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Realising the potential of Bangladesh automotive industry

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Even though the affluent middle-class in Bangladesh is growing rapidly and increasing its purchasing power, the demand for passenger cars are still low compared to India and Thailand.

According to a LightCastle study, the size of the country's automobile industry, in particular the passenger vehicle segment, remains modest compared to other Asian peers with only 2.5 cars per 1,000 population.

The market has grown multifold over the years and has become an industry worth USD 1 billion.

However, the industry experts believe that the market size of passenger cars is not bigger than Tk 5000 crore.

According to the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), only 20,093 passenger vehicles were registered in 2020, covering a mere 5.3 percent of the automobile industry volume.

Passenger vehicles include sedans or private cars, sport utility vehicles (SUVs) or jeep, and microbus or multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs). Within the passenger vehicle segment, sedans (also referred to as private cars) accounted for almost 55 percent of vehicles, with 12,403 units registered in 2020.

The remainder of the passenger vehicles segment was captured by SUVs and minibuses with 4,911 units and 2,779 units respectively.

These numbers have also changed over the last few years, where SUVs and MPVs have mostly recorded a gradual increase in demand, while the registration of sedans have at times been stagnant or even decreased.

The automobile market in Bangladesh has seen significant growth in the last decade, especially between 2015 and 2017. At the peak of its trajectory, BRTA had reported 32,942 registered passenger vehicles in 2017 that has since been in decline. Between 2018 and 2020, the

TOTAL REGISTERED CARS
20,093 IN **2020**

TOTAL PASSENGER
CARS IN BANGLADESH
539,079 UNITS

AVERAGE ANNUAL
GROWTH **8%**

MARKET SIZE TK **5000**
CRORE



TOTAL **12,403** UNITS OF SEDAN
CARS REGISTERED IN **2020**

TOTAL **4,911** UNITS OF SPORTS UTILITY
CARS REGISTERED IN **2020**



TOTAL **2,779** MICROBUSES
REGISTERED IN **2020**

Major customers – higher middle
class, mid-level government officials,
corporate house and government
project

Expenditure to run a car—
fuel, driver salary, repairs and
maintenance, insurance, road
tax, fitness fee

number of registered passenger vehicles
has declined by almost 39 percent.

Moreover, the automobile industry is
still heavily import dependent.

Currently, Pragoti locally assembles
cars made by Japan's Mitsubishi Motors
while PHP Motors, a sister concern of
the PHP Family based in Chattogram,
assembles cars designed by Malaysia's
Proton Holdings Berhad.

Besides, Indian automotive giants
Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra
recently showed interest in setting
up similar partnerships with local
manufacturers to grab a bigger slice of
the growing Bangladesh automobile
market.

At present, about 60 to 65 vehicles are
sold across the country each day.

When the market had just started to
take off in 2012, the daily figure was 29,
indicating a 117 percent increase in the
last eight years according to Bangladesh
Reconditioned Vehicles Importers and
Dealers Association (BARVIDA).

In 2019, car sales amounted to Tk
5,000 crore, which was more or less the
same the year before.

Bangladesh's thriving automobile
sector has grown 8 percent on average
annually since 2012, according to
industry insiders.

According to the Automobile Industry
Development Policy 2021, the local

automobile industry has been considered
a potentially major industrial sector for
the last two decades as it has registered
impressive annual compound growth
and contributes greatly to the national
economy.

Bangladesh will cut its over-reliance
on imported vehicles, switch to
electric modes of transportation and
become a regional hub for automobile
manufacturing by 2030 as the
government unveiled the country's first-
ever policy to develop the sector.

The policy promises to offer tax
and export incentives to encourage
entrepreneurs to establish automobile
plants in the country.

Opportunities for four-wheeler

The market is growing annually at a
rate of 8 percent with an increasing
purchasing capacity of the growing
middle class of the country. The middle
class are the main customers for
passenger cars.

As per the policy, investors will get the
opportunity to import capital machinery
and equipment to make cars at zero duty.

Besides, commercial vehicle
manufacturers will get duty-free access for
the import of auto parts for four years.

Investors will get concessional loans to
market locally manufactured commercial
vehicles, according to the policy issued by
the industry's ministry on Tuesday.

A 15 percent cash incentive will be
given for the exports of locally assembled
or CKD (completely knocked down) cars.

The local automobile industry
is nearing critical mass thanks to its
ability to adopt new technologies and
increased efficiency in human resource
management.

"Bangladesh's automobile industry
could even become a part of the global
supply chain in the future," the policy
states.

Growing demand for cars and
motorcycles is a result of the rise in
purchasing power among the general
public, it added.

The policy aims to provide a clear
roadmap on how to take the country's
evolving automotive ecosystem forward.

On the other hand, the policy
discourages the import of completely
built-up units of used vehicles as locally
assembled cars are more affordable than
the imported ones.

The government will attract both local
and foreign investment, the policy said.
The authorities will set standards for
locally manufactured vehicles in keeping
with global benchmarks, and help local
manufacturers to enter new markets.

SEE PAGE J2



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Family cars: The other name of convenience

ARFIN KAZI

With time, the number of vehicles getting registered in Bangladesh is on the rise. According to 2019 statistics from BRTA, about 500,000 motor vehicles were registered in 2019 alone and among these, 150,000 were passenger cars, in addition to buses and motorbikes.

Family cars in general are manufactured with convenience in mind, and in Dhaka, the number of sedans and mid-sized SUVs

commute; firstly, the personal space and privacy that is achieved from the cabin, and secondly, exposure to dust, grime and pollution is minimal compared to motorcycles and public transport.

Cars are safe and can be used to commute with less exposure to pollution, however, it occupies a larger footprint on the road, which means a large chunk of time is spent in traffic jams. From a Bangladeshi point of view, people usually complain about how they have to push through thick traffic congestions.

to school with their chauffeur.

Abdul Mannan, a professional chauffeur who, by design of his profession, spends most of his day on the road, thinks that people who are driving on the road should enjoy their convenience responsibly.

"Sometimes it feels like I am on a race track when driving, everybody thinks they are the only ones in a hurry. People should understand that cars allow us to travel comfortably and with air conditioning during the summer," he shared.

Although the second hand car market is becoming saturated, prices are still competitive. Usually, one manages to get a good deal only if they buy a car from direct parties, otherwise they are redirected to second hand car showrooms, through brokers or third-parties.

Zaheen Chowdhury, owner of a car sales showroom in Dhaka, shares how people's buying habits have changed over time.

"If you ask me about how the reconditioned market is moving in general, people are mostly moving towards buying hybrid vehicles and SUVs that are cheaper to buy in general, as hybrid taxes are lower," he shared.

Cars are a great investment for movement. If you want to commute fast while still having a car, hatchbacks are great options to look at. Even though commuting will not be faster than a bike, it won't be slower than a bus. It's a common middle ground which is more popular.

Newer brands of cars are coming through to meet demands, and in my opinion, this is the best time to get your hands behind the wheel. There are many options to choose from – big or small –and at the end of the day, commuting will be more comfortable.

Araf Afzal, a local businessman said, "When we bought our SUV, it was primarily so we could regularly go on family trips during the weekend. Without a large vehicle, coordinating the commute can become quite tedious, as we have a big family. Our SUV also allows us to go on random drives whenever we feel like it, and this was particularly useful during the lockdown when everything was closed and we could not go anywhere."

A car that gets driven daily can be compared to a moving house. And manufacturing companies are now focusing on comfort, drivability and efficiency even more to ensure that more families consider the option of getting a family car.

Realising the potential of Bangladesh automotive industry

FROM PAGE J2

"Progressive leasing policy will be pursued to help locally-made automobiles expand their markets," said the policy.

Abdul Matlub Ahmad, chairman of Nitol-Niloy Group, said the policy would help Bangladesh become an automobile manufacturing nation.

"Customers will benefit as they will get vehicles at affordable prices," he said.

Thanks to the policy, local manufacturers will be able to sell a sedan car within Tk 10 lakh as customers would not have to pay import duties, according to the entrepreneur.

The government will draw up a reconditioned car management guideline to support the firms involved in running reconditioned car businesses and local manufacturers.

An automobile scrapping policy will also be formulated. The government will impose anti-dumping taxes to prevent dumping and unfair trade practices.

A one-time 100 percent duty and tax waiver will be extended for the imports of machinery to set up CKD factories.

The total tax incidence will be 25 to 35 percent for CKD level manufacturers for imports of parts. It will not be more than 10 percent if parts are sourced locally, the policy mentioned.

Factories will be entitled to a 1 percent tax rebate if they spend 1 percent of their annual income on research and development.

The policy will look to transform a majority of the vehicles, particularly passenger cars, buses, trucks and three-wheelers, into electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030.

A 10-year tax holiday will be provided to EV assemblers or manufacturers.

In order to ensure higher production of EVs and keep the emission levels to a minimum level, the government will offer financial incentives, waiver of road tax and reduced registration fee for a certain period.

Challenges of automobile sector in Bangladesh

According to the market players, the market size of passenger cars is still infant.

Mannan Khan, chairman of Bangladesh Auto Industries Ltd (BAIL), said, "In our country, the lower-middle and middle class dream of buying vehicles but they cannot afford it as the prices are excessive."

Industry insiders said the government imposed the duty on import of car in early nineties when only the rich would buy cars for their own use or commercial purposes.

However, after 30 years, the economy of the country has changed a lot –so now the car has become necessary for the urban-middle and higher-middle class.

Due to high tax, the price of a car is very costly in Bangladesh, and for this reason, the market for four wheelers is yet to boom like India and Thailand.

According to car importers, when a car is imported at USD 5,000 from Japan, the retail price becomes around Tk 22 lakh in Bangladesh due to high tax.

The middle-class citizen cannot afford a car of his own due to the high price of car. And the market size will not increase without reducing tax on local manufacture.



are on the rise as prices have become more affordable and monetary funds, such as bank loans, have become more accessible.

Second hand cars meant to push traffic as of now, have been getting more affordable to the point it can be said used, cheap cars are getting better in terms of the Bangladeshi standard where there are cars in any budget, from the bare minimum to high end cars meant to push traffic.

There are reasons as to why family cars are considered a more convenient way to

Even though driving around local buses and rush hour traffic can be a bit cumbersome, but in the end, it is a small price to pay for private commuting.

Additionally, cars provide an easier way to accommodate a larger number of people. Family vehicles can seat up to eight people on average. As a result, families can travel together more easily as opposed to using public transport, bikes, rickshaws, etc. They are also a safer way to send kids to school, as working parents can just send their children



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"I don't launder money. I believe you [MPs] also do not launder money. How will I know who are laundering money if you don't give me the list."
FINANCE MINISTER AHM MUSTAFA KAMAL



"It's unfortunate that the ruling party leaders neither have any sense of political etiquette, nor human values."
BNP SECRETARY GENERAL
MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR



"The news about this new variant should make clearer than ever why this pandemic will not end until we have global vaccinations."
BIDEN CALLS FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION WAIVERS AFTER
OMICRON DISCOVERY



Alarm bells ring over new variant

World rushes to contain Omicron; govt plans travel ban for some countries, steps up screening at the airports

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government is preparing to introduce travel bans on South Africa and other countries where the Omicron variant of coronavirus has been found.

Screening at airports has already been stepped up, officials said.

As of last night, Omicron has been detected in Botswana, Belgium, Hong Kong, the UK and Israel.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque in a recorded video message yesterday said, "We are aware of the [Omicron] variant. This variant is aggressive. That is why air communications with South Africa will be suspended."

Health workers at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) said they were asked to beef up screening, but were yet to receive any instruction regarding travel bans.

The National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19 will sit for a

SKY IS NOT FALLING

"This happens - viruses evolve and we pick up variants. It's not the end of the world, the sky is not falling in. There is this idea that we are just waiting for the next variant, and I don't want people to spend their lives worrying about that every day."

MICHAEL RYAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
WHO'S HEALTH EMERGENCIES
PROGRAMME

meeting this noon to assess the latest situation and make recommendations, president of the committee Prof Mohammad Shahidullah told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Until the travel bans are imposed, I suggest maintaining strict screening at the airports, especially where passengers arrive from those countries [where Omicron has been detected]," he said.

Omicron has created a concern worldwide with experts fearing it might be more transmissible than any other variants, including the Delta variant that caused havoc in the country earlier this year.

The World Health Organisation on Friday labeled Omicron as a variant of concern. "This variant has been detected at faster rates than previous surges in infection, suggesting that this variant may have a growth advantage."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

OMICRON NEW WORRY

ORIGIN

It was first identified in South Africa, and it is likely to have evolved during a chronic infection of an immuno-compromised person, possibly an untreated HIV/Aids patient.

The variant has also been detected in Botswana, Hong Kong, Israel and Belgium.

'VARIANT OF CONCERN'

The classification by WHO puts Omicron into the most-troubling category of coronavirus variants, along with the globally-dominant Delta, plus its weaker rivals Alpha, Beta and Gamma.

THE UNKNOWNNS

- Will protection from Covid-19 vaccines hold up?
- Will people previously infected with the coronavirus be immune from infection with Omicron?
- Will Omicron will cause more or less severe Covid-19 compared to other coronavirus strains?

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

- It has more than 30 mutations in the spike protein alone, double the number associated with the Delta variant.
- On the ACE2 receptor, it has 10 mutations. In comparison, the Delta variant has two.



Digital display boards show cancelled flights at OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg on Friday.

WHO CAUTIONS AGAINST TRAVEL CURBS

- Despite countries scrambling to ban flights, the WHO earlier cautioned against imposing travel restrictions due to Omicron.
- The organisation said countries should take a risk-based and scientific approach when considering travel curbs in light of the variant-but cautioned against restrictions.
- "At this point, again, implementing travel measures is being cautioned against," said spokesman Christian Lindmeier.

SOURCE: REUTERS/ST/THE HINDU



Bleeding has put Khaleda's life at stake

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia needs to be taken abroad immediately to stop her internal bleeding, which has put her life in balance, said BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

In the last few days, the best doctors in the country have been trying to identify the source of her bleeding but they could not make any headway for lack of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

FAKE INDIAN RUPEES: FROM PAKISTAN TO INDIA

Bangladesh a stopover

DMP investigation finds a syndicate prints the notes in Lahore, sends those to SL and then to Chattogram

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A transnational currency forgery syndicate has been smuggling fake Indian rupees into India from Pakistan for a couple of years using Sri Lanka and Bangladesh as transit.

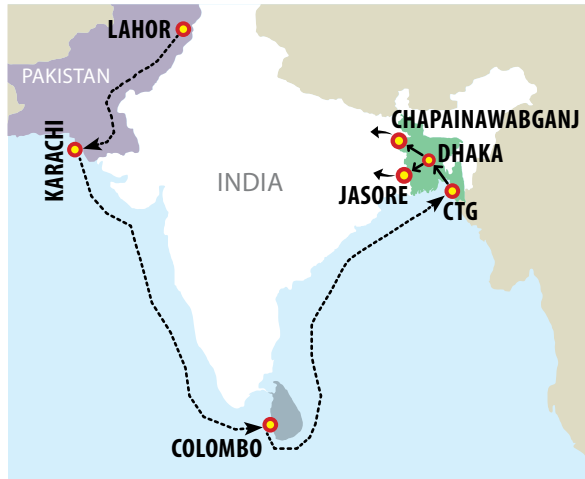
The syndicate prints fake Indian currency notes in Pakistan's Lahore and then sends those to Sri Lanka by sea in containers loaded with marble stones.

From Sri Lanka, the containers are shipped to Chattogram port in Bangladesh.

The consignments are then sent to Dhaka by trucks with other goods.

In Bangladesh, the fake notes are stashed in "special chambers" at homes of syndicate members before smuggling those into India in small portions using land routes.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) officials involved in the investigation into fake currency smuggling yesterday



disclosed this to The Daily Star, a day after the arrest of the syndicate's two Bangladeshi members - Fatema Akter Opy and Sheikh Md Abu Taleb.

Police also recovered fake Indian rupees worth around Rs 7.30 crore from Fatema's home in the capital's Dakshinkhan.

A high official of DMP (Gulshan Division) said Fatema married Pakistan national Danesh over a decade ago.

Danesh was arrested in 2010 over his involvement in note forgery, the official told this newspaper yesterday.

Fatema was also arrested before in a note forgery case filed with Motijheel Police Station.

"After coming out of jail, Danesh suffered a heart attack and became bedridden. Fatema then took over the illegal business and started controlling the syndicate's Bangladesh operations," said the DMP official, requesting anonymity.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

ROAD SAFETY Quader draws flak in House

Students issue 48hr ultimatum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition MPs yesterday blasted Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader for his failure to bring discipline on roads and for reducing the punishment for errant drivers by amending the Road Safety Bill.

They alleged Quader took the decision under the pressure of transport owners and workers.

"You have to make so many compromises when sitting in my chair," Quader said, while acknowledging that bringing discipline on roads and the transport sector is imperative.

In the face of the strong criticism of the MPs over the fatal road accidents, the minister said the drivers were not always

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

THIRD-PHASE UP ELECTIONS

2 crore head to polls today

Many fearful of violence

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

About two crore people in 1,000 union parishads are expected to cast their votes in the elections to the lowest tier of local governments today amid heightened fears of violence.

This will be the third phase, in which the highest number of union parishads will go to polls.

At least 45 people were killed and several hundred injured, during and after the first two phases of the polls.

Nine were killed ahead of the third phase, and 30 in pre- and post-polls violence centring the second phase held on November 11.

Six people died in the first phase, held in two parts on June 21 and September 21, according to the media reports.

The situation remained tense in the unions ahead of the election due to clashes mainly between supporters of the Awami League and its rebel candidates. According to AL sources, around 1,070 party rebels are contesting the polls.

Elections to the chairman posts of 100 UPs will not be required as candidates have already been elected unopposed.

In the absence of the BNP, the contest would presumably be between the AL, its "rebel groups" and the Jatiya Party.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Tigresses seal maiden WC berth

SPORTS REPORTER

A long wait for Bangladesh ended earlier than anticipated as the Tigresses earned entry to the 12th edition of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, to be held next year in New Zealand in March and April.

Nigar Sultana and her troops were already well on way to a maiden appearance in the World Cup after impressive wins against Pakistan and USA in the World Cup qualifiers in Zimbabwe.

However, the International Cricket Council (ICC) had no choice but to intervene and cancel the tournament after a member of the Sri Lankan support staff tested positive for Covid-19 yesterday amid the discovery of a new coronavirus variant in South Africa.

According to an ICC statement issued yesterday, all teams who were ranked 8th or above until September 30 will qualify directly for the upcoming World Cup.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



School and college students on Dhanmondi-27 write "no licence" on the bonnet of a car after finding the driver without a valid licence yesterday. Students demonstrating for safer roads have been stopping vehicles to check the registration and licence for the last few days.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

'Friendship' gave him steering wheel

Rab finds 'DNCC garbage truck driver' of three years not even its employee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even though he was not appointed by Dhaka North City Corporation, Md Hanif alias Fatik, had been illegally driving the corporations' vehicles for around three years, taking advantage of "friendships" with DNCC staffers.

He was arrested in Chandpur by the the Rapid Action Battalion on Friday after Ahsan Kabir Khan, 48, was run over by his vehicle in the capital's Panthapath area on Thursday.

According to Rab, Fatik earned money by selling fuel allotted for the vehicles he drove.

Following the arrest, law enforcers yesterday said that Fatik was driving the compact vehicle that hit Kabir, a pillion rider of a motorcycle.

Around eight years ago, Fatik used to work as the assistant of technician who repaired DNCC vehicles, said Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing.

In 2019, Fatik got his licence to drive light vehicles. He drove light vehicles for around two years and then started driving heavy vehicles since, while working as a mechanic, he established "good relations" with the staffers and drivers of the DNCC, who he would take the keys from to drive heavy DNCC vehicles, he said during a briefing at the Rab media centre in Karwan Bazar.

Fatik, however, did not disclose the names of those he maintained friendships with.

"We will check with the department concerned of the DNCC for names and then verify them."

During primary interrogation, Fatik told Rab he did not know who the designated driver of the vehicles was.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



155
New cases in 24hrs



15,75,579
Total cases



27,975
Deaths



15,40,018
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



5,211,124
Deaths



261,251,021
Total cases

World races to contain new Covid variant

AGENCIES

Fears mounted yesterday that a highly-infectious new coronavirus strain was pushing its way into Europe as the world brought the shutters down to contain the new Omicron variant.

Suspected new cases emerged in Germany and the Czech Republic, while Dutch authorities quarantined 61 passengers from South Africa who tested positive for Covid-19.

Britain yesterday confirmed its first two cases of the new strain, both linked to travel from southern Africa.

South Africa complained that it was being "punished" with air travel bans for first detecting the strain, which the World Health Organization has termed a "variant of concern".

