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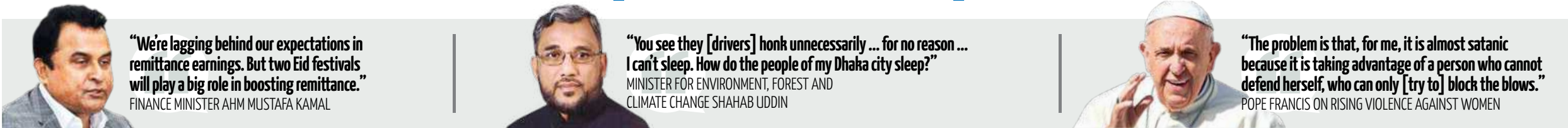
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Plastic menace worsening

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's plastic consumption in urban areas tripled in the 15 years to 2020, found a World Bank study, in what can be viewed as a setback for the government's efforts to beat plastic pollution.

A large part of the plastic waste is dumped in water bodies and rivers, said the report titled "Towards a Multisectoral Action Plan for Sustainable Plastic Management in Bangladesh", which was unveiled yesterday.

Of the 977,000 tons of plastic consumed in 2020, only 31 percent were recycled, according to the report. The rest were mismanaged, ending up in landfills, rivers and canals, and drains and unserved areas.

"The unmanaged plastic waste can seriously pollute the environment and have far-reaching consequences on human health," Abu Hasnat Md Maqsood Sinha, a consultant for the report and executive director of Waste Concern, told The Daily Star.

The plastic waste mixes into the ecosystem -- into the soil, water bodies, air and food chain, he said.

"With rapid growth and urbanisation, Bangladesh faced a sharp increase in both plastic use and pollution," said Dandan Chen, acting country director of the WB.

And the pandemic has worsened plastic pollution, especially from single-use plastic used in masks, gloves and personal protective equipment, she said.

In 2020, the country's annual per capita plastic consumption in urban areas stood at 9 kg, up from 3 kg in 2005, according to the report.

"The average per capita plastic consumption in European countries is more than 100 kg -- much higher than in Bangladesh. But Bangladesh is one of the top plastic polluted countries due to mismanagement of plastic waste," said Bushra Nishat, environmental specialist of the World Bank, while presenting the report at the event.

The problem is worse in Dhaka city, where plastic usage is significantly higher than the national average.

In 2020, the per capita plastic consumption in Dhaka stood at 24 kg, up from 9.2 kg in 2005.

About 646 tons of plastic waste is generated daily in Dhaka, which is 10 percent of all wastes generated in Bangladesh. Only 37.2 percent of the plastic waste in Dhaka is recycled.

In this circumstance, sustainable management of plastic will be crucial for Bangladesh to tackle the increasing plastic pollution and ensure green

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PLASTIC POLLUTION

- Covid pandemic has worsened plastic pollution due to use of masks, gloves, and PPE
- 10% of total waste generated in Dhaka is plastic
- A large part of mismanaged plastic waste dumped in water bodies and rivers



PLASTIC USE IN 2020

- DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION 9.77 lakh tonnes
- RECYCLED 3 lakh tonnes
- MISMANAGED 6.77 lakh tonnes



CONSUMPTION

Per capita national use in 2005 **3kg**
Per capita National use in 2020 **9kg**
Per capita use in Dhaka in 2020 **24kg**

PLASTIC WASTE IN DHAKA

Everyday generation **646 tonnes**
Landfill **310.7 tonnes**
Canals and rivers **77.5 tonnes**
Drains and other areas **17.3 tonnes**
Recycled **240.5 tonnes**

MANAGEMENT TARGETS

Recycling **50%** of plastics by 2025
Recycling **90%** single-use plastic by 2026
Reducing plastic waste generation by **30%** by 2030

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN, TITU DAS

Friendly ties with all the countries

PM says it's necessary for country's socioeconomic progress

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government wants to maintain friendly relations with all countries in order to continue Bangladesh's socioeconomic progress.

The premier was addressing a function yesterday marking the handover of Bangabandhu Medal for Diplomatic Excellence 2020. She joined the event virtually from the Gono Bhavan.

On behalf of the PM, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen handed the newly introduced award to two recipients at the capital's Foreign Service Academy.

The recipients are: Rear Admiral (ret'd) Khurshid Alam, secretary of the Maritime Affairs Unit at the foreign ministry, and Syed Mohammad Al Muhari, former UAE ambassador to Bangladesh.

