O	R	S	I	S	E	R
O	Z	A	W	A	I	N	A	N	E
T	A	T	E	R	S	O	R	T	S
E	L	I	E	M	S	A	R	T	
L	E	O	G	A	L	L	E	E	
S	A	N	D	A	L	B	L	E	D
A	U	S	T	E	R	E			
A	B	L	E	E	X	A	L	T	S
N	A	P	A	S	H	P	A	T	
I	N	A	L	E	I	A	B	E	
M	A	R	A	T	B	E	R	L	E
A	N	K	L	E	I	N	K	E	D
L	A	S	E	R	T	E	S	T	S

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

MOM, CAN I DYE MY HAIR BLUE?
UM, I'LL TALK TO DADDY.

I KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
OH? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

THAT I NEED TO GET TO DADDY FIRST!
GET BACK HERE!!



PHOTO: AUTHOR

Remembering Mohiuddin Ahmed, the founder of UPL

DILRUBA Z. ARA

Countless people cross our path as we walk through this temporal life; but only one or two strike us as people with no darkness within. Mohiuddin Ahmed was one of those unique humans. He radiated pure light, and for those within this light, time always moved peacefully because life seemed to have met all his wants and needs, and as a man so at ease with the ways of life, he effortlessly smoothed out the many negative thoughts of his visitors and friends, just by being who he was.

Nadia (Mahrukh) had texted me about his deteriorating condition a few hours before his passing. I had known he was unwell, but it was still difficult for me to cope with that news. I went out walking in the countryside, keeping my thoughts at bay. While I was out, the final text came. For a second everything went blurred, even though the Nordic sun was bright and strong. My legs bent, and I had to sit by the path in the shade of a tree. It was hours before I could walk back home.

Since then, I have been trying to come to terms with this grief and loss. On his first family memorial service on Zoom, I was a dumb participant, even though many words were bubbling in my head. It has taken me



house before he called for me.

It was a neat room that smelt of books, wisdom and olden times. There was a set of sofas before his desk. He invited me to take a seat, while he himself sat opposite me. He had a reassuring expression on his face, and I remember him laying the contract on the table and offering me a pen. He kept his eyes fixed on the document as I read through it. He must have had read the doubts on my face. As soon as I was ready, he declared with the confidence of any great leader that he knew what he was doing and that I shouldn't worry. Later, as I got to know him, I found out that it was one of his virtues to follow his gut feelings and never to stall matters that he somehow knew would be beneficial for his publishing house.

Having signed the deal, I joined him for lunch, which had been brought from his home. During that space of time, I mentioned that I had some of Abba's stories in English ready. He had never met my father but knew who he was. Without a second thought, he took the collection as well. Thus began our relationship, which turned to be one of a kind. In retrospect, I think the uniqueness rested on the fact he made me feel exclusive – when he was with me, he never mentioned anyone else or showed interest in anyone else's works.

Since then, we spoke frequently on the phone, and I met him regularly during my visits to Dhaka, which was often more than once per year. Apart my mother, he was the only person in Dhaka with whom I would spend my time. Because Motijheel was far away from Banani, where my family home is, Chacha would usually pick me up in his microbus – literally a mobile office – on his way to the UPL.

While we navigated through Dhaka's maddening traffic, he worked on manuscripts, signed documents, made phone calls and in between his official work shared with me memories from his student life in Punjab. He sang ghazals and recited poems by Shakespeare, and he described and impersonated episodes from his time in the dorm. Sometimes, he would stop the van when we passed by fruit-wallahs and get me some fruit. Once he got me a couple of Arong mugs from a roadside vendor. During his recesses, we would share coffee and lunch, and discussed literature and music. And when he was busy, I would walk through his

bookstore or sit there reading and writing. This was our standard routine whenever I went to Dhaka.

