



"Terrorists continue to damage property... and use weapons against civilians. I have given the order to law enforcement to shoot to kill without warning."

Kazakhstan's President Tokayev

DHAKA SATURDAY JANUARY 8, 2022

REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XXXI No. 348

Poush 24, 1428 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUS SANI 4, 1443 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 12.00



The forbidden forest life



Why destroy when you can preserve?



Similar focus promised for 2nd Test



When the mind says ves



Jabs for 1cr per month

Says PM, urges all to get vaccinated quickly



UNB. DHAKA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vesterday said the Covid-19 vaccination was going on in full swing and a mass vaccination drive was launched to inoculate one crore people per month.

She said the country had to go through a grave crisis in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic and that crisis is yet to be over.

"Amid the crisis, a new variant is spreading fast in various countries of the world. We have to be careful right now and follow the health guidelines. I'm requesting those who haven't yet taken vaccines to get vaccinated quickly.'

Hasina was addressing the nation marking the third anniversary of her current government formed following the 11th parliamentary election held on December 30, 2018. State-owned Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh

Betar aired the PM's address simultaneously. The Awami League president formed the government for the third consecutive term on January 7, 2019 after

her party's landslide victory in the national polls. Hasina said some 12,95,80,000 doses of Covid vaccines have been provided and 7,58,00,000 people have already received the first dose and 5,35,82,000 got the second shot.

"The administration of a booster dose started last month. At present, we have more than 9 crore doses in our hand.

She said all should remain alert so that no one can play with the fate of the people of Bangladesh and stop its remarkable journey to economic development.

Hasina said many people cannot tolerate it as Bangladesh is now moving fast on the development highway. "So, anti-Bangladesh and anti- independence forces, both at home and aboard, are hatching

conspiracies to stop this progress."

In her 28-minute speech, the PM said the anti-Bangladesh and anti-liberation forces were trying to confuse people in social media with false, fabricated and imaginary information to misguide the development partners abroad.

Brace for fresh Covid combat

Fresh directives issued to deal with Omicron spread, spike in cases; antigen test must for passengers from India

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government has instructed Covid-19 patients to undergo treatment in their district hospitals as it issued a set of directives to combat the recent spike in coronavirus infections and deaths.

The fresh instructions also include mandatory antigen test for those coming from India through different land ports irrespective of having Covid-19 vaccination certificate. It will also be applicable for suspected Covid-19 patients for hospitalisation.

The directives came following a meeting of the Directorate General of Health Services with all civil surgeons and divisional health officials on Wednesday where the health minister was present.

Officials said hospitals were asked to take full preparations as the Covid cases started rising over the past one week, thanks to the worldwide invasion of Omicron variant of the virus and lowering of the safety measures.

Covid-19 patients must be treated where the patient is diagnosed, and without proper explanations, no patient can be sent to Dhaka as it will do nothing but increase the chance of spreading Omicron.

"Patients of other districts cannot be sent to Dhaka without the forwarding of the hospitals concerned. Doctors should mention why the patient is needed to send to Dhaka. All the district hospitals are equipped to treat Covid

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Positivity rate highest in 15 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country yesterday recorded 5.67 percent Covid-19 daily positivity rate, the highest in the last 15 weeks.

On September 20 last year, the

positivity rate was 5.66 percent. The rate crossed 30 percent mark in July and started dropping from August. It later went down to one percent.

Following the emergence of the new Covid variant Omicron, the daily cases started rising in Bangladesh like many other countries of the world.

Yesterday, Bangladesh recorded 1.146 new Covid cases in 24 hours preceding 8:00am, taking the total caseload to 1,591,093, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7

REGULAR MIGRATION TO GREECE

DOORS OPEN next month

JAMIL MAHMUD

Migrant workers from Bangladesh may soon be able to go to Greece by legal means as the two countries are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in this regard next month.

Bangladesh and Greece signed a "declaration of intent" in November 2020 in Athens, aiming to "increase cooperation" for the safe and regular migration of workers.

Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad recently told The Daily Star that the declaration of intent was the first step towards the MoU. "We are hoping that we will have a Memorandum of Understanding by

the end of February," he said. Once the MoU is there, the next step will be to work out a standard

operating procedure, he added. The MoU will ensure the migration of Bangladeshi workers as well as

skilled professionals to Greece. One of the objectives of the MoU will be to prevent illegal migration and human trafficking, said Ashud Ahmed, Bangladesh ambassador in Athens.

Bangladeshis often risk perishing in the sea to reach Greece and several other European countries by boat through the Mediterranean. But many end up in detentions.

Greece is home to an estimated 30,000 Bangladeshis, many of whom are undocumented and asylum-seekers, according to officials at the Bangladesh embassy in Athens.





At present, Greece is home to about 30,000 Bangladeshis, many of whom are undocumented and asylum seekers.





A total of **7,574** Bangladeshis crossed sea, land routes to enter Europe illegally between January and November last year.

Apex court to get new judges anytime

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Since the Supreme Court's Appellate Division has been facing an acute shortage of judges, some new judges will be appointed anytime soon for gearing up its functions and increasing the rate of case disposal.

"So far I know the honourable president will elevate some judges from the High Court Division to the Appellate Division very soon. But I cannot specifically say how many will be promoted to the Appellate Division this time," Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star

recently. Asked whether new judges will be appointed to the HC which also has a shortage of judge, the law minister said, "I don't

know about it." The number of apex court judges stood at four SEE PAGE 2 COL 7

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Failing to pay hospital bill, she loses son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-month-old child died on Thursday as he along with his twin brother was allegedly driven out of a private hospital in the capital's Shyamoli after their

parents failed to pay the bills. Rab arrested the hospital's owner, Mohammad Golam Sarwar, 57, in Mohammadpur area yesterday, hours after the victim's mother Ayesha Akter filed a case with Mohammadpur Police Station against Golam and a director of the hospital, Shoaib Khan, 47.

According to the case statement, Ayesha got her ailing sons Ahmed and Abdullah admitted to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital from their home in Savar's Radio Colony on December 31. Influenced by an illegal agent, the mother took the children to Amar Bangladesh Hospital on January 2 hoping to get better treatment.

On Thursday, Amar Bangladesh Hospital authorities asked Ayesha to pay Tk 1.26 lakh for the treatment cost, the statement shows.

In the

afternoon of

Thursday, the

persons drove

the children

and Avesha

out of the

two accused

and several

unnamed

Ayesha's husband is a migrant worker and they could not pay the hefty amount. After she managed to pay the hospital owner Tk 50,500, the hospital authorities started showing negligence in the treatment, Ayesha said in the case statement, adding that they even removed oxygen

hospital masks from her son's face on multiple

In the afternoon of Thursday, the two accused and several unnamed persons drove the children and Ayesha out from the hospital. Desperate, Ayesha took her sons to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared Ahmed dead.

"I lost my son. I want justice for his murder," Ayesha told The Daily Star.

Sajia Afroza, a receptionist at the hospital in Shyamoli, said all relevant papers have been seized by Rab. She claimed Ayesha paid them Tk 4,000.

At a press briefing at the Rab Media Centre, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of the force's legal and media wing, said Golam, the hospital owner, has been involved in running hospitals and diagnostic centres for 20-22 years. He opened Amar Bangladesh Hospital a year

A syndicate of brokers would lure patients from various government ospitals into his, Moin said, adding, are interrogating him."



Nur Islam and Jahanara Begum holding photos -- one showing BSF members carrying away the body of their daughter Felani Khatun and the other in which she is hanging from a border fence. The killing of Felani 11 years ago by Indian Border Security Force at the Kurigram border had caused a huge outcry. The photo was taken in front of Felani's grave in Kurigram's Nageshwari upazila on Wednesday.

'We can't even get a fair trial'

Parents of Felani wait for justice 11 years after her killing at Kurigram border

S DILIP ROY

It has been 11 years since Felani, a Bangladeshi teenager, was shot dead by a member of India's Border Security Force and left hanging from the barbed fence of the border along Kurigram, but her family is still waiting for justice.

Felani's murder case is pending with the Supreme Court of India. But it has not yet been included in the judicial list.

On the dawn of January 7, 2011, Felani along with her father was coming back to Bangladesh through Anantapur border in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram when BSF member Amiya Ghosh fired upon them. Her father, Nurul Islam, had managed to cross the fence but Felani was killed on the spot and her body was left hanging on the barbed fence for four and a half hours.

Public Prosecutor of Kurigram Judge Court and human rights activist SM Abraham Lincoln said

Manabadhikar Surakhkha Manncha, a human rights platform of India, on July 13, 2015, filed a writ petition in the country's Supreme Court seeking justice and compensation for Felani's killing.

After the hearing on October 25, 2017, the date was repeatedly postponed in the Supreme Court of India. The trial of Felani's murder has not started yet. The case has not yet been included in the agenda of the court's judgment.

"We are praying for justice against the BSF member Amiya Ghosh; not against any state. The Indian government is also sincere in its demand that BSF member Amiya Ghosh, who was involved in Felani's murder at the border, be brought to justice," he said on Thursday. "If Amiya Ghosh was tried, no one would have dared kill people so brutally at the border."

Family members, relatives and villagers are still mourning reiani at her village at Dakshin Ramkhana Colonetari village of Kurigram.

According to Felani's family, Nur Islam along with his family were then living in India's Assam, where he ran a small tea stall.

Felani and Nur Islam were returning to Bangladesh after the family had decided to arrange her marriage, they said. That is when, 11 years ago, Felani was shot dead.

After hanging from the fence for four and a half hours, her body was taken away by BSF. The BSF handed over the body to the Border Guard Bangladesh 30 hours after the incident.

The ghastly photo of Felani's body hanging from the barbwire upside down sparked protest and condemnation throughout the

Felani's father Nur Islam told The Daily Star, "We were supposed to be paid compensation but we haven't got it yet. We can't even get a fair trial for our daughter's killing."

THREAT FROM CHINA, N KOREA

US-Japan military deal extended

AFP, TOKYO

Japan moved ahead with an expansion of support to US troops as the allies held top-level talks yesterday over tensions with China and North US Secretary of State Antony Blinken

announced the two nations were signing a fiveyear extension of the support package provided by Japan for the hosting of around 50,000 US troops on its soil. The new agreement "will invest greater

resources to deepen our military readiness and interoperability", Blinken said at the opening of four-way virtual talks between the allies' foreign and defence chiefs.

"Our allies must not only strengthen the tools we have but also develop new ones," Blinken said Thursday in Washington.

Tokyo pays the costs of the US forces in the country as well as utilities. A previous agreement was set to expire in March 2021, but was extended for a year around a change of administration in "Beijing's

Washington. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, appearing from isolation after a mild case of Covid-19, said the allies were "evolving our roles and missions to reflect Japan's growing ability to contribute

to regional peace and

provocative actions keep raising tensions across the **Taiwan Strait** and in the East and South China Sea."

stability". Japan renounced its right to wage war after World War II and has since developed a close alliance with Washington, which is treaty-bound to defend the world's thirdlargest economy.

According to the foreign ministry, the new five-year package will amount to 211 billion yen (\$1.8 billion) per fiscal year, an increase of about five percent.

The package comes amid growing tensions with China.

"Beijing's provocative actions keep raising tensions across the Taiwan Strait and in the East and South China Sea," Blinken said.

He also described North Korea's missile programmes as an "ongoing threat" after Pyongyang fired a suspected ballistic missile into A joint statement issued after the talks took

aim at "efforts by China to undermine the rulesbased order", with specific reference to activity in the East and South China Seas. The allies also expressed "serious and ongoing

concerns" about rights violations in China's Xinjiang region and Hong Kong, and called for "peace and stability" in the Taiwan Strait. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang

Wenbin yesterday expressed Beijing's "strong" dissatisfaction and firm opposition to the US, Japan, and Australia crudely interfering in China's internal affairs".

On Thursday, Japan and Australia signed what they called a "landmark" treaty to strengther defence ties.

Two Haiti journalists killed by gang

AFP, PORT-AU-PRINCE

Two journalists in Haiti were killed Thursday by a gang operating on the outskirts of the capital Port-au-Prince. as the country endures an ongoing security crisis six months after the assassination of its president.

Wilguens Louissaint and Amady John Wesley were killed in a shooting, Radio Ecoute FM told AFP. A third journalist, who was with them at the time,

Brace for fresh Covid

patients," Prof ABM Khurshid Alam, director general of DGHS, told The Daily Star.

He added that the decision was made to reduce pressure on hospitals in Dhaka and contain the transmission of the Covid-19 as transporting a patient to Dhaka from a

district is risky. The DG said antigen test is mandatory for the Health Organization on incoming passengers and suspected Covid-19 patients for hospital admission as RT-PCR test

is time-consuming. "Instructions have been given to do the antigen test first and if needed then only go for RTPCR test."

the Officials said meeting also instructed to coordinate with local law enforcement agencies to enforce institutional quarantine strictly.

They said oxygen supply to district hospitals is adequate and ICU beds along with nasal cannula and oxygen generators are sufficient.

"Even oxygen supply to upazila health complexes is smooth. So, we asked the civil surgeons and

health officials to take full preparations," said DG Prof Khurshid.

Country's Covid-19 situation is getting worse as the number of cases has been increasing for the last few days.

India yesterday registered one-lakh mark in its daily Covid-19 tally with as many as 1,17,100 new cases being

World Meanwhile, more than 2.6 million coronavirus cases were is the highest daily rate for

have nothing to do."

He said the surge is still in the "take-off" situation and it may reach to peak in March-April. "If we can delay it, it will be good for us."

recorded in 24 hours.

Thursday reported that registered around the world in 24 hours, which the entire pandemic.

Expressing frustration over the lax in following the health protocols by people, Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said, "The way the political, social and religious gatherings are going on across the country is unacceptable. If such situations continue, hospitals will be burdened with patients and we will

resisted the emergence welfare, developed and of militancy with an iron hand.

Doors open next month

FROM PAGE 1 Most of them work in the farming and hospitality sectors while some have their own businesses, according to the Bangladesh mission's website.

Many more Bangladeshi workers may be able to work in these sectors once the MoU is signed, said Ambassador Ashud, adding Greece currently needs a large number of foreign workers.

According to reports in the international media, Greece is a transit country many Bangladeshis hoping to reach other

"People are the source of

power. We believe in the

power of people. So, we are

The premier said the

government has taken

a tough stance against

corruption. "The corrupts

are not spared and won't

be spared either, no

matter what their political

affiliation and strength

are. The Anti-Corruption

Commission is discharging

its duties independently in

this regard. But to eradicate

this disease, creating social

that the government has

The PM said Bangladesh

made

mentioned

marked

awareness is needed."

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

with people."

MILITANCY

CORRUPTION,

they often fail to make it and engage in farming in Western Greece.

Between January and November last year, 7,574 travelled Bangladeshis through the sea and land routes to reach Europe illegally. They reached shores in Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, and Malta. By land, they reached Greece and Spain, according to the UN Refugee Agency.

On November 29, Imran Ahmad and Greek Minister of Migration and Asylum Notis Mitarachi signed the declaration of intent. They to Greece will be an

last 13 years. "In the South

Asia, Bangladesh is leading

in various socioeconomic

indexes, including poverty

eradication, development

of the health system,

reduction of the maternal

and child mortality,

increase in average life

She mentioned that this

has been possible as people

reposed trust in them.

"You helped us keep up the

pace of the development

by giving the scope for

running the country for

three consecutive terms.

By continuing this, we are

working to build a pro-

prosperous Bangladesh so

that Bangladesh could join

the line of the developed

countries by 2041. For this,

Jabs for 1cr per month

expectancy,

empowerment

European destinations. But agreed to systematically strengthen safe and orderly migration.

> Ambassador Ashud said the MoU will ensure safe, orderly, and regular migration, adding that a draft copy of the agreement will be finalised by the end of January. This will be the first MoU of its kind between Bangladesh and a European Union country.

Shakirul Islam, the chairperson of Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program, grassroots migrant rights group, said opening up regular migration

economic progress in the vou were with us and I do open the much-awaited

hope you'll be with us in

The premier said the

pandemic has created a

deep wound in the world

economy. "The economies

in many countries have

economy also suffered

setbacks and it came to a

with the cooperation of all

has managed to overcome

that to some extent,

Hasina said. "We're trying

to keep the wheel of the

economy moving through

policy support and various

liberal financial stimulus

be a milestone year for

Bangladesh's development

in infrastructure. "After a

few months, in June, we will we had made.'

She said 2022 will

But the government

devastated. Our

STIMULUS PACKAGES

future.

been

standstill."

packages."

women

"important" development as it will reduce irregular migration.

will strengthen Bangladesh's commitment in addressing irregular migration since the country ratified the Global Compact for Safe, and Regular Orderly Migration (GCM), he said.

"One of the objectives of GCM is creating a legal path for migration," Shakirul said.

The agreement may

also be a stepping stone for opening up similar opportunities in other European countries like Italy, he added.

Padma Bridge. We're going

to complete it with our own

funds defying conspiracies

The PM said the

government has adopted

a plan to open a 14-km

Uttara-Agargaon part of

the metro rail in the capital

at the end of this year.

She mentioned that the

country's first-ever tunnel

river will be completed in

Hasina said as a

government of the people

and hurdles."

October next.

Positivity rate FROM PAGE 1

This was the highest daily cases logged in the country in the last 100 days.

Meanwhile, one person died from Covid during the same 24-hour period. The dead was a female aged between 11 and 20 years.

With this, the total number of Covid fatalities in the country rose to 28.098. The death rate now stands at 1.77 percent.

A total of 20,204 samples were tested across the country in the 24

hours. Dhaka recorded the most cases among the eight divisions, logging 920.

At least 170 coronavirus patients have recovered during the same period. The total number of recoveries is 15,50,534 and the recovery rate is 97.45 percent.

Globally, over 300.38 million people been infected by the novel coronavirus and 5.47 million have died, according to statistics by Johns Hopkins University.

Apex court to get

FROM PAGE 1

after the immediate past chief justice Syed Mahmud Hossain retired December 30 last year.

Among the four sitting judges, Justice Muhammad Imman Ali has gone on a long leave citing personal

Currently, three judges of the Appellate Division headed by newly appointed Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique are running the judicial functions of the top

More than one bench of this division cannot beneath the Karnaphuli be constituted due to a shortage of judges, as at least three judges are needed for constituting a bench of this court, said court sources.

President Abdul Hamid

the Appellate Division on September 2, 2020.

On July 9, 2009, the then president raised the Appellate Division from

number of judges at the seven to 11 prior to disposing of some important cases on the assassination of Bangabandhu and the fifth amendment to the constitution, others.

The HC has now 90 judges. Among the 90 sitting judges, three are not being allowed to sit in the bench for running judicial functions as an inquiry is going on against them since August 22, 2019.