Australia and Thailand joined the United States, Brazil, Canada and a host of other countries around the world restricting travel from the region, fearing a major setback to global efforts against the pandemic.

India has ordered more rigorous screening and testing for travellers arriving from South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday asked officials to highlight the need for monitoring all international arrivals, their testing as per guidelines with a specific focus on countries identified 'at risk'.

Scientists are racing to determine the threat posed by the heavily mutated strain, which is more transmissible than the dominant Delta variant, and whether it can evade existing vaccines.

Anxious travellers thronged Johannesburg international airport, desperate to squeeze onto the last flights to countries that had imposed sudden travel bans. Many had cut back holidays and rushed back from South African safaris and vineyards.

"It's ridiculous, we will always be having new variants," British tourist David Good told AFP, passports in hand. "South Africa found it but it's probably all over the world already."

'WORRISOME VARIANT'
But the virus has already slipped through the net with cases in Europe and Hong Kong and Israel.

Germany became the second European country to find a suspected case of the new strain, after Belgium on Friday.

The neighbouring Czech Republic was carrying out further tests on a woman who had travelled from Namibia and was suspected to have the new variant, prime minister Andrej Babis said.

The Netherlands meanwhile found

that around one in 10 -- 61 out of 600 -- people who had arrived at Schiphol airport on Friday from South Africa were positive for Covid-19. The rest tested negative.

The infected people, who flew in on two KLM flights that took off before the Dutch government announced a ban on travellers from the region, were being kept quarantined in a hotel near the airport.

"The positive test results will be examined as soon as possible to determine whether this concerns the new worrisome variant," the Dutch Health Authority said in a statement.

The Netherlands on Friday became the latest in a series of European countries to tighten its Covid restrictions.

The WHO said it could take several weeks to understand the variant, which was initially known as B.1.1.529, and cautioned against imposing travel curbs while scientific evidence was still scant, reports AFP.

The main countries targeted by the shutdown include South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini (Swaziland), Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

US President Joe Biden meanwhile said richer countries should donate more Covid-19 vaccines and give up intellectual property protections to manufacture more doses worldwide to stem the spread of the virus.

"The news about this new variant should make clearer than ever why this pandemic will not end until we have global vaccinations," he said.

But with memories still fresh of the way global air travel helped the spread of Covid after it first emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019, countries clamped down on the new variant.

Australia became the latest to act, banning all flights from nine southern African countries.

Thailand meanwhile restricted flights from eight countries, as did the United States, Brazil, Canada and Saudi Arabia.

EU officials agreed in an emergency meeting to urge all 27 nations in the bloc to restrict travel from southern Africa, with many members having already done so.

Vaccine manufacturers have held out hope that they can modify current vaccines to target the Omicron variant.

Germany's BioNTech and US drugmaker Pfizer said they expect data "in two weeks at the latest" to show if their jab can be adjusted.

Moderna said it will develop a booster specific to the new variant.



Child workers of the transport sector are often put in harm's way by the employers. While students in different parts of the capital have been demonstrating for safe roads, this boy, a conductor of the bus, was seen perched on the window of a bus while calling potential passengers in Lalbagh yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

2 crore head to polls today

FROM PAGE 1

Nineteen registered political parties are participating in the third phase, EC data shows.

While people have been worried about the continuous polls violence, Election Commission Secretary Humayun Kabir Khandaker said the polls will be held amid "festivities".

"Right now, we don't see any reason to be fearful of possible violence. Instructions have been given to law enforcers to control the law and order," he told reporters at the EC office after a commission meeting yesterday.

Law Minister Anisul Huq told parliament yesterday that the EC has been "alert and vigilant" about election violence.

"Strict instructions have been given to law enforcement agencies to maintain law and order. The Election Commission has written a letter to the government departments concerned, requesting it to take necessary steps in this regard."

He added that the clashes have been taking place due to personal and factional conflicts and land related disputes.

On November 24, the police headquarters have asked all police forces to remain alert so that no

untoward incident takes place centring the polls.

Haider Ali Khan, deputy inspector general of operations at the PHQ, said they have started countywide raids to recover illegal firearms and narcotics to avert further polls violence.

Our Tangail correspondent reported that locals of different unions were worried about today's elections, following the death of a person in factional clashes between AL supporters in Doptior union in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila on Friday.

Returning Officer HM Kamrul Islam said the authorities have deployed additional law enforcers to avoid further violence.

Our Laxmipur correspondent reported that the situation was volatile in different unions under Ramaganj and Raipur upazilas as some of the candidates and voters alleged that many "outsiders are threatening voters with weapons and telling them not to go to polling stations".

AHM Kamruzzaman, Laxmipur superintendent of police, said law enforcers will control the situation and take prompt actions if they get any specific allegations of people carrying arms.

On October 14, the EC announced that 1,007 UPs from 63 districts

will go to polls in the third phase. But elections to seven of them were postponed over various issues.

There will be no election in 14 UPs of Chattogram's Raozan upazila as AL nominated candidates for chairmen have already been elected unopposed.

EC data shows that chairmen of 100 union parishads will be elected unopposed. Most of them are AL leaders, said party sources.

At least 337 UP members and 132 candidates for women's reserved seats were also elected uncontested.

EC data also shows that 4,409 candidates are running for chairman posts, 11,105 for reserved member seats for women and 34,632 for member posts.

Around 2.01 crore people are expected to cast their votes at 10,059 polling centres.

Meanwhile the EC yesterday announced that 707 UPs will go to polls on January 5 in the fifth phase for election, while the fourth phase is expected to be held on December 23.

For the fifth phase, candidates will be able to submit their nominations to the returning officers till December 7, evaluation of nomination papers will be held on December 9 and the last date for withdrawal of candidacy is December 15.

Quader draws flak in House

FROM PAGE 1

responsible; the pedestrians were sometimes at fault, too.

"Pedestrians recklessly cross the roads."

The VIPs' tendency to not follow the traffic rules are also responsible for the disorder on roads, he said.

"I would like to assure you all that the law has not been relaxed or the punishment has been reduced in any way. The rigidity of the law, the spirit of the law remains the same as in the original. That will remain."

The minister said the Road, Transport Bill will be amended only to make it time befitting in line with the neighbouring countries.

About the students' demand for a 50 percent discount on fares for them, Quader said the government has already prepared a gazette to provide the facilities in BRTC-operated buses across the country from December 1.

BNP MP Harunur Rashid said the students had taken to the streets demanding road safety and discounted fares. But the ruling party cadres swooped on them with sticks and roads.

"I want to know what action has been taken against those who carried out the attack," he said.

In response, Quader said the

Bangladesh Chhatra League also supports the students' demands. "Someone else in the name of BCL might have carried out the attack," he added.

Our Tangail correspondent reports BCL men drove away protesting students who gathered at the Shahid Minar at Nirala Intersection in Tangail town.

Fatema Rahman Bithi, an organiser of the student protest, alleged that BCL men thwarted them from their demonstration, took away their phones, tore their posters and attacked the female students.

Asked about the matter, Mostafizur Rahman Sohel, convener of Tangail district unit of BCL, told The Daily Star that they know nothing of the incident.

Meanwhile, the second meeting on the special fares for students between the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority authorities and transport owners and labour leaders yesterday ended inconclusively.

The first meeting on the issue on Thursday was also inconclusive.

As much as 80 percent of the transport owners in Dhaka are poor, said Khandaker Enayet Ullah, secretary-general of the Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, after the meeting.

"Some of them maintain their families by running just a bus. How will they handle the loss from taking half fare from students?"

During the meeting, Enayet Ullah proposed for setting up of a task force comprising of stakeholders to determine the loss in revenue for bus operators if half bus fare for students was introduced.

After the meeting, BRTA Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder urged all students to leave the street protest. The students' demands had reached the government.

"But we will need time to bring all under the structure of laws," he said.

But students of different educational institutions yesterday issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the government to meet the demands they had raised in 2018 including half bus fares and ensuring their security in public transport.

After holding a three-hour-long sit-in in front of Rapa Plaza in Dhanmondi, the students warned that they would besiege the BRTA office on Tuesday if their demands were not met.

They also said that their protest would also continue for today and tomorrow. They will also continue to check the unfit and unlicensed vehicles on the road.

Ethiopia PM Abiy says military will 'destroy' Tigray rebels

AFP, Addis Ababa

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said his soldiers would "destroy" rebels from the northern Tigray region, in the latest instalment of state media footage purportedly showing him at the war front.

"You are comprehensively destroying the enemy, there is no going back without winning," Abiy, winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, said in the 34-minute clip posted yesterday to his office's Twitter page.

"We will win, the enemy is dispersing, there are areas we have to control," he added.

"Until we destroy the enemy there is no rest."

Abiy announced this week he would start leading operations against

the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which once dominated national politics but has been locked in a gruesome war with his government for the past year.

The announcement has spurred new recruitment in Addis Ababa.

The country's most famous distance runner, Haile Gebreselassie, told AFP he was determined to "sacrifice and stand for Ethiopia".

The TPLF, he added, "is destabilising our country beyond its region".

On Wednesday state-affiliated media announced Abiy had handed over regular duties to his deputy.

His move came after the TPLF reported major territorial gains, claiming this week to have seized a town just 220 kilometres (135 miles) from the capital Addis Ababa.

Bleeding has put Khaleda's life

FROM PAGE 1

necessary technology and equipment, according to Alamgir, reports UNB.

"Khaleda Zia has been suffering from many diseases, but the main problem is in her stomach. The bleeding from her liver has put her life at stake -- it has to be stopped immediately," he said at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion was organised by pro-BNP student leaders of Dhaka University Central Students Union (Ducus) and All-Party Students Unity (Apsu) of the 90s at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity marking the 31st death anniversary of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon, a martyr in the 90's anti-autocracy movement.

Khaleda, a 76-year-old former prime minister, was re-admitted to Evercare Hospital on November 13, six days after she had returned home from the hospital.

The BNP chief's physicians said she has been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, ophthalmological and dental complications.

She needs advanced treatment abroad immediately as she is also suffering from critical cardiac, kidney and liver problems, high blood sugar and low haemoglobin level, they said.

On behalf of the family, Khaleda's younger brother, Shamim Iskander, applied to the home ministry on November 11 urging the government to allow her to go abroad for better treatment.

However, Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government will consider Khaleda's appeal if she submits a fresh petition after returning to jail.

Alamgir went on to criticise the ruling party leaders for what he said were their various 'derogatory' comments on Khaleda Zia's illness.

"It is unfortunate that the ruling party leaders neither have any sense of political etiquette, nor humanitarian values."

On Dr Milon, Alamgir said he was an active political activist. His death sparked the movement that finally led to the fall of the autocratic regime.

"There are differences between fascism and autocracy. The fight we waged that time and the fight we are waging currently has a massive difference. Now the state open fires, police open fires to create a de-politicisation in the country that began on 1/11," he said.

Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, a member of the BNP standing committee, and Amanullah Aman, former VP of Ducus, were present in the programme.

Riot police deploy after violent demo in Iran's Isfahan

AFP, Tehran

Riot police were deployed in force yesterday in the Iranian city of Isfahan, a day after violent protests over the drying up of a lifeblood river.

Security forces fired tear gas during the clashes with stone-throwers in the protest by around 500 people in the bed of the Zayandeh Rood river that crosses the central city, Fars and ISNA news agencies said.

"A limited number of arrests" were made by the security forces, according to the province's police chief.

"The situation is calm in the Zayandeh Rood riverbed and streets are empty, but I heard riot police were deployed on the Khadiji bridge," a resident who works in the area said yesterday.

Alarm bells ring

FROM PAGE 1

However, Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, cautioned against what he called "knee-jerk responses", reports The Straits Times of Singapore.

"This happens - viruses evolve and we pick up variants. It's not the end of the world, the sky is not falling in. There is this idea that we are just waiting for the next variant, and I don't want people to spend their lives worrying about that every day," he said.

The Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) yesterday said it has not found any new variant.

"We have to be very careful and maintain the health safety guidelines that include wearing masks," IEDCR Director Prof Tahmina Shirin told The Daily Star.

The spread of the Delta variant in May caused the number of new cases and deaths to soar until the end of July, forcing the government to impose strict restrictions. The government lifted those on August 19.

But the restrictions were largely ignored.

The government has so far inoculated only 20.65 percent of the population with two shots, and 33 percent got the first shot.

"This is our weakest point. We have to step up vaccination as well as enforcement of the health safety rules," IEDCR Consultant Mushtuq Hussain said.

He also recommended institutional quarantine for every one arriving from countries where Omicron has been detected.

Renowned US immunologist Anthony Fauci said reports on the new variant raised red flags, but it was possible that vaccines might still work to prevent serious illness.

"Until it's properly tested... we don't know whether or not it evades the antibodies that protect you against the virus", Fauci told CNN.

Tigresses

FROM PAGE 1

That means alongside Bangladesh, who were ranked 8th at the time, Pakistan and the West Indies join Australia, India, England and South Africa and hosts New Zealand.

Friendship

FROM PAGE 1

On Thursday, Fatik was carrying garbage from Panthapath to Gabtoli. He hit and killed Kabir, a garment accessories trader and a former employee of the Bangla daily Prothom Alo, on his third trip, said the Rab director.

Just the day before, Nayeem Hasan, a student of Notre Dame College, was killed after a Dhaka South City Corporation vehicle hit him while he was crossing a road in the capital's Gulistan.

Rab arrested the DSCC cleaner Md Harun from Jatrabari on Friday in connection with the accident. Like Fatik, he too was not an authorised driver of the vehicle.

Both garbage trucks caused the accidents while they were on the streets between 11:00am to 2:30pm, even though the High Court in October 2017 directed both corporations to carry out garbage removal work in the hours between 10:00pm and 6:00am.

About violating the directives, DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam, said it has been an old practice to do the work at daytime.

"But we have now decided that all garbage trucks would operate only between 10:00pm and 7:00am in the upcoming days," he told The Daily Star.

He added that CCTV cameras and GPS trackers will be installed in all the corporation's vehicles to bring them under strict monitoring.

The DNCC will also monitor the usage of the allotted 20 litres of fuel for each trip.

Md Abu Naser, public relation officer of DSCC, said, "We [too] have taken some steps, like implementing a token system, to monitor such anomalies."

Give me a list of launderers

Says finance minister after being slammed by opposition MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday told parliament that he does not know who are laundering money abroad and called upon opposition MPs to provide him a list of money launderers.

“I don’t launder money abroad. I believe you [MPs] don’t as well. How will I know who are laundering money, if you don’t provide me with a list?” he asked after opposition MPs slammed him for failing to stop money laundering.

The minister claimed that the amount of defaulted loans is the lowest since the country’s birth.

In 2006, the percentage of defaulted loans stood at 13.15 percent. As of September, it is 8.12 percent, which is the lowest, he said.

The heated debate took place during the passing of The Bankers’ Book Evidence Bill-2021.

While participating in the discussion on the bill, several opposition MPs alleged that thousands of crores of taka were laundered abroad from the country.

They also said the amount of defaulted loans has exceeded Tk 1 lakh crore.

The opposition MPs demanded answers from Kamal and formation of a banking commission to look into these matters.

The way you’re speaking, it seems that there’s no economy in the country, there’s no banking sector... how are we improving? How are we growing without these?

MUSTAFA KAMAL
Finance Minister

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



It's quite hard to wrap one's head around why someone, instead of using the footbridge right above them, would take the massive trouble of contorting their body to get through the structures beneath. With both sides of the road full of cars and buses, it's even more reasonable to not bother with weaving through the vehicles and just take the easy path. Ignoring traffic rules and risking one's life is, like always, concerning issues. This photo was taken yesterday near the capital's Ideal School and College in Motijheel.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

MUGDA FIRE Man succumbs to burn injuries after wife, son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man, who suffered burns along with three other family members in a fire in Mugda on November 22, died at a city hospital yesterday morning.

Sudhanshu Boidya (35) breathed his last around 5:00am at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, said SM Aiyub Hossain, resident surgeon of the burn institute.

He had suffered 35 percent burn injuries in the fire, he added.

Earlier, his wife Priyanka Baroi (32) and their son Arup Boidya (5) died at the hospital after they were injured in the fire believed to have originated from a gas leak.

Priyanka’s mother Shefali Rani Baroi (55) is in a critical state at the hospital.

Palash Baroi, a brother of Priyanka, said his sister’s family came to his house in Dakshin Mugda area from Shariatpur for Sudhanshu’s treatment.

‘Enact law against the maligning of Islam’ Hefajat places demands in presence of home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hefajat-e-Islam at an event yesterday demanded exemplary punishment for those who demean Islam.

At an “Ulama Mashayekh” conference organised by Hefajat at Jatiya Press Club, it made a four-point demand in presence of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, who was the chief guest.

The other demands are the state declaring “Qadianis” as non-Muslims, release of arrested Hefajat leaders and scholars, and withdrawal of cases against them.

They also demanded action against people of the government who commented against the state’s religion being Islam.

Starting the programme, Hefajat Secretary General Nurul Islam said he arranged the event after showing the demands to the home minister, who acknowledged that the demands are fine.

Hefajat held a public programme yesterday for the first time after nearly eight months, following the arrest of their leaders in an anti-Modi protest, which sparked violence in different parts of the country.

“In March, some unexpected events took

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Dispose of cases quickly, protect survivors during trial

Speakers tell nat’l conference on violence against women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding that the cases of violence against women and children be transferred to a speedy trial tribunal, Amrai Pari Paribarik Nirjaton Protirodh Jot (We Can) made a nine-point demand at a conference in the capital yesterday.

The event -- “National Conference Against Violence Against Women 2021” -- was held at the Liberation War Museum in Agargaon.

To stop all forms of violence against women and girls, the organisation demanded that the cases should be disposed of within the stipulated time and the victims and their families must be provided with the required security, medical care and compensation during the trial procedure.

The nine-point demand also included formulating and implementing policies to



prevent sexual harassment, as per the directions of the HC, making the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 successful and amending all kinds of laws discriminatory

to women.

In addition, they also recommended adopting a zero-tolerance policy against rape, sexual violence, abuse of women and children, and suggested introducing special campaigns against abusers.

Demanding a violence-free nation, Shaheen Anam, co-chair of We Can, said in her welcoming speech that even after fifty years of independence, the freedom of the people of Bangladesh has been curtailed by gendered violence.

“The tendency to not accept diversities has led to widespread discrimination and violence, we don’t change ourselves, police or law and order alone cannot change anything,” she said.

Senior district judge and director (training) at the Judicial Administration Training Institute

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Carry out more research on Liberation War

Speakers tell discussion on Crack Platoon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a virtual discussion yesterday said more research, especially at the universities, on the country’s Liberation War should be carried out to enlighten future generations about the most significant event of the country’s history.

They also said disseminating authentic history among students is essential not only to uphold the spirit of the Liberation war, but for the country’s progress as well.

The speakers said this at the virtual discussion titled “Crack Platoon: Dhaka’s Freedom Fighters”, organised by Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation.

Attended by freedom fighters, the

discussion was the fifth installment of the foundation’s initiative “Bidyapith Baitthaki: Ontorongo Alape Gunijan”.

Crack Platoon was a group that conducted major guerrilla operations in Dhaka against the Pakistan army during the Liberation War.

Addressing the session, freedom fighter Habibul Alam said there should be PhD level research works on the historic March 7 speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

It’s unfortunate that no major research work on the historic speech has been done in the 50 years of the country’s independence, he said, stressing that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

People call us AL agents due to overpraising Says JP lawmaker Chunnu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Because of praising the government so much, people are calling opposition lawmakers “agents of ruling Awami League”, the main JP opposition lawmaker Mujibul Haque Chunnu told parliament yesterday.

Chunnu, also secretary general of JP, made the remarks after Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader criticised opposition MPs for not praising the government for its various successes and development activities in the transport sector.

Earlier, several opposition MPs of BNP and JP came down heavily on the minister for anarchic situations, corruption in the transport sector and recent fatal accidents on roads.

Addressing Quader, BNP MP Rumeen Farhana said the government just wants to hear praises, adding that it is the opposition’s job to expose the government’s wrongdoings,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

PARLIAMENT PANORAMA

Highways bill passed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Highways Bill, 2021 was passed in parliament yesterday to enact a comprehensive law, replacing a century-old one.

Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader placed the bill in the House, which was passed by voice vote.

The bill intends to replace the Highways Act, 1925, which has only five clauses. Those are inadequate to deal with maintenance, management and construction of highways.

It has the provision of punishment -- maximum two years’ jail or Tk 5,000 to Tk 5 lakh fine -- in case of violation of the proposed law.

As per the bill, the government will decide who can enter which roads, which roads will be declared as expressway and highways, how they will be operated, and from which roads tolls will be collected.

Rawshan Ara, Masrafe made chairperson, member of JS bodies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party lawmaker from reserved seats for women in parliament Rowshan Ara Mannan was made chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on Road Transport and Bridges Ministry yesterday.