In the span of the next few years, Chacha's health slowly deteriorated. Parkinson's started eating him from inside, but with the courage of a soldier, he faced it and refused to let it affect his mind and life. When Nadia returned from the States in 2014 and started the UPL branch office in Badda, Chacha took me there to introduce me to her.

Thereafter I would meet Chacha, either in Badda or at his home in Gulshan, where I also got to know Chachi and Nadeem. I had free access to Chacha's room, and when he couldn't greet me in the living room, I would sit by his bed and speak with him or listen to him. Thus, I also witnessed his bond with each of his family members, including the people who worked for him. He was always the same decent human being who believed in equality and never for a second misused his authority.

The day he became Emeritus Publisher, he picked me up from my home in Banani and I was the privileged one he tried out his speech on, enroute to the Bangla Academy to receive his prize.

There are several noteworthy memories, and among those one was in 2016. During one of our luncheons, I happened to mention that my mother was unwell so I might not be able to visit him the following day. Chacha listened silently, but later in the evening, he suddenly called me to say he wished to pay my mother a visit. I told him that he couldn't do that because we had no lift, and Chacha was wheelchair bound. But he wouldn't listen to me. He would go up the stairs at any price. Finally, I had to give in; together with his attendance I had to help him up to the second floor, where my mother lived. It was an arduous task and time consuming. He was exhausted, and I had tears in my eyes as I sat him in our living room where my mother was already present to greet him. They chit-chatted a while. Going down was even more laborious for Chacha than climbing up, but he bore it with dignity.

Last year, after Chacha's recovery from Covid, Nadia arranged a video meeting for us, and I was grateful that he had beaten the virus. Little did I suspect that he would go so soon.

Chacha met my children, Navid and Tania, in 2015 when we were in Dhaka for the launch of my novel *Blame* during the Lit Fest. One single phone call from him brought them permission to visit our National Assembly building, designed by Louis Khan. It was an experience Navid, who is an architect, will cherish for the rest of his life. When Tania was elected as the editor of Stockholm's Royal Technical College magazine, Chacha was the first to send her a congratulatory letter, another testimony to his uniqueness.

I have tried here to portray Mohiuddin Ahmed as a human being. Many have already spoken of his role as a publisher, and I have nothing new to add to that – except that the Swedish translation of my novel *List of Offences* is going to be published in Sweden by another reputed publisher, who has been as quick as Chacha to appreciate it. I am saddened that Chacha is no longer here to experience the responses to the book which had brought us together.

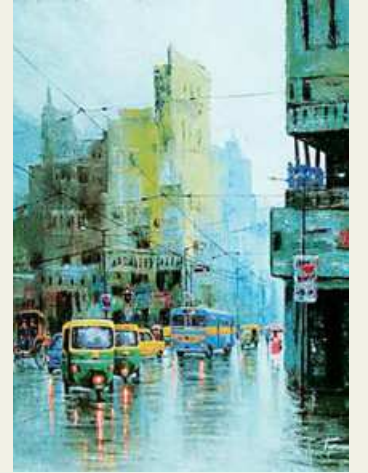
Dilruba Z. Ara is an internationally acclaimed Swedish-Bangladeshi writer, novelist, translator, artist and educator. She lives and works in Lund, Sweden, and writes from there. To know more about her, visit www.dilrubazara.com

POETRY

Now As We Live In Two Different Cities

MD MEHEDI HASAN

We stopped talking earlier.
Yet there was a chance that
I'd run into you.
There was a chance of
seeing you on the Gollamari bridge
buying vegetables.
In red roses
I see your simple expectations
whenever I travel by the city flower market.
Rickshaws, autos carry me to
all the rides that we took, to our memories—
this city is the collage of our days.
Would it be easy for you now
to forget me?
As my love we now
live in two different cities.
Let me know.



MD Mehedi Hasan occasionally contributes to the Star literature page. He is a lecturer of English at North Western University, Khulna.

