





15,46,071



5,380,299



**● 275,974,405** 

# Home farming helped women in pandemic

Study reveals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Homestead farming has turned out to be a good source of food security and nutrition among women, particularly the young and middle-aged ones who live in areas where livelihood is uncertain, found a study.

During the initial phase of the pandemic when supply chains of food had broken down, people survived in many places due to homestead food production (HFP) as a supplier of food, said the report titled "Homestead food production in Bangladesh: Its determinants and effect on household food security and nutrition among adult women".

National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN) and Helen Keller International Bangladesh prepared the report using secondary data of 27,072 households.

About 54.4 percent of the sample were raising both home gardening and livestock/poultry in 2014, according lands and backyards in all upazilas.

to the report, which was unveiled earlier this month.

HFP has emerged as a well-accepted practice that may further be supported through various models, it said, while calling for updates to the manuals on home garden models and livestock production.

To motivate people, the study suggested the authority concerned should develop a marketing system so that people could earn money selling their extra products.

The government should provide seed and fertilisers at a discount or free to the poor people to encourage them for homestead farming, it said.

The study also found the HFP ratio is higher among the people of chars, haors and coastal belt areas than the urban areas due to land scarcity.

At present, the government is running a Tk 438 crore project to set up homesteads in uncultivated fallow



Sobita Rani sits on a foothpath in the capital's Dhakeshwari Temple area, sewing cloth for a customer. A mother of three, she has dug up her old sewing machine to help her husband, a day labourer at a shoe factory, run their family. By sewing, Sobita earns about Tk 100-200 a day. The photo was taken on Monday.

# Holed up somewhere

million dollars for information on Avijit's killers.

On February 26, 2015, Avijit and Bonya were visiting Amar Ekushey Boi Mela in Dhaka when assailants attacked them, killing Avijit and injuring Bonya.

ABT had claimed responsibility for the attack soon afterwards.

Even though the police told this newspaper that both Zia and Akram are in Bangladesh, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan claimed that that was not the case.

Talking with reporters at an event in Manikganj yesterday, he said the murder of Avijit was investigated properly and an ABT group had done

He added that the law enforcers had successfully eradicated the militant groups that emerged in the country at that time. "The court sentenced five individuals

to death and one to life imprisonment for their involvement in the killing. We are now looking for Zia and Akram," the minister said.

A high official of the CTTC unit said according to the latest information, Zia introduced himself as Imran Kaysar in recent times. The previous name he assumed was Ahmed Mokter.

"We last tracked Zia's activities in May this year, when he sent instructions in secret online groups to all wings of the outfit ahead of Eid-ul-Azha," said the officer, requesting not to be named.

Addressing the ABT patrons, Zia wrote, "My dear brothers and sisters, to Shafiur Rahman Farabi. it is you, for whom our brothers are still active in Bangladesh, Kashmir and Afghanistan.'

A CTTC officer said the patrons are also members of the outfit's secret groups. Police are now trying to identify them.

Zia was found instructing media wing members to spread the outfit's sermons and write-ups, investigators

Police in 2016 offered a reward of TK 20 lakh for information on Zia.

The officer said police had a complete map of Zia's movement up until March 2020, but lost the trail during the pandemic.

"Zia had been to Dhaka, Chattogram, Cumilla and Mymensingh. Even before the Eid-ul-Fitr of 2019, he went to Chittagong Railway Station to buy a ticket to Dhaka and made a fuss at the station for not getting a ticket," said the

The local police later confirmed that the person was Syed Ziaul Haque, but by then it was too late, he added.

"It took time to identify him because we have old pictures of the fugitives and they frequently change their appearances," he said.

Md Asaduzzaman, chief of the CTTC unit, on Monday night told this newspaper that as per police intelligence, Zia is in Bangladesh.

Regarding Akram's location, a CTTC officer said that several years ago there was information that he was in India. "But, we later heard that he came

A former student of Dhaka College, Akram used to live in Old Dhaka's Dholaikhal area and he joined ABT in

The Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal in Dhaka on February 16 this year handed down death sentences to five militants and life imprisonment to another for killing Avijit.

Those handed the death sentence are Zia, Akram, Abu Siddique Sohel, Mozammel Hossain, and Arafat Rahman. Life imprisonment was given

Md Kamrul Ahsan, chief of the Anti-Terrorism Unit, told The Daily Star yesterday that both Zia and Akram were accused in a number of cases.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said that the reward announced by the US for information on the killers would help the efforts of the Bangladesh government to catch them.

"We do not know where they are or which country they are in but it will be helpful," he told reporters in Dhaka.

Marooned in Lebanon meltdown said he earns about 30 lakh Lebanese

phone.