On the other hand, Cricketer Masrafe Bin Mortaza, ruling Awami League MP from Narail-2, was made member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on planning ministry.

Chief Whip of parliament Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury moved the two motions to reconstitute the two parliamentary standing committees. AL MP Akabbar Hossain, chairman of the parliamentary committee on the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges Ministry, died on November 16, leaving the post vacant.

With Rowshan Ara being made chairman, four JP MPs are now chiefs of parliamentary standing committees.

Bills to raise judges’ allowance placed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two bills were placed in parliament yesterday to increase allowances of the chief justice, and judges of Appellate Division and High Court. They are Bangladesh Supreme Court Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) Act and Bangladesh SC Judges (Travelling Allowance) Act.

Law Minister Anisul Huq placed the bills. The SC Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) Act will replace the existing ordinance of 1978. The SC judges (travelling allowance) act will replace an ordinance of 1976.

Port city to be rid of 37-year-old toxic pesticides

- 1,000 tonnes of hazardous DDT to be cleaned up; stored in Ctg depot for 37yrs
- Out-of-date chemical may lead to health, environmental hazard
- To be shipped to France for incineration; venture of FAO, DoE, environment ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international operation to remove approximately 1,000 tonnes of hazardous pesticide is set to begin next month.

Specialists from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the government have set their sights on the now-banned DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), which has been stored at a depot in Chattogram for 37 years.

The pesticide will then be shipped to Europe for safe incineration in specialised facilities.

Under strictly monitored conditions, a specialist company will take about three to four months to remove the DDT and ship the waste to France, sources said.

The work will be undertaken through FAO’s Pesticide Risk Reduction in Bangladesh project, jointly implemented by the Department of Environment (DoE) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

An inception workshop for the project took place yesterday. Stakeholders at the workshop were provided with an overview of the project and discussed suggestions

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Airport Road is one of the busiest roads in the port city. Thousands of people ply it every day, but never without suffering. The area is under risk of accidents almost year-round. In monsoon, puddles gather and make movement difficult, while in the dry season, it becomes shrouded in dust so thick that it makes it hard to see due to development work. This photo was taken from EPZ area yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Mayor Hanif’s anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 15th death anniversary of Mohammad Hanif, the first elected mayor of undivided Dhaka City Corporation and president of Dhaka city Awami League.

On the occasion, President M Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in separate messages recalled Hanif’s memories and contributions to the nation and AL.

Mayor Mohammad Hanif Memorial Foundation will offer prayers at his grave at Azimpur graveyard around 11:00am and hold special prayers at Mayor Mohammad Hanif Jame Mosque in Azimpur, said a press release.

Members of AL and its associate bodies as well

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Newborn found from Wari dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newborn baby, who was found with injuries in Wari on Friday night, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

The baby girl breathed her last around 7:00am while being treated at the hospital, Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH police outpost, told The Daily Star.

A couple -- Apurba Robi Das and Jhinuk Das -- took the newborn to hospital after they found the baby with injuries in her head and back lying abandoned behind a building around 11:45pm.

She was crying, moving her limbs, said Apurba Robi Das.

Kabir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Wari Police Station, said they suspected someone threw the baby from the upper floor of the building or any other nearby buildings.

Police are investigating it, he said.

Mayor Hanif

FROM PAGE 3 as people from all walks of life will take part in the fateha and special prayers.

A close associate of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Hanif was born in Dhaka on April 1, 1944.

Hanif joined politics from his student life under the tutelage of Bangabandhu.

He also played a significant role in different democratic movements of the country.

Hanif suffered splinter injuries while shielding AL President Sheikh Hasina during the August 21 grenade attack on an AL rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in 2004.

He died of a cardiac arrest at a hospital in the capital on November 28, 2006.

Hanif's son Sayeed Khokon is a former mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

রেডি ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা ও বনানী আ/এ ২২০০ থেকে ৩০০০ বর্গফুটের রেডি ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়। জেমস প্রপার্টি

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The third phase of the Union Parishad elections takes place across the country today. In Keraniganj's Sakta union, poll contestants of Ward-5 covered the streets with posters and replicas of their symbols, which include cricket bats of various sizes, making it difficult for vehicles to pass through. This photo was taken yesterday.

Carry out more research

FROM PAGE 3 true history of the Liberation War should not be tainted.

It is unfortunate that the number of research works on the Liberation War has not been up to expectations, said the foundation's Director General Prof Ahrar Ahmad.

Welcoming the participants, he said the country's Liberation War was not just a mere event but a "fearless journey" to achieve and uphold certain principles and dreams.

On the significance of the Crack Platoon, its member freedom fighter Ali Ahmed Ziauddin

recalled that between June and August in 1971, the platoon members kept Dhaka city's situation out of control of the Pakistani occupation forces with their "reckless" tactics.

Such guerrilla warfare played a significant role in inspiring the common people, who were largely in the dark about the resistance until then, he said.

Among others, freedom fighter and eminent theatre personality Nasir Uddin Yousuff and freedom fighter Fateh Ali Chowdhury recalled their memories of the battlefield at the discussion.

IUB holds academic award ceremony

CITY DESK

The academic award ceremony of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) was held at the university auditorium at Bashundhara R/A in Dhaka yesterday, said a press release.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid was present as the chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the event, he said Bangladesh is now seeing a massive surge in investor interest in the power and energy sector, which now has a portfolio worth nearly USD 25 billion.

A Matin Chowdhury, chair of the IUB board of trustees, attended the programme as special guest. It was presided over by IUB Vice-Chancellor Tanweer Hasan.

This year's academic awards were given to five different groups from the Spring, Summer and Autumn semesters of 2020 under two categories -- the Vice-Chancellor's Honor List and the Dean's Honor List. The first group members received Tk 10,000 each while the second group received Tk 5,000 each.

Dispose of cases quickly

FROM PAGE 3

Md Golam Kibria said defendant women are not treated well in our society, which is why they want to conceal the issue of rape when they become victims of it, often making it too late for them to avail justice.

Stressing on the need for gender sensitivity of investigation officers, he also called for monitoring the effectiveness of laws relating to women and children. He also mentioned that the state must take responsibility for the victims in cases where the convicted is unable to provide compensation to them.

Eminent rights activist and chairperson of the organisation, Sultana Kamal, said

women have been empowered but equal status for them is yet to be achieved.

Five "Amrai Pari Changemakers" were also awarded for their work in preventing violence against women at the conference.

Planning Minister MA Mannan urged all to work together to prevent violence against women.

Lawmaker Aroma Dutta, Oxfam's head of Gender Justice and Social Inclusion Mahmuda Sultana, Jahangirnagar University's associate professor Dr Parveen Jolly, and additional chief judicial magistrate Farida Yasmin spoke at the conference, among others.

The session was moderated by We Can chief coordinator Zinat Ara Haque.

Enact law against

FROM PAGE 3 place. Some intruders entered and incited the violence. Now we will move forward to realise our demands by maintaining law and order," said Nurul Islam.

He said many of the scholars already got released on bail and thanked the home minister for that.

Hefajat's new amir, Mohibullah Babunagari, the maternal uncle of Junayed Babunagari, was also present at the event. In a written statement, he said the government should enact an exemplary law for maligning Islam.

Talking at the programme, the home minister said the government will not enact any law that is against the Quran and Islam.

He said Hefajat claims itself to be a non-political party. So, they should always be careful about intruders.

"Many Hefajat leaders were arrested following the violence in March. Those who were really involved, are behind bars. We have no control in the judiciary," he continued.

The authorities are just facilitating bail for those who were not found to be involved with the incident primarily, he added.

People call us AL agents

FROM PAGE 3

corruption and irregularities. Independent MP Rezaul Karim said it is not clear who the opposition party is in the parliament, due to such praises by opposition MPs.

Give me a list of launderers

FROM PAGE 3

At the beginning, the minister was criticised by the MPs, as he remained silent on these issues, but later on, Kamal started talking.

About the banking sector, the minister said the main driving force of a country's economy is its banking sector.

"We are doing well when the world economy is in turmoil. If you have any proof that Bangladesh's economy is lagging behind our neighboring country, South Asia and Southeast Asia, then you come to me. I will give you the solution," he said.

Kamal said, "The way you are speaking, it seems that there is no economy in the country, there is no banking sector in the country, there is nothing in the country. But if there is nothing, how are we improving? How are we growing without these?"

He said the number of banks, customers and deposits have increased. Every bank is making profit.

He mentioned that lawsuits were filed against those who committed irregularities with loans. The number of ongoing cases is 2.43 lakh.

Regarding various irregularities centring e-commerce, the minister said action is being taken.

বসুন্ধরা আবাসিক এলাকায় গুট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা বারিধারা আবাসিক এলাকায় এম-ব্লকে ১৩.২৪ কাঠা, এন-ব্লকে ১০কাঠা, আই-এক্সটেনশনে ১০+৫ কাঠা, রেজিষ্ট্রেশন, মিউন্টেশন, বাউন্ডারী ওয়াল কমপ্লিট গুটগুলো বিক্রয় হইবে।

মোবাইল: ০১৭১১৫৪৬৮৭, E-mail: mdfariduddin6687@gmail.com

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation

"BSC Bhaban", Saltgola Road, Chittagong

REF: 18.16.0000.373.01.006.21-22 Date: 25/11/2021

Invitation of Tender (LTM)

S/L No.	Tender ID	Name of tender	Publishing & closing date
01.	COMC-010 Dated: 25 Nov, 2021	Transportation of 1,00,000 mt (+/- 10% supplier's option) Murban Crude Oil from Jebel Dhanna, Abu Dhabi to Chattogram, Bangladesh basis lay-can 05-08 January, 2022	25-Nov, 2021 & 20-Dec-2021 12:00 HRS
02.	Website address	Detail information & tender document will be available in the website of www.bsc.gov.bd	

Capt. Md Mozibur Rahaman General Manager (Chartering)
Phone: 031-728269
E-mail: gm-chn@bsc.gov.bd

GD- 2177

Death of driver triggers workers' protest in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Transport workers demonstrated across different spots on Chattogram-Hathazari route yesterday, protesting the killing of a driver who was allegedly beaten to death.

They alleged public bus driver Abdur Rahim (45) was beaten by some eight people coming by a microbus at Amin Jute Mill area around 8:30pm on Friday night.

Vehicular movement on the route halted for around an hour from 10:00am as the workers demonstrated at Hathazari Bus Stand, Muradpur and Oxygen intersections.

Later, police rushed to the spot and calmed the workers down, assuring justice. They soon left the blockades peacefully.

"Rahim was driving the bus when a microbus overtook it. This triggered an altercation, leading to some eight people

coming out of the microbus and beating him up because he didn't give them space to go," said Md Harun, general secretary of North Chattogram Paribahan Shramik Oikya Parishad.

Passengers of the bus soon rescued and sent Rahim to his residence at Rahatgar Pool. However, he started feeling unwell, and family members admitted him to Chattogram Medical College Hospital, where he died around 11:00pm. His body was sent to CMCH morgue for autopsy.

As news of Rahim's death spread in the morning, transport workers started demonstrating on the route, said police.

OC Md Kamruzzaman of Bayezid Bostami Police Station said police were investigating into the allegations. "We are collecting CCTV footage to identify the microbus," he said, adding that filing of a case was underway.

Port city to be rid

FROM PAGE 3 for successful implementation.

Robert D Simpson, FAO representative, said the ministry and FAO will oversee the imminent cleanup and safe disposal of this large stockpile of DDT, which carries the potential for health and environmental hazards. The FAO project will also support the government update national regulations and develop capacity for management and safe disposal of hazardous waste.

"DDT removal is highly technical and requires specialist knowledge and equipment. Procedures must comply with national and

international laws," said Saso Martinov, the project's senior technical adviser.

The project will also support government actions to reduce risks from pesticides used in food production and processing, with a focus on fish drying and pesticide containers.

More than 60 representatives from various organisations and government departments, including the Ministry of Family Health and Family Welfare, Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Fisheries, DGHS, Chittagong University, along with farmers and dry fish producers attended the session.



A pile of garbage is kept out in the open on the capital's Mirpur road, causing an obstruction in movement for both transportation and passersby. Although the city corporation generally cleans up the streets as soon as dawn breaks, locals say they are yet to address this particular issue. The photo was taken yesterday morning from Kalyanpur area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Invitation to Bid (ITB)

for Provision of Installation, Testing and Commissioning for IT works, Hybrid IP-PBX works, TV works, CCTV & Access control and Office Furniture for FAOBD new office building

Published on: 24 November 2021
Dead line for application: 09 December 2021

The FAO Representation in Bangladesh is inviting Invitation to Bid (ITB) for Selection of a Firm for the IT, CCTV, PABX & TV Works and supply of Office furniture for FAO new office located in Road No. 18, House no. 74, Block no. J, Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Interested firms can access the tender document in the link below:
<https://https://ungm.in-tend.co.uk/fao/aspx/ProjectManage/13569>

Mandatory Site visit: 30 November, 2021 at 10:30AM – 12:00PM

Mandatory Pre-bidder Conference: will be held on 01 December 2021 at 10.30 AM to 11.30 am through a Zoom link (Kindly see the tender document for details)

Deadline for technical questions is 02 December, 2021

FAO Representation in Bangladesh reserves all the right to accept any or cancel any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Selection of Firm by FAO are made on a competitive and transparent basis. Firms are encouraged to apply directly to FAO and follow the instructions as given above. Please note that no intermediary is allowed to expedite or facilitate such process. All those who represent themselves as such are fraudulent and should be reported to FAO immediately. Vendor are requested to complete the registration process by following the below link: www.ungm.org

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

e-Zone

Servicing Change Managers

E-Zone HRM Limited is a management consulting group providing one-stop HR solutions. We have a formal agreement with one of the United Nations agency to provide outsourcing services under a third party contract.

We are now seeking applications for a UN Organization from Bangladeshi Nationals for the following vacancies under third party outsourcing contract modality. For detailed Job Description, please visit the following website link to apply for the post.

Title 1 : National Consultant for Implementation support for Covid19 vaccination (NOB level) Re-Advertise
Duty Station: Dhaka, Contract Duration: 8-9 Months.
Number of Vacancies: 1 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un74.html>

Title 2 : National Consultant (System Developer for ORG)
Duty Station: Dhaka, Contract Duration: 12 Months.
Number of Vacancies: 1 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un75.html>

Title 3 : National Consultant (Call Centre Agent for Office of Registrar General)
Duty Station: Dhaka, Contract Duration: 12 Months.
Number of Vacancies: 4 (Four)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un76.html>

Contract Type: Contract with E-Zone

Last Date of Application: 4th December, 2021

Patiya Govt College

Patiya, Chattogram

Website: www.patiyagovtcollege.gov.bd

Memo No. CEDP/PGC/2021-22/091 Date: 24/11/2021

e-Tender Notice-02/2021-2022

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of supply	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	631585	Procurement of Equipment of Physics and Chemistry Department of Patiya Govt College, Chattogram.	13-12-2021 01:00pm	13-12-2021 02:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 4.00pm, 12 December, 2021.

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

Prof. Mohammad Mozammel Hoque-2664
Principal
Patiya Govt. College, Chattogram
Mobile No. 01876029046
E-mail: patiyagovtcollege@gmail.com

GD-2175

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Principal's Office

Bandarban Government College

Bandarban Hill District.

Telephone No: 0361-62411
Mobile No: 01704447375
E-mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com
Web site: bandarbancollege.edu.bd

Memo No. BGC/CEDP/2021-22/G-6/03 Date: 25/11/2021

e-Tender Notice: 03/2021-2022

e-Tender is invite in the National e-Gp System portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package;

Sl. No.	Tender ID. No.	Name of Package	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	631463	Supplying of High-speed Duplicating Machine, Multimedia Projector & Photocopier for Bandar Govt. College	20-Dec-2021 01:00 PM	20-Dec-2021 14:00 PM

This is an on line tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks Branches up to 19-Dec-2021 16:00 PM

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-Gp System portal and from e-Gp Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

25-11-2021
(Professor Md. Maksudul Amin)
Principal
Bandarban Govt. College,
Bandarban
Phone: 0361-62411
e-Mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com

GD- 2174



Without any hope in his eyes, this fisher sits on a fishing trawler anchored at Badura fishing dock in Pirojpur Sadar upazila. A recent increase in piracy has left many trawlers in coastal districts to refrain from going fishing at the Bay of Bengal. The photo was taken recently.

Pirates prowling the Bay again

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur:

Panic has gripped fishers in Pirojpur and Barguna after incidents of piracy rose sharply along the coast of the two districts in the past several weeks.

After killing a fisher, who was from Pathorghata in Barguna, pirates abducted seven fishers on November 20.

Jahangir Hossain, from Telekhali village in Pirojpur's Bhandaria upazila, was one of the abductees. The pirates demanded Tk 3 lakh as ransom for the release of each of the abductees, said Jahangir's relatives and fellow crew members.

The pirates released the seven fishers on November 25 after relatives of the victims paid ransom as demanded by the pirates. All the

abductees said the pirates subjected them to extreme physical torture before releasing them.

"We had been catching fish in the Bay of Bengal without any fear over the last four to five years.

After killing a fisher, who was from Pathorghata in Barguna, pirates abducted seven fishers on November 20.

But now we are living in anxiety, as we don't have anyone to get us released in case we are kidnapped by the pirates," said Mizanur Rahman Sardar, from Bagerhat's Sharankhola upazila, who was

selling fish at Badura fishing dock in Pirojpur Sadar upazila.

All fishers in the region are now passing days in fear of getting killed or abducted by pirates while at sea, he added.

Another fisher, Abdul Hye, from Mahipur in Patuakhali, said the poor fishers cannot afford to pay Tk 2 to 3 lakh ransom to the pirates. "But if kidnapped or killed by the pirates, a fisher hardly gets any support from the owner of his fishing boat."

Hearing about the rise in piracy at the Bay, many fishers are no longer willing to go on fishing voyages to the sea, said fisher Farid Mridha, from Balipara village in Pirojpur's Indurkani upazila.

A kidnapped fisher usually ends up getting killed by the pirates,

unless his family members are able to pay the ransom, he added.

The rise in piracy came at a time when the fishers in the country had been grappling with poor catches over the past couple of years, thanks to back-to-back fishing bans in the Bay, said Nazrul Islam, from Barguna's Taltali upazila. "Now I am not certain whether I should ever return to the sea."

Unless the pirates in the Bay are brought to book immediately, there will be an increased threat on lives of the fishers, said Kamal Das, president of Pirojpur district unit of fishing trawler owners' association.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent was unable to reach any official concerned at Bangladesh Coast Guard.

Third gender UP chairman candidate causes a stir

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A third gender UP chairman candidate has drawn the attraction of voters and has caused a stir in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah.

Nazrul Islam Ritu of Dadpur village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah is vying for the post of chairman of No 6 Trilochunpur Union Parishad under the upazila. His symbol is pineapple.

Ritu, who prefers wearing feminine dress and styling, belongs to a well-off family and has gained popularity among the voters because of his contribution to society.

He has built two mosques in the area with his hard-earned money and also extends financial support to temples and the needy.

Ritu who lives in Demra area of Dhaka has a good rapport with the people of his locality. He also financially supports the needy people having difficulty marrying their daughters off.

He left the village at the age of five. But due to having profound bondage with his family and the villagers, he could not

stay in Dhaka for long and his academic progress was hampered, he said.

"I don't understand elections but it is the people's love and support that have compelled me to contest the elections," he said.

Shakil Hossain and Sagar Hossain of Baliadanga village said that Ritu is a liberal and honest person.

He has become a favourite to all for his contributions and works for the locality, they added.

Kaliganj Upazila Election officer Alamgir Hossain said that three candidates are running in the elections for the post of chairman including Ritu. There is no bar for a third gender person to take part in the elections, he added.

AL-backed candidate Nazrul Islam Sana and independent runner Mahbubur Rahman are also vying for the post of chairman in the UP elections to be held today (November 28).

Earlier, Pinki Khatun, another third gender person, was elected vice-chairman from Kotchandpur upazila in Jhenidah becoming the first public representative from the community.



Nazrul Islam Ritu of Dadpur village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah is seen electioneering in his own locality.

PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN



SHEER NEGLIGENCE

Local people place a bamboo pole inside a gaping hole in the middle of this iron-structured bridge over Boudubi Canal, on the border of Pirojpur Sadar and Indurkani upazilas, to warn vehicle drivers of the danger as Roads and Highways Departments (RHD) are yet to repair it.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Farmer stabbed dead in Jhenidah

Wife among 2 held for killing man in Pirojpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Criminals stabbed a man to death at Digharpara village in Kaliganj upazila on Friday night.

The victim, Rezaul Islam, 34, a farmer, was son of Abul Kashem of the village.

Quoting neighbours and family members, police said Rezaul returned home and then went to bed after having his meal around 9:00pm on Friday night.