Besides, three others are conducting International Tribunal that holds trials of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the Liberation War.

Some 15,225 cases were pending with the Appellate Division and 4,529,63 with the HC as of December 31, 2020, according to an

her government's duty and responsibility is to Five judges retired in develop the livelihood of the last two years, but the people. "You'll evaluate appointment of judges to the top court was not made what we have done for you in accordance with the in the last 13 years. But I vacancies, leading to the can say it firmly that we've been able to implement

the pledges successfully last appointed judges to annual report of SC.



Kite vendors are busy at work, a week before the festivities start for Shakrain. The traditional festival of the old town is keeping the neighbourhood busy, with preparations going on at full swing.

Dhaka gears up for Shakrain

DIPAN NANDY

Shakrain -- a festival most awaited in the neighbourhoods of the old town. Only a week is left, but the excitement is in the air of the "Puran Dhaka" alleys

Shakrain is now not limited to the residents of Old Dhaka. It has become a festival for all the people of the capital, and even outside.

Like every year, the festival will be observed this year on January 14 and 15, to celebrate Makar Sankranti.

According to locals, eating pithas, made with new rice, and flying kites on the occasion are an age-old tradition.

With the passage of time, the festivities have changed as well. On

the day of the festival, kites start flying above roofs of neighbourhoods, amid the morning mist. As the day progresses, the festivities take on new colours. The afternoon ends with a game of kite flying amidst the winter air, while the night sky is illuminated with fireworks and lanterns in the evening.

"Buro-Buri" puja will be held in temples on the afternoon of the festival

Preparations for the festival were seen in Shankharibazar, Tantibazar, Laxmibazar, Narinda, Sutrapur and Lalbagh areas of Old Dhaka on Thursday. Kites and natai (kite reels) are also being sold at small neighbourhood

Many have started a seasonal business of selling kites.

Asked if festivities would be any different due to the Covid situation, Hossain Adnan, who came to Shankharibazar to buy kites, said the risk of infection is lower as they celebrate the festival on the rooftops and among themselves.

According to the shopkeepers, kites of different designs and shapes, including Chokhadar, Pandar, Kathadar, Maladar, Pankhiraj, Chalandar, Petidar, Pandar, Prajapati, Dapas, Batur and Chil are available.

Ordinary kites are sold for Tk 5 to 25 depending on the shape. Foreign kites of different designs cost Tk 150 to 600.

A thousand yards of Manja yarn from India or China costs Tk 150. However, the more you get, the less you pay.

Mohan Sur, proprietor of Sur Ghurighar in Shankharibazar, said sales are lower this time than before Covid times. But with a week left to go for the festival, sales may increase. Although prices are the same as before, due to the low number of buyers, the natis are being sold for a lower profits this time around, he said.

For the second time, DSCC is also organising the festival. The standing committee on sports and culture of the organisation will hold the festival across all wards. The inauguration event will be held at Lalbagh Kella.

98pc of Kalyanpur's water retention land grabbed

Says LGRD minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 98 percent land meant for water retention in the capital's Kalyanpur area has been grabbed to construct various establishments, said LGRD Minister Tazul Islam yesterday.

"A total of 173 acres of land in the Kalyanpur area is kept for water retention. Except for some 3.5 acres, all houses and buildings of the area have been built by grabbing retention areas," he said.

The minister said they have given directives to DNCC to evict the grabbers. He said this while addressing the biennial meeting of Cumilla Journalist Forum Dhaka at Jatiya Press club.

Tazul said the cabinet has finalised the Detailed Area Plan, which is awaiting gazette notification. He said they will amend structures of the city corporation, municipality, and union, upazila and zila parishads to strengthen local government institutions.

2 killed in road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed, while two were injured, in road accidents in Dhaka over the last two days.

A motorcyclist was killed and a pillion passenger injured after a truck hit their motorbike on a flyover at Jurain rail gate early vesterday. This injured driver Shakil (19) from Patuakhali. The injured is his friend Zahid (18). Shakil was declared dead at DMCH, said SI Md

Nuruzzaman of Shyampur Police Station. Meanwhile, a ride-sharing motorcyclist was killed and his passenger injured in a head-on collision with a fuel tanker at Amulia in Demra on Thursday night. The deceased -- Humayun (34) was from Mir Hajirbagh area, said Inspector Md Bacchu Miah, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.









As part of the Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad's two-day 10th triennial council, a cultural event was held at the Institute of Engineers in Dhaka vesterday morning.

THE TIME IS NOW'

Minority leaders call for separate ministry, national commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different religious and ethnic community leaders vesterday demanded that the government create a separate ministry and national commission for the country's minority communities.

They said the government needs to formulate separate laws to protect people of those communities and end discrimination against them.

They placed the demands at the inaugural session of Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad's two-day 10th triennial council, held at the capital's Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh. A new committee of the parishad is expected to be announced at a session today.

Minority leaders said the government needs to properly implement Vested Property Return Act-2001 and CHT Accord-1997, and make CHT Land Commission functional. They also demanded a separate land commission for ethnic people living in the plains.

In his written speech, advocate

Rana Dasgupta, the parishad's general secretary and International Crimes Tribunal prosecutor, said ensuring the wellbeing of people belonging to different religious and ethnic communities has become a challenge in present-day Bangladesh.

He said a secular, democratic, and discrimination-free Bangladesh, as dreamt by Bangabandhu, will not be established without going back to the 1972 constitution.

"Fulfilling such pledge is the call of time now," he added.

At present, the country's rights situation is worrisome, and equity has not been established yet, said veteran left-leaning politician Pankaj Bhattacharya, also chairman of the council preparation committee.

Former chairman of National **Human Rights Commission Prof** Mizanur Rahman said minorities still have to raise their voices for rights, 50 years after the independence.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, who joined

the session virtually, said at one end, there are discussions on the country's development, while at the other, minorities are facing discrimination.

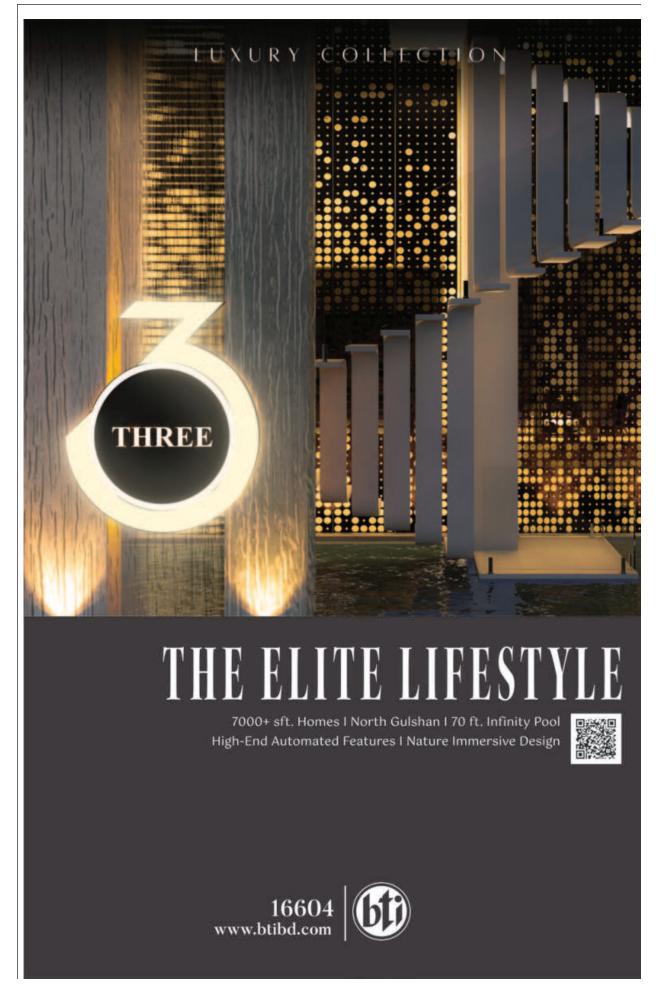
Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu said it is the state's duty to ensure safety for every citizen. The government should be held responsible for failing to protect minorities.

Eminent economist Debapriya Bhattacharya said at one end Bangladesh is targeting to become a middle-income country and expressing desire to become a developed nation.

However, there has been disruption in ensuring people's equal rights, he said.

AL Office Secretary Biplab Barua said the prime minister has ensured rights of the country's religious and ethnic communities.

Columnist Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury joined the programme virtually. Politician Mujahidul Islam Selim, and lawmakers Shameem Haider Patwary, Aroma Dutta and Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizvandary also spoke at the programme.



Why destroy when

FROM PAGE 5

the old building on the school ground will be demolished, while plans put forward of constructing a similar one in its place.

head teacher of the school, told The Daily Star that the meeting was held after receiving the letter of KCC, said did not want from KCC asking them to talk about the issue to remove the building. "On December 21, we issued a tender notice in newspapers to sell off the building. January 4 was the last date for submission of tenders for the building; a total of six tenders have been received."

Shankar Kumar Mallick, associate professor and researcher of the city's Government Brajalal College (BL College), told The daily Star that rather than demolishing the old building, it should be

He suggested that this can be done by turning it into an art gallery.

Contacted, executive engineer Liaquat Ali Khan said he's retired Amirul Islam, acting now and does not want to speak about the issue. Eiai Morshed Chowdhury, incumbent chief engineer either. Curiously, this was also echoed by school body president Mahfuza Sahabuddin.

> Meanwhile, regional director of DoA Afroza Khan Mita told The Daily Star, "By preserving it as a monument of special personality, it can be developed as a potential tourist destination in accordance with Tourism Act, 2010."

She said she will look into the issue.

Today the 8th January is the

46th death anniversary of

Late Mohammad Sirajuddin

founder Chairman &

Managing Director of

Modhumita Group, Sirco

Soap & Chemical Industries,

Kohinoor Jute Mills Ltd.

founder Director of Standard

Bank of Pakistan also the

founder Director of Dhaka

Chamber of Commerce &

fational Cyber Drill 202

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DIARY

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MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Though he is not in this world, he lives in our hearts, in our

minds, in our memory. Entrepreneurs like him are rare who

All friends, relatives and well-wishers are requested to pray

left behind foot prints for generations to follow.

for the salvation of the departed soul.

Bangladesh.

মোহাম্মদপুর-বসিলা রোডের সাথেই

পানি , বিদ্যুৎ সংযোগসহ এখনই ছ্ৰাপনা

নির্মাণের উপুযোগী কিছু সংখ্যক

আবাসিক ও বাণিজ্যিক জমি বিক্রয় হবে।

যোগাযোগ ঃ ০১৭০৮-১৪৯৯৬৮ , ০১৭০৮-১৪৯৯৭৪

46th DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF

MOHAMMAD SIRAJUDDIN



During a recent visit, this correspondent saw dozens of workers levelling the road with a roller machine near Rajghata bridge.

One worker they were instructed to accelerate the construction work. "That's why we're working round the clock,"

Talking to correspondent, in late October, Fazle Rabbi, an additional chief engineer at RHD and the then project director, said they took measures to mitigate the

environmental impact. He did not give a direct response as to why they concealed information in

"The earth would be removed after the project's completion. You have to break something to make something," said Fazle.

claimed construction work did not stymie the river current as the road is being constructed on flood plains, which he said is a common practice to control floods.

Earlier in August 2017, the Cox's Bazar district administration, on behalf of the RHD, had sent a letter to the land ministry, seeking to lease 62 acres of land for the road construction.

As many as 54 acres of the area are river land, according to the minutes of a September 9, 2021 meeting of a committee formed by the PMO.

The ministry rejected the proposal.

In late October last year, Amin Al Parvej, additional deputy commissioner (revenue) of Cox's Bazar, said they sent the proposal to the land ministry considering the national importance of the project.

"The ministry asked us

https://shop.cirt.gov.bd/

to send another proposal changing the status of the river," he said.

Contacted on Thursday, he said they were yet to send the proposal. "The matter is now sub judice as a writ petition was filed in this regard," he said, claiming that the RHD realigned the road to avoid taking river land.

Talking to The Daily Star in late October, Md Saleh Uddin, additional secretary of the land ministry (land acquisition), said, "They [Cox's Bazar district administration] sent us a proposal to acquire the shoal of the Kuhelia river, which was identified as a river in land documents. The project director knows very well as to why we rejected the proposal. So does the deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar."

the About land ministry's objection, Fazle Rabbi said it was a case of one government entity building a road on another government entity's land.

The government even allocated Tk 24 crore for land acquisition, he said, trying to justify their action

Shafikul Islam, former assistant engineer of SMEC Bangladesh, the consultancy firm, claimed the road was being built on khas land.

The RHD had to acquire just three acres of private land at Rajghata Bridge area to begin the work, he said.

"The area was perhaps a river once. Tidal water still inundates the construction site. But when there is no tide, the flow is poor," he said.

Land records from Matarbari Mouja show the Kuhelia is categorised as a river in CS (Cadastral Survey, 1880),

(Revisional Survey, 1938), and BS (Bangladesh Survey, 1980)

Asked what happened to the Tk 24 crore allocated for land acquisition given they had to acquire only three acres of land, Cox's Bazar Additional Commissioner Amin Al Parvej in late October had said he could not remember. He said the information was in the files.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), last month, said the PMO recommended building the road away from the river.

Then how could the consulting firm flout the PMO order and fill up the river?" she asked.

Mir Nasir Hossen, managing director of the construction firm Mir Akhter Hossain Limited, said they were working as per the plan provided by the government.

"We didn't fix any alignment by ourselves," he said.

On September 9 last year, the PMO formed a committee to restore the river current.

The committee found proof that the river was "partially" filled up and that the road "advanced towards the river slightly".

According to the meeting minutes, the committee recommended taking necessary steps.

Three days after the meeting, the High Court ordered the authorities to stop the construction work for three months, responding to a petition filed by BELA earlier. On September 28, the chamber judge stayed the HC order and asked the authorities to file a leave to appeal petition. A court order on the government appeal is

Restaurant

FROM PAGE 5 decrease to a very low

number." "We welcome government's steps for curbing the infection rate, but it should take realistic steps," he said. "Instead facemasks and physical

Abdul Hannan, general secretary of the association, said, "We haven't received any incentive from the government during the pandemic.

"Around three lakh workers have been working of showing certificates, it in the sector in the city, and should emphasise wearing around eight lakh people are dependent on their income," he said.

Book Hounds

switched our gears to science and technology. Hearing the stories of a well-travelled cousin whetted our appetite for travel writing. The scent might have changed, but the book hound pursued relentlessly.

Changing technology shifted our world of books by offering new sources for intellectual stimulation and gratification. Quick results promised by the Web, social media and

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি

গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Date: 06/01/2022.

gadgets replaced the seduction of books. But books made of paper persisted and bookstores left standing became monuments for book hounds. Their hunger for a good book, and their willingness to go through great lengths to collect it, has remained undiminished.

For the author's daily bird photos, please follow "ihtishamkabir" Instagram.



Government of the People's Republic of Banglades Local Government Engineering Department

> Workshop Bhaban (Level-3), Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. www.lged.gov.bd

Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project

Memo No.: 46.02.0000.954.07.071.2021-335

e-Tender Notice (1st Corrigendum) Tender Notice No. 06/2021-2022

Corrigendum notice issued in the National e-GP Portal System (http://eprocure.gov.bd) for the

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Name of the	Description of goods		ast Selling & Date)	Tender Closing & Opening (Time & Date)		
	Project		Previous	Corrected	Previous	Corrected	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1.	638368 EMCRP	Supply and Installation of 2500 set Solar Street Light at different Rohingya Camps under Ukhiya & Teknaf Upazila, District-Cox's	04.00 PM 12-Jan-22	04.00 PM 24-Jan-22	12.30 PM 13-Jan-22	12.30 PM 25-Jan-22	

Others conditions will remain unchanged.

GD-45

SD/-Javed Karim Project Director Phone: 44826155 pdlged.emcrp@gmail.com

An early FROM PAGE 5

stones at the birds. The area needs a security guard during peak hours to avoid this issue," Hasan said.

Contacted, JU Acting Registrar Rahima Kaneez said," We have received Prof Hasan's letter and we are taking steps. We have already restricted student's entrance from the backside of the transport yard. We have also imposed a restriction for outsiders from January 9 due to Covid-19 situation."

Know your

FROM PAGE 12

3. They can minimise harmful bacteria.

4. They may alleviate inflammation.

5. Nigella seeds could help protect the liver.

6. They can aid in blood sugar regulation. However, none of the uses listed above are

একাদশ শ্ৰেণিতে ভৰ্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি ২০২১-২২

নাইনে অথবা টেলিটক, বিকাশ, নগদ, শিওর ক্যাশ, রকেট-এ এসএমএস করে অথবা সোনালী ব্যাংকের মাধ্যমে ভর্তির আবেদন ফি প্রদান করা যাবে। আবেদনের তারিখঃ ০৮/০১/২০২২ থেকে ১৫/০১/২০২২ পর্যন্ত (১ম পর্যায়ে)। ভর্তি: ১৯-০২-২০২২ থেকে ২৪-০২-২০২২ পর্যন্ত। কলেজ ক্যাম্পাসের হেল্প ডেস্ক থেকে মোবাইলে এসএমএস অথবা অনলাইনে আবেদন করা যাবে। আবেদনের ন্যুনতম যোগ্যতা:

		জিপিএ (বালক শাখা)	
বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ: বাংলা মাধ্যম ও ইংরেজি ভার্সন 8	৪,৭৫ (বाংলা), ৪.৫০ (ইरরেজি)	8,60	কলেজ কোড : ১২০৪
ব্যবসায় শিক্ষা বিভাগ: বাংলা মাধ্যম ও ইংরেজি ভার্সন	0.00	0.2400005	EIIN: 132107
মানবিক বিভাগঃ বাংলা মাধ্যম, বালিকা শাখা	₹.9৫	-	Lint. 152107

শ্রেষ্ঠত্বের স্বীকৃতি: প্রতিষ্ঠানটি জাতীয় পর্যায়ে দুইবার শ্রেষ্ঠ প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে রাষ্ট্রীরভাবে স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত

অত্যাধুনিক বিজ্ঞানাগার এবং শীতাতপ নিয়ন্ত্রিত আধুনিক আইসিটি ল্যাব
 প্রশিক্ষপ্রাপ্ত ও অভিজ্ঞ শিক্ষকমন্তর্লী কর্তৃক পাঠদান।

• অনলাইনে শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার সুবিধা রয়েছে

ই-মেইলঃ mphss08@yahoo.com

আবেদনকারী এসএমএস এর মাধ্যমে অথবা অনলাইনে (www.xiclassadmission.gov.bd) আবেদন করতে পারবে। দুষ্টব্যঃ আবেদনের ক্ষেত্রে শিষ্ট অপশনে বাংলা মাধ্যমের ক্ষেত্রে Moming (M) এবং ইংগিশ ভার্সনের ক্ষেত্রে Day (D) নির্বাচন করতে হবে।

কলেজ ওয়েবসাইট: www.mpsc.edu.bd ফেসবুক পেজ: https://www.facebook.com/preparatorycollege/

মুর্শেদা শাহীন ইসলাম ভারপ্রাপ্ত অধ্যক্ষ

UDDIPAN

H # 9, R # 1, Block-F, Janata Co-operative Housing



		Invitation for Tender					
1	Department	Administration					
2	Tender Name	Supply, Installation and Successful Commissioning of Server & WAF					
3	Brief description of Works	High AZ of all servers through HCI Cluster with VM and configuration of WAF & GSLB.					
4	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)					
5	Eligibility of Tenderers	1) Minimum experience of 3 years in similar kind & field of works					
	(Copy of required documents mentioned in the	 Must have updated trade license, Income Tax clearance certificate, VAT registration certificate and Partnership Certificate. 					
	right have to be submitted)	 The satisfactory supply of ICT goods & related services amounting minimum BDT 2 crore under maximum 2 contracts. 					
		4) Should have at least two Professional OEM certified Engineer of Network Security and one professional OEM certified Engineer of Data center Virtualization					
6	Price of Tender	Tk. 1,000/- (Tk. One Thousand only cash & non refundable)					
7	Security Money	2.5% of total bid amount in the form of Pay Order favoring "UDDIPAN".					
8	Tender Collection Point	UDDIPAN Head Office Cash Counter (2nd Floor)					
9	Selling Date & time	From 9th January to 20th January, 2022 up to 3-30- pm					
10	Dropping Date & time	From 23rd January to 26th January, 2022 up to 2-00- pm					
11	UDDIPAN reserves the right	to accept or reject any or all tender, without giving reason/s to the vendor/s.					