This forced Titu, a migrant from Brahmanbaria, to think about his future in Lebanon as he was in dilemma whether he would return home.

Like him, thousands of other Bangladeshi workers are now facing severe financial crisis in Lebanon. Workers say they cannot afford their monthly expenses, and support their families back home.

The condition of undocumented workers is even worse as their wages are lower.

There are about 1.20 lakh Bangladeshi migrants, including an estimated 20,000 undocumented ones, in Lebanon, according to sources in the Bangladesh embassy in Beirut.

Amid the economic crisis, over 14,000 undocumented migrant workers have returned home from Lebanon since 2019 under special repatriation programmes arranged by the Bangladesh mission, said embassy officials.

others, especially the Many undocumented ones, are now thinking of returning home, say migrant workers.

However, a section of workers cannot afford the return airfare of \$400 as they would need to pay 10 million Lebanese pound for buying the equivalent US dollars in the black market. They have urged the Bangladesh government to provide a subsidy on their airfare.

anonymity, undocumented Bangladeshi worker said he wanted to return home but could not arrange the airfare. That's why he could not even register with the Bangladesh Embassy for repatriation.

He called upon the Bangladesh government to provide workers like him with full or partial airfare.

The migrant said he had to borrow about Tk 50,000 from his relatives in Bangladesh in the last three months to pay for rent and food in Lebanon.

Md Zakir Hossain, a 39-year-old worker at a cleaning company in Beirut,

pounds a month which is \$120 on the black market rate.

Besides, his wife earns about \$200 a month as a worker at a security service company. "We are now consuming more vegetables as we cannot afford enough

income," said Zakir. Babu Saha, a Bangladeshi journalist in Beirut, said if the economic crisis drags on, most of the Bangladeshi

meat and fish with our present

migrant workers may have to return home ultimately. Meanwhile, Lebanese Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh yesterday said

his country needs to receive \$12 to 15 billion from its partners to kickstart its economic recovery and shore up fastdiminishing foreign currency reserves, Lebanon is grappling with an

unprecedented economic branded by the World Bank as one of the planet's worst in modern times. Reuters on Thursday reported that

the Arab country's economy has been in freefall since 2019, when a mountain of debt and political gridlock, drove the nation into its deepest crisis since the 1975-1990 civil war. It said the Lebanese pound, which

dollar before the crisis, has collapsed to around 25,000 on the unofficial Shariful Hasan, head of Brac an Migration Programme, yesterday said

was exchanged freely at 1,500 to the

there is little hope that Lebanon's economic situation would improve "At present, most of the Bangladeshi

migrant workers in Lebanon are facing hardship due to devaluation of Lebanese currency," he told The Daily It will not be wise to send fresh

workers to Lebanon. Besides, the government should extend its support to those who are facing hardship, including arranging airfare for those in need, Shariful said.

The government can also consider arranging migration of workers to a third country, he said. Syed Saiful Haque, chairman of

Warbe Development Foundation, yesterday said many migrant workers who returned home from Lebanon recently had faced "wage theft".

He urged the Bangladesh government and the Bangladesh mission in Beirut to extend their support to the workers ensuring equal access to the service. Abdullah Al Mamun, first

secretary (labour welfare wing) of the Bangladesh mission in Beirut, said although there were jobs for Bangladeshi migrants, the major problem was the US dollar crisis. He said about 200 undocumented

migrant workers who registered with the embassy under a repatriation programme were waiting to return home. The embassy will arrange a

chartered flight for them as there is no direct air link between the two countries. Asked about providing subsidy on

the return airfare, he said they were not considering the matter yet as there was no directive from the expatriates welfare ministry in this regard.

### Saudi-led strikes halt aid flights into Yemen's Sanaa

Tenderer

UN aid flights into Yemen's rebel-held capital Sanaa have been halted by air strikes carried out by the Saudiled coalition which supports the government, an airport official said vesterdav.

Because of coalition air strikes targeting the rebels, "the airport is no longer able to receive aircraft operated by the United Nations or international humanitarian organisations", the official told AFP.

#### OMICRON VARIANT

# Thailand halts quarantine-free entry till Jan 4

Thailand reinstated its mandatory Covid-19 quarantine for foreign visitors and scraped a quarantine waiver yesterday due to concerns over the spread of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The decision to halt Thailand's Test and Go" waiver means visitors will have to undergo hotel quarantine, which ranges between seven to 10 Meanwhile, a so-called "sandbox"

programme, which requires visitors to remain in a specific location but allows them free movement outside of their accommodation, will also be suspended in all places except for the tourist resort island of Phuket.

"After December 21, there will be no new registrations for 'Test and Go', only quarantine or Phuket sandbox," said deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhanadirek.