Later, hearing his screams, neighbours and family members rushed to his room around 3:00am and found him lying injured in a pool of blood.

Critically injured Rezaul, with his throat-slit, was rushed Jashore Sadar Hospital, where the doctors declared him dead.

Deceased's wife Selina Khatun said she was sleeping with her two children in another room.

Hearing Rezaul's cry for help, she rushed to the room and found him critically injured, Selina said, adding that she also found the door to the roof open.

Victim's brother Anwar Hossain said miscreants might have enter the house, using the door of the roof, and stabbed

killed his brother by slitting his throat.

Officer in Charge of Kaliganj Police Station Mahfuzur Rahman said the reason behind the death will be clear after autopsy.

Away in Pirojpur, a youth was killed allegedly over his wife's extramarital relationship in Pirojpur Sadar upazila on Friday night.

Deceased Enamul Sheikh, 27, a tea vendor, was son of late Motaleb Sheikh of Shikarpur area in Pirojpur municipality.

Enamul used to live at a rented house at Bhaijhora village with his wife Reshma Begum, 25, and two children.

Meanwhile, police detained Enamul's wife Reshma and younger brother Rakib Sheikh, 24, after Maonir, Enamul's another brother, filed a murder case with Pirojpur Sadar Police Station the same night.

During primary interrogation the duo confessed their involvement in the murder, police said.

The law enforcers produced the arrestees before a court yesterday that sent them to jail, rejecting their bail prayer.

Missing NGO worker still traceless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A female NGO worker, who went missing from Tangail's Bhuapur upazila over a week ago, still remains traceless.

Victim Mira Khatun, 32, wife of Razib Miah of Salenga area in Kalihati upazila, has been serving as a senior field organizer at Falda branch of Society for Social Service, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

Bonya Akter, manager of the NGO's Falda branch, said Mira has been working at the branch office for the last one and a half years.

She went out of the office for field works at Jhanjhania and Maizbari villages in Bhuapur upazila on November 20 and remained missing since then.

A general diary (GD) was filed with Bhuapur Police Station in this regard, she said.

OC of Bhuapur PS Abdul Wahab said they were investigation the matter and also trying to trace the whereabouts of the missing woman.



Regional Public Administration Training Centre, Chattogram

10, S.S. Khaled, Road
<http://patc.chittagongdiv.gov.bd>

e-Tender Notice

No. 05.01.1541.062.07.99.001.10

Date: 25/11/2021

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

Tender ID No.	Name of goods	Online tender notice publications date and time	Online tender closing date and time
629815	Purchase of Bag (This will be a Framework Agreement and the Supplier will be bound to provide the bag at the same price for the next three years).	21/11/2021 11:30am	08/12/2021 12:00am
631806	Purchase of Desktop, Laptop, Printer, Scanner & UPS (This will be a Framework Agreement and the Supplier will be bound to provide the similar items at the same price for the next three years).	25/11/2021 11:45am	14/12/2021 15:00pm
632563	Supply and installation of networking items (This will be a Framework Agreement and the Supplier will be bound to supply of similar items at the same price for the next three years).	05/12/2021 12:00am	20/12/2021 15:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Registration in the National e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is a must to submit an e-Tender. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the Portal and the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). For more details, please contact the PE's Support Desk (01833-789995).

Sd/-
Mst. Rokeya Parvin
Deputy Director
RPATC, Chattogram

GD-2176



North-West Power Generation Company Ltd
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Certified
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Office of the Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2)
Soydabad, Sirajganj.

Ref: 27.28.8878.201.07.001.21.289

Date: 27/11/2021

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd):

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Brief Description of Tender	Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date
1	628701	Supply of General Tools & Consumables.	17-Nov-2021	13-Dec-2021 15:00 PM	15-Dec-2021
2	630473	Spares for 6.6 KV Switchgear System.	25-Nov-2021	23-Dec-2021 15:30 PM	26-Dec-2021

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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

27/11/2021

Shafiqul Islam
Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW CCPP (Unit-2)
NWPGL, Soydabad, Sirajganj.

GD- 2171

Pakistan take command

FROM PAGE 14
unbeaten on 52. Pakistan will resume the third day trailing by 185 runs and all wickets intact.

Bangladesh's bowling attack posed no threat to the two Pakistani openers as pacers Abu Jayed and Ebadot Hossain were unable to extract any purchase with the new ball.

The only chance that Bangladesh managed to create was in the 13th over when Taijul Islam's armer zipped through Shafique's back leg when he was on nine.

Initially, it seemed it had hit the bat first but despite an appeal from Taijul and wicketkeeper Liton Das, skipper Mominul Haque opted not to review.

It was later shown that the ball had hit the pad first but would have otherwise gone on to hit the stumps.

Abid stayed positive with his shot-making and reached his fifty off 84 balls while Shafique displayed great patience and reached his fifty off 153 balls.

Earlier, Pakistan's seamers again used the new ball to perfection to

begin the second day as Hasan trapped centurion Liton Das leg before with a brilliant in-swing, ending his magnificent 206 run fifth-wicket stand with Mushfiqur Rahim.

Debutant Yasir Ali struck a gorgeous cover drive to Shaheen Afridi and was looking good until he was undone by another deadly in-swinging delivery from Hasan which went through the gap between the bat and pad and struck timber.

Mushfiqur exercised caution in his nineties, playing 14 dot balls before edging to the keeper off the bowling of Faheem Ashraf. It was the fourth instance when Mushfiqur was dismissed in the nineties in Test cricket -- the most by a Bangladeshi.

Mehedi Hasan Miraz then added some crucial runs, striking six fours during an unbeaten 38 before Afridi and Hasan removed the lower-order inside the first session.

Hasan ended with figures of five for 51 while Afridi and Faheem bagged two wickets each.

India, Russia, China alarmed

FROM PAGE 14
exams yesterday for a Turkish foundation in Kabul that runs some of Afghanistan's most highly regarded schools, despite a delay by the Taliban in allowing the 13-year-olds to return to the classroom.

Some 3,500 students sat the highly competitive exams for the Afghan-Turk school system, with girls making up almost 40% of candidates, Reza Parsa, a school official, said.

The move came despite the Taliban government's delay in authorising girls above grade 7 - aged about 13 - to return to school following a ban imposed when the movement seized power in August.

"We want all girls to be educated. This is our president's and our government's wish and that of Afghans," the Educational Councillor at Kabul's Turkish Embassy, Changez Idmir, said at a news conference to mark the holding of the entrance tests.

Facing mounting global pressure, the Taliban have said they will allow

older girls to resume classes once arrangements are made to ensure they can do so in conformity with what the movement considers proper Islamic standards.

Afghan-Turk schools are regarded among the top schools in Afghanistan and admission is highly competitive.

Unofficially, many parts of the country have seen older girls restart classes, while officially the Taliban say they are still working on a national system.

An official of the Taliban-led education ministry, Ehsan Khateb, also attended the ceremony and thanked the Turkish government.

Afghan-Turk schools have had to make changes to their curriculum, shutting music, theatre and dance departments at the request of Taliban officials, the head of the Turkish educational foundation, Salleh Saghar, told Reuters.

The foundation respected the rules and culture of the host country, he said.

No justice expected

FROM PAGE 14
the resolution which called for meeting of the Security Council on the "threat to peace" in the Indian subcontinent. **YAHYA'S MESSAGE TO THANT**
Pakistan president Yahya Khan sent a message today to the UN secretary-general U Thant inviting his attention to the rapidly deteriorating situation in the subcontinent.

In the message, Yahya proposed the stationing of UN observers and reported on the "violations of Pakistan territory by India".

ON THE WAR FRONT

On the night of November 28, Mukti Bahini attacked Pak troops at Gaurinagar and captured portion of Gaurinagar from enemy occupation.

Calm returns to Solomons capital after deadly riots

AFP, Honiara

Calm returned to the Solomon Islands' capital Honiara yesterday after days of rioting left at least three dead and reduced sections of the city to smouldering ruins.

Petrol stations, shops and other businesses began to reopen, with Honiara residents flocking to buy basic provisions as the violence ebbed.

"The situation is very tense and anything could happen anytime," said Audrey Awao, a working mother who worried there would soon be no food left in the shops.

What began as a small protest on Wednesday quickly descended into a violent free-for-all, with poor Honiara residents joining anti-government protesters to rampage through the shattered glass and burnt-out remains of businesses for things to eat or sell.

For three straight days, angry mobs cut through the usually sleepy seaside capital, demanding the removal of Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare.

Two years of pandemic-induced closed borders have left the already ravaged Solomons economy in tatters, deepening widespread joblessness and poverty among the population of around 800,000.

An early estimate of the cost, released by the Central Bank of the Solomon Islands, said 56 buildings in the capital had been burnt and looted, with many businesses facing over a year-long recovery.

While the loss to the economy was expected to be at least \$28 million (24.7 million euros), with the bank's governor warning that the nation's accounts -- already struggling to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic -- had been further weakened by the riots.

A more thorough estimate of the damage would be released in the coming days, he added.

"Now the PM needs to step down," a self-employed 32-year-old who gave his name as Selson told AFP. "That's the demand for all citizens of the Solomon Islands."

Local police said a forensic team was working to identify the charred

remains of three bodies found in a shop in the city's burnt-out Chinatown district.

Heavily armed police were a visible presence on nearby streets as locals began clean up operations and limited bus services resumed.

A night-time curfew and the presence of roughly 150 foreign peacekeepers from Australia and Papua New Guinea appeared to have helped cool tensions.

But the scale of the recovery was coming into sharp focus, even as the city remained on edge.

"It is very frustrating as it took me more than three hours to reach the fuel pump to get my vehicle fuelled," Awao told AFP.

Many Solomon Islanders believe their government is corrupt and beholden to Beijing and other foreign interests.

"Most people are barely getting one meal a day, there are no tourists and very little economic stimulus," Douglas Kelson, chief officer at St John Ambulance Service, told AFP.

"People do things they normally wouldn't when they are hungry," Kelson said.

Protesters channelled their anger directly at Sogavare and his government, with mobs attempting to torch parliament and the prime minister's private residence as police fired tear gas and warning shots.

Over 100 people have been arrested for riot-related activity, Solomon Islands police said yesterday as they tried to restore order.

"No one is above the law," said commissioner Mostyn Mangau, urging residents to "respect each other, as well as our visiting friends from abroad".

As tensions escalated, Sogavare had begged neighbours for urgent help.

In a letter obtained by AFP, the prime minister told his Papua New Guinea counterpart James Marape that "certain elements" had "attempted to overthrow a democratically elected government" and called for peacekeepers to be sent for a "period of three to four weeks".



A member of Tunisia's national guard delivers food rations to migrants rescued during an attempted crossing of the Mediterranean by boat, at the port of el-Ketef in Ben Guerdane in southern Tunisia near the border with Libya, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh's exclusion bewildering

FROM PAGE 14

has not been invited.

"Our goal is to be as inclusive as possible, within logistical constraints," she said, adding, "In the long run, we seek to engage any and all countries that show a genuine willingness in making commitments that support the Summit's goals."

Former Ambassador Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury said the US and Bangladesh have a very strong relationship, which is even going to be stronger given the fact Bangladesh is in a strategic location in the Asia-Pacific and that the US is looking at Bangladesh to boost trade, defence and security relations.

Also, Bangladesh is a major Muslim country whose core values are democracy and human rights. It is also making a significant contribution to world peace, including in the UN and other multilateral bodies while sheltering more than a million Rohingya refugees that drew applause globally.

It is not only the US but also Europe that will be strongly supporting the initiative, which is part of the US's policy of return to global leadership to face down authoritarian forces led by China and Russia, he said.

"Bangladesh might have flaws in democratic practices...whatever, the US could have engaged Bangladesh before the exclusion," Chowdhury said, adding, "Not including Bangladesh suggests a contradicting and confusing US stance."

Also, he said, Washington has created a scope for Dhaka to complain if the US speaks of democracy later.

He suggested that Dhaka seeks to know the factors that led to Washington's exclusion.

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute President Humayun Kabir said the Summit for Democracy, as pledged by Biden before the elections, will have significant implications in the wake of deteriorating democratic and human rights values globally.

This initiative will be stronger if

Biden is elected in the next elections, he added.

"It seems Biden administration is going strongly and institutionally against the authoritarian regimes," said Humayun Kabir, a former ambassador.

He said analysis of the list of the invitees reveals it has two types of countries -- strong democracies and the US' strategic allies, whose democracies are, however, questionable. Some of the US's strategic allies, including Egypt and Turkey have not been invited.

"This could be a comfort for Bangladesh," he said.

However, one needs to keep in mind that the Summit for Democracy will be a trendsetter in the future. This can also contribute to who's a US friend and who's not.

"Though not invited, we need to take note of what's happening and the implications of the summit. Accordingly, we need to act," Humayun Kabir told this correspondent.

Armenia, Azerbaijan agree to ease tension under Putin's watch

AFP, Moscow

The leaders of arch foes Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to ease tensions left over after their war over Nagorno-Karabakh last year under the mediation of Russia's Vladimir Putin on Friday.

Both Armenia's Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's Ilham Aliyev hailed talks held with Putin in the Black Sea resort of Sochi as positive.

Putin announced that the pair had agreed to begin the process of demarcating their borders, re-building transport links in the region, as well as moving forward on "humanitarian issues."

He thanked Pashinyan and Aliyev -- whose countries have been at loggerheads for years and who rarely meet face-to-face -- for agreeing to the talks.

The trio met less than two weeks after the worst fighting between the ex-Soviet Caucasus republics since their six-week war last year that claimed more than 6,500 lives.

The meeting was timed to coincide with the anniversary of a Moscow-

brokered ceasefire that ended last year's conflict.

"We agreed on a number of issues that I think are key," Putin said in a joint press conference after the talks.

Armenia's Pashinyan said the talks were held in an "open" and "positive" atmosphere.

"The results of the meeting are positive. (The region) will be safer," Azerbaijan's Aliyev said.

Putin had earlier urged the leaders to ease tensions.

"We were part of a united state for centuries, we have deep historical links," Putin told the pair after holding separate talks with each of them.

"We should aim to rebuild them and nurture them in the future," he said.

He pressed the pair -- who last met in January -- to hold more direct contacts.

"The more contacts, including direct ones, the better," Putin said.

Putin welcomed the foes' planned meeting in Brussels on December 15, saying he had discussed the matter with European Council President Charles Michel.



A person holds a sign during a protest against the proposed changes to anti-terrorism and gagging laws, which police officers say will undermine their authority and jeopardise the safety of citizens, in Madrid, Spain, yesterday. Sign reads: "Sanchez go away".

PHOTO: REUTERS

Seoul trials

FROM PAGE 14

teacher Byun Seo-yeon told AFP during a visit to the bright and busy Maru nursery in Seoul.

The robot's eyes wink and blink -- and its pupils become heart-shaped during conversation.

With a camera on its helmet, it takes photos that are instantly sent to a tablet for viewing.

"In the future, knowing how to manage AI and related tools will be very important," Han Dong-seog, from the Seoul government's childcare division, told AFP.

The robots are being trialled in 300 Seoul nurseries and childcare centres, with the government recommending the programme for children aged three to five.

"We believe having this experience in nursery schools will have a lasting effect throughout their youth and as adults," Han said.

The Alpha Mini has been adopted as part of a daily schedule for the class of four- to five-year-old students at Maru, with its ability to "fart" on command being a highlight during playtime.

"When I tell it to sing, it sings well. I tell it to dance and we dance together," said five-year-old Lee Ga-yeon.

Two more die

FROM PAGE 14

hospitals during the past one day.

From the beginning of the pandemic, 97.74 percent Covid-19 patients recovered among the infected people while 1.78 percent died, the DGHS statistics showed.

The DGHS said among the total 27,975 fatalities, 12,209 occurred in Dhaka division, 5,680 in Chattogram, 2,050 in Rajshahi, 3,609 in Khulna, 946 in Barishal, 1,270 in Sylhet, 1,367 in Rangpur and 844 in Mymensingh divisions.

Trudeau tours flood-ravaged western Canada

AFP, Ottawa

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday visited areas of Canada's Pacific coast hit by catastrophic floods, warning of further climate mayhem as the region braces for more torrential rains.

"This will not be the last crisis Canadians go through," Trudeau told a joint news conference with British Columbia's premier, John Horgan.

"Extreme weather events are going to become more frequent," he said, adding: "We need to address the long term climate change problems," including by cutting CO2 emissions and making infrastructure more resilient.

Heavy rains hit British Columbia in mid-November, causing widespread flooding and mudslides that damaged or destroyed roads and bridges, forced thousands to evacuate their homes and left at least four dead and one missing.

This followed record-high temperatures over the summer that killed more than 500 people in the province, as well as wildfires that destroyed a town.

"We're facing the brunt of climate change, not in the future, but right now," Horgan said.

"Our farms have been flooded, our roads have been washed away and our communities are underwater, and more rain is coming," he said.

Horgan's government on Friday ordered sections of three major highways closed ahead of two more major rain storms expected over the coming days.

Environment Canada has forecast up to 120 millimeters (4.7 inches) of rain over the weekend, warning it could lead to flash floods and washouts.

A second storm is expected to slam the province on Monday.

Coordinated action needed to tackle antimicrobial resistance

STAR HEALTH DESK

Antibiotic resistance (AMR) is one of the biggest public health challenges of our time. Fighting this threat is a public health priority that requires a collaborative global approach across sectors. It requires urgent multisectoral action in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that AMR is one of the top 10 global public health threats facing humanity.

AMR occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change over time and no longer respond to medicines making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. Misuse and overuse of antimicrobials are the main drivers in the development of drug-resistant pathogens. Also, lack of clean water and sanitation and inadequate infection prevention and control promotes the spread of microbes, some of which can be resistant to antimicrobial treatment.

The cost of AMR to the economy is significant. In addition to death and disability, prolonged illness results in longer hospital stay, the need for more expensive medicines, and financial challenges for those impacted.



According to World Bank, each year, 700,000 people die of AMR. Without action, the death toll could rise even higher, to as many as 10 million deaths annually by 2050. As a result of drug resistance, antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines become ineffective and infections become increasingly difficult or impossible to treat.

Every year, from November 18 to 24, World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) is observed. The 2021 theme, *Spread Awareness, Stop Resistance*, calls on stakeholders, policymakers, healthcare providers, and the general public to be Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness champions.

Among the primary causes

of mortality and morbidity, maternal infections and sepsis account for at least 11% of maternal deaths. Most maternal infections and their repercussions can be avoided by implementing appropriate practices, prenatal screening, and antibiotic use.

Also, antifungal resistance is becoming a significant public health concern around the world. Antifungal medications now on the market are frequently linked to severe side effects. Few new drugs are under development. Other ailments are commonly made worse by fungal infections.

The severe consequences of mucormycosis and invasive aspergillosis during the COVID-19 pandemic recently demonstrated this. This event

will introduce World Health Organisation (WHO)'s solution to the problem, including creating a worldwide priority fungal infections list with public health implications.

This year's event looked at how chosen technologies, such as linked diagnostics and AMR (Anti-Microbial Resistance) stewardship, can support the proper use of antimicrobial drugs and how they can help accomplish relevant United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets.

This year, an event also took place to enlighten about the Tailoring Antimicrobial Resistance Programmes (TAP) Quick Guide and Toolbox

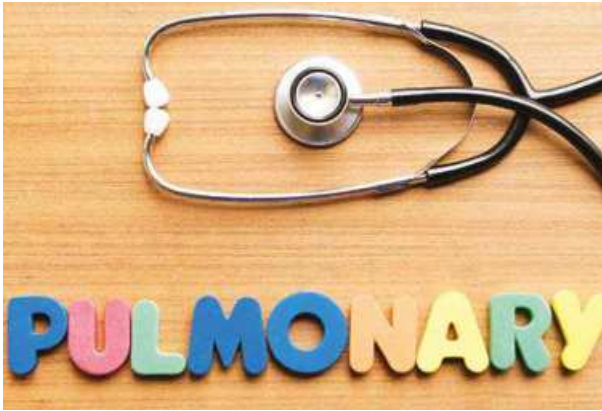
recently developed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Through a behavioural insights approach, these technologies attempt to boost efforts to combat antibiotic resistance. The TAP Quick Guide is a practical, step-by-step approach to designing and implementing a targeted behaviour modification intervention to address human and animal health AMR factors.

The HIV Drug Resistance Report 2021 was launched as a part of the World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 2021. It aimed to spread awareness of the burden of HIV drug resistance and advocated to stop HIV drug resistance by implementing a comprehensive prevention and response approach involving all stakeholders as outlined in the WHO global action plan to prevent, monitor, and respond to HIV drug resistance.