Chairman (Central Purchase & Evaluation Committee) Deputy Director & Head (HRM & D)



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, বরিশাল (নেজারত শাখা) www.barisal.gov.bd

১৫ পৌষ ১৪২৮ ৩০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২১

স্মারক নং-০৫.১০.০৬০০.১১১.১০.০১২.২১-১০৫৫

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রপালরের উন্থন্ত কর্মচারী শাখার ১০ জুন ২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখের ০৫,০০,০০০০,১৬৬,১১,০৪৪,১৫-১৩০ নং স্মারক ও ন্ত্ৰপাসন মন্ত্ৰণালয়ের ০৮ আগস্ট ২০২১ খ্রি. তারিখের ০৫.০০.০০০০.১১২.১৫.০১৯.১৯-২৭০ নং স্মারকে প্রদন্ত ছাড়পত্র মোতাবেক জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসারের কার্যালয় ও বরিশাল সাবিটী হাউজের শূন্য পদসমূহ পূরণের লক্ষ্যে জাতীয় বেতন ক্ষেল ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত বরিশাল জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের নিরুট ইতে নিমুবর্গিত শর্তসাপেক্ষে জনপ্রশাসন মশত্রণালয় কর্তক নির্বারিত ফরমে দরখান্ত আহ্বান করা যাচেছ

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও গ্রেড	বেতন ক্ষেল	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা
031	অফিস সহায়ক, চোড-২০	b,200- 20,020/-	২৩ (তেইশ) টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সাটিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণ
021	নিরাপদ্তা প্রহরী, মেড-২০	b,200- 20,020/-	০৬ (ছ্য়) টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিকিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ
୦୯	পরিচ্ছন্নতাক্মী, শ্লোভ-২০	b,200- 20,020/-	১৬ (যোল) টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ
08	বেয়ারার (সার্কিট হাউজ), গ্লোড-২০	b,200- 20,020/-	০২ (দুই) টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক কুল সার্টিকিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ
OØ 1	বাবুর্চি (সার্কিট হাউজ) শ্রেড-২০	₹0,0\$0/-	০১ (এক) টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে জুনিয়র জুল সাটিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ এবং রাদ্ধার কাজে অন্যুন ০৫(পাঁচ) বংসরের অভিজ্ঞতা।

প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই জন্মসূত্রে বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক ও বরিশাল জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দা হতে হবে। 05. নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমটি www.barisal.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে। আবেদন ফরম স্বহত্তে পূরণ করতে হবে 02.

আবেদন পরের সাথে নিম্রোক্ত কাগজপরাদি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে: 00. সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার মূল/সাময়িক সনদ পত্রের অনুলিপি (১ম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক

সত্যায়িত) প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত সদ্য ভোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ০৩ (তিন) কপি রন্তিন ছবি (আবেদন ফরমের নির্দারিত স্থানে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে)

সংশ্রিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্দিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত নাগরিক সনদ

পঢ়োর সত্যায়িত অনুগিপি জনু নিবন্ধন সনদের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি

জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্রের সভ্যায়িত অনুদিপি (যদি থাকে)। ১ম শ্রেণির সরকারি গেজেটেভ কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক প্রদন্ত চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র।

অন্যান্য অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র (যদি থাকে) ¹এর সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি।

১ম শ্রেণির সরকারি গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সকল সনদ/কাগজপত্র সত্যায়িত হতে হবে এবং সংশ্রিষ্ট কর্মকর্তার নাম সম্ভিত সীল থাকতে হবে। জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের বিধি-১ শাখার ১৯.০৮.২০২১ ভারিখের ০৫.০০.০০০০.১৭০.১১.০১৭.২০.১৪৩ নং স্মারকের নির্দেশনা

অনুযায়ী প্রার্থীর বয়সসীমা ২৫.০৩.২০২০ তারিখে সর্বনিদ্র ১৮ হতে সর্বোচ্চ ৩০ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। তবে বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা/নাতি-মাতনীদের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারি বিধি মোতাবেক সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ৩২ বছর পর্যন্ত শিধিলযোগ্য এবং প্রতিবন্ধী চাকুরী প্রথীদের ক্ষেত্রে বিধি মোতাবেক সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ৩২ বছর পর্যন্ত শিথিলযোগ্য। এ ক্ষেত্রে সরকার কর্তৃক জারিকত সর্বশেষ শীতিমালা/পরিপত্মের নির্দেশনা অনুসরণ করা হবে। বয়সের ক্ষেত্রে কোন এফিডেভিট গ্রহণযোগ্য

বীর মৃক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহিদ মৃক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা ও প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে পুত্র-কন্যার পুত্র-কন্যা হিসেবে আবেদনকারীকে নিমুবর্ণিত ছকের

তথ	্য আবেদনপঞ্জের স	নাথে দাখিল করতে	হবে:		
প্রার্থীর নাম, পিতার নাম ও ঠিকানা	বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার নাম, পিতার নাম ও ঠিকানা	ধে তালিকা/ গেজেটে বীর মুক্তিবোজার নাম রয়েছে তার বিবরণ	প্রার্থীর সাথে বীর মুক্তিযোজার সম্পর্ক ও উপযুক্ত কার্তৃপক্ষ প্রদন্ত ওয়ারিশ সনদ ও প্রভায়নপত্র	বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার জন্ম তারিখ	মন্তব্য
			বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যানে পুত্র-কন্যাদের ক্ষেত্রে পুত্র-কন্যাদের ক্ষেত্রে পুত্র-কিন্যা পক্ষ উল্লেখসহ উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের দাগুরিক স্থারক, তারিখ ও	ক্রু নিবন্ধন অনুযায়ী জন্ম তারিখ; জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র অনুযায়ী জন্ম তারিখ; গ) এসংগ্রসি/সমমান সনল অনুযায়ী জন্ম তারিখ; খ) জন্ম নিবন্ধন আইন অনুযায়ী সৌরসভা/ ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের প্রত্যয়নপত্র অনুযায়ী জন্ম তারিখ	

মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কোটায় নিয়োগ প্রাপ্তির ক্ষেত্রে বীরমুক্তিযোদ্ধার বয়স ও অন্যান্য তথ্যাকলীর প্রমাণক যাচাই/প্রতায়ন সংক্রান্ত মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের ১৭.০১.২০১৮ ভারিশের ৪৮.০০.০০০০.০২.১০.২৬২৪.২০১৭.২৫ নং স্মারক ও ১৮.১০.২০২০ ভারিশের ৪৮,০০,০০০০,০০৩,২৫,০১৯,২০,৮৭৫ নং স্মারকে জারিকত পরিপত্তের নির্দেশনা অনুসরণ করা হবে।

ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষা ফি বাবদ কোভ নং ১-০৭৪২-০০০০-২০৩১ (পরীক্ষা ফি) তে ৫০/- টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা প্রদান করে চালানের মূল কপি এবং প্রার্থীর যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা সম্বলিত ১৫/- টাকার ডাকটিকিট লাগানো ১০"×৪.৫" সাইজের

একটি ফেরং খাম আবেদনের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। আবেদন পত্র জেলা প্রশাসক, বরিশালকে সন্বোধন করে আগামী ২০/০১/২০২২ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, বরিশাল এর ইসেবা কেন্দ্রে আবেদনপত্র জমা দেয়া যাবে অথবা রেজিস্টার্ড ডাকয়েগে এ অফিসে পৌছাতে হবে। নির্ধারিত

তারিখের পর কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না। চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীর যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে অগ্রিম কপি গ্রহণ করা হবে না। চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীর বয়স

প্রার্থীকে খামের উপর অবশ্যই প্রার্থীত পদের নাম স্পটাক্ষরে লিখতে হবে।

অসম্পূর্ণ, ক্রটিপূর্ণ ও বিলম্বে গ্রাপ্ত আবেদনসমূহ সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। একজন প্রার্থী তথুমাত্র একটি পদের জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবেন। একাধিক পদের জন্য আবেদন করলে বিধি মোতাবেক বাতিল

নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারি সকল বিধি বিধান ও কোটা যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে। নির্দিষ্ট কেটিায় আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে কেটার স্বপক্ষে উপযুক্ত কর্তপক্ষের সনদপত্র/প্রমাণক দাখিল করতে হবে।

নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণের জন্য প্রাথীদের কোন প্রকার ভ্রমণ/দৈনিক ভাতা দেয়া হবে না।

আবেদন পত্রে প্রার্থীর উল্লিখিত কোন তথা যে কোন পর্যায়ে ভুয়া ও অসত্য প্রমাণিত হলে আবেদনপত্র/নিয়োগ বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে

এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যক্তির বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

সাক্ষাংকারের সময় প্রার্থীকে সকল সনদ পত্রের মূল কপি উপস্থাপন করতে হবে। নিয়োগ কার্যক্রম চলাকালীন পদ শৃণ্য হলে বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত পদ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পেতে পারে।

মুজিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুজিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা/নাতী/নাতনী আবেদনকারী চাকুরী প্রার্থীকে মুজিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় মন্ত্রী/প্রতিমন্ত্রী/উপদেষ্টা কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষরিত ও বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা সংসদের উপদেষ্টা মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী/প্রধান উপদেষ্টা কর্তৃক শ্বাক্ষরিত সংশ্লিষ্ট মুক্তিযোদ্ধার মূল স্নদপত্র অথবা মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের সচিব কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষরিত সাময়িক সন্দপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি। এরূপ সন্দপত্র ব্যক্তীত অন্য কোন সন্দপত্র মুক্তিযোদ্ধা সন্দপত্র হিসেবে এইণযোগ্য হবে না। উল্লেখ্য যে, মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা/নাতী/নাতনী হলে আবেদনকারী যে মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা/নাতী/নাতনী এই মর্মে চাকুরী প্রার্থীকে সংক্রিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ চেয়ারম্যান/সিটি কর্পোরেশন এর ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর ও পৌর সভার

মেয়র/কাউন্দিলর কর্তৃক প্রত্যয়ন পত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ সরকারি বিধি বিধানের সঙ্গে সাংঘর্ষিক নয় এমন কোন শর্ত পরিবর্তন বা অভিরিক্ত শর্ত সংযোজন করতে পারবেন এবং কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যাতিরেকে নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞন্তি আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণ ব্যতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত যে কোন বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-(জসীম উদ্দীন হায়দার) জেলা প্রশাসব

কিভি-৪৮

science-backed and cannot replace medical treatment.



Along with the original Maheshwarpasha School of Art building, the school ground hosts two other buildings of the rechristened Shashibhushan Shishu Vidya Niketan. Currently, plans are in motion to demolish the main 100-year-old building and replace it with a similar looking one.

Why destroy when you can preserve?

Country's first art school building faces extinction

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

The Maheshwarpasha Art School was established in 1904 by artist Shashibhushan Pal, the first of its kind for the East Bengal region.

Shashibhushan established the school on the east side of the present Jashore Road, inside his own home. In 1918, it managed to secure recognition and funding from the government 14 vears later.

A little over a hundred years from then, the school's premise is now about to be auctioned off to construct a similar building in its place. This comes despite disapproval from conscious citizens, who would rather see the original building turned into a historical landmark.

According to educationists, researchers, and historical books on Khulna, in 1929, the school was shifted to the west side of Jashore Road. It used to confer the four year "Diploma in Fine Art" certificate.

After the Partition, the Maheshwarpasha School of Art was renamed Shashibhushan Art College.

In 1983, it emerged as Khulna Art College and was shifted to Gallamari area. In 2009, it became known as the Institute of Fine Arts under Khulna

Meanwhile, local well-wishers built the Shashibhushan Shishu Vidya Niketan at the original location about four decades ago. In 1980, a primary school was established there, while the grounds saw a secondary school in 1991. With these two, the complex now has three institutions.

Over the years, famed artists and eminent citizens from here and abroad visited the school. This includes Maharaja Vijaychand Mahtab of Burdwan, Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin,

poet Jasimuddin, SM Sultan and more. In a statement written on march 14, 1975, preserved at the school, Zainul

Abedin mentions, "This is the second art school in joint Bengal after Calcutta Art School, but it's the first for East Bengal."

On the same day, poet Jasimuddin and artists Quamrul Hasan and Nilima Ibrahim wrote, "This is the oldest art and craft school in Bangladesh. It is necessary to preserve this school to conserve its heritage."

Talks of taking down the century-old building began in 2016. But this was no more than a murmur till January last year, when Khulna City Corporation wrote a letter to the Department of Archaeology (DoA) to know whether the school was listed by the department.

In response, Afroza Khan Mita, Khulna regional director of the department, said in a written statement that the building is a British-era structure. While it is not a preserved antiquity, the school is associated with the continuity of cultural development and passion of the local people.

"Conservation and management

can be delegated to local government councils or district administrations. The Department of Archeology will provide technical advice on its renovation if the city corporation, school authorities or the district administration take the initiative to preserve it," she added.

Later on August 29, 2021, while identifying risky buildings at a KCC meeting, the then KCC executive engineer Liaquat Ali Khan raised the issue of including the 100-yearold building in the list of vulnerable buildings, sources told this newspaper. It was recommended that the authorities concerned take steps to demolish the

KCC then sent a letter to the then head teacher of the school Nahid Sultana, notifying her of the decision.

On November 14, 2021, at a school meeting held in the presence of State Minister for Labor Welfare Begum Mannujan Sufian, it was decided that

Book Hounds



Bookstore, Nilkhet, Dhaka.

Te are a perpetually curious group. Like members of secret societies of the Middle Ages, we quickly recognize each other. Once our numbers were large and we were considered cool and fashionable. Though fewer today, we persist in our ways - habits we learned from doting parents, an affectionate uncle or aunt, or the right kind of friends. For the rewards of these habits add immeasurably to our lives. We are book hounds.

While talk of a new movie, a fancy car, or Elon Musk's billions excites some, our ears perk up whenever we hear talk of a book or a writer. Picking up the scent of a good read we doggedly follow it. We do not rest until we have held the book in our hands to read it.

As children, books captured our hearts and opened the doors of our imagination. We read them everywhere - before school, during breaks, after school, at night under the blanket with a torchlight when our parents thought we were asleep. Books were the gifts we prized on our

Money to buy books was even better. A trip to the bookstore was a joyous occasion. Those of us growing up in small towns had only one or two bookstores at our disposal – Sylhet's National Library and News Corner, for example - but they were familiar with us and patiently encouraged

We eagerly loaded up before school vacations. Would ten books tide us through summer? Read the best one first or save it for the last? Exchange with others? There was no end to the want for

Word of a new thriller by Alistair MacLean, or an upcoming volume of Kuasha, the scientific detective, started us on a new chase. Sometimes it took months of searching and waiting before the book finally reached our hand.

Second-hand bookstores, such as those in Nilkhet, drew us with the promise of unexpected treasures.

We scoured the libraries. The one at school came first, but when we had gone through all the books there we turned to public libraries. We sought out friend or relatives who had large book collections, so we could immerse ourselves in their books.

Growing up changed our interests and our books. A chance encounter with a tree, fruit or flower opened up an interest in books on botany

A trip to an archeological site kindled a fascination with history and the kings, queens

A technical discussion on a radio show

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

COVID CURBS Restaurant association worried

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,

Leaders of Bangladesh Restaurant Owners' Association in Chattogram are worried as the government has decided that dine-in customers must show their Covid-19 vaccine certificate to get

Expressing their concerns, the leaders said if the government issues such an order, it will be a big trouble for the restaurant sector.

Recently, the health minister said the government was going to issue an order to bar people who did not receive both vaccine doses from entering restaurants, shopping malls, trains, launches and aeroplanes.

While talking to The Daily Star, Elias Ahmed Bhuyan, president of the association, said, "Checking the vaccine certificate of every customer will not be viable for restaurant staff."

"Many are yet to get vaccinated, while many others are still waiting to get the text their message after registering," he said.

"If staffers ask customers to show their vaccine certificate, altercations might start," he said. "If the rule is imposed, customers would SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



For at least 35 years, Jahangirnagar University campus has served as a welcoming transit spot for migratory birds during winter. But owing to ill-mannered birdwatchers and noise pollution, they've started to leave the premises early this year, within the first week of January. This photo was taken from the Botanical Garden beside JU's Joy Para Lake. PHOTO COURTESY: AURITRA SATTAR

An early goodbye

JU CORRESPONDENT

They're gone, before they could even settle in.

Just a few days ago, a walk down the Jahangirnagar University campus would be filled with the buzzing and chirping of migratory birds, who have become regular visitors to the campus every winter.

But the university is no longer the green sanctuary it used to be. From reckless birdwatchers to sound pollution, a bunch of adversities have managed to rid the university grounds of the birds even before spring has come along.

