



**P6** Pori weds Razz, expecting their child



**B1** BB for gradual depreciation of taka



**P7** Russian troops will leave KZ



**P11** Djokovic released, drama continues

# Covid curbs return from Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Covid curbs are back five months after relaxation as the government looks to stem the tide of Covid-19 cases that can potentially cripple the economy and overwhelm hospitals once again.

On the day that the country announced the highest number of Covid-19 cases in four months, the cabinet division issued a notice with an 11-point directive for public movement from January 13.

No social, religious or political gatherings and rallies at open places are allowed until further notice.

Mask wear is mandatory in all public places, including shops, markets, shopping centres, restaurants, offices and courts. Mobile courts will be operated countrywide to penalise violations of the health guidelines.

Bus, launch and train must operate at half capacity. The authority concerned will issue a specific notice on the matter along with the date the restriction will take effect. Drivers and their assistants in vehicles must provide proof of vaccination.

To dine at restaurants, a vaccine certificate must be furnished, while students aged 12 years and above will not be allowed to attend classes in-person unless they are vaccinated after January 15.

No visitors will be allowed at airports. All international arrivals

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

## GOVT'S PLAN TO KNOCK OUT BREWING COVID STORM

- ✦ Buses, trains and launches will operate at half capacity
- ✦ Drivers and helpers must carry vaccine cards
- ✦ Unvaccinated students above 12 will not be allowed in schools
- ✦ Proof of vaccination needed at restaurants
- ✦ International arrivals must produce vaccine cards and get antigen tests
- ✦ No visitors allowed in airport
- ✦ Mobile courts to slap penalty on those without masks
- ✦ Local admin to take necessary steps if cases spiral

# Shamim Osman breaks silence, code of conduct

## Taimur's campaign coordinator arrested

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA AND SANAD SAHA

Ruling Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman finally broke his silence and asked AL leaders and activists in Narayanganj to work in favour of Selina Hayat Ivy, the party's mayor candidate in the January 16 city polls.

By doing so, he, however, violated the electoral code of conduct, as no MP is allowed to join electioneering.

The development came yesterday in the wake of allegations that the influential Osman family in Narayanganj threw its weight behind Taimur Alam Khandakar, who is running for the mayor as an independent candidate.

The long-standing bitter rivalry between Shamim and Ivy has come back to the fore in the run-up to the election. Meanwhile, police yesterday detained Taimur's Election Coordinator Monirul Islam, who is the acting convener of Narayanganj BNP.

Jayedul Alam, the district superintendent of police, said they arrested Monirul as he was facing around three cases over vandalism and sabotage. The cases were filed in March last year but he was not on bail, the SP said.

### 'SYMBOL MATTERS'

Since the NCC polls campaign kicked off, AL leader Ivy had been alleging that her rival Taimur was contesting the election as a "candidate of Shamim", who Ivy had defeated in the previous election.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A marching band member playing a sousaphone at a rally marking the historic Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman yesterday in the Secretariat area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# No 'crossfire' deaths since US sanctions

MUNTAKIM SAAD

No "gunfight" took place in the country between law enforcers and criminals since December 10 last when the United States imposed human rights-related sanctions on the Rapid Action Battalion and seven of its top officials.

Before December 10, killing of people in "shootouts" had become a regular occurrence, data of human rights organisation and media reports show.

Hours before the imposition of the sanction, a suspected "robber", a suspected "robber" was killed in a "gunfight" between Rab and "a gang of robbers" in Barguna's Patharghata upazila. Just four days before, two more suspected "robbers" were killed in another such "shootout" with the elite force in Bhola.

Three accused in the Cumilla ward councillor murder case, were killed in two "gunfights" between police and criminals early on November 30 and December 2 last year.