Common illnesses will become untreatable as antimicrobial resistance rises unless the world takes coordinated action across the human, animal, plant, and environmental health sectors. Therefore, there is a need for immediate action. Civil society has a critical role in mobilising different stakeholders, including governments, donors, academia, and the general public, in taking action.

HEALTH bulletin



Pulmonary rehabilitation after hospitalisation for COPD exacerbations

In clinical trials, pulmonary rehabilitation lowers the risk for readmission following hospitalisation for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exacerbations. In this retrospective cohort study, researchers evaluated nearly 200,000 Medicare patients hospitalised with COPD across more than 4,000 medical centres to determine if this association holds up in routine practice.

Patients who underwent pulmonary rehabilitation were healthier overall than those who did not. Therefore, the researchers assembled and compared two propensity-matched cohorts, each with 2,700 patients: One group received rehabilitation, and the other did not, but baseline characteristics were well-matched in the two groups.

Patients who initiated pulmonary rehabilitation within 90 days of discharge were significantly less likely to be rehospitalised (for COPD or any other reason) within 1 year. On average, the probability of rehospitalisations was 0.95 per person in the rehabilitation group and 1.15 per person in the no-rehabilitation group. The number of days spent in the hospital per person-year also was lower in those who initiated pulmonary rehabilitation (7.9 vs 11.7 days).

This large study of a diverse patient population verifies the generalisability of prior randomised trial data and highlights the need to encourage pulmonary rehabilitation participation following discharge among patients hospitalised with COPD.

Manage your sinus attack this winter

A sinus attack usually involves pain in the forehead or between the eyes, upper teeth ache, heavy full face feeling, stuffed and congested nose. In addition, you may have a common complaint that sends many people to a doctor's office.

Sinuses are air spaces in your skull lined with mucous membranes. Most people have four sets of nasal sinuses. They are like fingerprints. Everybody's is different. Some people have no frontal sinuses or just one.

Sinusitis is inflammation in the sinuses. Tiny, hair-like structures called cilia move mucus across sinus membranes and toward an exit. All of your sinus cavities connect to your nose to allow a free exchange of air and mucus. Infections or allergies make sinus tissues inflamed, red, and swollen.

Sinusitis usually starts with inflammation triggered by a cold, allergy attack, or irritant. But it may not end there. Colds, allergies, and irritants make sinus tissues swell.

Most people have a stuffy nose and pain or pressure in several areas around the face or teeth. There is usually a nasal discharge that may be yellow, green, or clear. You may also have fatigue, trouble with sense of smell or taste, cough, sore throat, bad breath, headache, pain when you bend forward, and fever.

Inflammation of the sinuses that lasts for more than three months is chronic sinusitis. Bacteria can make their home in blocked sinuses, but they are not the only cause. Anatomy, allergies, polyps, immune system problems, and dental diseases may also be to blame.

If your sinuses remain inflamed, sinus membranes can thicken and swell. The swelling may be enough



to cause grape-like masses called polyps. They can jut out from the sinus into the nasal passage and block your nasal airway.

Nasal decongestants sprays open swollen nasal passages and allow your sinuses to drain. But you should use these drugs only for a few days. After that, there is a kickback effect, making your nasal passages swell shut again. Nasal steroid sprays, or saline sprays or washes, maybe other options.

Now the question is if you need antibiotics. The common cold is a viral infection. Colds can lead to sinusitis symptoms, but these are usually clear by themselves. Antibiotics do not treat viruses so that they will not help the sinus symptoms of a cold. Your cold should be over in a week or two. Usually, cold-related sinusitis goes away then, too.

Have you tried irrigation with saline solution with a squeeze bottle? Nasal steroid sprays might help, too, if your sinus symptoms are due to allergies. Antihistamines could also come in handy, especially if you are sneezing and have a runny nose.

Yellow or green mucus can mean a bacterial infection. Even then, it usually clears up in 7 to 14 days without antibiotics. But if you keep feeling worse, your symptoms last and are severe, or if you get a fever, it is time to see a doctor.

Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS), a kind of operation, can bring some relief if nothing else works. But start with the simplest solution, Avoid things that irritate your sinuses, and then work with your doctor to see if medicines help. Surgery is the last resort.

Unfortunately, you cannot prevent sinusitis. But you can do these three things that help:

- Keep your sinuses moist. Use saline sprays, nasal lubricant sprays, or nasal irrigation often.
- Avoid arid indoor environments.
- Avoid exposure to irritants, such as cigarette smoke or strong chemical odours.
- Stay healthy and stay away from risk factors that initiate sinus attacks.

Source: WebMD

GLOBAL HEALTH

Pandemic reform agenda is moving, but not fast or cohesive enough

The Co-Chairs of The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response presented their findings recently in the new report titled *Losing Time: End this pandemic and secure the future*.

In May 2021, Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the Right Honourable Helen Clark issued the Independent Panel's findings following a nine-month deep-dive into the global and national response to COVID-19. They recommended immediate actions to end COVID-19 and a package of international, interlinked reform solutions to prevent future outbreaks from becoming another devastating pandemic.

The former Co-Chairs find uneven and sometimes fragmented efforts as the pandemic continues at pace. They note that in just the six months since tabling their action plan, at least 90 million more people have contracted COVID, and 1.65 million more people have died, and those are only the illnesses and deaths that have been recorded.

Of grave urgent concern remains vaccine inequity, which has changed very little since May 2021. Analysis shows inadequate full coverage in the poorest countries; in some, under 1% of the population are fully vaccinated.

The former Co-Chairs say that global health cannot be left hostage to a pharmaceutical industry that buys up patents and develops them in the interest of making profits. Instead, they say that the development of an accurate end-to-end global public goods model remains the answer.

Overall, the report underscores that a more focused and coherent reform package should be done with urgency. The Co-Chairs stress that the reforms required now can contribute to ending the current pandemic and preventing another.



Complex cardiovascular procedure successfully carried out by Evercare hospital Dhaka

First JCI-accredited hospital of Bangladesh, Evercare Hospital Dhaka, has recently reported the successful completion of Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), a complex procedure in cardiovascular surgery, says a press release.

Kazi Md Abdur Rouf, aged 72, was recently admitted to Evercare Hospital Dhaka with various ailments including issues with his kidney and lungs, among other complications associated with old age. Later, Mr Rouf recently underwent heart bypass surgery, it was discovered that one of the valves of his heart was damaged. Following this news, the doctor in charge, Prof Dr Md Shahabuddin Talukder, Senior Consultant of Evercare Hospital Dhaka's Clinical & Interventional Cardiology department, advised Mr Rouf to undergo Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR). Recently the suggested procedure was carried out successfully by Evercare Hospital Dhaka, and Mr Rouf is safe and healthy at present.

There are two valves in each of the four chambers those assist in proper blood circulation in the body. Among these valves, an aortic valve is important because it supplies oxygenated blood to the vital organs and other organs of the body. For various reasons however, sometimes these valves can become narrow, which causes the normal flow of blood to be disrupted. Consequently, various complex diseases and complications afflict the body.

Prof Talukder said, "Conventionally, aortic valve stenosis is treated with open heart surgery, and it is extremely risky, especially for elderly patients. The alternative to this is TAVR. This procedure is minimally invasive (like an Angioplasty) and is not very complicated."

  /StarHealthBD



Don't ignore even the lightest symptoms

Meet a doctor

Most men above 40 years and beyond, suffer from either of these prostate related symptoms -

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Make healthy choices in lifestyle to stay fit for long

Antibiotics’ ineffectiveness must be dealt with urgently

AMR now prevalent in poultry products

IT was only a few days ago that we voiced our concerns in this column over the misuse and overuse of antibiotics in humans—in regards to a recent study, conducted by the IEDCR, which found that almost all clinically important and widely used antibiotics have lost their effectiveness by more than 50 percent. Now, it appears we are also developing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through the food we consume. A study by the Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI) found three serotypes of salmonella bacteria that were resistant to 17 antibiotics in percentages ranging between 6.7 to 100 percent, in chicken samples collected from 29 wet markets in Dhaka between February and December 2019. In humans, salmonella is one of the four key global causes of diarrheal diseases, according to the WHO.

The issue here is that farmers are not only feeding antibiotics to sick poultry animals but, as another icddr study found, more than half the farmers were found to have administered antibiotics on day-old chicks without reason. Moreover, farmers rationalise their use of antibiotics on healthy chickens, saying that it is to keep illnesses from spreading within the flock. What is most concerning is that farmers use these antibiotics on animals on the recommendations of both veterinarian doctors and feed dealers, the latter of whom are not in any way qualified to prescribe such medicines. Experts say that the increasing ineffectiveness of antibiotics, or AMR, is a major public health threat and will eventually make it impossible to treat many previously treatable bacteria, viruses and parasites. Not only will this increase the number of sick patients and cause deaths—it will also put more pressure on our already burdened healthcare system, to say nothing of how it will adversely impact the economy.

What is necessary now is a collective effort from the government and from the healthcare sector. It is high time to put a stop to the arbitrary use of antibiotics, which is done in major hospitals to smaller clinics, for humans and animals alike. Not only does this ineffectiveness of antibiotics affect health, it also increases costs on multiple fronts. Be it through consumption or other ways such as poor hygiene, AMR can spread across species and affect all. The only way to reduce it now would be to raise awareness among the general public and to strictly monitor the prescription and administration of antibiotics in humans and animals.

Half bus fare for students a welcome decision

Private bus operators should also consider reducing their student fares

WE commend the government for taking the decision to halve the bus fare for students travelling by state-owned BRTC buses. Reportedly, the decision will be effective from December 1. School and college students had been protesting against the high bus fares they were being forced to pay after the new fares came into effect. They gave the government an ultimatum of 48 hours to come to a decision in this regard, or face a new student movement. It is, therefore, great to see that the government has listened to reason and met the students’ demand.

After the government raised the prices of diesel and kerosene by Tk 15 per litre, transport owners went on an indefinite strike to raise bus fares. To meet their demands, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) increased the fares for intra-city and inter-district buses by 26.5 and 27 percent respectively. The increased bus and other transport fares came as a shock to mid- and low-income groups who already had their backs against the wall, struggling to cope with the pandemic effects and soaring prices of daily essentials even before increased fares added to their children’s educational expenses. Therefore, it was really important that the government listen to the students’ grievances. In fact, there has been an unwritten rule of half bus fare for students from even before our independence. But only a few BRTC bus drivers complied with this rule, while the majority of private transport owners moved away from this.

But since a majority of the buses on our roads are operated by private owners, it is important that they halve their fares in the students’ interests as well. A discounted bus fare for students will not prevent them from making profit, since they are already making hefty profits by boarding more passengers than there are seats, and charging standing passengers the same fare as those occupying the seats. So instead of waiting for directives from the government, the private bus owners should consider their social responsibilities and reduce student fares willingly.

School and college students were protesting with two demands: half bus fare and safety in public transport. While the government took a judicious decision to reduce the bus fare by half, no particular measures were promised to ensure the students’—particularly the girls’—safety on public transport. The fact that the conductor of a private bus service threatened to rape a female student for wanting to pay half bus fare is concerning and calls for strict action from the authorities.

‘Bloodstained’ UP elections and the CEC’s alternative truth



VIDEO footage and reports have been emerging daily on both traditional and social media exposing how violent and intimidating our elections have become. It has been going on throughout the country and in all the phases of local government elections—mostly union parishads (UPs) but in a few municipalities too. Death counts from these acts of violence are between 39 and 50, depending on official and unofficial statistics. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Khan Mohammad Nurul Huda, however, said “the elections were not violent and there were only a few incidents of violence”, whereas his fellow Commissioner Mahbub Talukder termed it as “bloodstained”.

A closer scrutiny of the facts shows that during the first two phases of UP elections, at least 200 chairmen were elected uncontested, which is suggestive of intimidation by candidates favoured by local administration in order to force likely contenders to quit the race. Such administrative favours, though unlawful and undesired, are quite rampant due to the pressures applied by the ruling party’s local leadership, which in most cases involve MPs. Hence, we have seen the High Court’s intervention and follow-up queries to ensure a few MPs leave their constituencies during this period. Several videos have gone viral, showing members of the ruling party asking voters that they

Had the CEC and his fellow commissioners had some decency, they would have apologised to the families of each of these victims and initiated appropriate legal actions against the perpetrators.

would have to show their votes before putting them in the ballot box. Post-result recovery of ballots—more than enough to overturn the outcome in Tangail and Cox’s Bazar—were published in the media, but the aggrieved parties were simply told to go to election tribunals. The third phase of UP polling, scheduled for today, is unlikely to be any different.

The unfortunate loss of lives during these elections meant that, on an average, at least one person had to die for every 25 UPs. Had the CEC and his fellow commissioners had some decency, they would have apologised to the families of each of these victims and initiated appropriate legal actions against the perpetrators. Instead, the CEC has engaged himself in putting out alternative narratives, devoid of facts. The current Election Commission’s records in poll management and conduct—with the

battle between the local MP and upazila chairman or party executives. In a number of places, leaders of the student or youth wings are running against main party functionaries.

The reason for such desperation among factions is to get a share of the pie—cuts from development projects and government allocations for social support. Quite a few newspapers have reported that the number of so-called rebels from the ruling party account for more than one-third of the elected chairmen. In most of these places, election officials belonging to civil administration favour the strongest due to the power equation. Until and unless the Election Commission assumes its constitutional obligations honestly and sincerely, they will not be able to make the administration act with neutrality and according to law.

Primarily, the responsibility of the



Post-result recovery of ballots were published in the media, but the aggrieved parties were simply told to go to election tribunals.

PHOTO: STAR

exception of one commissioner, Mahbub Talukder—are similar to the preceding EC led by Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmed. Those similarities are not only in their failures to make elections participatory, competitive and fair, but in callous behaviours too, including disregard for human lives.

These are quite a few symptoms of the total collapse of the electoral system and its supervisory institution. Unfortunately, many among us are more concerned about symptoms instead of the cause of the ailment. Some people have called for doing away with contests based on party nominations, as if the EC is not at fault. But, ground reports show that most of these contests are between various factions of the ruling party. In some places, it’s a

bloodshed and electoral farces lies with the EC. Despite having all necessary constitutional authority and power to hold free, fair and participatory elections, they have not delivered a single election in their nearly exhausted five-year term which people deemed credible. Mahbub Talukder’s comment that UP “elections are now in ICU (Intensive Care Unit) and democracy is on life support as its side effect” is equally true for all the elections and by-elections held under the current EC and its immediate predecessor. It was aptly put by the chief of Shujan (Sushashoner Jannyo Nagorik), Badiul Alam Majumder, when he said at least people in our country had one day of democracy every five years when as a kingmaker they could vote, but

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Informal labour markets must be safer for girls and women

JENEFA JABBAR and TASMIYAH T RAHMAN

DURING the pandemic, UNICEF reported on how an additional 10 million more girls were pushed into the risk of child marriage. In Bangladesh, at least 11,000 school children were married off by their families between March 17, 2020, and September 12 this year, according to data gathered by *The Daily Star* from different districts. Child marriage is internationally recognised in law as a form of gender-based violence—it puts children at increased risk of sexual, physical, and psychological violence and related

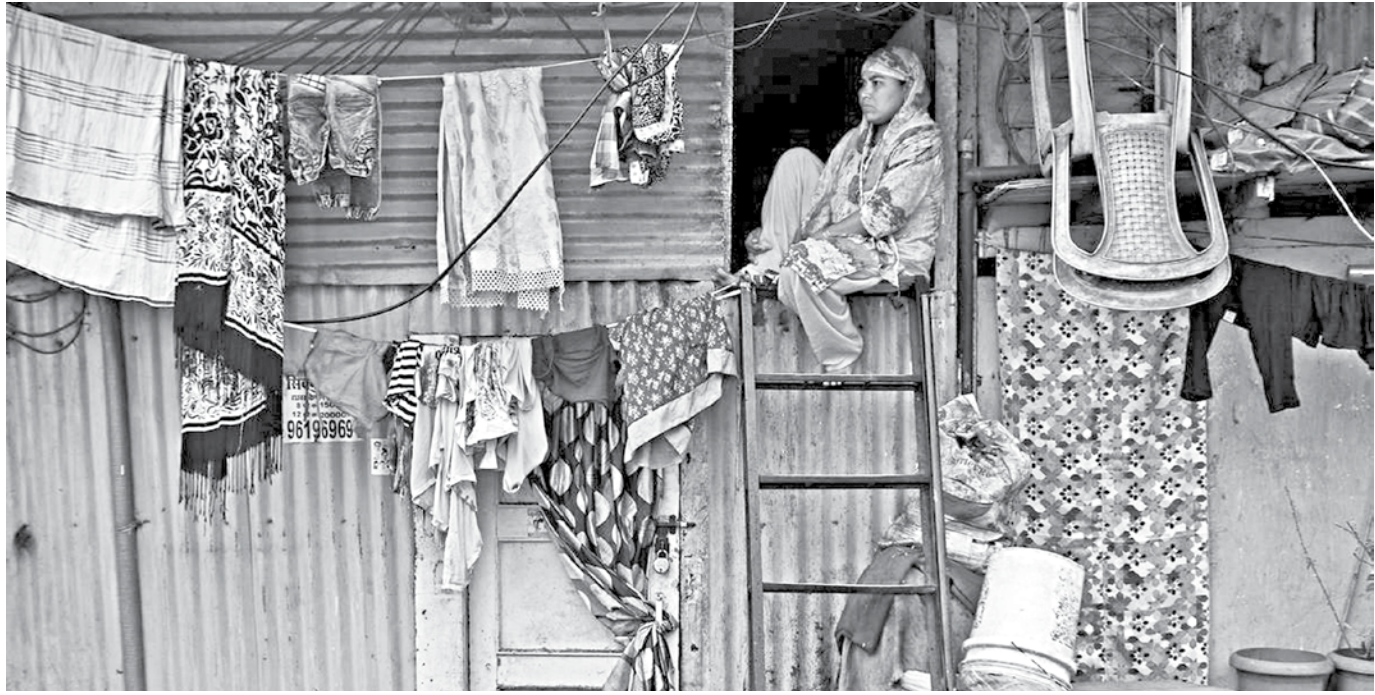
percent reduction in child marriage, especially if they start the training as early as 14 years and join informal workforces at 15. Parents from poor families see employed daughters as less of a burden and allow them to remain at home, as they are earning members of the family.

However, major challenges remain for many young girls in Bangladesh who are trying to enter into labour markets and establish their independence, yet face high risks of violence. The following story of Joanna (not her real name) will perhaps shed light on this reality.

Joanna’s mother left her and three of her siblings with their maternal

would not be taken seriously. However, when Joanna was raped multiple times, she stopped going to the shop and informed her friend in confidence, who was volunteering for an NGO.

When her friend went and spoke to her family, the aunt, along with both her parents, wanted this matter to remain a secret. No one encouraged her to speak up. However, her friend insisted she protest against the crime, and Joanna eventually agreed to go to the police. She was taken to a One Stop Crisis Centre and it was proven that she was raped. Her employer was arrested by the police and she was sent to a government shelter home under the



Local markets and the employment environment have to be safe spaces for women and girls.

PHOTO: REUTERS

outcomes throughout their lives. Girls pushed into child marriages are even less likely to ever earn an income and have any of the tools necessary to escape from any violent situations they are trapped in, especially since there is definitely a positive correlation between child marriage and school dropouts.

One good pathway to alternative learning is technical vocational training, where girls can remain in labour markets. According to research conducted by the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, this can result in a 62

aunt to work in the Middle East. Her father remarried and refused take any responsibility for his children. Joanna dropped out when she was in Class 5, and was helping around at home. She was told to join a workshop where she would learn how to sew so that she could also start earning for the family at the age of 15. At first, Joanna’s employer was good to her. But soon enough, he realised that her parents were not around. He understood her vulnerability and lured her into staying longer hours. One day, he raped her, thinking that this incident

Department of Social Service (DSS). While there, she told an NGO worker that she no longer wants to go back to her home and community, since she knew she would be blamed and socially excluded.

Joanna’s father, who was missing from her life for many years, suddenly came back after the case was filed. The perpetrator’s family reached out to him and offered money to dismiss the case. He went to the DSS and asked for his daughter’s custody, which he was entitled to claim. However, he could not dismiss the case, since criminal cases cannot be

that too was lost due to the failure of the EC.

Apart from the Election Commission, it is the government that shares the blame for causing so much harm to the electoral mechanism. Since scrapping the 13th amendment and abolishing the system of caretaker government, the ruling party Awami League has been gradually shifting towards authoritarianism. Dissent and criticism are no longer tolerated and politicisation of state institutions, including the civil administration, has made the functioning of a viable opposition almost impossible. As a result, whoever holds any ambition for a public office and political power and influence has little choice other than joining the Awami League. It explains why elections nowadays are an intra-party contest and frequently turn deadly. Creating and maintaining a peaceful electoral environment thus no longer remains a priority for the administration.