Campus sources said thousands of ill-mannered

visitors come to watch the birds everyday, who often throw rocks at the touring avians. Then there's the case of all the noise made by cars and battery-run rickshaws that ply inside and around the campus which makes the birds feel even more unsafe.

In reply to a query over why the birds are leaving this early, Dr Md Kamrul Hasan, professor at the zoology department of the university and wildlife conservation researcher, pointed out three reasons

"The two major lakes of the university -- Transport Yard Lake and Joy Para Lake - are the main junctions of the migratory birds. It's mainly the visitors of these two lakes, whose disturbance has shooed away the birds," he said.

"I have issued a letter to the registrar to restrict entrance of vehicles from the back of the lake for this season," he added.

"Another reason is the dilapidated state of the Joy Para Lake, which is filled with algae and garbage. Even though I have notified the estate office to clean the lake, but this wasn't done. As almost all of the lake's surface is covered with aquatic plants or rubbish, the birds have no place

"Another reason is the mindless violence of the visitors, especially those who throw

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

An-Noor THE LUMINOUS RESIDENCES

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Office of the District Primary Education Officer Shariatpur.

www.dpe.shariatpur.gov.bd Reference No: 38.01.8600.000.07.057.2021-15



Invitation for e-Tender Notice

S.L. No.	Name of Work	Package No	Tender ID No.	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
01.	Supply of Furniture at 16 nos different Government Primary School of Sadar (9 nos), Zajira (4 nos) & Naria (3 nos) upazila of Shariatpur District under Need Based Infrastructure Development of Govt, Primary Schools Project (1st Phase) FY: 2021-2022	e-Tender/ NBIDGPS- 1/G1.0085	640743	24.01.2022 11:00 AM	25.01.2022 11:00 AM	25.01.2022 11:00 AM
02.	Supply of Furniture at 21 nos different Government Primary School of Bhedorganj (11 nos), Damudya (4 nos) & Gosairhat (6 nos) upazila of Shariatpur District under Need Based Infrastructure Development of Govt. Primary Schools Project (1st Phase) FY: 2021-2022	e-Tender/ NBIDGPS- 1/G1.0086	640745	24.01.2022 11:00 AM	25.01.2022 11:00 AM	25.01.2022 11:00 AM

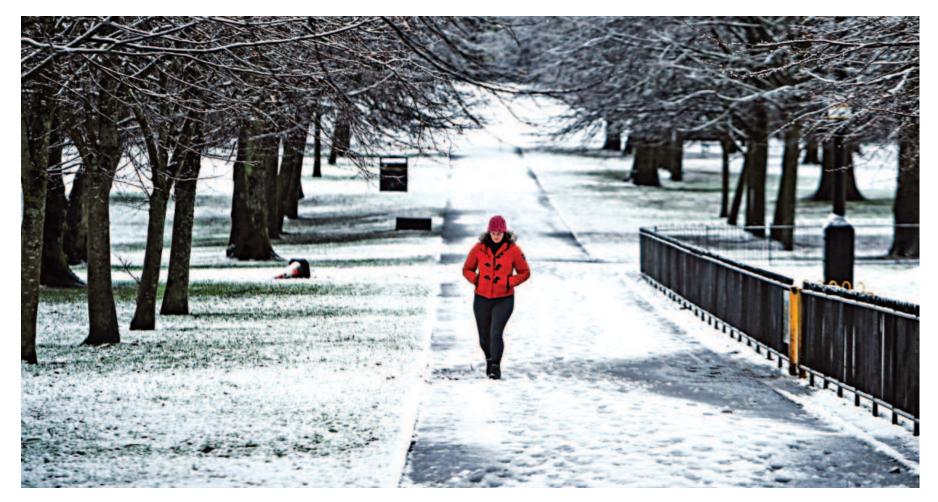
This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP Portal and no offline/hand copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks' branchs up to 24.01.2022, 11:00 AM.

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

Md. Abul Kalam Azad District Primary Education Officer

Shariatour, dpeoshari@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL



A pedestrian walks in the snow in Victoria Park, in the West End of Glasgow, Scotland, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



Anger as Cambodia PM visits Myanmar

REUTERS

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen yesterday met Myanmar's military ruler Min Aung Hlaing amid criticism of the first visit by a head of government since the army seized power from an elected government last

Hun Sen was greeted by an honour guard and red carpet when he arrived yesterday, just as protests by coup opponents broke out in other parts of the country over fears his trip will provide more legitimacy to the junta.

Hun Sen's two-day visit was the first by a head of government since the army overthrew the civilian administration of Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb 1 last year,

sparking months of protests and a bloody crackdown. The Cambodian leader, who has been criticised over crackdowns on his political opponents at home, has said he was making the visit to press a Myanmar peace plan sponsored by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Cambodia is current chair of the 10-member Asean. In Depayin, about 300 km north of the capital, Naypyidaw, protesters burned a poster of the Cambodian prime minister and chanted "Hun Sen don't come to Myanmar. We don't want dictator Hun Sen",

photographs on social media showed. There were also reports of protests in the second city of Mandalay and the Tanintharyi and Monywa regions. In October, junta leader Min Aung Hlaing was barred from attending an Asean summit for his failure to cease hostilities, allow humanitarian access and start dialogue,

as agreed with Asean. But in a further sign of divisions in the 10-member bloc, Hun Sen last month said junta officials should be

allowed to attend Asean meetings.

Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director for Research Emerlynne Gil said the trip risked sending mixed messages to Mynamar's military leader.

US-funded Radio Free Asia cited a junta spokesman as saying Hun Sen would not meet Suu Kyi.

'Shoot to kill'

Kazakh leader tells forces, rejects talks



Kazakhstan's president yesterday rejected calls for talks with protesters after days of unprecedented unrest, vowing to destroy "armed bandits" and authorising his forces to shoot to kill without

He said earlier that order had mostly been restored across the country, after protests this week over fuel prices escalated into widespread violence, especially in main city Almaty.

"Terrorists continue to damage property... and use weapons against civilians. I have given the order to law enforcement to shoot to kill without warning," Tokayev said in his third televised address to the nation this week.

He ridiculed calls from abroad for negotiations as "nonsense".

Long seen as one the most stable of the ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia, energy-rich Kazakhstan is facing its biggest crisis in decades.

Protesters stormed government buildings in Almaty on Wednesday and fought running battles with police and the military, with officials saying 748 security officers were wounded and 18 killed.

Tokayev said Almaty had been attacked by "20,000 bandits" with a "clear plan of attack, coordination of actions and high combat readiness.'

He gave his "special thanks" to Russian President Vladimir Putin after the Moscow dominated Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) sent troops to Kazakhstan to help quell the unrest.

It marked the alliance's first major joint action since its founding in 1999.

The interior ministry yesterday said that security forces had taken all the country's regions "under increased protection" and that 26 "armed criminals" had been killed and 18 wounded in the

Authorities declared a nationwide state of emergency until January 19, with curfews, restrictions on movements and bans on mass gatherings.

The interior ministry said Thursday it had detained about 2,300 people. Officials said more than 1,000 people had been wounded in the unrest, with nearly 400 admitted to hospital and more than 60 in intensive care.

Protests spread across the nation of 19 million this week in outrage over a New Year increase in prices for liquid petroleum gas (LPG), which is used to fuel many cars in the country.

Thousands took to the streets in Almaty and in the western province of Mangystau, saying the price rise was unfair given oil and gas exporter Kazakhstan's vast energy reserves.

The full picture of the chaos has often been unclear, with widespread disruptions to communications including mobile phone signals, the blocking of online messengers and hours-long internet shutdowns.

Western countries have called for restraint on all sides, with US State Department spokesman Ned Price warning Russian troops in Kazakhstan against taking control of the country's



BMW unveils colourchanging car

REUTERS, Las Vegas

German carmaker BMW has unveiled the world's first "colour-changing" car at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. The concept car, called the BMW iX Flow, uses electronic ink technology normally found in e-readers to transform the car's exterior into a variety of patterns in gray and white. When stimulated by electrical signals controlled by a phone app, the material brings different pigments to the surface, causing the car to take on a different shade or design, such as racing stripes. In the future, the changes would also be controlled by a button on the car's dashboard or perhaps even by hand gestures, Clarke said. Though the vehicle displayed at CES could only alternate between gray and white, the technology will be expanded to cover a spectrum of colour, according to BMW.

US boycott of Beijing 'insult' to Olympic spirit: North Korea

AFP, Seoul

North Korea has slammed the US-led diplomatic boycott of February's Beijing Winter Games, state media reported yesterday, describing it as an "insult" to the Olympic spirit. Washington and some of its allies have announced a diplomatic boycott, citing China's human rights record, in a decision that incensed Beijing. North Korean Olympic and sports bodies criticised the boycott in a letter to their Chinese counterparts, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. "The US and its vassal forces are getting ever more undisguised in their moves against China aimed at preventing the successful opening of the Olympics," the letter said, according to KCNA. Their moves are "an insult to the spirit of the international Olympic Charter". China is the main ally and economic benefactor of impoverished North Korea, which is suspended from competing in the Chinese capital for its refusal to take part in Tokyo Games last year because of Covid-19 pandemic.

Indian man has taken at least eight Covid jabs

BBC ONLINE

A man in India got jabbed with a Covid-19 vaccine at least eight times last year, a health official said. Brahmdeo Mandal, 65, has claimed that he received 11 doses of the vaccine in Bihar state. The retired postman said the jabs had helped him to get rid of aches and pains and "stay healthy". He claimed he had not suffered any adverse effects. Mondal was finally stopped from taking what he claimed was his 12th jab at a camp last week. A probe is underway to find out how Mandal, who lives with his family in Madhepura district, managed to get multiple jabs. He told the BBC that he travelled to vaccination camps across Madhepura and even to at least two neighbouring districts - one more than 100km (62 miles) away to get the jabs. He used different identity cards to register at these sites.



Mahathir in hospital again

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad was admitted to hospital yesterday, the medical facility said, weeks after he was discharged following a check-up.

The National Heart Institute said the 96-year old was admitted for an "elective medical procedure" but did not provide further details.

Mahathir has had heart problems in the past, suffering several heart

attacks. He has been one of Malaysia's most dominant political figures in recent decades, serving twice as PM for a total of 24 years.

Overwhelmed by Omicron, US hospitals delay surgeries UK to deploy troops to London hospitals; France

expects new wave to peak around 10 days time

AGENCIES

Hospitals across the United States are postponing elective surgeries to free up staff and beds due to a surge in Covid-19 cases driven by the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

Administrators say hospital staff shortages have been compounded in the last month by medical practitioners isolating as they themselves are infected or exposed to the virus.

Hospital systems in nearly half of US states have announced they would postpone elective surgeries, a Reuters review of public statements and local media reports found, and at least three state governments; New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts, have implemented or recommended state-wide delays.

The seven-day average of Covid-19 patients admitted to hospitals was up 60percent from last week to 16,458 per day, CDC data shows, just 0.2 percent shy from the national peak in hospital admissions exactly a year ago.

Data from the US Department of

Health and Human Services shows that over 82 percent of ICU beds nationwide are currently in use as of Thursday with over 27 percent in use for Covid-19 cases.

In Europe, France reported 261,481 new coronavirus infections on Thursday, less than the record of more than 332,000 set on Wednesday, but the seven-day moving average of new cases rose above 200,000 for the first time since the start of the health crisis. The French health ministry also reported 204 new deaths, taking the total Covid-19 death tally to over 125,000.

Professor Alain Fischer, an official responsible for France's Covid vaccine strategy, said the current Covid-19 wave engulfing the country could reach its peak in around 10 days time.

Britain yesterday said it will deploy troops to hospitals in London to alleviate severe staff shortages caused by the Omicron outbreak. Around 200 armed forces personnel will join health workers in the capital, which has been particularly badly hit by the recent upsurge in coronavirus cases leading to mass staff absences in hospitals.



A pro-refugee activist carries a placard outside a government detention centre where Serbia's tennis champion Novak Djokovic is reported to be staying in Melbourne yesterday, after Australia said it had cancelled the entry visa of Djokovic, opening the way to his detention and deportation. The former Park Hotel, now officially known as an "alternative place of detention", holds about 32 refugees and asylum seekers trapped in Australia's hardline immigration system. Detainees cannot leave and nobody is allowed in or out except staff.



Back on stage back on track

Stars express relief on return of live shows

Bangladeshi rock 'Guru' and legend James, along with his band Nagar Baul, had their first performance after months last November. After that, the eminent musician has been tearing down venues with his powerful performances, and is now a regular on stage.

PHOTOS: STAR & COLLECTED

The last couple of winters were arguably incomplete without stage shows and live performances, as the world suffered from the effects of the pandemic. This year, life returned to musical

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

venues, as stars were relieved to get back to what they love doing the most: perform for the people.

"I have returned to live performances in full swing," shares celebrated musician Kumar Bishwajit. "I don't know what the future has in store for us, but I want to keep performing live for as long as possible."



dark days."

Liza was seen in multiple shows last month, and has more performances lined up for 2022. "I can interact directly with my fans, and that's what I love the most about stage shows," she mentions.

Beauty, who is famous for her folk performances, says, "It feels like we have been reborn."

"I started performing on stage as soon as the cool winter breeze began to flow," shares an excited Aankhi Alamgir, fresh off a show in Sylhet. "I am enjoying every second, and so are my fans. That inspires me to keep performing."

"I missed the stage for 2 years, and it broke me," says renowned pop and playback singer Imran. "My fans are my strength, and the way that they shower me with love and affection means the world to me.'

Singers Zhilik, Sabbir Zaman, and Kornia are busy with live performances. "I performed at a university last week, and the energy was magical," recalls Zhilik.

"Performing in front of thousands of people while they sing along - that is what defines our being," says Kornia. "The

thirst of a real artiste is never

quenched without stage shows,"

shares Sabbir. "We are spending

> a great phase, and I promise to do a lot of live performances this winter."

Talented singer and composer Belal Khan told The Daily Star that he wants to do as many shows as possible. "Nothing really beats being up there, no matter what anyone says."

> Bangladeshi rock 'Guru' and legend James, along with his band Nagar Baul, had their first performance after months last November. After that, the eminent musician has been tearing down venues with his powerful performances, and is now a regular on stage. Marking the birth

centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence, folk queen Momotaz Begum made her muchawaited return to stage.

With winter winds growing chilly, the stars now look to having a great year ahead, jam-packed with stage shows and live performances.



Sohel Rana's condition improves, shifted to cabin

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Veteran actor and freedom fighter Sohel Rana was admitted to ICU, as his health deteriorated after he was diagnosed with Covid-19. He has been shifted to the cabin, as his health condition improved.

His son, Mashrur Parvez, confirmed the news to The Daily Star.

"We have shifted him to the cabin from ICU on January 6, and we are happy that he is improving, says Mashrur.

Sohel Rana was admitted to the hospital on December 25, with a fever and cold. Later, he tested positive with Covid-19.

The actor earned accolades for his performance in "Ora Egaro Jon", the first film made on the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

The legendary actor began his career in the film industry in 1973. He was honoured with the National Film Awards' Lifetime Achievement Award.



'Will scream from rooftops when film with Shah Rukh Khan gets finalised'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Noted Indian actress Taapsee Pannu is looking forward to working with none other than Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan in Rajkumar Hirani's next project. In an interview with India Today, the "Mulk" actress opened up about working with Shah Rukh Khan, and expressed her sheer excitement. Although the film has not been finalised vet, Taapsee could not contain her happiness.

She said that she would be the first person to tell everyone about the project once the final statement comes up from the makers. "Let things get finalised and let things move ahead otherwise there will be mere speculations. I will scream and announce the film from rooftops when it's finalised. I am that excited," she expressed.

Mithila to feature in Hoichoi's 'Montu Pilot'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Rafiath Rashid Mithila will be starring in the second season of Hoichoi's popular web series, "Montu Pilot", replacing Solanki Roy in the role of Bhromor, as per reports.

However, she is unable to join the shoot at the moment, as her husband Srijit Mukherji and daughter Ayra have tested positive for Covid-19. Mithila is currently in isolation at home with

Starring Saurav Das in the lead role, "Montu Pilot", directed by Debaloy Bhattacharya, is about the character Montu who wanted to be a pilot in his childhood. His mother tried everything to take him out from the red-light area of Neelkuthi but failed and met a terrible end.

The first season of "Montu Pilot" was released



EDITORIAL

The Baily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Take urgent steps to prevent Omicron spread

Vaccination campaign should be ramped up, heath guidelines should be strictly enforced

***OLLOWING** the detection of 10 new Omicron cases ◀ in Bangladesh, the government is considering taking fresh steps to prevent further spread of the new coronavirus variant. We welcome this as a positive sign. The government has to proactively try and prevent Omicron transmission, particularly seeing how rapidly it has spread in other countries.

From what we can gather so far, Omicron, although reportedly less deadly than the Delta variant, is far more easily transmissible. This, in some ways, makes it even more of a threat. We have seen how Delta wreaked havoc across the country last year, when the number of cases peaked around July and August. The number of daily new cases during those months regularly stayed above 10,000, putting immense pressure on our healthcare system. It would, therefore, be much wiser for the government to act now to prevent a similar outburst of

Among the measures that the government is considering taking are: stepping up its inoculation campaign; lowering the age limit for booster doses; and preventing the gathering of unvaccinated people at public places. Moreover, it is also considering not allowing anyone to enter restaurants and shopping malls, and board buses and trains without vaccine certificates, besides making it mandatory for school children above the age of 12 years to receive at least one dose of the vaccine to attend in-person classes. While we appreciate the government planning these measures, we wonder how realistic they would be, particularly given that, so far, only 31 percent of the targeted population have received both doses of the vaccine. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to see the government step up its vaccination campaign, which we hope will continue without many hiccups. At the same time, rather than forcing the population to get vaccinated, we hope the government will educate the people why it is important to get the vaccine.

Additionally, the government needs to renew its awareness campaign to encourage people to follow the health guidelines such as wearing masks, maintaining social distance, and going into early isolation if they suspect they have contracted the coronavirus. Ramping up screening at airports and other border points is also crucial—especially since quite a few of the new cases have been detected among people who have come into the country from abroad.

While these preventive measures are extremely important, the government should also upgrade the country's healthcare facilities on an urgent basis. Making sure that hospitals are well equipped and have centralised oxygen systems installed and working properly are agendas that the government should pursue with equal focus.