A Woman of Substance

TASNEEM HOSSAIN

She lies on the bed, a broken canvas.
Fragments and splinters of an old frame,
Faded colors of painted priceless picture,
Greys and white, crooked dark veins, wrinkled paper skin.

Frames abound on the wall's fortress,
A beauty to behold, ablaze with youth fire;
Larger than life passionate self-portraits,
One can only stand, stare and admire.

Brightly shining sapphire sea blue eyes,
Small pointed nose, gentle and sweet;
Strawberry melting soft sweet red lips,
Cascading down golden curls on ivory skin;

Swan long flawless neck, waist you could hold in a hand.
Strong, slender curvaceous body, fit for any outfit,
Flamboyant costumes, hair styles so chic,
Dynamic and coy, bold and brave all well portrayed.

Gazes across and beyond all from the wall,
Ravishing alluring smile for onlookers and all;
Balanced flawless, eight body postured, danseuse,
Dazzling, daring goddess, even deities would pursue.

Unequaled beauty everyone's craze,
Lies old and feeble on the bed;
Old she is with wrinkled skin,
Grey white hair, feeble bones so thin.

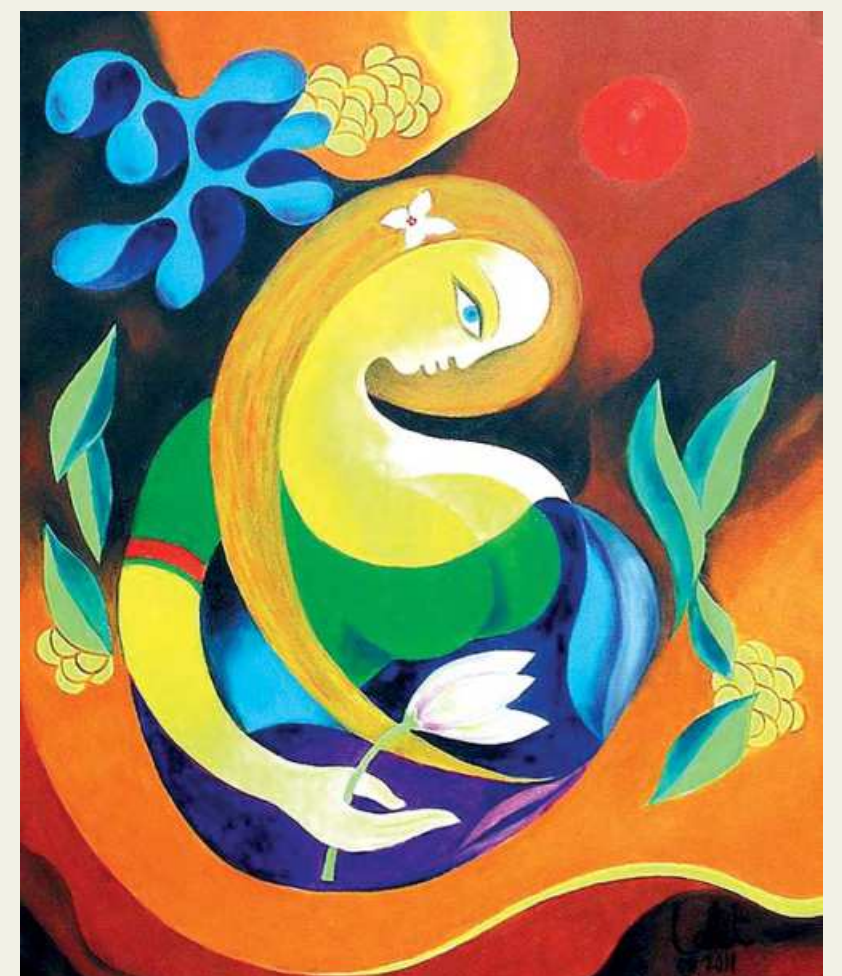
The man on the door stands with a note.
Stares in awe, what should he compose?
The famous ballerina, a living legend,
Wasted away lies on the bed. Broken!