Human rights defenders say the pause in such killings shows that continuing killing in the name of "gunfight" or stopping it solely depends

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

# DHAKABANK Launches CARD EXPERIENCE CENTER

*Privilege Beyond Limits*

Balance Inquiry

Card & PIN Delivery

Card Statement

Card Payment

Card Application

Document Submission

Passport Endorsement

Offers, Promotion & Booking

Airport Hospitality

Self Service KIOSK

**Get Complimentary C-House Milano Coffee**  
Everytime With Privileged Services By Personal Bankers....

**16474**  
+8809678016474  
For ISD/Overseas Call  
www.dhakabankltd.com

**DHAKABANK**  
LIMITED

**CWS (C)-10, (2nd Floor)**  
Bir Uttam A K Khandakar Road,  
Gulshan-01, Dhaka -1212.

## Six killed in 2 road crashes in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, KUSHTIA

Six people have been killed in two road accidents in Kushtia over the last two days.

Four of them died after a tipper truck hit a battery-run rickshaw coming from the opposite direction on Kushtia-Jhenidah highway in Batail Dakshinpara area of Kushtia sadar, said Idris Ali, OC of Kushtia Highway Police.

Muktar Hossain, a rickshaw driver, and three passengers of the vehicle died on the spot around 5:30am yesterday, he said.

The three were identified as Jasmine, 30, of Swastipur, Rozina Khatun, 28, and Swapna Rani, 45, of Haldarpara of the upazila. They were workers of a local beedi manufacturing factory.

The truck was seized but its driver fled, said the OC, adding that another injured in the accident was receiving treatment at Kushtia General Hospital.

The bodies were kept at the hospital, he said.

Two more people were killed as the driver of another tipper truck lost control over the steering and hit a motorcycle in Taragunia area of Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila around 9:00pm on Sunday.

The victims - Bidyut and Rajan, both 38 and from Kaipale village of the upazila - were on the motorcycle. They died on the spot, said OC SM Jabid Hasan of Daulatpur Police Station.

He said angry locals stopped the truck and set it on fire.

The driver managed to flee, he added.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana offer prayers after placing wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi on his Homecoming Day yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

## Keep up the pace of development: PM

UNB, DHAKA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the country's people to keep up the pace of the economic progress that the country has achieved in the great stride of all to build "Sonar Bangla".

"InshAllah, we'll change the fate of distressed people by implementing the dream of the father of nation. I also urged the people of the country to keep up the progress already achieved for building Sonar Bangladesh," she said.

The PM was presiding over a programme titled "Jatir Pita Mukta Swadesh-a" (The Father of the Nation in his Independent Homeland), joining it virtually from the Gono Bhavan.

The National Implementation Committee for Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Birth Centenary Celebration arranged the programme at BTV's Shaheed Monirul Alam Auditorium in the capital, marking

the 50th historic Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu after the 1971 Liberation War.

Hasina said the goal of her government is to change the fate of the people for whom Bangabandhu liberated the country, struggled throughout his life, endured repeated incarcerations and repression, and dedicated his life.

"Today, I express my gratitude to the people of Bangladesh as they kept their trust in me and I've got the scope time and again to work for the development of the people, coming in power," said Hasina, the eldest daughter of Bangabandhu.

She said people came to know about a complete plan to rebuild independent Bangladesh from the historic 10th January Speech Bangabandhu delivered after returning home from Pakistan jail in 1972.

She said the father of the nation, in his speech, had mentioned how the independent country would run and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Now police press charges against JCD leader

FM MIZANUR RAHMAN, CTG

Police have pressed charges against Elias Khan, a Chhatra Dal leader in Chattogram, in an arms case filed by Rab with Akbar Shah Police Station.

Since Elias's arrest on November 26, his family members have been alleging that he was framed by a team of Rab after being picked up by law enforcers in plainclothes from the street near a shop he owned.

Elias, currently behind bars, is a former vice president of Chattogram City Chhatra Dal. Rab said it arrested Elias with a double-barrel pistol and two cartridges from CDA Road-1 of Bishwa Colony.