Historical data shows the worst record of electoral violence was in the UP elections of 2016, when a total of 145 lives were lost. But, the second worst record goes back to 1988 under the military rule of General Ershad, when 80 people were killed in union parishad elections. It, therefore, could be argued that violence in elections of the lowest tier of local government is more likely to be linked with lack of, or, weaker democracy; and not whether the contest was on the basis of party nominations and symbols.

The first UP elections after Awami League’s return to power, held in 2011, was managed by the Election Commission led by Shamsul Huda, when the opposition was much stronger despite the fact that their representation in parliament was much diminished. Those elections too were very competitive and unfortunately saw 10 lives lost, but no one questioned the integrity of the electoral process and the role of the commission.

In the past, violence in elections was largely meant to stifle political competition, but now it also disenfranchises the electorate. And, it is the result of the Election Commission’s failure to stand up to the hegemonic pressure from the party in power. Without the restoration of the honour and integrity of this constitutional body, these farcical theatrics are simply a waste of national resources.

Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His Twitter handle is @ahmedka1

withdrawn, but he did stop Joanna from attending the hearing. He changed his phone number and shifted to a new place to avoid the case.

This is often the case for thousands of girls in Bangladesh. A holistic approach needs to be taken if the government wants more girls to grow up to become educated and join the labour force, like in competing countries such as Cambodia and Vietnam. As over 85 percent of people in Bangladesh work in the informal sector, labour market participation for vulnerable girls like Joanna usually starts in the informal markets. But if these informal labour markets remain hostile, girls will not have a shot at working and making their own choices at all. As such, local markets and the employment environment have to be safe spaces for women and girls, maintaining basic workplace rights and ensuring protection.

A wider support services network can be achieved if joint efforts by the government and local civil society organisations and NGOs are made for ensuring witness protection services and shelter facilities to survivors and their families, who play significant roles in court cases. Often, witnesses and survivors are intimidated and threatened, which results in cases being dropped or influenced. Rigorous psychosocial support needs to be provided to these survivors, continuous legal counseling must be ensured, and the government needs to control out-of-court mediations that are very common in Bangladesh, especially in rural areas. To do this, local government bodies and community leaders need to be sensitised. Government initiatives need to be taken to expedite court proceedings, as long and tedious court hearings only delay access to justice.

Lastly, not only girls but men and boys also have to be sensitised to understand that if women in households become economically solvent, then that is beneficial for their family income. The Joannas of Bangladesh need an environment of support and justice, not hostility, in communities and markets, in order to improve their lives and increase labour market participation.

Jeneefa Jabbar is Barrister-at-law, advocate at Supreme Court of Bangladesh and Director Social Compliance and Safeguarding at BRAC. Tasmiah T Rahman is Head of the Skills Development Programme at BRAC.

Carbon Tax is Not Dead

Do not dismiss the efficiency of carbon taxes

AN OPEN DIALOGUE



ABDULLAH SHIBLI

Why? Carbon trading and carbon tax are complementary policy tools for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The revenue from carbon tax generated in developed countries is an important source for financing the mitigation and adaptation projects in developing countries affected by climate change.

According to an IMF estimate, financing for climate adaptation totaled USD 30 billion on average annually in 2017 and 2018, and adaptation costs in developing countries alone are currently estimated at close to USD 70 billion and are expected to rise to USD 140-300 billion by 2030. As the OECD countries are working all the angles to raise the money for their contribution to global environmental projects, carbon tax is slated to play an important role. The US Congressional Budget Office has estimated that a carbon tax starting at a relatively modest USD 20 per ton would raise USD 1.2 trillion in revenue in a decade.

In a recent edition of *The Atlantic* magazine, Robinson Meyer wrote an article titled “Carbon Tax, Beloved Policy to Fix Climate Change, Is Dead at 47”. If that is so, my readers might wonder why I am trying to resuscitate a dead cow, or as they say in many countries, “Why flog a dead horse?”

The outcry against the story in *The Atlantic* was spontaneous and strong. One cannot deny that many issues must be resolved before a country, developed or developing, can implement a carbon tax. A national consensus has to be reached on the disposal of the tax money collected. In 2010, Bangladesh was on the verge of adopting a carbon tax, but the idea was shelved partly because of the fear that it might hurt the pocketbook of the average

consumer. A legitimate question would be: does the cash raised go towards funding environmental projects or provide relief to the poor in the form of lower VAT? Another unintended consequence may be increased use of biomass. An example is the case of Sweden’s carbon tax, which has resulted in increased biomass use for heating and industry because these fuels are classified as renewable. In Bangladesh, a carbon tax will unquestionably increase the consumption of firewood, biomass, bagasse and agricultural waste.

My optimism about the role of carbon tax and its efficiency will not necessarily be shared by all. In a recent, very well-written op-ed in this newspaper, Anis Chowdhury and Jomo Kwame Sundaram argued that carbon tax is

emissions trading and carbon tax, are invaluable instruments that deserve a chance.

As an economist who has worked in assessing and evaluating the efficacy and efficiency of market-based tools, as well as others known as command and control mechanisms, it has been my experience that the chief obstacle to carbon tax or other emissions reduction regulations is political. Chowdhury and Sundaram agree that many carbon reduction measures require legislative action, and coal and oil sectors wield strong economic and political power in the capitals of rich countries. However, it would be erroneous to single out carbon tax for ignoring “political realities, especially differences in key stakeholders’ power and

One cannot deny that many issues must be resolved before a country, developed or developing, can implement a carbon tax. A national consensus has to be reached on the disposal of the tax money collected.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Why not add a tax on coal based on its true “damage” to minimise consumption?

regressive, saying “it is unfair to the poor”. While this logic has some merit, there are various countermeasures to compensate lower-income taxpayers through reduced electricity rates and redistributive actions.

Nonetheless, I agree with Chowdhury and Sundaram that carbon tax is not a silver bullet. Climate change is a very complex problem and addressing this global issue requires experimenting with various mitigation tools. Along with mandated technological innovations, economic instruments, including

influence”, since all Net Zero initiatives face opposition from strong political lobbies.

Nonetheless, today 100 nations, states, and cities have instituted some form of carbon tax to limit GHG. Some countries don’t call it a tax, but to minimise its “shock effect” have found other names, including carbon fee and carbon dividend. But let us call a devil by its true name.

In the aftermath of COP26, it was reported by *Bloomberg News* that Russia will look to cut its ambitious goals for boosting coal

A green shoot of hope in a (still) arid, racist terrain



ASHFAQUE SWAPAN

The facts of the case are brutally simple: On an unfounded suspicion of burglary for which the armed defendants had no evidence, they pursued the unarmed Arbery. When Arbery tried to flee, he was cornered and shot to death.

death, often with impunity. A BBC timeline lists 11 high-profile cases since 2014 where police were involved in such killings. This includes the case of George Floyd, whose gruesome killing drew international protests. Only in four instances were officers prosecuted. In one of those cases, the involved officer was cleared of murder charges. (The Georgia murder is not included in this list, as the convicted murderers did not belong to law enforcement.)

So it is remarkable that the jury found Travis McMichael; his father, Gregory McMichael; and their friend William Bryan—all White—guilty of felony murder offences after the trio chased down and then shot to death Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black youth, in Brunswick, Georgia, in February last year.

What transpired before the case came to trial is even more remarkable. Arbery was killed in February, several months before the killing of George Floyd, the international cause celebre. Although police had immediate access to a cell phone video of the murder, absolutely nothing happened for months. Even when the case went into trial, there was far too much doubt about the eventual verdict. The facts of the case are brutally simple: On an unfounded suspicion of burglary for which the armed defendants had no evidence, they pursued the unarmed Arbery. When Arbery tried to flee, he was cornered and shot to death.

Local police and prosecutors base their refusal to arrest on the preposterous claim that the defendants killed in self-defence. It was only after the murder video went viral on social media and resulted in a statewide—and eventually nationwide—outcry that Georgia’s Republican Governor Brian

Kemp stepped in at the request of local authorities and brought in the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, a state agency. The GBI started an investigation and arrested the three defendants. It took a full 77 days since the murder for the three defendants to be arrested. Notwithstanding this ignoble record, there are signs of heartening changes. First, a little historical note is

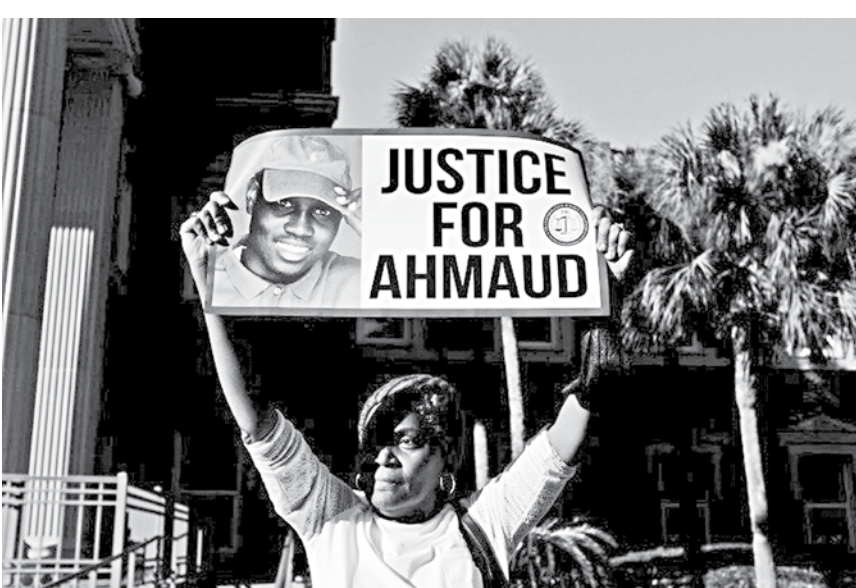


PHOTO: MARCO BELLO/REUTERS

A jury in the US state of Georgia convicted three men of the murder of Ahmaud Arbery in February last year.

in order. Georgia, like most other formerly-Confederate southern states had shifted lock-stock and barrel to the Republican Party after the landmark passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act in the 1960s by Democratic President Lyndon Johnson. Republicans vehemently deny this,

but there has been a long history of racially charged politics in Republican campaigns. This ranges from the “strapping youth” and “welfare queen” snarks of President Ronald Reagan to the elder President George Bush’s notorious campaign ad highlighting paroled murderer—and surprise, surprise Black—Willie Horton.

To his credit, Kemp, Georgia’s Republican governor, responded to the

organisation NAACP, was murdered in 1963 by the segregationist White Citizens Council member Byron De La Beckwith, Democratic Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett actually met and shook hands with him during his trial. (Despite overwhelming evidence, White juries failed to reach a verdict twice. Beckwith lived a free man for three decades until he was finally tried and convicted in 1994.)

Compared to the Evers murder, the verdict on Arbery’s murder has been relatively swift. Yet it is a bittersweet moment for many.

Rev. Raphael Warnock, a Democratic US senator from Georgia, issued a poignant tweet: “This verdict upholds a sense of accountability, but not true justice. True justice looks like a Black man not having to worry about being harmed—or killed—while on a jog, while sleeping in his bed, while living what should be a very long life. Ahmaud should be with us today.”

It is a heartbreaking observation. What gives me some hope, however, is that it comes from someone duly elected US senator from a deep South state despite being “a fitting heir to the mantle once worn by The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr”, according to *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

It is also sadly true that this hope is diminished by the fact that the path to justice for Arbery was unconscionably tortuous. It is a sobering reminder of how much remains to be done.

As Adam Serwer trenchantly observed in *The Atlantic* magazine: “To say the system worked in this case is like saying your car made it home—after your entire family had to get out and push it miles down a dirt road.”

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

QUOTABLE Quote



BILLY SQUIER
American musician

I try to remember our relative insignificance on this planet and that these seemingly important things do not mean quite as much as we think they do.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

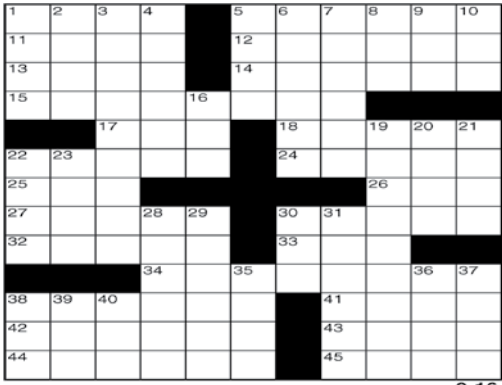
ACROSS

- 1 Warsaw native
- 5 Go ashore
- 11 Stratford’s river
- 12 Wide street
- 13 Cribbage markers
- 14 Tidy up
- 15 Quarrel
- 17 Drop the ball
- 18 Mythical giant
- 22 Flanks
- 24 Boosted
- 25 Commotion
- 26 Obtained
- 27 Pumpkin’s kin
- 30 Book makeup
- 32 Modify
- 33 Penny prez
- 34 Fiesta food

DOWN

- 1 Hemingway nickname
- 2 Finished
- 3 Closed a session
- 4 Guarantee
- 5 Hamlet, for one
- 6 Calendar items
- 7 “Get lost!”
- 8 Industrious insect
- 9 Paris street

- 10 Writer Follett
- 16 “—Miniver”
- 19 In fancy duds
- 20 Lotion ingredient
- 21 Brooklyn team
- 22 Heroic tale
- 23 Revered one
- 28 Stop working
- 29 Visit
- 30 Contrived
- 31 Humbles
- 35 Sailor’s septet
- 36 Surrounding glow
- 37 Mailbox part
- 38 Mud bath setting
- 39 — Aviv
- 40 King of France



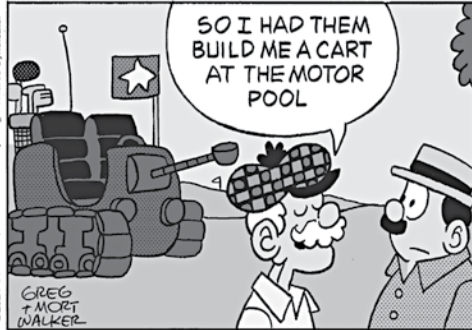
YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

C	H	I	P	B	L	I	M	P	S
L	I	N	E	A	I	R	O	U	T
O	K	R	A	S	K	I	M	P	Y
T	E	E	T	I	E	S			
V	E	I	N	S	I	Q	S		
A	B	E	T	S	O	W	N	U	P
M	A	R	T		A	R	I	A	
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			A	H	A	B	E	B	B
J	I	G	S	A	W		B	R	I
O	R	I	O	L	E		I	V	A
G	A	F	F	E	R		Z	E	S

BEETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

MYANMAR ARMY OPERATIONS IN NORTHWEST

US, allies express concern

Report says 50,000 people displaced in Chin State and the regions of Sagaing and Magwe

AGENCIES

The United States on Friday issued a joint statement along with Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea and Britain expressing concern over a military offensive in Myanmar that they say is disproportionately harming civilians.

Washington and other nations have repeatedly denounced a February 1 coup that threw the Southeast Asian country into turmoil, with regional militias taking up arms after the military attempted to crush widespread protests.

In their joint statement, the nations expressed their "grave concern" over reports of abuses, including sexual violence and torture, especially in the northwestern area that comprises Chin State and the regions of Sagaing and Magwe, where at least 50,000 people are reported to have been displaced. They called for the junta, which



has been accused of destroying homes and churches, to immediately end the violence, reports Reuters.

"We are concerned about allegations of weapons stockpiling and attacks by the military, including shelling and airstrikes, use of heavy weapons, and the deployment of thousands of troops accompanying what security forces assert are counter-terrorism operations, which are disproportionately impacting civilians," the countries said.

Myanmar's army has called the militias "terrorists" intent on

destroying the country.

The UN Security Council on November 10 issued a statement expressing concern and calling for the cessation of violence.

The seven nations on Friday went further, calling for countries to "suspend all operational support to the military, and to cease the transfer of arms, materiel, dual-use equipment, and technical assistance to the military and its representatives."

In late October, Washington had condemned what it called "abhorrent attacks" by the Myanmar junta in Chin state, reports AFP. That followed reports that security forces had committed human rights violations and destroyed more than 100 homes as well as Christian churches there.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military staged a coup in February, sparking nationwide protests and a deadly crackdown on dissent.



Congress party workers along with Member of Parliament (MP) Gurjeet Singh Aujla (C) takes part in a cycle rally from the Attari-Wagah border to Jallianwala Bagh in protest against the extension of the Border Security Force's (BSF) jurisdiction in Punjab and the hike in price of essential commodities, at the India-Pakistan Wagah border, some 35 kms from Amritsar, India yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

IAEA bowing to West's pressure: Iran

AFP, Tehran

Iran has accused the UN's nuclear agency of bowing to pressure from its Western financiers to "discriminate" against Tehran, as strains persist ahead of new talks to revive the 2015 atomic deal.

"It's a reality. The IAEA doesn't deal with Iran as it should," Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, told state television on Friday.

He argued that organisations such as the IAEA were "under the influence of powerful countries" which "finance them and in exchange apply pressure on them".

In a phone call on Friday with EU diplomatic chief Josep Borrell, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said it would be "possible to reach a favourable agreement" if sanctions are lifted.

Pakistan condemns RSS chief's Partition remarks

Calls it 'delusional thinking, historical revisionism'

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan yesterday strongly condemned the statement of Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat's statement — in which he said "the only solution to the pain of Partition lies in undoing it" — terming it "delusional thinking and historical revisionism".

According to a report by The Indian Express, the RSS issued a statement on Thursday quoting Bhagwat as saying that the India of 2021 was not the same as the one in 1947 while speaking at a book launch event.

"Partition has happened once, it won't happen again. Those who think that way will face partition themselves," he said.

The RSS chief said if India wanted to contribute to the world, it would need to become "capable", adding, "the only solution to the pain of Partition lies in undoing it."

Reacting to the remarks, the Foreign Office, in its statement issued today, said Pakistan completely rejected the "highly

provocative and irresponsible remarks", pointing out that the RSS chief had also indulged in "such delusional thinking and historical revisionism" previously.

"Pakistan has repeatedly highlighted the threat posed to regional peace and stability

by the toxic mix of the extremist Hindutva ideology (Hindu Rashtra) and expansionist foreign policy (Akhand Bharat) being pursued by the ruling RSS-BJP dispensation in India."

The FO warned that the "dangerous mindset" was aimed to "completely marginalise and displace" minorities in India, and also posed an existential threat to all South Asian neighbours.

The world was witness to the systematic usurpation of the rights of minorities, especially Muslims, in India and the unabated repression of Kashmiris in occupied Kashmir, the statement noted. In addition, the world had also seen India's reckless misadventures in February 2019 —when Indian aircraft violated the Line of Control, it said.



GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Office of the Director
National Institute of ENT
Tejgaon, Dhaka

Memo No: NIENT/Admin/Tender (MSR)/2021-2022/ 1453

Date: 27 / 11 / 2021

Invitation for Tender

KEY INFORMATION	
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family welfare
2. Agency	Department of Health Services
3. Procuring Entity Name	Director, National Institute of ENT
4. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5. Invitation for	Procurement of Goods (MSR)
6. Invitation Ref No	NIENT/Admin/Tender(MSR)/2021-2022/1453
7. Date	27/11/2021
8. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION	
9. Budget and Source of Funds	GOB (Revenue)
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
10. Organization Code	127020811119
11. Organization Name	National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
12. Tender Publication Date	28/11/2021
13. Tender Last Selling Date and Time	26/12/2021 during office hours
14. Tender Closing Date and Time	27/12/2021 11.00 AM
15. Tender Opening Date and Time	27/12/2021 12.00 PM
16. Name & Address of the office (s)	
(a) Selling Tender Document	Office of the Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka
(b) Receiving Tender Document	Office of the Director National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka & Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (North), Tejgaon Division (North) Shamoly, Dhaka (west to shamoly shishu park)
(c) Opening Tender Document	Office of the Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
17. Eligibility of Tenderer	The Tenderer shall have a minimum of last 3 years of general/overall experience in the supply of similar goods to the Govt./semi govt./autonomous Institute/Hospital. Certificate Must be submitted along with supplying document The Tenderer shall have a minimum of last 2 years of specific experience in the supply of related services to the Govt./semi govt./autonomous Institute/Hospital. Certificate Must be submitted along with supplying document Other requirement described in the Tender document
18. Brief Description of Goods	MSR Item
19. Pkg. No	Identification of Pkg
GD-01	Supplying of Medicine
GD-02	Supplying of Gauze ,Bandage & Cotton
GD-03	Supplying of Linen
GD-04	Supplying of Surgical Item
GD-05	Supplying of Chemical Re-agent
	Lot no:-(1) Biochemistry, Blood Bank & Clinical pathology
	Lot no:-(2) Histopathology.
	Lot no:-(3) Audiology.
	Lot no:-(4) Radiology Imaging & Others.
PROCURING EBTITY DETAILS	
20. Name of Official Inviting Tender	Prof. Dr. Md. Abu Hanif
21. Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
22. Address of Official Inviting Tender	Tejgaon, Industrial Area, Dhaka
23. Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel: Phone 8878155, Fax No: 8878150
24. Authority is not bound to accept the lowest tender/rate. Authority may cancel the whole tender/part of the tender without assigning any reason.	
25. Terms and conditions of the tender and other information will be available with the schedule.	