Journey into the unknown

Hundreds return with broken dreams

■HE arrival of yet another group of Bangladeshis last week as deportees from Greece accentuates the vulnerability of the unemployed youth in the country. Having tried all avenues, many of them get allured by the promises of regular work and good pay in a foreign country given by the agents of human traffickers. In their desperation for financial support from the Bangladesh government, the deportees from Greece staged a sit-in and token hunger strike in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka on January 3. They narrated their story before the media saying some of them had paid the agents Tk 13-14 lakh to go to

It was quite perturbing to learn that some of them went to the Middle East a couple of years back, but as their employers did not pay them for two months, they decided to go to Greece—some fellow migrant workers had told them that the European countries offered better opportunities. The group of deportees said that local traffickers took about 70 illegal migrants, including 20 Bangladeshis, on a two-week hectic journey to enter Greece from Turkey via an illegal route. They endured immense hardships, often having to walk up to 20 hours a day through the jungle and mountainous roads, and even crossing a river on a plastic boat. The final chapter of their sad saga began when, after about two months, they were caught by the Greek police for illegal entry into the country and working as undocumented workers. About 18 of the Bangladeshis were sent to a detention centre, and after about 15 months, were deported back to Bangladesh.

It may be mentioned here that deportation of illegal migrants happens on a regular basis, but despite wide coverage in the print and electronic media, young men from our country continue to seek illegal migration to the EU and other rich countries in search for a better life. The community members, we feel, have a role to play in collecting information regarding the fate of those who have already set out for the unknown destinations. They should remain informed through the media about migration laws of different countries, and take caution when manpower agents come with unusual offers of good jobs abroad.

The department of social welfare, local government officials, UNO's office and the police should help the young men and women in verifying the job offers and checking the identities of the agents. Moreover, the government should help the returnees with whatever aid is necessary, as well as seek to establish lawful channels for them to work legally in countries like Greece.

When the protector becomes the predator



BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza is the pro-vice-chancellor of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB).

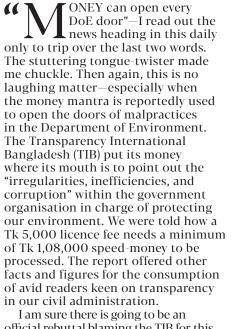
SHAMSAD MORTUZA

demonstrates a lack of good governance in our civil bureaucracy.

We are branded as laggards in quite a few categories. In environmental health, we are placed in the 178th position, just above Nepal and India. The other bottom categories in which we are vying to be in the last position are air quality (179), inhalable particulate matter

sustainability is compromised. The financial benefit of one officer will have a butterfly effect on many, including the ones using the water for irrigation, sanitation, livelihood, and so on.

However, corruption is not the only instance of the violation of environmental laws. Some of the challenges in the implementation of these laws include



official rebuttal blaming the TIB for this "notoriously fabricated, agenda-ridden, anti-state" report. There will be punches and counterpunches; even the high official who was unavailable for comments earlier will surface with a rejoinder. TIB will launch its "international" defensive missile to negate the "nationalist" diatribe. The conversation will soon die down. We will wonder why it was even considered a news item. Anyone who has sought government services knows or has experienced some level of systemic corruption. Therefore, to cry corruption in the system is like asking, "Are fish really wet when they're underwater?"

Alternatively, you may visit the Yale University site on the Environmental Performance Index (EPI). Out of 180 countries whose data have been analysed to prepare the country index, Bangladesh ranks 179. Only Burundi stands like the snake at 99 on a ludo board between us and the end. The list, based on 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, measures the environmental health and ecosystem vitality of a country. In the preamble, the report mentions a connection between the wealth of a country (i.e. GDP per capita) and the investment in outcome-based policy programmes. The mismatch between our recent economic prosperity and environmental health confirms the TIB report in a circumstantial manner. While access to adequate financial resources, in theory, implies the capacity to build the necessary infrastructure to provide clean drinking water and sanitation, reduce air pollution, control hazardous waste, and respond to public health crises for human well-being, corruption in the system remains the chink in the armour as it



ILLUSTRATION:

The systemic flaws are allowing individuals to open doors for money, but they are also making us vulnerable to climate change and its consequent hazards. The money these corrupt officials are hoarding will be useless against the fury of nature once it starts hitting back. (PM2.5) exposures in the air (178), PM2.5 exceedance (179), heavy metals (177), and lead exposure (177). The irony is, according to the TIB report, a total of 293 DoE officials went abroad 10 times under a project titled "Clean Air and Sustainable Environment." And one official went on all 10 trips. One wonders how these officers added to the carbon footprints through these "educational" trips.

There are a few areas in which our EPI rankings fare slightly better. They include fisheries (28), marine protected areas (36), species habitat (41), agriculture (52), and forests (98). However, in biodiversity and habitat, we rank 133, and in ecosystem vitality, we rank 153, suggesting that we have yet to attain the baseline rank.

As a developing country, issues of industrialisation and urbanisation are likely to be at odds with sustainability. Commitments to rule of law and evenhanded enforcement of regulations are necessary to strike a balance between present growth and future resilience. Despite our SDG target, this is where the government officials are failing us. Say, for instance, if an environmental surveyor is tampering with the report of an effluent treatment plant to downplay the level of toxicity released by a factory, the government's commitment to

"lack of specificity, procedural complexities, lack of accountability, partisan state machinery, and the absence of environmental consciousness among the common people." The monopoly of the system can be exemplified by the get-out-of-jail card available to the DoE director-general. Section 18 of the Environment Conservation Act is a case in point, where any damage or injury done by his actions is construed as a good faith act, which will protect him from being

The lack of environmental rule of law is also symptomatic of the corrupt system. The TIB report mentions that the DoE officers prefer levying hefty fines to rendering justice in environmental court. The systemic flaws are allowing individuals to open doors for money, but they are also making us vulnerable to climate change and its consequent hazards. The money these corrupt officials are hoarding will be useless against the fury of nature once it starts hitting back. Do you think this tainted money will shield a corrupt official or his family members from the carcinogenic air and water they are responsible for? Only a fool will leave the door open for money to walk in, while allowing the wrath of nature to rush in.

India's polarised politics and media



Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent for The Daily Star. He writes from New Delhi, India

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

Is unbiased

N December 29, 2021, India's Chief Justice NV Ramana sent out a message to the Indian media that could not have been timelier. In fact, it served as a wake-up

While delivering his keynote speech at a journalism award ceremony in New Delhi, Ramana, who reminded us that his professional journey began as a journalist, said mixing news with views was a dangerous cocktail, and "nothing can be more lethal to democracy than the deadly combination of confrontational polity and competitive journalism.'

He also raised a few other important points related to journalism as a profession in India. The most important of his messages was his caution to journalists against ideological biases seeping into news stories, and that factual reports must keep aside interpretations and opinions. "Allowing yourself to be co-opted by an ideology or the state is a recipe for disaster," the chief justice said, adding that truthful reportage was essential for a robust democracy. What he appears to be driving at is the pitfalls of highly-opinionated news dissemination, a trend that has been in India for decades but really caught on in the last decade or so. Separation of news from views,

than ever before.

In this context, he pointed to a rising tendency in Indian media-that of "cherry-picking of facts" to give news stories a "certain colour." In fact, cherry picking or selective presentation of facts has become a favourite tool of a section of the media trying to curry favour with the government. A classic example of this comes either in the form of a total blackout of a news story going against a ruling party, or its relegation to a less noticeable space of newspapers. It has been argued by some that it is the media's prerogative to decide which facts to include and which to leave out while presenting a story. But fair journalism cannot take shelter behind such specious arguments. For a section of the Indian media, objectivity, it seems, is no longer an option—but subjectivity is.

therefore, acquires more urgency today

Another key issue raised by the Chief Justice Ramana relates to TV discussions and interpretations of the judiciary's rulings, especially on social media, amounting to slandering the judiciary. The press must show some belief in the judiciary, and the media has the duty to defend and protect the judiciary from motivated attacks by evil forces, he said. One cannot agree more.

Is unbiased journalism a myth? Is some bias, however subtle and nuanced, inescapable—especially when the media sees itself as an important agent of reforming the ills of society and holding a mirror to different pillars of a democracy? We want myriad flowers to bloom in a democracy. But do we also want the media to let those flowers bloom by giving space to views of all shades and hues, barring the rabid elements?

Justice Ramana's speech comes at a time when the Indian society is highly polarised along political lines. Unfortunately, a segment of the media has been sucked into taking sides, mainly due to reasons of economic survival. That is why one finds many newspapers becoming virtual outposts of ruling parties, irrespective of ideology both in states and at the centre.

A newspaper has every right to follow its own political line and comment on the activities of all stakeholders in a democracy, including the judiciary, but it should introspect if in the process it is resorting to downright slander. The views of the media should be reflected in its editorials and commentaries with a coating of fairness, and not in its news reporting.

Reflecting on the state of Indian media today, the chairperson of the Hindu Publishing Group, Malini Parthasarathy, acknowledged in a recent interview to the "Tricity Scoop" portal "the tendency of journalists to take sides, to take ideological positions." Of course, she also talked about pressure from governments on journalists. Those words come from someone who has risen from a city reporter to the top post of The Hindu newspaper.

It is often said that most journalists are not given to self-introspection. The problem arises when journalists or media houses start visualising their roles as agents of social change and mobilisers of public opinion for the better. That is where the dividing line between activism and journalism often gets blurred. Activism is not news reporting, and news reporting is not activism.

journalism a myth? Is some bias, however subtle and nuanced, inescapable especially when the media sees itself as an important agent of reforming the ills of society and holding a mirror to different

pillars of a

democracy?

When the mind says yes



Shahidul Alam is a photographer and an activist, and founder of Drik and Pathshala South Asian Media

SHAHIDUL ALAM

Daddy (November

5, 1894-January 9,

Golam Kasem

1998)

SHAHIDUL ALAM

T was in the foothills of the Himalayas that he was born. In a bullock cart amid a snowstorm. It was in the cold chill of January, in the severest winter in Bangladesh's memory, that he died. Alone and uncared for, the frail old man shrunken with age, but with a heart as wide as the ocean, and a mind as young as the children that he loved, Golam Kasem, nicknamed Daddy, died at the tender age of 103. The single-storey yellow building at 73 Indira Road, with its unkempt garden, was home not only to Bangladesh's oldest photographer, but also the first Bengali Muslim short story writer.

Born on November 5, 1894, Daddy lost his mother shortly after birth. Raised by his aunt, the young man took up photography the way many young men take up many things-to impress a young girl. She had promised to cook for him if he could develop a film that others had failed to. Kasem embarked with the same trait for disciplined research that he maintained till his death. He went around the studios of Medinipur to find out the method that would win him his meal. He never talked of what the meal was like, but did describe how he used a hardener to prevent the emulsion from peeling off. Saving his bus fare to school to buy a brownie camera, he began taking photographs of the things he loved most: animals, flowers and children. And most importantly, he preserved those negatives. In his archives, amid old paper sachets marked in his neat handwriting are glass plates dating back to 1915: the harbour in Calcutta, early steam engines, the Gurkha regiment in shorts, and many hardener portraits. Period pieces lit in that soft natural light that early studios used.

Grainless negatives of people, generally in studied poses. His spontaneous pictures were those of animals and children, and among them are some gems. "Her first dance" is a delicate photograph of a child amid a twirl, centre stage with her family as an audience. Strong portraits of his friend, a teacher, and the calm portrait

of 98, for Drik's 1991 calendar.

The founder of the Camera Recreation Club, Daddy arranged regular meetings at his house in Indira Road where the club was housed. Regular visitors included poet Sufia Kamal, painter Quamrul Hassan, and photographer Manzoor Alam Beg. His letters were hand-written, each one numbered, and the envelopes were often made of recycled newspapers or book wrappings. Competitions at the Camera Recreation Club were unusual events. Photographers who would abstain from many local competitions would submit those small 4"x5" prints. And they were proud of the simple prizes they sometimes won. The prize giving was always accompanied by a cultural programme.

The room next to his bedroom was his darkroom. A red plastic bowl stuck under a light bulb-his safe light. He mixed his own chemicals from old tins of chemicals. Often, I would get an SOS—in the same neat handwriting, asking for potassium ferricyanide or some other chemical that he needed for his latest experiment. Photography was his passion. Once during a meeting at the Bangladesh Photographic Society (BPS), where he had been presented a new camera, Daddy spoke of how the camera he had been given would be much more than a machine to him. He talked of how he kept his camera next to his pillow when he went to sleep. How, when he was sad, he would speak to it, and that it would talk back and comfort him. Unimpressed by the modern motor-driven models, his preference was a simple manual SLR, "preferably not too heavy," he would add

Two girls in **Bhowanipur, South** Calcutta, India, in 1920.

That is not to say he was shy of

technology. I remember him holding up his thick glasses to read his first email from his grandson in Canada. He asked me to come back the next day, and as I parked my bicycle by his rose garden, he

was ready with his answer, again written in his neat handwriting. He was fascinated by email and used it regularly, and curious about how the message would get through the ether.

taken in Rajshahi in 1947.

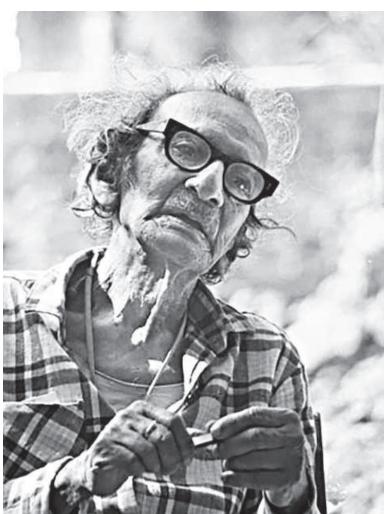
PHOTO: GOLAM KASEM/DRIK

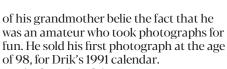
A child, surrounded by family, takes the centre

stage to show off her dance skills. The photo was

Daddy was fiercely independent. He cooked his own meals, fed his dog and cats, and did his own shopping. Until recently, he would even go on his own to a house down the road and guide himself up the stairs to meet a lady friend whom he occasionally visited. Rarely would he talk of himself, and it was only in passing conversation with the late Nasiruddin that I discovered that Daddy was the first Bengali Muslim short story writer. He used to write regularly for "Saogat," and continued to write, both technical articles on photography for the BPS newsletter, and short stories for general publication. His last manuscript, a simple manual on photography, sadly lies in my hands, unpublished. He had dearly wanted it printed before he died. The proofing was complete, the photographs selected, but "matters of consequence" allowed other projects to take precedence. His last note, urging me on with the publication, will forever haunt me.

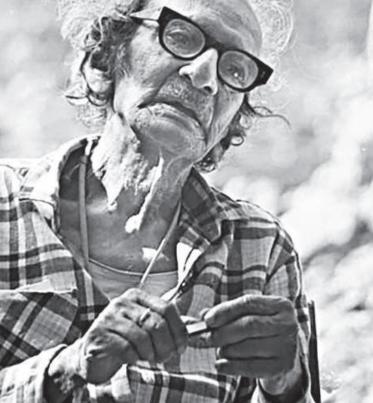
Always articulate, on his 100th birthday, at the opening of a joint photographic exhibition by him and the other photographic guru Manzoor Alam Beg at Drik Gallery, he talked eloquently of how photography was the way for people of the world to make friends, to break barriers, to discover one another. Later as the chief guest at the opening of the 1996 World Press Photo Awards, he talked of his own struggle to overcome the limitations of an ageing body. "My body says no, but my mind says you must, and in the end, it is the mind that wins." On January 9, 1998, the body finally said no and the mind took wings.





And Daddy would always sing.

with a mischievous smile.



EVO

OUOTABLE

Ouote

(born October 26, 1959) Former president of

Bolivia

humans.

What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without

MORALES 15 Fathers 16 Car type 17 Bearing a finger 19 Sea dogs 21 Drama

division Ringo 26 Exploited

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Muscle woes 7 Crimson Tide's home division 11 Luau setting 12 Goes astray 13 Saws 14 Head honcho region 18 Selects with **DOWN** 22 Non-sense 25 John, to

27 Somewhat 7 Jazz genre 29 Overlook 8 Stirring 33 Drama state 9 Science 34 Parrot officer on TV 35 Try out 10 Agreement 36 Sea rover 16 Social class 37 Falco of TV 18 Rendezvous 38 Barcelona's 20 Blue hue 22 Grant 39 Bears' lairs 40 Let up one side 28 Poker

1 Deep ravine 2 Arm bones 3 In the know 4 Printer's ink 5 Diner desserts 6 Pop's daughter

23 Inveigles 24 Fleet leade 25 Tilted to payments 30 Politician's concern 31 Squelch 32 Fragrance 34 Deep mud 36 Golf goal

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER





BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT







As the media always thinks, there aren't any players except the five or four of us but this was proven wrong [when Bangladesh beat New Zealand].

Shakib Al Hasan





'Test cricket needs Bangladesh to thrive'

AFP, Christchurch

Ross Taylor saluted Bangladesh for their triumph in the first Test but warned Friday that a green Christchurch wicket was much more in New Zealand's favour as he looks to bow out of Test cricket with a bang.

Bangladesh's eightwicket win over New Zealand in Mount Maunganui this week was "good for world cricket", the 37-year-old Taylor said.

we were outplayed the whole time. But for this game of Test cricket to survive, we need Bangladesh to be a thriving nation and I think they will get a lot of confidence from that win." The hosts are desperate to save the two-Test series to get some momentum in the defence of their world Test crown following two losses and a draw in their first three matches.

The second match against Bangladesh, starting on Sunday, will be the farewell Test appearance for Taylor, New Zealand's most prolific runscorer.

Different challenges await Tigers in Christchurch

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangladesh finally found the resolve, mental depth and proper approach to overcome a 20-year old hurdle and win a first match in any format in New Zealand, clinching the first Test at Mount Maunganui on January 5.

Having accomplished an unbelievable task, the Tigers head to Christchurch to find something really special from the two-Test series.

In 2019, Christchurch was the scene of a terrorist shooting, which the Tigers were lucky to escape unharmed. Following the incident, the rest of the series was called off, with the Christchurch Test cancelled. That means the Tigers have played only one Test at the Hagley Oval till date.

The only time Bangladesh played there was in 2017 and there will be specific challenges that are different from Mount

Kamrul Islam Rabbi, one of the few players to have made an impact on that bleak tour by picking up six wickets with three in Christchurch, revealed the nature of those challenges. Bounce and swing will be on offer but there is a wind issue to counter, according to Kamrul.

"From what I recall, the wicket had

good bounce and was very good for pacers. one of the batters who scored runs in both Normally on Bangladeshi wickets, we bowl eight-metre lengths to get the bounce where it will clip the bails of the stumps, but there you can get the same bounce by pitching at six-metre lengths," he told The Daily Star.

"The bounce is very even," Kamrul added, which means that the uneven bounce on the fourth day at Mount Maunganui will not help Bangladesh's cause here.

However, he also outlined specific challenges Bangladesh pacers will need to overcome.

"The swing may depend on the weather and the wind. At this time of the year, it's very cold and windy. When you bowl with the wind, it's easy. But bowling against the wind from the other end was incredibly difficult. I have a side-arm action and it's difficult but it's easier for bowlers with an open-chested action. We have Taskin [Ahmed] and Ebadot [Hossain], who have open-chested actions, but for [Abu Jayed] Rahi, who has a slightly side-arm action, it will be difficult." he said.

The task will be steeper for the batters. In the Tigers' last Test at the venue, a second innings debacle saw Bangladesh lose by nine wickets. Soumya Sarkar was

innings (86 and 36) on that occasion and he prescribed early caution.

"I think it's very important for batters to have patience in Christchurch. Since the ball gets a lot of movement initially, it's difficult for batters to adjust to the pace and bounce. Even in the second innings, when the pitch gets dry, the movement and bounce remains intact. Γhey also have quality fast bowlers so Ι think if we can bat with patience for the first 30 overs, it gets a lot comfortable after that," Soumya told The Daily Star yesterdav.

New Zealand's outgoing star Ross Taylor said during a press briefing vesterday that the 'bowlers will be licking their lips' while the 'batters need to apply themselves' better on what would be a regular wicket.

Meanwhile, ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, talking to the media during a commercial event in Dhaka, talked tactics.

"Everyone will be confident after the win. The toss will be important and might become the biggest factor. The wickets in New Zealand are very good on day two and three and bowling first could be the way to go," Shakib dictated, hoping confidence could come good in the second Test.

'It will be crucial to keep the process right'

So the tables have turned and hosts New Zealand, for the very first time in their own backyard, are under pressure against Bangladesh following an eight-wicket defeat in the first Test as they prepare to take on a spirited Tigers side to save the series in the second and final Test, starting in Christchurch from tomorrow.

The ICC World Test Champions will undoubtedly give it their all but it will be important for Bangladesh to maintain focus, especially after raising expectations with a magnificent show in the first Test.

Although pacer Ebadot Hossain stole headlines by bagging six wickets in the second innings to become only the second Bangladeshi pacer to bag a five-wicket haul in an away Test, it was a complete team effort that saw Mominul Haque and Co. re-write history and register a maiden Test win against New Zealand.

According to team director Khaled Mahmud, the Tigers will continue to follow the processes which led to success in Mount Maunganui.

"We are yet to asses the pitch here in Christchurch. Once we do that, we will chalk out our final plans. I think expectations from the fans and everyone back home has peaked after the manner in which we won the first Test. But for us it's very important to keep the process right.

T SPORTS & GTV

Bangladesh v New Zealand Second Test, Day 1 Live from 4am (Sunday)

It will be crucial for us to maintain that in the second Test. The boys are confident, eager to give their best and hungry to pick up where they left off in the first Test," Mahmud told The Daily Star ahead of the second Test yesterday.

The Bangladesh team spent time in the gym yesterday after rain halted scheduled training in Christchurch after the weather in Mount Maunganui favoured Bangladesh to some extent with hot and sunny conditions.

Although rain is forecast for the fourth and fifth day of the second Test, it is expected to remain sunny and warm for the next couple of

"We are expecting favourable conditions over the next few days here in Christchurch in a sunny atmosphere. The weather has been good enougl for us to adapt and adjust. Despite the fact we were unable to train today (Friday) due to rain, we are hoping the weather will be ideal for a Test match," he added.

In terms of the combination, the team management will be forced to make at least one change to the eleven that won the first Test after young opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy -- who scored his maiden Test fifty in his second Test and batted brilliantly during a 228-balls 78-run knock in the first innings -- was ruled out after suffering a cut to his right hand while fielding.

Mahmud hinted that left-handed opener Naim Sheikh could make his Test debut as Joy's replacement.

"We have Fazle Rabbi and Naim Sheikh in the squad and are looking for a replacement for Joy. Since Rabbi normally bats at number three, I think there is a chance for Naim to open the innings with Shadman," Mahmud concluded.

'Overjoyed' Bairstow remembers father

Nothing was going to stop an emotional Jonny Bairstow from realising his ambition of scoring an Ashes century in Australia -- not even a nasty blow on his thumb during the fourth Test in Sydney on Friday.

The 32-year-old typified the grit of a counterpunching 128-run partnership with injured Ben Stokes to raise his first Test century in Australia, and England's first on a demoralising tour with the Ashes relinquished inside 12 days. Bairstow turned the tide and gave the tourists something to cheer finally with his unbeaten 103 off 140 balls, studded with eight fours and three sixes.

There was also some emotion for this Test, which started on the 24th anniversary of his father David's sudden death. Bairstow looked to the heavens as he achieved his goal. "I'm extremely proud, I had to dig deep," he said.

But his spirited knock didn't come without pain after he suffered a nasty blow on his right thumb from Pat Cummins, which for a time threatened to cut his innings short. Bairstow was on 60 when Cummins dug one in and it crushed his thumb holding the bat.

He needed treatment from the team physio, painkillers and strapping before he bravely continued to defy Australian attempts to get him out. "It takes quite a bit to get me off the park. Yes, it was sore but the circumstances of the game, it was one of those where it was a decision I made to stay out there," he said.

"The medics can give you advice but you're playing in an Ashes Test match, New Year's Day Pink Test match at Sydney in front of a big crowd, it's going to take a lot to get you away from that."



Johnny Bairstow scored England's first century of the series as the tourists staged a fightback after a torrid start to the third day of the fourth Ashes Test against Australia in Sydney yesterday.

Djokovic thanks supporters

REUTERS

World number one Novak Djokovic on Friday thanked people around the world for their support amid a visa row over Covid-19 vaccines that has seen him being detained at a Melbourne hotel ahead of this month's Australian Open.

"Thank you to people around the world for your continuous support. I can feel it and it is greatly appreciated," the Serbian wrote on Instagram.

Djokovic was granted a medical exemption from Australia's strict Covid-19 vaccination requirement following a review by two independent panels prior to boarding his flight, but was denied entry upon landing in Melbourne late on Wednesday.

The 34-year-old is currently housed in a government detention hotel in the suburb of Carlton.

If you win one or two matches at home on good wickets, on grassy wickets, you'll develop confidence automatically.

tomatically

Wasim Akram





23 pacers played 126 Tests at home combined, scalping a total of 209 wickets.

26 pacers played 158 away Tests and took a total of 284 wickets.

Mashrafe Bin
Mortaza, having
played his last Test in
2009, still holds
the record for taking
the most number
of wickets (78)
amongst pacers
in this format for

Bangladesh.

In the 21 years since Bangladesh's Test debut, only five seamers have picked up a five-wicket haul in an innings. Shahadat Hossain achieved the feat four times.

THE FIRST STEP

towards a genuine cricketing culture?

Sarwar Imran who has worked as the head coach for Bangladesh in the inaugural Test match back in 2000 has witnessed the progress of the Tigers in the longest format very closely. The prominent fast bowling coach spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin, sharing his views on various aspects of fast bowling in an interview.

The Daily Star (DS): There has been discussion about providing seamers with suitable conditions at home to help prepare them. What sort of pitch do you think would genuinely help them improve?

Sarwar Imran (SI): The first and most important thing you have to have is bounce on the surface. If there is no bounce or a lack of bounce, there is nothing for swing bowlers because it won't swing without bouncing tracks. Batters tend to play easily on such pitches, but when we travel abroad it's different and that's when our pacers struggle to adjust.

DS: How can we improve pitches at home?

SI: Many talk about weather or conditions here not being conducive to pace-friendly pitches but I think it's very possible to have ideal pitches in Bangladesh if we take some time. Once there is heavy and frequent rolling on the surface, the bounce starts to disappear as the pitch does not get enough rest. That happens due to the load of arranging a lot of matches at the same

venue. If we talk about Bogura, it's a very good pitch but we don't have matches there. If the curator wants, I think it's possible. At the same time, those on the board are mostly batters so they also want pitches that favor batters and produce high-scoring games. But ultimately that will not help pacers. Once you have sporting tracks, it's even for bowlers and batters.

DS: The pacers were instrumental in Bangladesh's historic win in New Zealand.

What message does that send and how can Bangladesh cricket build on this success?

SI: I think nobody ever thought we would go on to beat New Zealand at their home in a Test match, barring the players. I think this win should be the first step towards preparing a genuine cricketing culture in the country. At the same time, it's just the start. They have just won one game and there is still a long way to go. We need to keep the process right on a consistent basis and only then can we think of better outcomes frequently in the longest format.

DS: How important is it to have a big pool of fast bowlers for a Test-playing team?

India has prioritized developing a crop of fast bowlers and they are now dominating worldwide.

SI: Apart from 2-3 local coaches who are involved with the national set-up, how many pace-bowling coaches do we have across the country? We don't have a single fast-bowling academy despite getting Test status more than twenty years ago. We need to have a pool of at least 15-20 pacers who train all year long. If there is any injury, they can fill in accordingly. We don't have enough facilities in the divisions and districts. The players mostly rely on Dhaka for training facilities. I think if you provide enough support at the root level it will help you to get results in the long run.

'Ebadot will definitely be a great bowler'

Pacer Ebadot Hossain surprisingly arrived as the leading character in Bangladesh's emphatic Test triumph over New Zealand in their own backyard, after which The Daily Star's Ekush Tapader caught up with a certain Sri Lankan who had a significant role behind Ebadot's development. The excerpts of the interview where Champaka Ramanayake, the bowling coach of the Bangladesh High-Performance (HP) team, shared his thoughts about Ebadot's journey and Bangladesh's pace bowling culture, are given below:

The Daily Star (DS): What's your take on Ebadot's bowling in Mount Maunganui?

Champaka Ramanayake (CR): A historical spell, I would say! And everyone will remember as it's probably the biggest win in Bangladesh's history. Ebadot bowled consistently well, as shown by his bowling figures. Yes, to bowl on the fourth day onwards is a very difficult thing to do, as your body gets exhausted, and yet, he maintained a beautiful line and length with courage. That's what I've been telling him for a long time, that consistency will bring rewards. It was long overdue but it finally arrived.

To beat the number one team in their soil is a remarkable achievement. I'd like to thank the selectors for having faith in him despite the fact



he didn't perform that well before. I'm delighted because he was my student and was with me for a long time. Other bowlers – Shoriful, Taskin and Mehedi – maintained consistency as well, right throughout the game.

DS: In the first ten Tests, Ebadot had taken only 11 wickets and so everyone was actually surprised at his six-for. Did you also feel the same?

CR: Yes, it was really unbelievable, and that too on the fourth and fifth day! Having been a fast bowler myself, I know it's not easy. I hope now he'll be a very confident guy since he knows that he can take wickets. That belief is there.

DS: What would your advice

be so that
Ebadot and company
can frequently repeat this sort
of form?

CR: In Bangladesh, the condition favours the spinners. But away, the presence of a lot of grass on the pitch assists the fast bowlers. If you hit the right channels consistently, you will be rewarded. But for that you require patience. Ebadot has accomplished that, and it's huge. He will definitely be a great bowler in the next couple

READ FULL STORY ONLINE

'Lack of exposure can affect mental health'

It took more than eight years for someone to take on the mantle and become just the second Bangladeshi after Robiul Islam to pick up a five-wicket haul away from home in Test cricket, but the former national team pacer can also serve as a cautionary tale. After scalping the nation's first fivewicket haul against Zimbabwe in 2013, Robiul got lost in the shuffle and failed to prolong his career.

Currently a coach in the domestic circuit, the 35-year-old spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin about the obstacles and challenges that a pacer encounters in Bangladesh. The excerpts are below:

The Daily Star (DS): It took almost eight years for Ebadot Hossain to become the second pacer to claim a five-wicket haul in Tests abroad. How did that feel?

Robiul Islam (RI): Records are meant to be broken. I am happy Ebadot broke my record because it feels good when a pacer from Bangladesh does well. When a fast bowler does well, there is always a higher chance for his team to win a Test. I think Ebadot bowled really well, especially in the last session of the fourth day and the first session of the fifth day. Not just him, I think Taskin Ahmed also bowled really well alongside Shoriful Islam. I hope all the fast bowlers will be encouraged after Ebadot's performance.

DS: Why did it take so many years for a Bangladeshi fast bowler to get a five-wicket haul abroad?

RI: Maybe it took a long time for them to do it

since my feat but I wouldn't say our pacers have bowled badly overseas over the years. Luck is also needed to get a five-wicket haul, regardless of bowling well. Abu Jayed picked up four wickets in India not so long ago and Taskin bagged four in Zimbabwe. It's not just about getting five wickets, it's more important how you apply yourself as a fast bowler in the team. We can see pacers playing immense roles in their teams' successes worldwide and I think it's also about having faith in the seamers, which I think has been missing over the years. But I hope this win will encourage fast bowlers in the coming days.

DS: Despite showing a lot of promise, a number of fast bowlers have faded away over the years. Why do fast bowlers lose their way in Bangladesh cricket?

RI: If I talk about my career, I can say I tried my best to serve our country longer. But I think many may already know that I was initially dropped from the team because of [then head coach] Chandika Hathurusingha before injury eventually finished my career. If I talk about why pacers in general fade away in Bangladesh, I think the biggest reason is a lack of suitable conditions compared to what we see abroad because a lack of exposure can affect the mental health of a fast bowler. Fitness and injury are also big reasons. Often we see pacers not go through the rehabilitation process. A lack of strength also causes long-lasting injuries to pacers. If I talk about salary, there is also a huge gap between the pacers compared to batters or spinners in the domestic circuit. As professionals, everyone wants to support their families and I think pacers suffer the most in this aspect in Bangladesh. A lack of financial security can at times force fast bowlers to quit the game. DS: What aspects do you think should be provided to

encourage pacers more in the coming days?

RI: It's true that the pitches in the domestic circuit are not suitable for the seamers but they are the same pitches that previous generations of fast bowlers had when they went to represent the country. I think a fast bowler also needs to have that hunger, courage and game sense. Things have started to change. I am also in the coaching profession now and I can tell you that the standard of our first-class cricket is improving. But there is always room for improvement when it comes to pitches.

The Kuhelia crying

River turns into a narrow stream, thanks to earth-filling by RHD

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

The Roads and Highways Department has earth-filled about 26 acres of the Kuhelia river in Cox's Bazar to build a two-lane

The massive encroachment has turned the once-vibrant river in Moheshkhali's Matarbari union into a narrow stream.

The department is going ahead with the construction despite the land ministry's objection.

In its Environmental Impact Assessment, the RHD even concealed the fact that the construction work would require earth filling to make way for the road along the ecologically sensitive river, said Nazmul Huda, deputy director of Department of Environment, Cox's Bazar.

Because of the river's natural value, the land ministry had turned down the RHD's proposal to build the road, according to Prime Minister's Office documents seen by The Daily Star.

Besides, a proposal, sent by the Cox's Bazar district administration to the ministry, on acquiring the river land mentioned the river area as ponds and ditches, the documents show.

Construction of the 7.35km road from Rajghata area of Kuhelia to Muhuriaghona of Dolghat began in October 2018 and is expected to complete in June 2023.

The 13km stretch of the river, which used to facilitate maritime trade and ensure livelihoods for many, now flows like a canal due to heavy earth-filling.

The grim picture came up in an investigation by the DoE, which found the RHD earth-filled 25.68 acres of the river as of January 2021. Latest data are not available, but sources say more river area has been encroached upon by now.

Mujibur Rahman Howlader, former chairman of the National River Conservation Committee, who visited the river in April 2021, recently told this newspaper that the way the RHD filled up the river was a criminal offence.

"They sandwiched the river by reducing its breadth and depth.... They can in no way stymie the current of a river. They can't fill up the flood plains of any river either," he said, referring to river protection laws and Supreme Court orders.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



The Kuhelia river in South Rajghat area of Cox's Bazar has been narrowed due to earth-filling. The Roads and Highways Department is building a two-lane road on the river despite the land ministry's objections. The photo was taken recently.

HEALTHLINE Know your deshi 'superfoods': **NIGELLA SEEDS**

STAR HEALTH DESK

Many of us know kalojeera or Nigella seeds from the time when our grandmother handed us a small cloth pouch filled with the black seeds to sniff -- for relief from a stuffy nose.

Nigella seeds are one of the most common traditional home remedies, specially in the subcontinent.

Nigella seeds are known for their medicinal properties and culinary

Its use can be traced back several centuries as a natural remedy for various illnesses

Let's take a look at some of the benefits they offer.

1. Nigella seeds are packed with antioxidants. Essential oil made from them also acts as antioxidants. However, it was not yet proven how the antioxidants found in Nigella Sativa may impact human health.

2. Nigella seeds are used by many to lower cholesterol levels.

SEE PAGE 4COL 5



India fears another **Covid catastrophe**

Cases hit 7-month high; seven-day home quarantine made mandatory for all overseas travellers

AGENCIES

India's daily Covid-19 cases jumped to 117,100 yesterday, a five-fold increase in a week, and on course to overtake its previous infection peak as the fast-spreading Omicron becoming the dominant coronavirus variant across the country.

Case numbers have vet to match the enormous figures seen during the brutal second wave of the pandemic last year when thousands died each day and crematoriums maintained round-the-clock pyres for mass cremation of victims.

Government officials have privately said they are working under the assumption that daily infections will surpass the record of more than 414,000 set in May, given what has happened in countries such as the United States where daily cases recently rose past 1 million.

"We will clearly surpass our record shortly and reach a new peak by early February," MD Gupte, a former director of the state-run National Institute of Epidemiology and an immunisation adviser to the government, told Reuters.

Fearing another catastrophe like last year, authorities in several cities have brought in restrictions in a bid to keep infections in check.

As cases have shot up, the Indian health ministry said that starting from January 11 arrivals from all countries would have to isolate at home for a week. Some two percent of such people would be tested at their port of arrival, and sent to institutional quarantine if

found positive for Covid-19. Earlier, only all those arriving from countries with a high number of cases had to be mandatorily tested and sent to institutional quarantine if found positive or home quarantine for a week if negative.

Preliminary studies have so far suggested the Omicron variant has led to less severe health consequences among those infected, despite its rapid

Experts however warned that an uncontrolled spread of new virus infections could still pose serious problems for

World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday warned against complacency against the new variant.

"While Omicron does appear to be less severe compared to Delta, especially in those vaccinated, it does not mean it should be categorised as mild," director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at the same briefing in Geneva.

"Just like previous variants, Omicron is hospitalising people and it is killing people."

One killed, 10 hurt in clash over trifles

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

A 65-year-old man was killed and 10 others were injured in a clash over money between two families in Bera of Pabna.

Tota Bepari died on the way to a hospital after he was injured in the clash, said Arbinda Sarkar, officer-in-charge of Bera Police Station.