He used to sit in his shop named "E & I Traders" just in front of Akbarshah Police Station.

Sub-inspector Biswajit Chandra Debnath of Rab-7 filed the case on November 27. Family members, however, alleged that a local Rab informant in connivance with the SI implicated Elias in the false case.

The Daily Star investigated the incident earlier and found some discrepancy between the witnesses' version and the case statement by the Rab. In a report published on December 18 titled "Ctg Chhatra Dal Leader's Arrest: Everything goes against Rab claim", this newspaper highlighted the discrepancies.

However, the charge sheet, submitted by Akbar Shah Police Station SI Mohammed Sayem, failed to find out the source of the firearms or how the JCD leader allegedly collected the firearms. The charge sheet does not even answer whether Elias had any intention to do any criminal activities carrying the firearms.

SI Sayem submitted the charge sheet on December 28 in the prosecution section of the court, said court sources.

## UP member shot dead in Abhaynagar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newly-elected union parishad member in Jashore was shot dead at point-blank last night.

The incident happened around 8:00pm when Uttam Sarker, 34, was on his way home in Harishpur village from Shundali Bazar in Abhaynagar upazila.

He was attacked near Harishpur Primary School by assailants who were hiding in a bush.

The attackers shot him in the chest, killing him on the spot, said AKM Shamim Hasan, officer-in-charge of Abhaynagar Police Station.

Uttam became a member of Shundali union parishad after he won in the UP polls on December 26.

The OC said they were trying to identify those involved in the killing.

"We are investigating the incident," he said. The incident follows the fifth phase of the UP election which concluded last week. At least 10 people were killed in polls-violence in that phase.

A total of 86 people have been killed in the various phases of the UP elections since they began in mid-2021.

The most number of deaths happened during the second phase when 30 people were killed.

## Form EC thru law, not search committee

JP (Manju) tells Hamid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (Manju) yesterday said the new election commission should be formed through the enactment of a law in line with the constitution and not through search committee.

A seven-member JP delegation, led by party chairman Anwar Hossain Manju, said this at a dialogue with President Abdul Hamid at the Bangabhaban regarding formation of the new EC.

In response, the president said he will try to meet their proposal in accordance with the power bestowed upon him as per the constitution, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

"There is a clear provision in our constitution stating that the election commission will have to be formed after enacting a law in this regard," Sheikh Shahidul Islam, JP (Manju) general secretary, told this newspaper after the hour-long meeting that began at 6:30pm.

"We told the president we did not suggest any name for a search committee as the constitution has no such provision [for forming the EC by a search committee]."

"Rather, we told him that an EC should be formed comprising people who will be able to gain people's trust and hold a free, fair and acceptable election."

President Hamid has so far held the dialogue with 18 political parties, most of whom proposed the enacting of a law for the EC formation.

## Guliakhali beach now a reserved tourism zone

UNB, CHATTOGRAM

Guliakhali Sea Beach, a unique sea beach located in Sitakunda upazila, was declared a reserved area for tourism yesterday.

The civil aviation and tourism ministry made an announcement in this regard, bringing 259.1 acres of the beach under its protection as khas land.

The ministry notification said the area was being affected by unplanned establishments. The protection will also allow development of tourism in the beach, it said.

Lush Kewra forests crisscrossed by a dense network of thin canals give this beach a unique appearance. The canals swell during high tide. Unlike other beaches, it does not have sand, being covered with green grass instead.

The beach is only five kilometres off Sitakunda bazar. It has recently been developed into a popular tourist spot for locals and travelers wishing to see a beach that is beyond ordinary.

## No 'crossfire' deaths since US sanctions

FROM PAGE 1

on law enforcers.

The government and law enforcers often claimed that such killings took place after criminals opened fire first. But in reality, the law enforcers "staged" such incidents, they said.