The announcement came a day after Thailand reported the first case

#### No legal way FROM PAGE 1

commented while attending a programme of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) at Hotel Lakeshore in the capital's Gulshan. He also said that the government

would follow the president's directives regarding Khaleda's issue. The president would direct the

government about it after holding talks with the political parties on the reconstitution of the Election Commission, he said. About the US sanctions on Rab and its seven current and former top

officials, he said he hopes that the foreign and home ministries would look into the issues. The minister said the NHRC must remain firm and uphold its target for

which Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina established it in 2009. NHRC's Chairperson Nasima Begum presided over the function. Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel,

deputy minister for education, NHRC all-time member Dr Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Dhaka's Divisional Commissioner Md Khalilur Rahman and his Secretary Narayan Chandra Sarkar also spoke at the event. Meanwhile, the High Court yesterday accepted hearing the writ

petition that sought its directives on the government to allow Khaleda to go abroad for advanced treatment. The HC bench of Justice Mamnoon

Rahman and Justice Khandaker Diliruzzaman may hold a hearing on the petition today, petitioner Md Eunus Ali Akond told The Daily Star. Supreme Court lawyer Akond filed

the writ petition with the HC on Monday. Since November 13, the 76-year-

old former prime minister has been in the critical care unit of Dhaka's Evercare Hospital, where she is receiving treatment for liver cirrhosis. Her doctors have said she needs a

medical procedure that is available

only in countries such as Germany,

the UK and the US.

Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous

Private buildings by Developers and submit the

Wallages

Project Director, CBCP

## We acted fast to shield the vulnerable

At the very start of the pandemic last year, the government offered relief to the ultra-poor, the disabled, seniors, returnee migrant workers, and impoverished women, she wrote. "We quickly distributed cash and

other types of assistance to 40 million people, a quarter of the population. This came in the form of 28 separate stimulus programmes totalling \$22.1 billion -- nearly 6.2 percent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP). We spent billions of additional dollars on vaccines and other emergency measures," she added.

"People continue to be at the heart of everything we do, whatever the Omicron variant brings," she noted, adding that the government instituted a 'No One Will Go Hungry' policy that provided rice, baby food, and cash to 16.8 million families.

"We targeted payments to the aged, the disabled, and deserted and destitute women. We expanded a programme inaugurated prior to the pandemic to build houses for the homeless to commemorate the centenary of the birth of my father -- the founding father of the nation and its first president -- Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The programme contributed immensely to our fight against the disease,"

She mentioned the government also prioritised assisting small businesses and their employees. The government offered low-interest loans to smallbusiness entrepreneurs, especially women and farmers. The government loans on favourable terms were also used to pay workers in the tourism and hospitality industries that were ravaged by lockdowns. Hasina added.

The PM said larger businesses also

multi-billion-dollar payments went to employees of export-oriented companies, such as those in the vital garment-making industry.

"A working-capital loan facility was established to keep both big manufacturers and rapidly growing service firms, including information technology companies, in operation. Interest payments on these loans were split between the borrowers and the government. Interest payments on all commercial loans, in fact, were suspended for two months last year and then spread out over the next 12 months to ease the financial burden on employers," she wrote.

Like other nations, Bangladesh instituted social distancing edicts, mandated the wearing of face masks, and enforced a 66-day closure from late March to early June last year, Hasina mentioned.

wrote that

She

industrial

production fell. Small and mediumsized businesses were shuttered. Global lockdowns reduced demand and rocked Bangladesh's economy. "However, we never lost faith in ourselves and continued to invest in our people. We set up testing facilities.

We did contact tracing. We installed isolation facilities in hospitals across the country. We also recruited 6,200 doctors, 10,000 nurses, and 3,000 other key medical personnel. In the end, thanks in part to years of investments at the local level, our healthcare system was resilient despite the terrible strain," Hasina said.

The PM said the combination of new initiatives and past investments has saved countless lives and allowed the economy to weather the storm. GDP growth has increased roughly by two percentage points since November last year. Bangladesh is in a hundred years. Investing in received assistance: several rounds of now among the five fastest-growing people made all the difference.'

economies in the world. Over the past 10 years, Bangladesh has reduced its poverty rate from 31.5 percent to 20.5 percent, she wrote.

"Our per capita income has trebled in a single decade to \$2,227 in fiscal 2021, which is higher than our neighbours -- India and Pakistan. Our foreign currency reserves have reached an all-time high of \$48 billion," the PM added.