Hasina said she believes that the award will encourage Bangladeshi diplomats to be the best performers by discharging their duties with the utmost professionalism.

"Besides, the diplomats of our friendly countries will be encouraged to take the

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TALKS OVER ELECTION COMMISSION JP names 1 for EC, 4 for search panel

President hopes new commission to be formed on political consensus

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and RASHIDUL HASAN

During a dialogue with President Abdul Hamid yesterday, the Jatiya Party proposed the enactment of a law, as prescribed in the constitution, to form the Election Commission.

The opposition party also proposed enacting another law in line with the constitution that carries the provision for penalising any executive authorities who violate their duties to assist the Election Commission (EC) in the discharge of its functions.

In the three-point recommendation, they further proposed that the president promulgate ordinances regarding the issues if it is not possible to enact such laws in parliament before February 14 next year, when the term of the current EC led by Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda expires.

As per the constitution, the new EC has to be formed before the term of the current EC ends.

A JP leader, wishing anonymity, said the party had placed four names to the president as nominations for the search committee, which is expected to recommend names to the president for the formation of the EC.

Additionally, JP also nominated Rokana Kader, a retired additional secretary and wife of JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnun, as an election commissioner in case the new EC is formed without search committee recommendations, added the leader.

The JP placed the recommendations to Hamid on the first day of dialogues, initiated by the president, with political parties over the formation of the new EC.

As in 2012 and 2016, the president is expected to form a search committee from the nominations of different political parties. The search committee, after discussions with political parties, will then provide the president with a shortlist of candidates, from which the president will

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Bangladesh buying 2cr Sinopharm vaccines

Shipments to start arriving early next year

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is procuring around 20 million Covid-19 vaccine doses from China, using funds given by the Asian Development Bank under bilateral arrangements.

The vaccines, manufactured by Chinese state-owned company Sinopharm, would start arriving in the country from early next year, said finance ministry officials.

To buy the doses, the government will use the remaining funds from the loan it had gotten from ADB, they said.

The Manila-based multilateral lender has already disbursed \$894 million of the \$940 million pledged for vaccine purchase as part of its "\$9 billion Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility" launched in December last year.

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INFORMATION ON AVIJIT'S KILLERS US declares \$5m reward

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US State Department yesterday announced a \$5 million reward for information on the killing of Avijit Roy and the concurrent attack on his wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya in Dhaka in February 2015.

The Rewards Justice Programme (RJF), the counterterrorism rewards programme of the department's Diplomatic Security Service, made the announcement in a statement yesterday.

On February 26, 2015, the Bangladesh-born US citizens were visiting Dhaka to attend Amar Ekushey Boi Mela when unidentified assailants attacked them with machetes. Avijit was killed and Bonya survived with critical injuries.

As an author, blogger, and activist, Avijit challenged fundamentalism in Bangladesh by advocating for freedom of expression. He coordinated international protests to raise awareness of the plight of imprisoned bloggers in Bangladesh and was a well-known critic of social repression, the RJF said.

He was targeted and killed for his outspoken beliefs and activism.

The Ansarullah Bangla Team, a Bangladeshi militant group that claimed responsibility for the attack, seeks to radicalise youths to kill those deemed by it to be "anti-Islamic". Those responsible for the attack are believed to be in Bangladesh, the RJF added.

Shortly thereafter, Asim Umar, the now-deceased leader of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), posted a widely circulated video claiming that AQIS followers,

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Three held over rape of woman in bus

STAR REPORT

Three bus staffers were arrested early yesterday in a case filed over gang-raping a woman in a bus in Narayanganj's Bandar upazila.

The arrestees are: bus driver Nurul Haque, 21, conductor, 16, and the driver's helper, 14.

According to the case statement, the victim, 18, boarded a bus in the capital's Jatrabari area around 10:00pm on Sunday to go to Gauchia of Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila.

When the bus reached Shimrail area on Dhaka-Chattogram highway, all its passengers except the victim got off.

The bus pulled over in Narayanganj's Madanpur. The driver, the conductor and the helper then gang-raped the woman playing music at high volume.

She was able to trick her way off the bus and call 999. A police team then rushed to the spot, rescued

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বঙ্গবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

২৩-২৭ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২১

প্রতিদিন সকাল ১০টা - রাত ৯টা

প্রধান অতিথি: জনাব টিপু মুন্সি, এমপি
মাননীয় মন্ত্রী, বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়

বিশেষ অতিথি: জনাব শরীফ আহমেদ, এমপি
মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী, গৃহায়ন ও গণপূর্ত মন্ত্রণালয়

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