Tota's son Akher Ali went to Saudi Arabia with his neighbour Shafiqul Islam one and a half years ago. Akher returned home after a few months, but Shafiqul, who took money from Akher's family for the latter's migration, stayed back, the OC said.

After Akher returned home, his family members forced Shafiqul's family to return the money, which began an enmity between the two families.

Yesterday morning, members of the two families engaged in an argument and attacked each other, said the officer.

5 killed in 2 road crashes

3-year-old girl among victims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Five people, including a child, were killed and seven others injured in two road crashes in Tangail's Madhupur and Mirzapur upazilas vesterday.

Police said an accident took place near Madhupur Bus Stand on Tangail-Jamalpur Regional Highway around 7:00am. Tarik Kamal, officer-in-charge of Madhupur

Police Station, said a pickup van and a CNG-run three-wheeler collided head-on, leaving three The dead are Sharmin Begum, 31, her daughter

Sohagi, 3, of Jamalpur, and Rasel Miah, 20, of Sherpur, said police, adding that the injured were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. On information, a police team went to the spot

and recovered the bodies, the OC said. Meanwhile, two men were killed and three others injured in a road crash at Bashtoli union in Mirzapur upazila.

According to police, a passenger bus collided head-on with a covered van and both the vehicles fell into a ditch around 1:00pm.

Mohammad Selim, sub-inspector of Bashtoil Police Outpost, said the identities of the dead

could not be known immediately.

The injured were rushed to Kumudini Hospital, the police official added.

TALKS ON EC FORMATION JSD (Rob) turns down invite

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Rob) yesterday became the latest political party to reject President Abdul Hamid's invitation to a dialogue on the formation of the Election Commission.

Earlier, five more political parties -- BNP, Liberal Democratic Party, Islami Andolon Bangladesh, Communist Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal -- also rejected the dialogue, terming the initiative "meaningless".

It is the first time since 2012 that political parties have refused the president's invitation on holding the dialogues on formation of the EC. JSD president ASM Abdur Rob yesterday

revealed the party's decision not to join the dialogue at a press conference at his residence in the capital's Uttara.

In the briefing, Rob said that formation of EC is not a solution for holding a free and fair elections. "Considering the reality, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal is not participating in the President's

dialogue," he said. "The dialogue has to be on process of formation of a national government for holding a free and fair election and to establish rule of law.'

The JSD chief said the current Election Commission was appointed by the president. But this commission has been biased and betrayed the nation by destroying the electoral system.



A health worker wearing protective gear takes a nasal swab sample of a passenger during a routine coronavirus screening event at a railway platform in Mumbai, India, yesterday.



PHOTO: MOHAMMAD RAKIBUL HASAN

"We never had a peaceful life in

"We never had a peaceful life in the forest. We lived in constant fear of law enforcement, rival robber gangs and, sometimes, even our own people.

Mustafa Sheikh former robber



MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

"Bullets can't hit me! I led hundreds of gunfights, but the bullets always just whizzed past me!" exclaimed a self-assured Jahangir Shikari, former robber of the Sundarbans.

"It's because of a special talisman I collected from a magician in India, which protects me from bullets," he continued, lowering his voice. "I can't tell you the details of where I got it, but rest assured, it works."

Jahangir used to lead the robber gang "Jahangir Bahini" before he surrendered to Rab in 2017 in three phases with 48 of his associates. He was among at least 328 robbers who gave up their arms to the government between 2016 and 2018.

There was nothing quite "bandit-like" in Jahangir's appearance. Short and ordinary-looking, he could almost pass off as an automobile driver — which, incidentally, is his profession post surrender — but there was nothing ordinary about the stories he shared of his past life.

"I got started on this life to avoid persecution by political rivals," he said.

"I became active in politics in Bagerhat when I was 19. In 2002, I was stabbed indiscriminately by my rivals. Luckily, I survived but I couldn't go home fearing another attack. I couldn't get a job anywhere either — my rivals made sure of that my family was in desperate need of money, so I

Bahini" in the Sundarbans for over a decade, was only 21 when he left his home after being attacked by his opponents.

"For three years, I couldn't return to my village in Bagerhat. In 1994, a political big brother gave me firearms so I could fend for myself if attacked. I took refuge in the Sundarbans along with a few associates," recalled Mustafa, now 51.

"But we had no way to make money and buy food. That's when we started targeting local trawlers. The rest, as the saying goes, is history."

Mustafa surrendered to Rab on May 31, 2016. He was one of the first to do so.

LIFE IN THE FOREST

Life as robbers was neither glamorous nor peaceful, shared the former gang leaders.

"We never had a peaceful life in the forest. We hardly got to sleep two or three hours a day," Mustafa recounted. "We lived in constant fear of law enforcement, rival robber gangs and, sometimes, even our own people."

Jahangir, who worked for five other robber gangs, before finally buying 12 firearms for Tk 6 lakh and starting his own gang, narrated how he was always anxious about being attacked -- despite his talisman which protected him from bullets.

"I used to move with five armed guards. Looking back, I now think life was beautiful would hunt deer and catch fish from the river which we then cooked over an open fire," said Mustafa.

When they weren't with their families, they would spend most of the day hiding out in a small river in the forest and foraging for food.

"We stayed in three boats, each around 35 to 40 feet long and 10 to 12 feet wide. There were around 45 members in our gang. We slept in small cabins inside the boats. Behind the cabin, there was a small kitchen of sorts where a burner had been set up," added Rafiqul Alam, 39, who was once a member of

"Alam Bahini".

"During daytime, we would all stay together. But we always had a security check post, within half a kilometer from our position."

Four or five armed members of the gang would stand guard at the check post and inform the others if any boat or law enforcers approached, he added.

"During the day, we either slept or made arrangements for food. Some of us caught fish, but in the back of our minds, we were always anxious of being attacked or spotted."

Most of their nights would be spent chasing targets or in search of fishing trawlers.

"In the 90s, we would target good-laden ships. We used to charge Tk 20,000-30,000 as ransom. This rose to Tk 1 lakh and Tk 2 lakh after 2005," said former robber Mustafa Sheikh, who joined a robber gang in 1994.

When asked if they tortured the people they abducted for ransom, Jahangir swore he never laid his hands on them.

"We used to beat empty water bottles against the trees to make sounds and asked the boatman to shout for help. Hearing these screams, their families or employers would pay us the ransom," he claimed.

During a visit to Barguna on December 14 last year, this correspondent had met with a number of anglers who said some of the robbers who went into hiding after law enforcers started cracking down in the Sundarbans are now resurfacing in coastal areas.

In November last year, an angler -- Md Musa -- was killed, while dozens were tortured by these robbers.

"Most of these robbers are younger, some may even be from the other side of the border. They've been using boats which are Indian and moves faster than ours," said one of the surrendered robbers.

Another, on condition of anonymity, claimed that some of their associates -- who had refused to surrender at the time and had fled the area -- had returned to form new gangs.

"We know because they called some of us, and tried to persuade us to rejoin the gang. But I turned them down. I want to die in peace."



Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, is spread across five districts of the country

> Until 2018, forest-based robbers used to collect tolls and ransom by abducting coastal people and tourists

> > In the early '90s, robbers demanded Tk 20,000-Tk 30,000 as ransom. In the 2000s, they demanded between Tk 1 – 2 lakh for

No available data on how many people were killed or abducted by Sundarbans robber gangs

each abductee

A special task force was formed in 2012 with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) director general to make Sundarbans "robber free"

In 223 drives of Rab, approx. 135 robbers were killed and 507 more arrested

Rab recovered around 1,556 firearms and 33,324 round of bullets during the drives

Between 2016 and 2018, around 328 robbers surrendered to Rab with 462 firearms and 22,504 bullets

PM declared Sundarbans "Robber Free" on November 1, 2018

AFTER SURRENDER

Tk 1 lakh given to each robber from PM funds

Rab provided Tk 20,000 to each robber along with poultry, shops etc. depending on robber's peeds

Many former robbers claim they are still struggling

The government had promised to settle cases filed against them and assist them through their legal issues, but the promise is yet to be fulfilled

On December 26, Khandaker Al Moin, director of legal and media wing of Rab, said process is underway to provide legal assistance to the surrendered robbers, except in cases involving murder and rape



"I hardly earn Tk 26,000 a month by driving an auto-rickshaw in Dhaka, but almost Tk 22,000 from that goes into the legal costs of six cases filed against me, I had

to take out a loan worth Tk 2.5 lakh to address six cases filed against me. I had hoped to get some peace of mind by surrendering, but alas, I am still

Jahangir Shikari

haunted!"



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

finally started working as a rickshaw-puller just to make ends meet," said Jahangir.

However, the money he earned couldn't meet his family's needs. Soon after, he was approached by an acquaintance who told him about a "job" in the forest that would pay an advance of Tk 5,000.

"I gave the advance to my family, and stepped into the forest for a forbidden life. Within three months, I had earned Tk 1 lakh, and within six months, Tk 6 lakh."

Janangir wasn't the only robber whose origin story began with political persecution. There were others at the event who also claimed to have taken refuge in the Sundarbans to escape their rivals.

Mustafa Sheikh, who led the gang "Master

when I was a rickshaw-puller, as I had a routine and peaceful sleep. The robbery may have brought me money but it destroyed my life," he added.

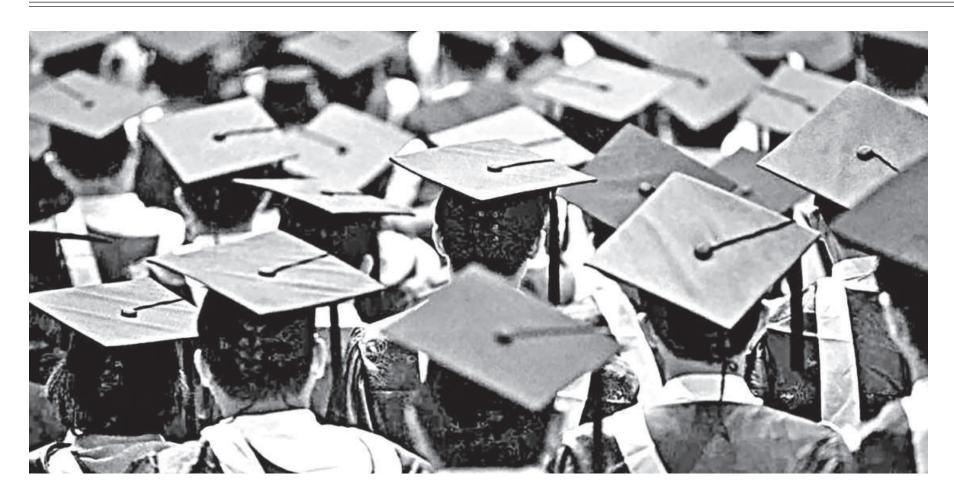
There was hardly any time for their families as they were always on the move.

"We had to stay in our boats or inside the Sundarbans with armed guards to avoid arrest and rival attacks. If we wanted to meet our families, we had to bring them along into the deep forest for a few days," said Jahangir.

They would build makeshift homes in the forest and stay there for some days, but even then, they could not spend time alone as there was fear of attacks -- from people or

"We had no entertainment, no food. We

LAW & OUR RIGHTS



LAW OPINION

Improving higher education in Bangladesh:

A national university ranking system?

Taking the western bodies' ranking as the universal standard has serious **implications** for university academic/ research in Bangladesh. This western perception of standard has brought to bear enormous pressure on Bangladeshi university academics/ researchers to perform and produce new knowledge at a level worthy of recognition by western ranking

bodies.

M RAFIQUL ISLAM

The current state of higher education in Bangladesh is at crossroads, often deemed to be falling short of expected standard of research outcomes and new knowledge creation. The existing universities have performed poorly in the Ranking Web of Universities, Bangladesh of July 2021 and the World University Rankings 2022 of Times Higher Education. The ongoing proliferation of public and private universities with less focus on their quality of education has but added to widespread national and international concerns. It is in this context that this short write-up purports to offer a suggestion for the establishment of a national ranking system for universities to boost the quality of higher education and competition among Bangladesh universities. Why this proposal is important and promises to be rewarding is explained below.

Modern progression in identity and prosperity is knowledge-induced. Unprecedented advancement in the production and dissemination of scientific, communication technological, socio economic, and infrastructural knowledge around the globe has engineered a knowledge-based world economy contributing to improve living standard in many countries. A dominant method of assessing this knowledge is the quality of higher education generally provided by universities. There are few international university ranking bodies, notably the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities, which rank universities worldwide including Bangladesh universities. This periodic university ranking system is widely regarded as standard-setting for higher education, a dominant factor in augmenting the prestige, reputation, and prospects of universities, and their staff and students. In accepting the assessment of these ranking bodies, one must bear foremost in mind that these bodies are mostly from rich western countries, whose higher educational resources, both materials and money, societal needs and values, and most importantly the measuring metrics are markedly different, if not contrasting, from that of developing and least developed countries albeit including Bangladesh.

Historically, some western elite universities have succeeded in disseminating their knowledge credentials worldwide and monopolised the global knowledge market since the colonial era. These institutions enjoy their hierarchical status through access to advanced technology and vast budget and control over research publications outlets operating only in English language which they dominate. The peer review of research publications is not always determined on merit and at arm's length, often influenced by the preconceived mindset pre-supposing the high research excellence of academics/researchers from top western universities. Research, publications, and commercialisation of knowledge as the dominant criteria of ranking also favour western universities. The research conducted and knowledge

produced are mostly listed in western citation databases. The knowledge produced and propagated in southern journals and published in languages other than English do not appear on the radar of the western databases. The combined effect of these factors gives an upper hand to western academics and researchers over their counterparts in the South. Notwithstanding these differences, the current international rankings of universities influence the minds of people and authorities in Bangladesh to seeing university performance through the lenses of the western rankers and the standards set by them. This does not necessarily reflect an equitable assessment and evaluation of research accomplished in Bangladesh universities.

Taking the western bodies' ranking

as the universal standard has serious implications for university academic/ research in Bangladesh. This western perception of standard has brought to bear enormous pressure on Bangladeshi university academics/researchers to perform and produce new knowledge at a level worthy of recognition by western ranking bodies. It is this pressure that may seemingly be responsible for several incidents of plagiarism and predatory publications (publications in lieu of money) by university academics to demonstrate their quality of research and quantity of publications, a pressure that often becomes a race for survival called 'publish or perish'. This race at any cost and under all circumstances is a perfect recipe for publication fatigue among academics/researchers, militating against contributory genuine knowledge creation.

The above differential factors and implications are highlighted not to assert that the expectation of western standard of higher education is wrong, but to highlight the nature of international rankings and stress that escalating this ranking cannot be achieved overnight. It must be planned and executed in an incrementally progressive way. The authorities responsible for higher education in Bangladesh need to recognise and facilitate appropriate social impact and technology-based research, support digital platforms and educational websites, incentivise knowledge production and promote dissemination through publications and commercialisation, and adhere to a depoliticised and merit-based recruitments procedures. The purpose is to launch a holistic national environment for university academics/researchers to engage in competitive knowledge creation through research excellence, whose quality and contributions must be ascertained. A formal and authoritative national university ranking system free from political influence would go a long way in managing and grading such research quality and contributions.

The crucial issue is who will administer this national ranking system and what will be the rankings determination parameters. The ranking may cost-effectively be conducted by the existing university regulator, the University Grants Commission (UGC) which may assign the management of the system to a qualified

group of officials and experts and articulate the criteria of rankings with their weightings (numerical may be preferred) to be readily and publicly available to all universities in advance. This arrangement is consistent with other southern countries. Including Nigeria, Kenya, Libya, and Egypt, ten African and Arab countries have introduced their respective national university ranking system and assigned the task of ranking to their university commissions composed of tertiary education experts analogous to UGC. While publications in high ranking and impact-driven international journals remains the predominant criterion of measuring excellence in research, the broader social contributions of research, such as publications in place and language with maximum accessibility of target readership, relevance to the sustainable development goals, local needs, and national interests, partnership with local

organisations, and community outreaching

engagement and inclusivity are no less

significant for measuring the quality and

value of a given research and its talent. The current international ranking system may appear intuitively appealing, but it masks the inherent conundrum that Bangladesh university academics/ researchers are being judged internationally and nationally by the systemic criteria and evaluation procedures largely rooted and evolved in the West to create knowledge necessary for northern economy and invest in the flourishment of its universities developed over centuries. This ranking system and its metrics are anything but universal. The proposed university ranking system of Bangladesh must articulate an equitable model for measuring and judging the social value of research backed by demonstrated evidence of excellence, promote the creation and curation of knowledge responsive to the local community and culture, and embrace alternative approaches to disseminating and using knowledge in national public and private arenas and beyond. Collaborative research with relevant stakeholders on cross-border issues may not be gainsaid. In this venture, the establishment of a neutral national university ranking system inclusively recognising indigenous indicators and process for measuring research excellence would be a domestic research capacity-building experience, going from strength to strength every year. And it may well be this experience that will serve as a stepping-stone towards improving research performativity and competitiveness in knowledge creation and dissemination, thus leading Bangladesh universities to climb the ladder of international ranking.

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RIGHTS ADVOCACY

The Right to Repair and IP Rights in Bangladesh

SAUROV DASH RONI

Most of the corporations aim to block repair through making new devices such that they are even hard to be repaired by the third-party repairers much less the consumers. For example, it is next to impossible to repair Apple's new iPhone 13 without going to an apple authorised store. The tech corporations choose to exert more control also by making their product obsolesced and slower over time, so that they are forced to buy newer models. This is mostly common in mobile phones and other handy devices. The third way that they choose is authorising only some selected repair shops to have their product, and not making them available at the free market.

However, the problem is that IP rights under national legislation of most of the countries including Bangladesh allow most of these processes of continuing monopoly. The most common IP right that is linked to right to repair (R2R) is that of patent. The companies often,

Repair may also cause trademark infringement when the third-party repairers either use the product by procuring it through an unauthorised way or by amending or modifying the trademarked product.

through patenting their spare parts, make it almost impossible for the third-party repairers and consumers to repair a product on their own without breaching the relevant laws. Section 29(1) of the Patents and Designs Act (PDA) of 1911 provides that a patentee may institute suit for infringement in respect of an invention when a person makes, sells or uses the invention without his license, or counterfeits it, or imitates it. As the Act does not provide any scope for national exhaustion, this particular section may bar third parties from selling spare parts of a product without obtaining a license. As a result, the

producers are at will to control who sells their product and who is not allowed

to do so- ultimately rendering the consumers less options, and at times, making it even impossible to repair a thing by not producing the parts required at all.