Note: If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.

(Prof. Dr. Md. Abu Hanif)
Director cum Professor
National Institute of ENT
Tejgaon, Dhaka

WAR-TORN NORTHERN ETHIOPIA

Over 9m people face hunger: UN

AFP, Addis Ababa

The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) said Friday that the number of people requiring food aid in war-torn northern Ethiopia had surged to more than nine million.

International alarm is mounting about the escalating conflict in Africa's second most populous country, with fighters from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebel group advancing towards the capital as foreign governments urge their citizens to leave.

The year-long war has left hundreds of thousands on the brink of famine as aid workers struggle to deliver urgently-needed supplies to desperate

populations in the regions of Tigray, Amhara and Afar.

On Friday, the WFP said the situation had sharply deteriorated in recent months, with an estimated 9.4 million people facing hunger "as a direct result of ongoing conflict", compared with around seven million in September.

"Amhara region -- the frontlines of the conflict in Ethiopia -- has seen the largest jump in numbers with 3.7 million people now in urgent need of humanitarian aid," WFP said.

"Of the people across northern Ethiopia in need of assistance, more than 80 percent (7.8 million) of them are behind battle lines."

This week, aid workers were able to distribute food in the Amhara towns of Dessie and Kombolcha for the first time since they were captured by the TPLF nearly a month ago, the WFP said, adding that it was only granted access to its warehouses last week.

The risk of malnutrition has also increased across the three regions, with screening data showing rates between 16 and 28 percent for children, it said.

"Even more alarmingly, up to 50 percent of pregnant and breastfeeding women screened in Amhara and Tigray were also found to be malnourished."

Fighting has also damaged 500 health facilities in Amhara, the UN's agency OCHA said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Principal
Dhaka Medical Dhaka, Dhaka.
E-mail: principal@dmc.gov.bd, Phone: 02-55165088

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Memo no. 59.14.4000.025.11.000.21.4193

Date: 25/11/2021

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited for Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka from only bonafide experienced firm/Distributor/ Supplier as per PPA-2006 & PPR-2008 terms & conditions are as follows:

KEY INFORMATION		
1 Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	
2 Agency	DGME	
3 Procuring Entity Name	Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka	
4 Procuring Entity District	Dhaka.	
5 Invitation for	Outsourcing	
6 Tender Ref. No & Date	59.14.4000.025.11.000.21.4193 Date: 25/11/2021	
7 Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION		
8 Budget and Source of Funds	GOB (Revenue)	
9 Developments Partners	N/A	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
10 Tender Publication Date	25/11/2021	
11 Tender Last Selling Date	19/12/2021 at 02.00 pm	
12 Tender Closing Date and Time	20/12/2021 at 12.00 am	
13 Tender Opening Date and Time	20/12/2021 at 12.30 pm	
Name and address of the Office's		
14 Selling Tender Documents	Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka.	
15 Receiving Tenders Documents	Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka & Officer In charge, Shahbag Thana, Dhaka.	
16 Opening Tender Documents	Office of the Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka.	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
17 Eligibility of the Tenderer	a) The tenderer should have valid Trade License, Vat Registration Certificate, Latest Income Taxes Clearance Certificate and Financial Solvency Certificate with Bank Statement (Computer generated). b) The tenderer shall be bonafide Businessman/experienced Service providing company/Appointed Company by the Service providing company. c) The Tenderer shall have overall experience in the supply of similar goods and related services and shall have a minimum 03 (Three) years of specific experience for supply of similar services and related services.	
18 Brief Description of Services	Outsourcing: hiring of physical service for the post 1. Carpenter, 2. Laundry operator, 3. Gardener, 4. Cook, 5. Assistant Cook/Mashalci, 6. Security guard, 7. Cleaner, 8. Lift Man, 9. Lab Attendant, 10. Animal Attendant, 11. Hostel Attendant, 12. Binder.	
19 Brief Description of Related Services	1 (One) year after Supply of Services.	
20 Price of Tender Documents (Taka):		
Name of the Non consulting services	Price of tender documents (in Treasury Chalan with CTR)	Tender Security amount (in Pay-Order/Bank Draft)
Outsourcing	Taka 5000/- (Five thousand Only) Non-refundable.	4,50,000 (Four lac Fifty Thousand)
* Purchases of Tender document by Treasury chalan with 1-7401-0000-2366 by the District Account Officer, Dhaka in favour of Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka.		*Method of payments: To be paid by Bank draft or Pay order in favour of Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
21 Name of Official Inviting Tenders	Professor. Dr. Md. Titu Miah.	
22 Designation of Official Inviting Tenders	Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka.	
23 Address of Official Inviting Tenders	Shahbag, Dhaka.	
24 Contact details of Official Inviting Tenders	Office of the Principal, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka. Tel: 02-55165088.	
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject in part or whole of any or all tenders.		
Note: If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively. Work order will be given according to budget availability.		
(Professor. Dr. Md. Titu Miah) Principal Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka		

GD- 2172

MORE NEWS

UAE says 100pc of population received one Covid jab

One hundred percent of the United Arab Emirates' population has received at least one dose of a vaccine against Covid-19, the health ministry has said. The announcement late Friday came amid growing global concern over a new Covid variant dubbed Omicron that was first detected by South Africa. The World Health Organization said the new variant is more infectious than the dominant, highly transmissible Delta strain, and several countries, including the UAE, have restricted travel from a number of south African countries. A total of 21,802,032 doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the Gulf Arab nation.

China conducts drills near Taiwan Strait

The Chinese army has carried out a "naval and air force combat readiness patrol" near the Taiwan Strait following a contentious visit to the island by a group of American lawmakers, a spokesperson said. Tensions between Beijing and Washington have soared over the fate of democratic self-ruled Taiwan, which China has vowed to one day retake, by force if necessary. A group of American lawmakers arrived on the island Thursday offering support for the Taiwanese authorities, who Beijing accuses of seeking independence for the island. In response, the Chinese army on Friday carried out "a naval and air force combat readiness patrol in the direction of the Taiwan Strait," a spokesperson for the Eastern Theater Command said in a statement.



Two students, driver killed in Kosovo bus shooting

A gunman opened fire late Friday on a bus in Kosovo carrying school students, killing a boy and a girl and the driver, police said. Another 14 year-old student was wounded but is in stable condition, Skender Dreshaj, the head of a nearby local hospital told the state-run RTK television channel. According to local media, the shooter was wearing a mask and carried an AK-47. The bus was packed with children returning from school, the head of Glogjan village Mustafa Selmani told RTK. The motives for the shooting were unclear. Kosovo President Vjosa Osmani condemned the attack and called the police to find the perpetrators as soon as possible and bring them to justice. "Attacking bus with students is a blow to our security and order." Osmani said on Facebook.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Migrant children pose for a photo at the transport and logistics centre Bruzgi on the Belarusian-Polish border, in the Grodno region, Belarus yesterday. Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko told migrants stranded at the border with Poland that his country would help them to return home if they wanted but would not force them.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Vaccines likely to work

Say researchers, stress the need for further studies to determine how much of the shots' effectiveness may be reduced


AGENCIES

Scientific experts at the World Health Organization warned Friday that a new coronavirus variant discovered in southern Africa was a "variant of concern," the most serious category the agency uses for such tracking.

The designation, announced after an emergency meeting of the health body, is reserved for dangerous variants that may spread quickly, cause severe disease or decrease the effectiveness of vaccines or treatments. The last coronavirus variant to receive this label was Delta, which now accounts for virtually all cases in the US. The WHO said the new version, named Omicron, carries a number of genetic mutations that may allow it to spread quickly, perhaps even among the vaccinated.

Independent scientists agreed that Omicron warranted urgent attention but also pointed out that it would take

NEW COVID STRAIN



more research to determine the extent of the threat. Although some variants of concern, like Delta, have lived up to initial worries, others have had a limited impact.

Researchers said that vaccines will most likely protect against Omicron, but further studies are needed to determine how much of the shots' effectiveness may be reduced, reports New York Times.

Omicron first came to light in

'Declaration of war'

Pacific islands blast COP26 pledges

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

The United Nations COP26 Climate Change Conference held in Glasgow this month was billed as the last chance to save the future of life on earth by ensuring global warming did not exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

There were notable pledges by participating nations to roll back the use of coal and fossil fuels, stop deforestation and boost conversion to zero-emission forms of transportation.

But for many Pacific Islanders, the summit failed on the decisive action needed to guarantee the containment of global warming and denied justice to nations that are among the most vulnerable to climate-induced poverty.

"Glasgow missed the 1.5 degrees goal. It was the Pacific's expectation that this would be firmly and irreversibly secured in Glasgow," Satyendra Prasad, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations in New York told Al Jazeera. "We are now dependent on large emitters to offer deeper emissions cuts. But the second part of the equation is more important. These countries have fewer and fewer years left in which to achieve the cuts before 1.5 degrees is lost permanently."

"To anyone in the world who is still listening to the Pacific, let me remind them that 1.5 is the last possible compromise that the Pacific can offer the world," Prasad added. "Beyond that, you are asking their leaders to sign away the right to exist as countries on our shared planet. To lose 1.5 is a declaration of war on Pacific Governments, it is a declaration of war on our communities and on our peoples. It is that simple - period."

In July, Pacific Island leaders attended a preliminary Pacific-UK High Level Climate Dialogue meeting with conference president, Alok Sharma.

South Africa 'punished' for detecting the strain

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa complained yesterday that it is being "punished" for detecting a new Covid-19 variant Omicron which the World Health Organization has termed a "variant of concern" and is more transmissible than the dominant Delta strain.

The decision by a number of countries around the world to ban flights from southern Africa following the discovery of the variant "is akin to punishing South Africa for its advanced genomic sequencing and the ability to detect new variants quicker," the foreign affairs ministry said in a statement.

"Excellent science should be applauded and not punished," it said.

The ministry pointed out that new variants had been discovered in other parts of the world.


"Each of those cases have had no recent links with Southern Africa, but the reaction to those countries is starkly different to cases in Southern Africa," it said.

Israel and Belgium announced after South Africa that they also had detected cases of Omicron.

Government insisted that South Africa's "capacity to test and its ramped-up vaccination programme, backed up by a world-class scientific community should give our global partners the comfort that we are doing as well as they are in managing the pandemic".

With more than 2.95 million cases and 89,783 deaths, South Africa is the worst-hit country in Africa by the pandemic.

Quote of the day



In all probability ...I am concerned. We support Ukraine's territorial integrity. We support Ukraine's ability to govern itself."

US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN ON GROWING TENSION OVER A RUSSIAN MILITARY BUILD-UP AND AN ALLEGED COUP PLOT

'The reality is severer than ever'

Japan PM to step up defence of his country amid growing threats from China, North Korea

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has renewed his pledge to consider "all options," including acquiring enemy base strike capability to protect the country amid growing threats from China and North Korea.

Kishida said at his first troop review yesterday that the security situation in the region is rapidly changing and that "the reality is severer than ever," with North Korea continuing to test-fire ballistic missiles while advancing its capability, and China pursuing a military buildup and increasingly assertive activity in the region.

"I will consider all options, including possessing so-called enemy base strike capability, to pursue strengthening of defence power that is necessary," Kishida said in an address to hundreds of Ground Self-Defense Force members in olive-coloured helmets and uniforms.

Kishida, who took office in October, served as top commander for the first time at yesterday's Self-Defense Force troop review held at the main army base Camp Asaka, north of Tokyo. About 800 troops gathered for the inspection, according to the Ministry of Defense.

"The security environment surrounding Japan has been rapidly changing at an unprecedented speed. Things that used to happen only in science-fiction novels are today's reality," Kishida said. He said his government will lead "calm and realistic" discussions to determine what is needed to protect people's lives and gain their understanding.

The possibility of possessing so-called enemy base strike capability has been a divisive issue because opponents say it violates Japan's war-renouncing constitution.

Kishida has shifted his dovish stance to a more hawkish one, apparently to please influential leaders within his governing party, including former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and to strengthen his grip on power. He now advocates increasing Japanese military capability and spending.

On Friday, Kishida's Cabinet approved a 770 billion Japanese yen (\$6.8bn) request for an extra defence budget through March to expedite the purchase of missiles, anti-submarine rockets and other weapons amid rising concern over the escalation of military activities by China, Russia and North Korea.



Civil organisations hold a protest calling for Burkina Faso's President Roch Kabore to resign and for departure of French forces that patrol the country, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



People try to return a whale to the sea after it beached itself at the shores of the fisherman's cove Lenga, near Hualpen, Chile on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Widow of S Korean dictator apologises for husband's rule

AFP, Seoul

The widow of a South Korean dictator who brutally crushed opponents until mass demonstrations forced him from power apologised yesterday for the "pains and wounds" of her husband's rule.

Chun Doo-hwan died Tuesday at his home in Seoul aged 90 and remains among the country's most reviled figures.

A general in the military, he effectively took control of South Korea in a coup after the 1979 assassination of strongman Park Chung-hee.

He was president from 1980 to 1988, ruling with an iron fist, and became known as the "Butcher of Gwangju" for ordering his troops to put down an uprising against his rule in the southwestern city in 1980.

"On behalf of my husband, I would like to deeply apologise to those who suffered pains and wounds during his time in office," Lee Soon-ja said on the final day of Chun's five-day funeral service.

The apology was brief and did not specify Chun's wrongdoings.

Chun never apologised during his lifetime for his atrocities and became mired

in court battles in his final years.

His reign was marked by the widespread use of torture against dissidents and stifling of freedom of expression.

Around 200 people were killed or went missing during the uprising in Gwangju, according to official figures, but activists say the toll may have been three times as many.

He was convicted of treason and condemned to death in 1996 but his execution was commuted on appeal and he was released following a presidential pardon.

Lee Jae-myung, the ruling Democratic Party's candidate for next year's presidential election, said Lee had "insulted" the people of Gwangju by not specifically mentioning the uprising and its victims in her apology.

But Min Jeong-ki, a long-time aide to Chun, told local media that Lee's apology did not cover the uprising because it took place before Chun officially took office as president.

On Wednesday, a day after Chun's death, a group of 70 Gwangju survivors filed a lawsuit against the government seeking compensation for emotional damage.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 28

1912 - Albania declared its independence after more than 400 years of Turkish rule.

1943 - Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met in Tehran to chart the future Allied course for World War Two and decide a post-war future.

1971 - Black September agents assassinated Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tell outside a hotel in Cairo during an official visit.

2004 - Jordan's King Abdullah relieved his half-brother Prince Hamza of his duties.

SOURCE: REUTERS



'It's a big opportunity to make a statement'

SPORTS REPORTER



Third time is indeed the charm for Bangladesh women's cricket team as they will play the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup for the first time in New Zealand next year.

Since gaining ODI status in 2011, Bangladesh women's team, holders of the latest Asia Cup, failed to qualify in the 2013 and 2017 editions of the mega event but Nigar Sultana Joty's troops made it happen this time.

Alongside Bangladesh, Pakistan and the West Indies will progress to the upcoming

World Cup in March-April next year by virtue of their rankings up until September 30 this year. And now the Tigresses are set to join hosts New Zealand, Australia, India, England and South Africa as the women's cricket World Cup qualifying tournament in Zimbabwe has been abandoned after the discovery of a new Covid-19 variant in South Africa.

Bangladesh team players and officials expressed their happiness after the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the cancelation of the qualifiers after Saturday's game between the West Indies and Sri Lanka had to be called off when a member of the Sri Lankan support

staff tested positive for Covid-19.

"We are really happy and excited. It's our hard work that made it possible. We just got the news earlier than expected because of the abandonment of qualifiers. Personally, I am happier than anybody as I captained the team for the first time and got the good news. Now our target would be to continue good performance in the World Cup," said Joty.

Nazmul Abedin Fahim, a well-known name in Bangladesh cricket fraternity, said that: "We are going to play against the best of the bests. So, it's an opportunity and as well as a big challenge for us to make a

statement on the world stage."

"We have to take the challenge with progressive planning because we are going to face a tough challenge against the quality sides. It will be a big boost for our women's cricket if we can perform well there," the veteran coach, who guided the women's team earlier, added.

"We must make sure that we play some quality cricket at home and get some international exposure before the mega event. I think we have a good ODI side, so we would just need some proper planning so that it creates a good sense of pride among our women athletes," Fahim concluded.

'Starting from zero is always a challenge'

ASHEAQ UL MUSHFIQ

It was the second over of the first session of Day Two yesterday, where Liton Das was standing on 114 runs as he was about to face Hasan Ali's last ball of the over. Anticipating yet another outswinger delivery, Liton was completely taken by surprise as an inswinger, this time, went past the inside edge of his defensive prod and struck him on the back thigh pad. Liton's spectacular innings came to an end early in the day as it only opened the portal to the demise of Bangladesh's first innings. Mushfiqur's dismissal set the Tigers further on the backfoot as the tail-enders could not take the team beyond 330 or the lunch interval.

But looking back at the feat Liton pulled off on the first day, his elegant display with the bat created a refreshing aura, not only for Bangladesh cricket but also for Liton as an individual. Even though the Tigers could not reach an amassed total, it takes nothing away from Liton's maiden Test century on the first day.

Great sportsmen around the world are remembered not only for their great performances but also for their comebacks when chips are down. Liton had been called into question since his disappointing run in the recent T20I World Cup, which had consequently left him out



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH 1ST INNINGS

330 all out in 114.4 overs (Liton 114, Mushfiqur 91, Mehedi 38; Hasan 5-51, Afridi 2-70, Faheem 2-54)

PAKISTAN 1ST INNINGS

145 for no loss in 57 overs (Abid 93 not out, Abdullah 52 not out)

MUSHFIQUR RAHIM'S NERVOUS 90S

95, against England, Chattogram, 2010

93, against Zimbabwe, Harare, 2013

92, against Sri Lanka, Chattogram, 2018

91, against Pakistan, Chattogram, 2021

Impact of genuine fast bowling showcased again

MAZHAR UDDIN FROM CHATTOGRAM



Irrespective of pitch and conditions, the possession of potent attacking fast bowlers keeps a team invariably in the hunt and the Pakistani frontline pacers proved that yet again by utilising the new ball perfectly to dismantle the Bangladesh batting line-up.

Despite managing to stage a dramatic comeback, courtesy of a magnificent 206 run fifth-wicket stand between Liton Das and Mushfiqur Rahim, Bangladesh went on to add no more than 77 runs to their overnight score of 253 and lost six wickets to be eventually bundled out for 330 in the first innings at the



stroke of lunch on Day 2 at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

The performance of the Bangladeshi seamers was in stark contrast to their Pakistani counterparts, who made the ball talk and wreaked havoc in the early morning of the first two days. Since then, the likes of Abu Jayed and Ebadot Hossain posed no real threat as their lack of pace or swing made the visitors' openers Abid Ali and Abdullah Shafique negotiate the attack comfortably as Pakistan ended up on 145 without loss at day's end, trailing by 185 runs. Bangladesh are certainly missing some fire power from the likes of Taskin Ahmed.

Much like the first session of the opening day, where the likes of Shaheen Afridi, Hasan Ali and Faheem Ashraf rattled through the Bangladesh top-order to reduce the hosts to 49 for 4, the seamers repeated the trick for the

visitors again once they had the second new ball in hand yesterday morning. The fact that the three Pakistani pacers ended up bagging nine wickets among themselves, clearly reflects their domination against Bangladesh batters.

Pakistani fast bowlers displayed outstanding skills with the new ball, especially Ali who managed to swing the new ball both ways and ended up bagging his sixth five-wicket haul in the longest format.

It was a classic fast bowlers' trap set by Ali to dismiss Liton, batting on 114, where he started off by bowling a few deliveries moving away from the right-hander from a good length before surprising the centurion with an in-swinging delivery on the length that came in sharply. The right-hander was undone playing for the outward movement but the ball went through his defence, leading to a leg-before dismissal.

Afridi had relentlessly hit the deck hard and pushed the batters on the back foot while Ashraf asked questions bowling at the stumps alongside Hasan who kept the batters guessing with his art of swing — the trio complemented each other and offered variety from both ends.

Mushfiqur at the other hand, remained overcautious since resuming the day on 82 and probably it was down to some brilliant bowling by the Pakistani pace front. Having managed to score only nine runs in 35 balls on the second day, Mushfiqur fell by edging to the wicket-keeper off Ashraf's delivery. It was Mushfiqur's fourth time in getting out on the nervous nineties in Tests and arguably he was intimidated by some fine demonstration of pace bowling from the Pakistanis with the shiny red cherry.

from the squad that faced Pakistan in the three-match T20I series earlier this month. However, history has shown that the best way to respond amid criticism is to perform on the pitch and Liton did exactly that. And if the 27-year-old batter regards the innings as his new beginning, this can be the start of something remarkable for Bangladesh cricket.