The body on the bed moves with elegance and poise.
Looks at him, smiles and he gasps:
Sparkling, smiling bright blue eyes,
He stands there, bewitched and sighs.

Ah, the eyes!

Age has left her body a barren land.
Twinkling beautiful eyes, speak of no regrets,
An ocean of passion, pride and content remain,
A woman of substance, ages with grace.

Tasneem Hossain is a multilingual poet, columnist, op ed columnist and training consultant. She is the director of Continuing Education Centre, Bangladesh.



months to collect myself to write my thoughts about UPL's founder, Mr Mohiuddin Ahmed, my publisher, later my friend, my Chacha and champion, my favourite person in Dhaka. Had he been older, I would have dubbed him my second dad.

I first met him on July 20th, 2005, at his Motijheel office. I had gone to see him with the manuscript of *A List of Offences* and my translation of my father, Shahed Ali's stories. I also carried with me a bunch of letters from various reputed US and UK publishers on my manuscript. Mohiuddin Ahmed was very busy in his room, so I had to wait a while before he could receive me. He was slim, tall and well dressed: a striped tie and a vest on a pressed white shirt, his face smoothly shaven under his silvery hair, his spectacles spotless, his shoes shining, his hands clean.

The series of impressions he made on me I found initially to be confusing, but shortly they began to level out. It was at that point our liaison could begin to grow, something permanent in the making. He looked over his spectacles and asked me what he could do for me. I explained why I was there and handed him the documents I had with me. He nodded a few times, flicking through the papers, and then asked me to wait in the reception. Whereupon he shut himself with everything in his office room. I spent hours browsing through the bookshelves of the

Having signed the deal, I joined him for lunch, which had been brought from his home. During that space of time, I mentioned that I had some of Abba's stories in English ready. He had never met my father but knew who he was. Without a second thought, he took the collection as well.

SPORT

What to WATCH

TSPORTS

World Cup Qualifiers
Lithuania vs Bulgaria
Live from 7:00 pm
Sweden vs Kosovo
Live from 10:00 pm

Andorra vs England
Live from 12:45 am (Sunday)
SONY SIX
World Cup Qualifiers
Switzerland vs Northern Ireland
Live from 12:45 am (Sunday)



Brazil's Gabriel Barbosa (2nd from R) celebrates with his teammates after scoring a goal during their 3-1 win against Venezuela in a World Cup qualifying fixture in Caracas on Thursday. (Bottom) Argentina talisman Lionel Messi cuts a forlorn figure during their goalless draw against Paraguay in Asuncion.

PHOTO: REUTERS/AFP

BRAZIL STAY PERFECT Argentina stutter

AFP, Montevideo



Gabriel Barbosa's penalty five minutes from time maintained Brazil's perfect start to South American World Cup qualifying with a come from behind 3-1 win over Venezuela on Thursday.

It was a ninth win from nine for the Selecao and extended their lead in the single South American qualifying group to eight points over unbeaten Argentina, who drew 0-0 in Paraguay. Eric Ramirez's early goal gave Venezuela a shock lead in Caracas but Marquinhos equalized with a header before Barbosa's late penalty.

Substitute Antony rubbed salt into unlucky Venezuela's wounds five minutes into injury time to leave the hosts rooted to the bottom of the table.

"It was a tough game, we started off well below our level," admitted Marquinhos.

"It was our second half performance that got us the positive result we wanted."

Shorn of the suspended Neymar, Brazil clearly missed his spark, dominating possession but creating little until their late rally.

Venezuela took a shock lead on 11 minutes when Yeferson Soteldo stood up a cross into the box and Ramirez rose unmarked to head into the far corner as two Brazilian defenders in close attendance slipped.



Brazil were almost level halfway through the first period but Everton Ribeiro's attempted cross deflected off Nathuel Ferraresi and onto the bar, before the defender cleared the ball to safety.