Likewise, repair may also cause trademark infringement when the third-party repairers either use the product by procuring it through an unauthorised way or by amending or modifying the trademarked product. Section 26 (5) of the Trademark Act, 2009 comes up with great difficulty for third

party repairers as well as the owner of an item. Accordingly, any person may be treated as infringer if that person applies, having known or reason to believe that the application of the mark was not duly authorised by the proprietor or a registered user, a registered trademark to material intended to be used for labeling or packaging goods, or for advertisement purpose. Interpretation of this provision would mean that if a repairer or any person through customisation or repair altered the features of any product in a way that applying the registered mark on that customised or repaired item would not be duly authorised by the proprietor or registered user then such application might cause trademark infringement. Also, this provision would attract use of unauthorised

billboards containing registered trademarks by

third party repairers for advertisement purposes.

Although the existing IP rights legislation in Bangladesh comes as an obstacle to R2R, the situation is the other way around with the Competition Act, 2012. The Act in its section 15(3)(a) prohibits tie-in arrangement as mostly used by the companies to somewhat compel the consumer to purchase the tied products or services (for example, toolbox or other accessories) only from them and not anyone else. Therefore, use of any condition of purchase requiring a purchaser of goods to buy tied products will breach this provision. To give an example, in an otherwise perfect case, Apple's policy to compel the buyer to buy a dongle to connect it to an earphone jack may easily attract this provision. The Act also prohibits 'exclusive distribution agreement' where the agreement limits, restricts or withholds the output or supply of any goods or allocates any area or market for the disposal or sale of the good (section 15(3) (c)). This appears to be in conflict with section 29(1) of the PDA, 1911 as the PDA, in effect, allows exclusive distribution agreement by providing the patentee right to sue for infringement if a person inter alia, sells or uses the invention without his license. Of note, in such conflict, the result is obvious as section 15 (4) of the Competition Act upholds the supremacy of the intellectual property legislation in this situation on the one and only condition that to restrain infringement of IP rights, only the reasonable conditions may be imposed.

In the light of the foregoing, it transpires that a new legislation is a must.

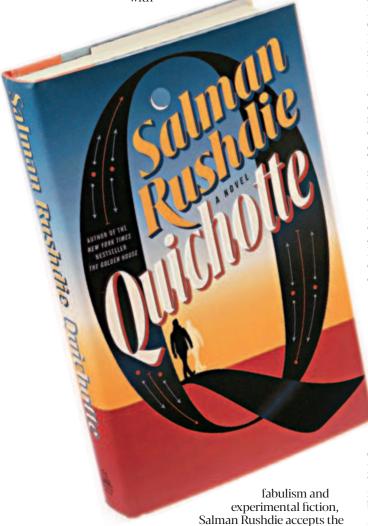
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Facts, Fabulism, and Fantasy: Salman Rushdie's Quichotte

ISBN 9780593133002. Penguin Random House, 2019

BY FARHAD B. IDRIS

Few authors would attempt a task as daunting as borrowing a seventeenthcentury masterpiece *Don Quixote* from Spanish to English and setting it up on twenty-first-century United States. Given his dexterity



task with aplomb.

Like most Rushdie characters from Mumbai, the protagonist of Rushdie's Quichotte is an Indian immigrant in the US. His itinerant life in his newly adopted country has a reason: he works for a pharmaceutical business, which is a cover for pushing opioids. His ride, comparable to Cervantes's Don's rickety horse Rocinante (or Rozinante), is a Chevy Cruz of bygone years. His Sancho Panza—well, there is one in *Quichotte*, sort of-is his son who materializes in the passenger seat of the Cruz out of thin air to give his dad a reality check every now and then. For a fifteen-year old, he shows amazing wisdom. Rushdie's Quichotte's self-begotten romance or his Dulcenea del Toboso, on the other hand, is Salma R, also of Indian origin and a hugely popular TV personality. Rich and unattainable, she is the woman Quichotte idolizes. This is where Rushdie makes a significant departure from Cervantes. Cervantes's psychotic knight adores and elevates an illiterate farm girl of La Mancha to a damsel of phenomenal beauty, lady Dulcinea; Rushdie's Quichotte has his eyes on the farthest removed in twenty-firstcentury United States.

Then, Rushdie's Quichotte is not an exact retelling of Don Quixote; his is based on the French opera set on Cervantes's work. While the French Quichotte authored by Jules Masinet is a loose recapping of its master work predecessor Don Quixote, Rushdie's toggles between both.

Cervantes's job in *Don Quixote* was a hard one: how to balance fantasy wih fiction. His Don, who believes in

wizards, knights, and only virtuous damsels (most of the time he meets only prostitutes), is consumed by fantasy while he inhabits a world that is always real. When the Don realizes that he has been fantasizing foolishly, he dies. No longer young, the Don's death is not all

that unexpected. The little possessions he had is already willed to his niece, his housekeeper, and his loval squire Sancho. Rushdie comments on the Don's end, "The death of Don Quixote felt like the extinction in all of us of a special kind of beautiful foolishness, an innocent grandeur, a thing for which the world has no place, but which the world can call humanity" (281).

More poignant is the end of Massinet's Quichotte. He has been rejected by Dulcinée and dies on his way home, Sancho by his side. Sancho can't stop crying, but in a strange vision Quichotte sees Dulcinée beckoning him to the other world. Rushdie doesn't comment on this event in his Quichotte, but what he says about Cervantes's Don applies well to the ending of Massinet's work.

Rushdie's Quichotte finally meets his Salma R in an opioid transaction encounter; it turns out she too is an inveterate addict. Quichotte brings her to California from New York. His journeys both to and from New York is fraught with pain. On the way to New York, he, a seventy-year-old Indian with a permanent limp in his gait because of a stroke, is subjected to racist attacks. On a Labor Day at Lake Capote, he and his son are accosted by a "wide bodied young white lady in denim dungarees." She wants to know where Quichotte is hiding his turban and beard. When she wants to know what religion Quichotte and Sancho subscribe to, Quichotte gently replies, "It is my good fortune." This provokes someone from the gathering crowd to pipe, "he's is a godless scum," but the irate lady claims Quichotte is most likely a member of ISIS. The ugly encounter ends peacefully when a security man asks Quichotte and Sancho to leave and they oblige.

Finally, Quichotte and Salma gain entry into CentCorp, a guarded place where a secret scientific project is near completion. Its goal is to send people to

another dimension and return them back alive though so far the science has failed to yield that result. CentCorp is the brainchild of Evel Cent who appeared in one of Salma R's TV shows and claimed he was able to bring back a dog from the other side of the portal. Now he admits there was no dog; he made it up. Undeterred, Quichotte invites Salma, "'Come on" \dots 'Let's go through." Presumably, they do. What happens to them? Rushdie

prefaces the event with two statements that offer an explanation: "WHAT VANISHES WHEN EVERYTHING [author's capitalization] vanishes: not only everything but the memory of everything" and "the book of how everything became nothing cannot be written, just as we cannot write the stories of our own deaths" But in this retelling of the story of Cervantes's Don, the knight, does secure his love, his Dulcinea, though it is in a

beyond that no one can imagine. The point of view of Rushdie's Quichotte is that of an omniscient narrator, thugh this may not be the right way to describe someone who is unmistakably like the author and yes, supremely omniscient. However, it enables him to comment on issues such as the opioid crisis, racism, and many aspects of popular culture. There is another rub, though. Quichotte is in fact, an imagined

author of espionage fiction, but Sam DuChamp is a pseudonym. Fact and fantasy separate only by an infinitesimal hair's breadth in the work. But then strict adherence to realism is not Rushdie's purpose in Quichotte; one also realizes that the maze of dreams and inventions does not diminish the reader's interest in the gripping narrative.

character of Sam DuChamp, a failed

Farhad B Idris is Professor of English at Frostburg State University.

Indeed, Quichotte is a tale of imagination

and dreams, testifying to Rushdie's deft

craftsmanship.

"The death of **Don Quixote** felt like the extinction in all of us of a special kind of beautiful foolishness, an innocent grandeur. a thing for which the world has no place, but which the world can call humanity" (281).

For the Love of

"When I first entered this house as a daughter-inlaw, I used to wake up with the beautiful, strong smell of tea. Your dadi had this huge aluminum kettle that she used to put on the stove with the appearance of the first light of dawn, and before anything else, tea was prepared for twenty people in the house."

SANJEEDA HOSSAIN

from me and starts licking it. He was given the last few drops of tea from the mug and now he wants more. He puts his hand inside the mug, gets the boiled tea dust into his fist, inserts them in his mouth and starts chewing furiously.

mug. The smell drives him mad, and he dips his hands inside the lukewarm mug. I ask him to behave himself, and assure him that he will get his mild baby tea, but he

addict at the age of two. Tea runs in his bloodline," my mother makes a passing comment as she walks by.

"When I first entered this house as a daughter-in-law, I used to wake up with the beautiful, strong smell of tea. Your dadi had this huge aluminum kettle that she used to put on the stove with the appearance of the first light of dawn, and before anything else, tea was prepared for twenty people in the house.'

She sits beside me on the bed, and gets lost in her thoughts.

from guests coming in, tea was rarely prepared."

said, surprised.

"Everyone got under the spell of the scent your father brought in. Whenever he visited his in-laws, he used to say, 'Just a sip of tea, I will have nothing else."

He made a gesture of holding an imaginary tea-cup in between his thumb and index finger, and by pretending to drag a sip from it, he used to demand a real cup of tea from anybody who was around him when he arrived at my

My baby boy snatches my empty tea mug

I like to have black tea in a big, steel needs to allow me some time to prepare it.

"Your son. I tell you, has become a tea

"I think I fell in love with that smell, not your father... in my house, apart

"But everyone there drinks tea now," I

Yes, I remember.

No wonder my son also acquired the

When his grandma wakes up in the morning, and he hears her moving around, he can barely keep his eyes shut. The aroma of tea fills the house as the two sit in front of their mugs, spoons and crackers. Together, they watch a morning musical show on TV, have a little tea and become serious about the music being played.

"It is also you, ma. You have accustomed him to start the day with tea.'

"You learnt to drink tea from your grandparents as well," she smiles.

I remember dadabhai sitting on the balcony facing the mango tree. Tiny rays of sunshine used to appear through its leaves. His face used to glow under the rays. As soon as he came out from his bedroom in the morning, he had his cup of tea placed in front of him.

It was English tea poured in a silver-coloured mug and stirred by a silver spoon, served with two thin salted crackers on a saucer and a white handkerchief with my dadi's floral embroidery on it, and a little jar full of sugar cubes. They were all in pristine form when put on his little round, wooden table.

One by one his grandchildren appeared to have a spoon of tea from his cup. Among them there was the one who was getting ready for school; one was crying aloud, not wanting to go to school; one just happily babbling and standing in front of him on wobbly legs, and one that just had learned to taste solid food.

My younger brother who was six months old, sat on my grandfather's lap, calmly gulping down the warm tea, enjoying his share of vitamin D provided by the sun.

All these children of the house made

a procession, standing in a neat, unbroken line to receive the holy water from the Grandfather. After receiving that refreshing draught, they did what seemed to be their daily mission – to scatter around the house.

I was the one planning to abort whatever mission was afoot. I sobbed and wailed, and bawled, and wept, holding the end of my mother's saree, demanding school to be brought home, and didn't stop until I was given an extra sugar cube on my palm.

As I reluctantly went off to get ready for school, I peeped through the room of my boro chacha, the eldest among

my father's siblings, bending over his



used to have his ginger lemon tea by dipping dhakai paneer in it, and was sorely distracted by the children's clamour during his script checking.

this spectacle instilled in me a lifelong desire to be a teacher. Apart from having cheese and tea together while marking piles of scripts, I don't really know how far I have ventured along the mission; nonetheless, the desire came to life as soon as I started giving tuition to children during my first year of college.

I was teaching English to Sadia, an adorable, little girl living upstairs with her parents.

And teaching her was a joy! She was very intelligent, sharp and had a photographic memory. She just had

a look on a page and could remember every word on it.

Her mother used to serve me fried egg, toast and tea every evening. Being aware of my love for tea, Sadia went to the market holding her mother's hand, and chose a special mug for me.

It was a mug that was red and vellow in color and had a matchstick woman drawn on it. The woman wore a mini skirt and tied her untamed, curly hair in a pony tail. And in blue, the mug had written on it: SEXY

"That woman has no resemblance to me dear, why have you bought it for me?" I asked her, amused.

"This is not you, Apu. This is just another woman. I loved the mug, and I love you. It is love brought for the loved one," she said with a straight face.

Someone else used to bring mugs of tea for me and called it, "love brought for the loved one." Her name was Isra, a friend of mine in Malaysia from Iraq. When I was studying at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, I lived with her in a university hostel. Residential halls are called Kolej there; mine was Kolej 8.

We used to have our midnight tea sessions in Isra's room. There were six of us; everyone from a different country. Together, we had macha, the Japanese green tea, with cream and some unknown herbs. That drink had a

disinhibiting effect on our minds, and brought out every thought we had locked up inside. We spoke to each other like madwomen. At times our babbling didn't even mean a thing, and sometimes, we laughed like we never in our lives ever had.

I feel a tug on my clothes, and find my son pulling me from behind. He points at his feeding bottle, and shouts out, "jinjah man!"

I finely chop a little piece of ginger and soak the ginger with lemon in his feeding bottle. I dip a green tea bag in it and mix in a few drops of honey; close the lid for a while, shake it hard and put it in his hands. I turn on The Ginger Bread Man on YouTube for him to watch, and I start to wonder if there is any connection between his lemon ginger tea and the story of The Ginger Bread Man.

As my son watches the cartoon, he giggles while having his baby tea, and shouts out "jinjah man!"

Every evening by seven o'clock, he has his tea in the same manner. I watch him and muse on his tea ritual as he opens the lid of the bottle and carefully brings out the sliced ginger and starts chewing. Happy and content.

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BEATNEW ZEALAND

Batters to play with one stump in board's next revolutionary move

Speaking at the same press conference, Phapa said from now on, batters in domestic cricket will be given a single stump instead of bats to hone their skills further.

UNSPORTING CORRESPONDENT

The government has gifted the officials of Board, Cricket Board (B,CB) houses and land in recognition of their service after the Chapasthan national team notched its greatest achievement by beating New Zealand in a Test in the southern-hemisphere nation.

B,CB President Kamrul Hashan Phapa was given a grand mansion in the capital's Foolshan, right next to his six-storey apartment complex.

"The government has recognised the B,CB's untiring criticism behind the players' development, which led to this grand result," read a sports

All board directors were given houses in the capital and land in their home districts. All of their home districts are in the capital, as it so happens.

Speaking at a press conference at 6:30am, 10 minutes after the team won in New Zealand, Phapa said, "All you people only find fault in us, but never see the good that we do. You say we don't prepare our players for overseas conditions, we never build our team, and this gets my goat the most... you say we don't have long-

term plans

"Ever since I took office I was planning this. We weren't going to give fast bowlers friendly conditions here because we did not want to spoil them, we wanted them to be desperate, hungry. If they play on bad pitches here and perform, imagine how good they will be on good pitches. That was the thinking, although it took nearly a decade for the plan to work, because the cricketers are not very good.

"We also kept the domestic players hungry in a more literal sense because we wanted them to be desperate. Finally, it has borne fruit, and we promise to never give players the fruit." respect but this is my promise to

BC Malik, a very influential board director, said, "Remember when the players went on strike? They wanted respect from the board. We said we would agree to their demands... but did we? No!

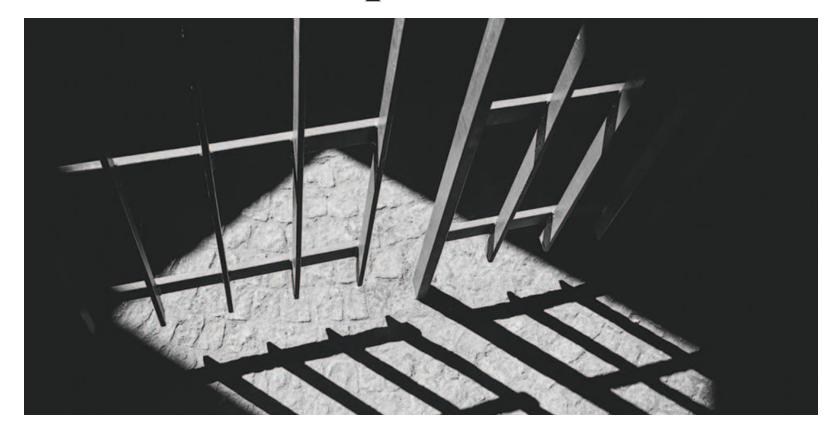
"We didn't give them respect.
Because you have to earn the respect
by playing cricket," said the director
who, like the president, never played
cricket. "If we had given them respect,
they would have climbed on top
of our heads. But since they were
disrespected, they went out to earn
respect. They earned the world's

respect but this is my promise to the nation, we will never respect cricketers."

Speaking at the same press conference, Phapa said from now on, batters in domestic cricket will be given a single stump instead of bats to hone their skills further. To even the scales, bowlers will also have a single stump to bowl at.

"This will be our second phase of development," Phapa said. "Our aim is 2040... I have to be in power till then, I guess. I will be 93, but these are the sacrifices one makes for cricket."

Parents arrested after using newborn to escape dawats



STAR PARENTING CORRESPONDENT

Local police yesterday arrested the parents of a newborn after a barrage of complaints were lodged against them by their friends for using their child to escape social niceties.

The arrest was made last night, according to Sub-Inspector Torbaap Ahmed, after the couple's friends lodged the complaints.

According to the statements, ever since the baby was born the couple has been saying that they need to be with him all the time.

This led the friends to lodge the complaint on the basis that the new parents weren't taking good enough care of the baby, which must be why the "thing" was crying all the time and

needed their undivided attention.

"I am her best friend and kept
calling her to attend my holud but she
didn't even pick up. She just left me a
message saying the baby was crying,"
said one of the complainants, wishing
not to be named.

The father's friends too lined up with complaints. "I just returned from bidesh and it's important he makes

time for me. We have been friends for decades. Yet, it's been over two weeks, I have not seen my friend. His excuse: the baby of course.

"I've seen other people have babies. They meet their friends."

Meanwhile relatives of the couple too have been flustered by the ongoing absence of the new parents from dawats. "We usually spend 20 to 30 minutes at the door while saying goodbye after any social gathering. But the new mom hurried us out of the door saying her baby was crying. We didn't hear any baby cries. How come they didn't engage in the customary long-drawn-out bye-bye at the door?" asked another complainant.

NGO Baby Welfare visited the couple's apartment after the complaints were filed and found that the parents were not giving the exact prescribed amount of tummy time to the baby, and also that their room was not a hundred percent dark when the baby went to sleep at night.

The arrested parents were not able to make any comments regarding the matter as they have been sleeping nonstop in the prison cell.