"The feeling is always great," Liton expressed his feelings after the end of the second day. "A batsman can't ask for anything more if he gets to score a century. But I would've felt better if I could extend the innings," he added.

Although Liton has been undergoing a tremendous calendar year in red-ball cricket, scoring 483 runs so far with an average of 60.37, the wicketkeeper-batter still wants to follow the process to maintain his consistency with the bat.

"I'm always trying to be consistent, just because I scored a hundred today doesn't mean I'll score a hundred again in the next day. "Test cricket is very tough. Starting from zero is always a challenge but I'll try to follow the process as I've been doing for the last six-seven Tests," Liton added.

The dynamics of a Test match transforms each day and in each session. Despite Pakistan dominating the first session of Day One, Bangladesh fought hard in the following two sessions to end the day in their favour. And then on the second day yesterday, Pakistan bounced back and had all three sessions under their control. However, Liton believes the situation of the match is still balanced for both sides ahead of the third day.

"Look, when we [Bangladesh] lost four wickets before lunch on the first day, everyone thought we would get bundled out for a small total. Me and Mushfiq Bhai [Mushfiqur] stitched a very good partnership and bounced back from the situation.

"Pakistan did well today but the situation still favours both sides," he concluded.

Vaughan says sorry to Rafiq but denies racism

AFP, LONDON



Former England captain Michael Vaughan denied making a racist remark when he was skipper of Yorkshire but told the BBC on Saturday he apologises to his accuser ex-team-mate Azeem Rafiq if he was "responsible for any of his hurt".

English cricket has been rocked by revelations of racism from Pakistan-born Rafiq.

He gave harrowing testimony to lawmakers this month in which he said his career had been ended by the racist abuse he received while at leading English county Yorkshire.

These have included an allegation Vaughan told the now 30-year-old Rafiq and other Yorkshire players of Asian origin there were "too many of you lot, we need to do something about it" during a county match in 2009.

Then Yorkshire paceman Rana Naved-ul-Hasan, a former Pakistan international, and current Yorkshire and England leg-spinner Adil Rashid have backed Rafiq's version of events. The fourth player in the group -- bowler Ajmal Shahzad -- has told the Daily Mail he had no recollection of the event and "the senior guys were really good to me".

Vaughan -- who has been dropped by the BBC from their broadcasting team for the forthcoming Ashes series in Australia -- was adamant he never uttered those words saying "No I didn't. No."

Vaughan -- who played his entire domestic career at Yorkshire from 1993 to 2009 -- was distraught for Rafiq. "It hurts deeply, hurts me that a player has gone through so much be treated so badly at the club that I love," Vaughan said.

"I have to take some responsibility for that because I played for Yorkshire County Cricket Club for 18 years and if in any way shape or form I'm responsible for any of his hurt, I apologise for that."

'It's been a dream, no doubt'



REUTERS



Patel would never disrespect Test cricket by calling it an easy game but the India left-arm spinner accepts he is living a dream after producing another stellar performance in the opening Test against New Zealand on Saturday.

Patel completed figures of 5-62 to collect his fifth five-wicket haul in seven innings since he made his Test debut against England this year.

Left-arm spinner helped India grab a handy 49-run first-innings lead.

The home side suffered a setback, however, with Shubman Gill's late dismissal as they finished day three on 14-1 at Kanpur's Green Park Stadium. Kyle Jamieson bowled Gill for one and troubled Cheteshwar Pujara who remained unbeaten on nine.

Patel is yet to play a Test match abroad where pitches would be less conducive to his craft and even at home he remains under the shadow of senior spinners

Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja in the game's longest format.

The 27-year-old, who claimed 27 wickets in three matches in his debut series against England, overshadowed both his spin colleagues on Saturday to help India take a 49-run first innings lead at Kanpur's Green Park Stadium.

"It's been a dream, no doubt," the wiry all-rounder said.

Asked if he wondered what all the fuss was about test cricket, Patel said; "Not at all, test cricket is definitely not easy."

"When New Zealand were going strong at 120 for no loss yesterday, it certainly did not feel easy."

Replying to India's total of 345, New Zealand were 151 for no wicket on Saturday before Patel wrecked their middle order and the tourists eventually folded for 296.

"I just try to enjoy the game whenever I play," Patel said. "When playing alongside Ashwin and Jadeja, I honestly don't think who is the lead spinner among us."

"When I have the ball in my hand, I'm too pre-occupied assessing the pitch and my bowling plans to think of these things."

‘It’ll hit me only when I go out for toss’

REUTERS



Pat Cummins is focused on doing justice to his appointment as Australia’s new Test captain and believes limited-overs leadership would be “too much” for him, the 28-year-old said on Saturday.

Cummins is the first Australia paceman to lead the team in 65 years after Tim Paine stood down earlier this month following a “sexting” scandal.

Cummins, who has insisted he does not want to miss Test cricket, said he has been flooded with messages since landing the Test captain’s role but the feeling had not sunk in yet.

“Probably not fully,” he said after a practice session on the Gold Coast.

“I think until I walk out at the Gabba and see a big home crowd, pull on the Baggy Green (cap) and go out for the toss – that’s when it’ll probably hit me. It’s a bit of a weird feeling.”

Former fast bowler Geoff Lawson has hailed Pat Cummins’ appointment as Australia’s captain after the 28-year-old was named Tim Paine’s replacement.

Cummins is Australia’s 47th captain and the first fast bowler to lead the team in 65 years, prompting Lawson to celebrate the New South Welshman’s promotion to the top job ahead of the upcoming Ashes series against England.

“The stranglehold has been broken, the envelope pushed and the pace ceiling smashed,” Lawson, who played 46 tests for Australia, wrote in his column in the Sydney Morning Herald.

“A cricketer, whose main skill...is to bowl fast, has been granted the office of national captain.

“Cricket realists all over the continent are sighing with relief after turning blue from holding their breath since...Tim Paine resigned.”

Limited-over skipper Aaron Finch led Australia to their maiden Twenty20 World Cup title earlier this month, and Cummins reckoned split-captaincy suited them.

“It’s probably too early to say, mainly because I start this role and see where we go,” Cummins was quoted as saying by the Australian Associated Press.

“My gut feeling and preference at the moment is to have separate captains. “I think it’s too much to ask, certainly of me. I’d love to just concentrate on Test cricket.

“Aaron’s doing a fantastic job,” Cummins said, saying it was best to have “someone who can take the white-ball squad teams to make it their own, take it in their own direction”.



PHOTO: STAR

Mariners regain hockey league title

SPORTS REPORTER



Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club made it a double success in domestic hockey this year, adding the title of Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League to the Club Cup Hockey title they won earlier in the year.

The Arambagh-based outfit beat arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club 3-2 in the last match of the league at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium to clinch the prestigious title for the second time after having broken their duck five years ago.

Shohanur Rahman, who had scored two goals when Mariners beat Abahani 3-0 in the final of the Club Cup last month, scored twice for the winning side.

Pradeep Mor scored Mariners’ third goal while Gonzalo Peilet and Sarwar Hossain scored for Mohammedan in the entertaining encounter.

The win took Mariners to 42 points from 15 matches while Abahani finished second on 39 points and Mohammedan ended on third with 36 points.

Following their Club Cup triumph, Mariners had started the campaign emphatically by winning all 11 matches in the first phase of the league.

However, as they needed a point from their last two matches, Mariners were stunned with a 4-3 defeat against Abahani in their last Super Five match -- conceding two goals in the last minute of the match. The result meant a defeat for Mariners in yesterday’s match would have put all three teams on equal points, forcing a three-way play-off.

Those fears of Mariners became more palpable when Mohammedan broke the deadlock in the 10th minute, Gonzalo Peilet flicking home the second penalty corner of the game dragged by Rasel Mahmud Jimmy. But Mariners hit back five minutes later, with Sohanur striking from

a PC initiated by Milon Hossain. The same combination worked again 10 minutes later as Mariners took a 2-1 lead going into the half-time break.

Mohammedan were less impressive from open play and spurned a slew of PCs and they were punished for their profligacy when Pradeep Mor scored a wonderful field goal on 51 minutes to give Mariners breathing space.

Even though Sarwar Hossain scored for Mohammedan in the 57th minute to reduce the margin, there was no more dramatic defeat for Mariners as they held onto the lead to clinch their second trophy of the season.

Winning starts for Sk Jamal, Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER



Former champions Sheikh Russel KC and Sheikh Jamal DC made winning starts as the new football season kicked off through Riviera Independence Cup yesterday following a

break of two months and seven days.

Sheikh Russel, the 2011 edition champions, beat Uttar Baridhara Club 1-0 in the first match of the day at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur before Sheikh Jamal, who won their only Independence Cup title in 2013, beat Bangladesh Air Force 3-0 at the same venue.

The two results mean Sheikh Jamal grabbed the top spot in Group B after the first day while today Mohammedan will take on Muktiyoddha Sangsad and Saif Sporting Club will square off against Bangladesh Army in two Group C matches.

A total of 15 teams -- 12 from the premier league and three services teams -- will vie for the title of the Independence Cup, which is being held after a gap of three years.

All the matches of the three-week tournament will be held on the synthetic turf of Kamalapur as the Bangabandhu National Stadium, the premier football venue of the country, continues to undergo renovation.

Sheikh Russel failed to break the deadlock in the first half of the first game against their premier league opponents despite finding three good scoring chances.

Machado de Souza saw his header glance past the near post on 14 minutes before Mohammad Jewel’s sliding volley went straight to the goalie in the 34th minute.



Mannaf Rabbi then struck straight at goalie at the stroke half-time before making amends 14 minutes after restart, poking in from the goalline a well-judged chip from Sheikh Russel captain Esmael Ruti Tavares.

Saiful Bari’s charges were denied a second 12 minutes later when Aizar Akmatov’s corner was cleared off the goalline before Baridhara keeper Saiful Islam Khan made a double save on 87 minutes against De Souza and Tavares to keep the margin of defeat to a solitary goal.

Sheikh Jamal, meanwhile, had a much more comfortable victory against Bangladesh Air Force in the second match.

Valijonov Otabek gave Sheikh Jamal a 16th-minute lead with a right-footed curler from the edge of the box before Solomon King made it 2-0 in the 52nd minute with a placing shot on a thorough-pass from Otabek. Sohanur Rahman put the icing on the cake with a third goal, beating the opposition goalkeeper following a thorough-pass from Rahbar Khan on 55 minutes.

Arsenal stroll past rock-bottom Newcastle

REUTERS, London

Arsenal returned to winning ways and deepened Newcastle United’s relegation worries as goals by Bukayo Saka and Gabriel Martinelli sealed a comfortable 2-0 Premier League win on Saturday.

Bottom club Newcastle had new manager Eddie Howe on the touchline for the first time after he was forced to isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test, but they were well beaten in the end and remain without a league win after



A coach that merits the talent

SAMAMA RAHMAN



While most Manchester United fans would have been well within their rights to feel sadness at the departure of club legend Ole Gunnar Solskjaer from the dugout, there must have been a tinge of optimism.

The Norwegian knew Manchester United’s expectations for the season were at an all-time high after a very successful transfer window. Their subsequent struggles were attributed to the coach. It was also apparent that he could not win a battle of minds against the likes of Pep Guardiola, Thomas Tuchel or Jurgen Klopp.

Manchester United, after their dithering perhaps cost them Antonio Conte, acted quickly and somehow appear to have failed upwards, landing on ‘the godfather of German football’ as most everyone has labeled him, Ralph Rangnick.

There is little to base any speculation about the manager, given that he has only completed two seasons as a coach since 2011, but his tactics being at the forefront of modern coaching provide some indication of his ability.

The 63-year-old also has a knack for identifying and quickly developing talent, famously signing



a then 20-year-old Sadio Mane for 450,000 from Metz in 2012 before molding him into a world-beater. But above all, it is his ability to organise a team and imprint a clear idea of how to play that were the major factors. As Thomas Tuchel showed at Chelsea last season by winning the Champions League, organisation and knowing what to do with and without the ball is imperative.

What that may look like, given his time at Leipzig, is a quick press. He remarked once that he had checked some recent statistics and found that 60 per cent of their goals had come within 10 seconds of winning the ball.

In order to accomplish that, Rangnick relied on young, hungry players that could win the ball and flood beyond the opposition backline. Timo Werner, now at Chelsea, often played that role, but it is also a mold that fits perfectly onto the likes of Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Mason Greenwood.

With the need for such a dynamic front three, the question becomes what to do with Cristiano Ronaldo, whose unwillingness to press has caused many to question if he is the right man to be at the forefront.

Those not convinced by CR7’s consistent goals can find relief in the knowledge that Rangnick’s

system of positionally marking zones on the pitch instead of following around players will cause the Portuguese’s instincts and anticipation to come into play more than a form of more direct pressing would. He will also be backed up by one of the more willing pressers in the team, Bruno Fernandes.

In midfield, Fred again underlined his pressing credentials by winning the ball back quickly for both of Manchester United’s goals in their Champions League win against Villarreal, but others have not quite been up to the task and reinforcements in that department must be a priority.

There are similar problems in a leaky defense, where Harry Maguire and his compatriots have been guilty of individual mistakes. But one could argue that lack of a coherent identity -- no patterns of play out of defense or any kind of plan B when caught in a trap -- also led to them playing as individuals, which left more room for mistakes.

If Manchester United fans were already convinced that the individuals in their team were good enough to compete for the Premier League or Champions League, they now have a manager who is capable of backing those claims.

13 games.

Arsenal, whose 10-game unbeaten run in all competitions came to a juddering halt at Liverpool last week, dominated the opening half with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang missing a sitter.

But their patience was rewarded as Saka finished superbly in the 56th minute before substitute Martinelli volleyed the second 10 minutes later with his first touch of the game.

Newcastle’s Jonjo Shelvey was denied by the woodwork in the first half but once they went behind, a 17th defeat in 18 league games against Arsenal looked inevitable.

Arsenal stayed fifth in the table, level on points with fourth-placed West Ham United.

Newcastle have six points and are five behind 17th-placed Leeds United who play later on Saturday.



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BIDEN'S SUMMIT FOR DEMOCRACY

Bangladesh's exclusion bewildering

Say analysts, experts

PORIMOL PALMA

The exclusion of Bangladesh from US President Joe Biden's Summit for Democracy has triggered surprise, questions and caution among foreign relations analysts, especially as there is no clear explanation given though Washington considers Dhaka its strategic ally in the Asia-Pacific.

They say there could be flaws in the democratic practices in Bangladesh, and the US should have engaged Bangladesh. Excluding Bangladesh from the list of invitees is also intriguing as there are a number of countries, whose democratic process is highly questionable, but were invited.

Analysts say Biden's initiative to improve democracy, curb corruption and promote human rights, if sustained, will have far-reaching implications in global governance, trade and diplomatic relations.

Therefore, it is crucial for Bangladesh to keep a close watch on the initiative and plan measures to deal with the implications in the coming days, they said.

According to the State Department, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Maldives were invited to the virtual summit on December 9 and 10, which aims at defending against authoritarianism, addressing and fighting corruption and promoting respect for human rights.

A US Embassy spokesperson in Dhaka said they have followed the UN's approach in determining the countries to be invited, but spoke nothing about why Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Fire tore through the Mazar slum adjacent to Sena Kalyan Bhaban in Tongi in the early hours of yesterday. About 500 shanties were gutted. As dawn broke, many of the slum dwellers were seen trying to salvage whatever they could from the rubble. Primary investigation suggests that the fire originated from a mosquito-repelling coil. The photo was taken yesterday noon.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

SOHEL MURDER Rab arrests two more suspects

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Rab yesterday arrested two more men accused in the case filed over the murder of Councillor Syed Mohammad Sohel.

Ashikur Rahman Rocky was arrested in Lalmonirhat and Alam Mia in Cumilla, said Major Mohammad Sakib Hossain of Rab-11.

Law enforcers have so far arrested four of the accused named in the case.

Sumon and Masum were arrested earlier.

Masked gunmen shot Sohel and his aide Haripada Das in Pathuriapara area on Monday.

Sohel, 48, was also the panel mayor of Cumilla City Corporation and a local Awami League leader.

His younger brother Syed Mohammad Rumon later filed the case against 11 named and 12 unnamed individuals.

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

No justice expected from Security Council: Indira

NOVEMBER 28, 1971
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

INDIRA GANDHI'S SPEECH
Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi today said any reference of the present tension on the Indian subcontinent to the UN Security Council would neither help ease the situation nor would it materially affect the situation.

Addressing a massive public meeting in Jaipur, the Indian premier said, "Pakistan had committed aggressions against us four times in the past. It is clear that we did not attack Pakistan but what did the Security Council do to help us against the aggressions?"



refugees in India
RUSSIA WOULD REJECT ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE COUNCIL
Soviet Union indicated today it would reject attempts to involve the UN Security Council and the five great powers in the Bangladesh crisis.

Pravda said in its international review section, "reactionary forces in Pakistan and abroad are doing everything to use the situation for aggravating Indo-Pak relations and for giving it the character of an international crisis."

Meanwhile, US president Nixon sent messages to India, Pakistan and Soviet Union asking them to do everything in their power to prevent escalation of border incidents in the subcontinent.

The US president decided to intervene personally in the crisis.

Italy joined Belgium in sponsoring

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Tremor again jolts parts of Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

A 4.2-magnitude earthquake shook different parts of the country including Chattogram on Saturday afternoon.

The tremor was felt around 3:47 pm, according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD).

The epicentre of the earthquake was in the India-Myanmar border region, about 308 kms South-East off Dhaka, the BMD said.

However, there was no report of any damage, injury and casualty by the tremor so far.

In the early hours of Friday, a strong 6.1 magnitude earthquake jolted Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna and some other parts of the country. Its epicenter was at a depth of 32.8 kilometers (20.4 miles) near Hakha, Chin State, Myanmar, said the US Geological Survey (USGS).

Seoul trials tiny robots in nursery schools



AFP, Seoul

Seoul has started trialling pint-sized robots as teaching aids in kindergartens -- a pilot project the city government said would help prepare the next generation for a hi-tech future.

The "Alpha Mini" is just 24.5 centimetres tall and can dance, lead sing-a-longs, recite stories and even teach kung-fu moves as children mimic its push-ups and one-legged balances.

"The robots help with the kids' creativity,"

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Two more die, 155 get Covid

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday reported 155 Covid-19 cases while the coronavirus claimed overnight two lives.

"The country reported 1.15 percent Covid-19 positive cases as 13,462 samples were tested in the past 24 hours," Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said in a statement.

In the past 24 hours, the combined figure of coronavirus in Dhaka city and upazilas of the district is 122 while two Covid-19 deaths were reported during the period.

The official tally showed that the virus killed 27,975 people and infected 1,575,579 so far, the statement added.

The recovery count rose to 1,540,018 after another 188 patients were discharged from the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Pakistan take command

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

Pakistan took charge and pushed Bangladesh onto the back foot after the second day of the first Test at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

Bangladesh were bundled out for 330 in the first innings as pacer Hasan Ali picked up his sixth five-wicket haul. The visitors then replied strongly through a 145-run opening stand from Abid Ali and debutant Abdullah Shafique.

Abid was seven runs shy of his fourth Test hundred while Shafique was

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Pakistan pacer Hasan Ali took four wickets inside the opening session as Bangladesh were bundled out for 330 on the second day of the first Test between Bangladesh and Pakistan at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. In reply, Pakistan reached 145 without loss.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

AFGHAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS India, Russia, China alarmed

Hundreds of girls take entrance exams for Turkish-run schools in Kabul

REUTERS, New Delhi

The foreign ministers of India, Russia and China on Friday expressed concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the spread of drug trafficking in the country.

Afghanistan has been plunged into crisis by the abrupt end of billions of dollars in foreign assistance, following the collapse of the Western-backed government and return to power of the Taliban in August.

"Expressing concern over deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Ministers called for immediate and unhindered humanitarian assistance to be provided to Afghanistan," said a joint statement released following a virtual meeting between India's S Jaishankar, Russia's Sergey Lavrov and China's Wang Yi.

The statement called on the Taliban to respect the results of United Nations resolutions on Afghanistan and the central role of the UN in the country.

The three countries also pledged to do more to combat drug smuggling in the region.

"The spread of illicit drug trafficking in opiates and methamphetamine from Afghanistan and beyond... poses a serious threat to regional security and stability and provides funding for terrorist organizations," the statement added.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Afghan girls took entrance

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 28

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
5:10	12:45	3:45	5:19	7:00	
JAMAT	5:45	1:15	4:00	5:22	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION