

EVERYONE CAN MAKE ROBS, BUT **THERE'S ONLY 1 EXPERT** SO CHOOSE BSRM TO BUILD SAFER HOMES

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT

BSRM building a safer nation

HIGHEST SELLING 15 CEMENT for more than years

SHAH CEMENT

5.2cr people food insecure in Bangladesh

FAO report says the number rose by 2.4pc in two years

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The number of people without food security in Bangladesh increased 2.4 percent to 5.2 crore between 2018 and 2020, found a recent study by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation -- as the pandemic worsened access to food.

As much as 31.9 percent of the population in Bangladesh experienced moderate to severe food security, according to the report styled 'Asia and the Pacific - Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2021'.

This is lower than the Southern Asia -- which is the grouping for Bangladesh -- average of 43.8 percent.

People face moderate food insecurity when they are uncertain of their ability to obtain food and have been forced to reduce, at times over the year, the quality and/or quantity of food they consume due to lack of money or other resources.

Severe food insecurity means that individuals have likely run out of food, experienced hunger and, at the most extreme, have gone for days without eating, putting their health and well-being at serious risk.

In the preceding two years, the number of people facing moderate or severe food insecurity in Bangladesh stood at 5.08 crore, which is 31.5 percent of the population.

While the FAO has not pinned the increase on the pandemic, it says the global public health crisis, which

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



NOT EASY FOR MANY ... Keeping this four-month-old baby on a table out in the open, his parents -- Ibrahim and Sajeda -- are busy selling badges, rubber bands, and coat pins on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital yesterday. Their six-year-old boy helps them. The family is homeless and spends their nights on the pavement.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

488 journos imprisoned in 2021: RSF

46 killed

AFP, Paris

There are currently 488 media professionals imprisoned around the world, the highest number since Reporters Without Borders began counting more than 25 years ago, the NGO announced yesterday.

By contrast, the number killed this year -- 46 -- was the lowest since it began issuing annual tallies, due to the relative stabilisation of conflicts in the Middle East.

"The number of journalists detained in connection with their work has never been this high since RSF began publishing its annual round-up in 1995," the NGO, which battles for freedom of the press, said in a statement.

The number has risen by some 20 percent over the past year thanks largely to crackdowns on the media in Myanmar, Belarus and Hong Kong.

RSF said it had also never seen so many female

SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

Star HEALTHLINE

Obesity in children: CAUSE AND EFFECTS

STAR HEALTH DESK

We all want children to be healthy. But sometimes, we misunderstand what constitutes as healthy and what does not.

Just like being underweight is not healthy for the little human beings, being overweight or obese can also be harmful.

Children who are obese may have a higher risk for developing heart disease, diabetes, and other weight-related diseases later in life.

Obesity is a disorder that involves excess body

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



Hyginex Instant hand sanitizer

BEACON Pharmaceuticals Limited

LEVEL CROSSING

Family torn apart by tragedy

Defunct barrier, rash driving claim lives of mother, toddler

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A woman and her two-year-old son died while her husband and daughter were injured when their microbus was rammed by a train at a level crossing in Dakkhin Khan, Gazipur, early yesterday.

Mitu Akhter, 26, and her son Shoyeb died as their vehicle got wrecked by the train, said Mazaharul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kamalapur Railway Police Station.

Mitu's husband Abul Hasan, 40, who was driving the vehicle, and their daughter Labiba, 6, were injured. The family was going to their village home in Naria, Shariatpur, the OC added.

Locals and police said the barrier on one side of the road had been out of order. The area was covered in dense fog.

Abul Hasan tried to go past the level crossing through the side where there was no barrier, Mazaharul said, adding that the Nilsagar Express Train heading towards Dhaka hit the rear half of the microbus.



Locals rescued them and took them to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital where doctors pronounced Abul Hasan and Shoyeb dead, he said.

Contacted, Helaluddin, station master of Dhirashram Railway Station, said there was poor visibility at the time of the accident.

Deaths on rail lines are not too

SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

Momen likes Blinken's 'positivity'

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said he liked the positive tone of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during their telephone call on Wednesday evening.

Blinken told Momen that Dhaka and Washington have a lot of scope to work together on issues, including climate change, democracy, human rights and peacekeeping.

"I said we have several dialogues with you. You could consult us [before imposing sanctions]. Mr Blinken said 'you can also call me, feel free to call me'," Momen told reporters at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday.

"Blinken said 'come to Washington next spring'. I said we would meet soon, hold dialogues. He was very positive. I liked the way he responded to us," he said.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Nasa's rover makes 'unexpected' volcanic discovery on Mars



CNN ONLINE

Lava once flowed at the site of an ancient lake on Mars.

The Perseverance rover landed on the planet just 10 months ago, but it has already made that surprising discovery.

The rover's latest finding suggests that the bedrock it has been driving over since landing was once formed by volcanic lava flows -- something that was "completely unexpected," according to mission scientists. Previously, they thought the layered rocks Perseverance took photos of were sedimentary.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

Jabs, boosters 'vital' against Omicron: EU

AFP, Brussels

EU leaders said yesterday that vaccinations and booster shots would be vital to counter the Omicron coronavirus variant as countries stepped up restrictions to slow its startling spread.

The EU summit they were participating in also emphasised the need for "coordinated efforts" based on science, amid go-it-alone measures applied notably by Italy.

The joint conclusion, swiftly adopted at the beginning of the one-day

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4



PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 17

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-20	12-30	3-45	5-22	7-00
JAMAAT 5-55	1-15	4-00	5-25	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Return of the sea robbers

PAGE 3

Bangladesh makes a name in suit making

PAGE B1

US Congress votes for commission on Afghanistan failures

PAGE 6

Smith, Boucher and De Villiers showed racial prejudice: ombudsman

PAGE 11



An osprey seen flying with a fish it caught in the Teesta river in Rangpur. Osprey, a large variety of (fish-eating) raptor, is found near large water bodies or in rivers in Bangladesh. This bird comes from the Western part of the world in the winter.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SHABBOSACHI DAS

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada / Canada

CHILD, EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE IS ILLEGAL

You have the right to choose

YOU NEED HELP? We can assist

If you know of a Canadian citizen being forced into marriage, contact the Canadian High Commission in Dhaka. dhaka.consular@international.gc.ca, Tel: 5566-8444