"Indeed, our relentless attention to helping the people who needed help the most clearly has paid major dividends. We are especially proud that the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranks Bangladesh seventh in political empowerment of women. outpacing our regional neighbours since 2014. Our infant mortality rate has been reduced to 23.67 per 1,000. The maternal mortality rate has fallen to 173 per 100,000 live births. Bangladeshis' average longevity has risen to 73 years," Hasina noted.

She wrote that Bangladesh has also become a world leader in digital adoption and expertise. "Our 'Digital Bangladesh' initiative has transformed and diversified the economy. It made combatting Covid-19 easier than it would have otherwise been. Average Bangladeshis now rely on their smartphones. As a result, they are kept informed minute-by-minute about pandemic developments. The premier mentioned that

Bangladesh has travelled a long way from being one of the poorest nations when it was founded in 1971 to achieving lower-middle-incomecountry status this year. "We're on the track to graduate from the United Nations' list of least developed countries by 2026. All of this is still possible despite the worst pandemic

#### Frontliners FROM PAGE 1

launched the booster dose campaign where 60 people received Pfizer jabs.

Health officials said, only Pfizer dose will be given as a booster dose and the detailed protocol will be announced soon. In yesterday's event,

the minister also said that

the transmission of a new variant of concern Omicron may increase as people do not wear masks in tourism spots including Cox's Bazar. "People are thronging in without wearing masks in different [tourism] spots as well as participating at

the political gatherings.

As result, there is a chance

that the coronavirus transmission will increase," Zahid Maleque said. On December 9, the DGHS found the first two cases of Omicron variant infection among two of the returning players of the

Bangladesh Women Cricket

"Omicron has not spread yet in the country. Necessary steps have been taken to prevent spreading the variant," the minister said, adding that all the hospitals have been kept prepared. Mentioning that the

to controlling coronavirus transmission, he also urged people to take vaccines. Meanwhile, the Maldives will appoint doctors and nurses from Bangladesh, the

Covid vaccines contributed

"There will be a contract signing in this regard, Zahid Maleque said without sharing details.

minister also informed.

#### Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) House # 6, Road # 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 Tender Ref. no 42.06.2626.101.06.001.21-2655

### Invitation of Third Re-Tender

Supply, installation & commissioning of lifts for CEGIS Office Building at Plot No. F-14/E, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka,

|       | Olici E Bo   | ingia riagar, Briaka.  |
|-------|--|--|
| 1     | Name of Organization   | Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS)   |
| 2     | Invitation for   | Tender for Procurement of Works  |
| KEY I | NFORMATION   |  |
| 3     | Procurement Method   | Open Tendering Method (OTM)  |
| FUND  | ING INFORMATION  |  |
| 4     | Source of Fund   | CEGIS's own fund   |
| PART  | ICULAR INFORMATION   |  |
| 5     | Project name   | CEGIS Office Building Construction Project   |
| 6     | Tender Package Name  | Tender for Supply, installation & commissioning of lifts for CEGIS Office Building at Plot No. F-14/E, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka. |
| 7     | Last Date of Selling Tender  | 01 January, 2022, by 05:00 p.m.  |
| 8     | Last Date & Time of receiving Tenders  | 02 January, 2022, by 01:00 p.m.  |
| 9     | Opening Date & Time of Tenders   | 02 January, 2022,by 03:00 p.m.   |
| 10    | Name & Address of the office for<br>Selling, receiving & opening of<br>Tender Document | Center for Environmental and Geographic Information<br>Services<br>House # 6, Road # 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212                             |
| 11    | Place, date and time of Pre-tender meeting   | Conference Room, CEGIS, House 6, Road 23/C,<br>Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212<br>Date: 28 December, 2021, Time: 10:30 a.m.                            |
| INFO  | RMATION FOR TENDERER   |  |
| 12    | Brief Eligibility and Qualification of   | Tenderers shall have experience certificates in supplying, installation & commissioning of the respective works in                           |

documents & other criteria specified Brief Description of Works as specified in the tender document Price of Tender Document 14 Tk. 2000.00 (Taka Two thousand) only (non-refundable) Tender Security Tk.4.00 (four) lac. in the form of Pay Order or Bank Dra Completion Time 9 (nine) months

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS Md. Sarfaraz Wahed, Project Director, CBCP Name, Designation and Address/Contact details of Official CEGIS, House #6, Road #23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 Phone # 222282551, 222263581 Inviting Tender E-mail: mswahed@cegisbd.com Tenderers having quoted the tender price more than 10 (Ten) % above or below the official cost estimate, the tender will be treated as non-responsive

anomalies in the amount quoted, fulfilling the criterion mentioned in SI. No. 13 and in the Instructions to the Tenderers (ITT) and Tender Data Sheet (TDS) of the respective Tender documents. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings

The contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsive Tenderer having no arithmetical or other