Brazil had the ball in the net on 56 minutes but it was chalked off for a foul by Thiago Silva.

Marquinhos rose to head home debutant substitute Raphinha's corner 19 minutes from time, although Venezuela's goalkeeper Joel Graterol should have done better but seemed to be deceived by the ball bouncing in front of him.

And the turnaround was complete when Oscar Gonzalez tripped Barbosa in the box, with the striker calmly slotting the resulting spot kick down the middle of the goal.

Leeds United's Raphinha rounded off an

impressive debut with a second assist for Antony to tap home from six yards with almost the last kick of the match.

Paraguay kept Lionel Messi quiet in a goalless draw in Asuncion.

A lively start saw chances at both ends but Argentina's Joaquin Correa should have done better when put clean through on goal, only for a heavy touch to allow goalkeeper Antony Silva to smother the danger.

Argentina stopper Emiliano Martinez then made a full stretch save to tip Santiago Arzamendi's piledriver from distance around the post. Argentina were predictably on top as Messi curled a free-kick from the left wide of the far post.

But despite enjoying almost 70 percent of possession and most of the first half chances, Argentina rarely looked like breaking down their organized hosts.

There was a similarly brisk start to the second half as Correa somehow failed to convert Rodrigo De Paul's cross to the back post.

Carlos Gonzalez should have won it two minutes from time for Paraguay but skied his shot from 12 yards out.

"We just lacked a goal from our clear chances," moaned Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni.

"Paraguay had us in difficulty a few times but we dominated."

'New committees after T20 World Cup'

SPORTS REPORTER



While the newly elected board of directors will take charge of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) for the next four years, led by Nazmul Hassan for the fourth consecutive term, the previous 21 working committees are expected to continue their operations until the next board meeting.

Six new faces were elected in the recent BCB elections on Wednesday while 19 directors, who were retained and led various committees, will continue their respective roles keeping the upcoming busy schedule for the Tigers in mind.

"Until the next board meeting, our president Nazmul Hassan has asked the respective committees of the previous term to continue their work. Keeping the busy schedule of the Bangladesh team in mind it is expected that we are going to form the new committees after the T20 World Cup," BCB director and chairman of the media committee of the previous term, Jalal Yunus, told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to Jalal, there could be changes in the new committees of the BCB.

Former Bangladesh captain and chairman of the High-Performance Unit of the previous term, Naimur Rahman, who won the election from Dhaka Division,

informed that he is willing to work for the betterment of cricket in any committee for the new term.

"I have the experience of working from the cricket operations committee to game development and also in the HP unit. I think I have tried to give my best in any role given to me and I think I can say I was successful. I am looking forward to working whichever department I am given the charge of," Naimur told the media yesterday.

"We are doing well in the ODIs and T20s and now we should do well in Tests too. Now is the time for Bangladesh cricket to take the next step. We need to do a lot more than our designated works and this time I will do that," he added.

On the other hand, there have been a lot of talk over the cricket operations committee led by another former captain, Akram Khan, in the previous term. It will be interesting to see whether the new board would see a new face to lead the most important committee.

There have been few interested candidates for the posts, however, none of them are willing to speak on record and informed that the president will ultimately decide everything.

Whatever responsibilities are given to me, I will try to work on that aspect. The president will decide who will get which role," said Akram.



Brotherhood. That is how Mustafizur Rahman described the picture with Shakib Al Hasan, taken during the IPL game between Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders, and published on his social media accounts on Thursday night. The two leading Bangladesh players are done with their IPL stint and will join the national team in the UAE tomorrow. The Tigers, meanwhile, will fly to the UAE today after ending their training camp in Oman where they played a warm-up match against Oman A team last night. Following two official practice matches in the UAE, the team will return to Oman for the Round 1 group stage matches, starting from October 17.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK



'Mbappe has winner's mentality'

AFP, Paris



Hugo Lloris on Thursday hailed Kylian Mbappe's superb performance which pushed France to bounce back from two goals down at half-time to beat Belgium 3-2 and reach the Nations League final.

Theo Hernandez struck the late winner which set-up a clash with Spain at the San Siro on Sunday but it was Mbappe who led the fightback in the second half on his 50th France appearance.

Mbappe, who is the youngest ever player to rack up half a century of Les Bleus caps, provided the pass from which Karim Benzema halved the deficit just after the hour mark and netted the penalty that levelled the scores in the 69th minute.

"Taking that responsibility at that moment of the match was fantastic," Lloris told reporters.

"Yes he has a lot of talent but behind that he has a winner's mentality. We're all happy for him in the dressing room."

Mbappe, 22, had a difficult summer, missing the penalty which knocked world champions France out of Euro 2020 at the last-16 stage and then being at the centre of a transfer saga which saw his desired

move to Real Madrid denied by Paris Saint-Germain.

He also said in a recent interview with L'Equipe that he would have liked more support from the France set-up and his teammates after missing that spot-kick in June.

But France coach Didier Deschamps insisted that he "always tried to be there with him, and right behind him".

"There are a lot of demands and expectations around him, but I have always known that the France team will be stronger with Kylian. I have never doubted that," Deschamps told reporters.

Roberto Martinez, meanwhile, said that Belgium let the weight of expectation get the better of them, saying that the desire for a golden generation to win a trophy held them back in the second half.

"The quality was shown in first half, second half was a question of emotion and feeling responsibility... it became a game that we wanted to finish and wanted to get into the final. At that point we stopped playing," Belgium coach Martinez said.

"We're hurting but 12 months from now we have a major tournament (World Cup). It's a good opportunity to show that we can grow from this experience."

'Tough to play three matches in seven days'

SPORTS REPORTER from Male



Even though Bangladesh's interim coach Oscar Bruzon blamed the fatigue for their defeat against Maldives, the men in red and green were, no doubt, outplayed by the quality of Maldivian footballers, who had been superior in terms of skills, tactics and its execution.

Under the guidance of the Spanish coach, Bangladesh have been trying to play possession football in the ongoing regional football extravaganza and the improvements were evident against Sri Lanka and India, where the charges of Bruzon nicely controlled the midfield while keeping the backline solid.

However, the plan did not work against Maldives, who outshone Bangladesh by their composure of holding the ball and creating goal-scoring opportunities in presence of a familiar home environment.

Ali Ashfaq, Ali Fisir, Hamza Mohamed, Niaz Hassan, Hussain Nihaan and others were exceptional upfront and the Bangladesh defence were made to toil before Hamza put Maldives

ahead with a brilliant overhead kick after which Ashfaq doubled the lead from a penalty.

Bangladesh manager Satyajit Das Rupu seemingly denied that Maldives' players are better than Bangladesh's, rather, pointing at fatigue for the latest off day at the field.

"I think the first 30 to 35 minutes of the match looked even because they could not put any pressure on Bangladesh during that period. Last five to six minutes of the first half, we were a bit under pressure because of the positional mistakes.

"After the break, the coach briefed the players to avoid repeating those mistakes. I think the first goal was an unbelievable strike that gave them a big advantage and Maldives gained the momentum from the lead," opined Rupu.

"We had a bad day yesterday [Thursday] as our players were tired playing three matches in seven days," added the former national player.

Defender Rahmat Mia also believes that it was fatigue, caused by a hectic fixture, that had led his side to underperform.

"Similar to how we performed against Sri Lanka and India, our game plan was to keep the midfield compact first and then

launch attacks but it didn't work well," said Rahmat Mia who played as right-winger against Maldives instead of his usual left-back position.

"I think we lacked energy because it was really tough to play three matches in seven days. It wasn't like the Bangladesh Premier League, where we could somewhat relax in between matches.

"That's why our performance was a bit down against Maldives," said Rahmat who believes they can overcome their fatigue well in a five-day break before the match against Nepal.

"Before the match, we knew that we could confirm our spot in the final through a win. If not possible, then we would look to return with a point at least. But anyway, none of us are morally down for not achieving those targets against Maldives.

Still, we are in with a chance and we believe that if we win against Nepal, then we can reach the final. So we are fully focused solely on that objective," said a confident Rahmat Mia, who has been enjoying a two-day lay-off, except for swimming and gym sessions, along with teammates to recharge for their last group match, virtually a semi-final match for Bangladesh.



Murray back in the good books of Sears

REUTERS

Andy Murray was "back in the good books" with his wife on Thursday after his wedding ring and stinky shoes were returned to him.

Murray said on Twitter that his shoes reeked so badly in his car that he decided to leave them under the vehicle outside his hotel in California overnight to air them out.

When he went back to get the shoes he found they, along with the ring he had strung through their laces, were nowhere to be found, prompting



Murray to ask for help in recovering the missing items.

Murray, who married Kim Sears in 2015, said in a video posted on Instagram that the ring had been returned after he made calls to hotel security.

"Little update for everyone. Would you believe it?" Murray said before taking a big whiff of the footwear.

"They still absolutely stink but the shoes are back, the wedding ring is back, and I'm back in the good books."

Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray faces France's Adrian Panarino in the first round of the Indian Wells tournament in Southern California on Friday.




SAND, STONE FROM MEGHALAYA Carried by flash flood, damaging cropland

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

It was a rainy night in July 2008. Residents of some bordering villages in Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila heard a sound of landslide coming from a hill across the border.

Within minutes, a flash flood carried stones and sand mixed with coal chips onto Bangladesh through a small transboundary canal named Nayachhara.

That night, vast areas of farmland were covered in sand, ponds were filled and houses were buried knee-deep in sand in Chanpur village.

The canal, the only tributary to Pochashol Beel of Tanguar Haor, was also filled with sand.

Since then, this has been recurring every rainy season.

Locals and environmentalists blamed the landslides on open cast limestone and coal mining and razing of hillocks in the Khasi Hills districts of India's Meghalaya.

According to locals, Chandpur, Rajani Line, Jangalbari, Charagaon, Maram, Burungachhara, and Shantipur are the villages most affected in Tahirpur.

The Nayachhara canal and Pochashol Beel have also been filled up with sand over the years. Parts of Tekeghat road, the only road for communication between the three bordering upazilas in the district, have also been damaged badly.

This year alone, at least 400 acres of land, mostly farmland, has been covered with sand, locals said.

Md Khasrul Alam, chairman of Sreepur Uttar union in Tahirpur upazila, said: "The most alarming issue is the loss of navigability in most parts of the Jadukata and Patlai rivers. Besides, the Maharam river was filled up with sand several years ago."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Locals in Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila collecting pebbles and stones from a farmland that is now covered with sand. During flash floods, sand, stone and coal from the Khasi Hills of India's Meghalaya wash into the area, resulting in degradation of farmlands, roads and houses. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

QCOOM SCAM RJ Nirob arrested

Minister says govt won't take responsibilities for e-commerce losses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested Humayun Kabir alias RJ Nirob, head of sales (communications and public relations) at controversial e-commerce platform Qcoom, early yesterday after an aggrieved customer sued him and five others, including Qcoom owner, for fraudulence.



Later in the day, Nirob was produced before a Dhaka court, which placed him on one-day remand for questioning, said Hafiz Al Faruq, additional deputy commissioner of police (Tejgaon division).

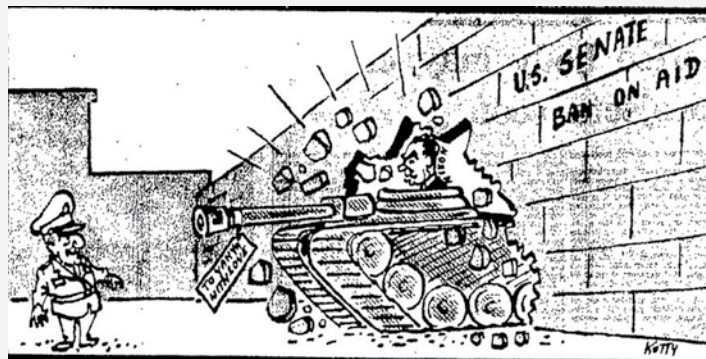
He said they arrested Nirob, 38, at his house at Noboday Housing in the capital's Adabar area around 3:00am after a Qcoom customer filed a case against six people with Tejgaon Industrial Police Station.

The other accused are: Qcoom owner Ripan Mia, his wife Syeda Tasmina

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Nothing short of complete independence: Nazrul Islam



CARTOON SOURCE: THE HINDUSTHAN STANDARD

OCTOBER 9, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

NAZRUL ISLAM REITERATES STAND

Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of Bangladesh, reiterated that nothing short of complete independence would settle the Bangladesh issue. He said that there could not be any compromise with the West Pakistani marauders against whom the 75 million people of Bangladesh had launched their struggle and they would be wiped out from the sacred soil of Bangladesh.

Syed Nazrul was addressing a passing out parade of the Mukti Bahini officers. Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmad was also present at

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Covid death toll drops to single digits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After 205 days, the daily Covid-19 death toll dropped to single digits yesterday.

The Director General of Health Services (DGHS) recorded seven deaths from coronavirus in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to a DGHS press release.

On March 11, the health department recorded six deaths.

The total number of Covid-19 deaths in the country now stands at 27,654 and the death rate is 1.77 percent, according to the DGHS press release.

The highest death toll 264 was recorded in August.

Meanwhile, at least 645 new infections were recorded during those 24 hours, taking the total number of infected people to 1,561,463, added the release.

A total of 23,302

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

New species found fossilised in 16m-yr-old amber



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A microscopic new species has been discovered after being preserved in amber for millions of years in what scientists are calling a "once-in-a-generation" find.

The micro-animal, which measures just over half a millimetre long, is a previously unknown species of tardigrade: eight-legged creatures also known as water bears which have been known to survive apocalyptic conditions.

The discovery, which was made by scientists at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Harvard University, is just the third fossilised tardigrade on record.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

India, China troops face off on border

THE HINDU ONLINE

Indian and Chinese soldiers engaged in a minor face-off near Yangtse in Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh last week and it was resolved in a few hours as per established protocols between the two countries, according to Indian defence sources.

"Face-offs occur due to differing areas of perception due to the demarcated boundary and as both sides undertake patrolling activities up to their line of perception. The face-off that occurred last week lasted for a few hours and was resolved by local commanders," a defence source said.

"However, there has been no damage to defences," two sources stated.

The Army has so far not responded to questions on the incident.

Defence sources said that whenever patrols of both sides physically meet,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

KURIGRAM BORDER BSF enters Bangladesh, chasing smugglers

UNB, Kurigram

A Bangladeshi family suffered harassment at the hands of Indian border guards who entered their frontier home while chasing drug smugglers, border officials said yesterday.

The incident occurred on Thursday night at the Phulbari border of Uttar Kuthi Chandrakhana in Kurigram Sadar.

Local villager Rafiqul Islam said BSF members forcibly entered the house

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A view of a construction site located in the capital's Kaptan Bazar. As seen in the photo, virtually all of the area dug up for construction has become waterlogged following recent rainfall. Clean standing water such as this is a breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes, carriers of the dengue virus. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 9

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
4:45	12:45	4:15	5:53	7:30	
JAMAT	5:20	1:15	4:30	5:56	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