Similar break in "gunfights" was seen after the killing of Major (ret'd) Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan in Cox's Bazar on July 31, 2020. Except one in Sylhet on August 2 that year, not a single "shootout" was reported in the country between law enforcers and criminals for over five months afterwards.

However, 184 people were killed in "shootouts" in the first seven months in 2020, according to the tally of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

Following the killing of Sinha, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement on August 6, 2020 said the then army chief and the inspector general of police gave

necessary instructions to their respective forces so that no "such incident" occurs again in future.

Last year, 51 people were killed in "gunfights" between law enforcers and criminals, shows ASK data.

Speaking to The Daily Star on Sunday, noted rights activist Nur Khan said these are extrajudicial killings. Incidents of "shootout" or "gunfight" didn't occur at all as claimed by law enforcers, he added.

"If 'shootout' existed at all, it would have continued even after the imposition of US sanctions or after the killing of Major Sinha. After the sanctions, we saw one was tortured to death in Rab custody. It's quite evident that if the government wishes, it can either stop or continue extrajudicial killings."

Such extrajudicial killings increase, decrease or stop in special situations or times, the rights activist said, adding that

the number of arrests grows during or before elections and the number of enforced disappearance goes up during political movements.

"When a special situation arises or when people get angry, such shootouts stop. That's why it seems that extrajudicial killings can be a strategy of the rulers to create an atmosphere of fear so that people can't protest any offences or wrongdoings," said Nur Khan.

Human rights bodies say extrajudicial killings had begun in early 2002 in the name of "Operation Clean Heart". There had been a spate of "gunfights" between law enforcers and criminals since 2004.

According to rights organisation Odhikar, at least 3,135 people were killed in "gunfights" between law enforcement and security agencies and criminals from January 2001 to September last year.

The number of people

killed in "gunfights" increased in 2018 compared to the previous two years after a countrywide anti-narcotics drive began.

The Awami League in its 2008 election manifesto stated that "extrajudicial killings" will be stopped if it is voted to power.

After the party came to power, the then government in February 2009 informed the UN Human Rights Commission that Bangladesh adopted a "zero tolerance" policy for extrajudicial killings, torture, and deaths in custody. But "gunfights" took place throughout that year, except in March.

Asked about the pause in "shootout", Rab Director (legal and media wing) Commander Khandaker Al Moin yesterday said occurrence of "gunfights" does not depend on any special situation or time; rather it depends on the circumstances of a drive when criminals open fire first.

"The constitution and law of Bangladesh have permitted us to open fire in self-defence. It's not a matter of human rights. We might have not come under attack in the last one month. This proves that it's not a routine issue that gunfights would take place five-seven times every day. We only open fire when we come under attack," he claimed.

The USA on December 10 imposed human rights-related sanctions on Rab and seven current and former top officials of the agency, including Benazir Ahmed, now inspector general of police.

The State Department in a separate release said they barred two Rab officials including Benazir, former director general of Rab, from entering the US for their involvement in a gross violation of human rights, namely the May 2018 extrajudicial killing of a Teknaf municipal councillor.

## Shamim Osman breaks silence, code of conduct

FROM PAGE 1

Taimur has always refuted the allegation, saying he wants to win to free the Narayanganj city corporation from the "clutches of contractors".

Shamim extended his support to Ivy at a press conference yesterday, just six days before the polls.

Speaking at a local community centre, he said, "I am sorry for holding this press conference during the electioneering. I was silent for a few days, and many tried to create an issue over this. It hampers the unity of the party. Some are hurting the party while

being a part of it.

"All Awami League leaders are here. I could not join the campaign earlier but I am joining it today."

He then asked party leaders and activists to go to voters' doors and seek blessings for Ivy. "Blaming others will not bring in votes."

The MP added, "It does not matter who the candidate is. It's the [Awami League's electoral] symbol that matters. 'Boat' is Bangabandhu's and we all stand by it."

Contacted after the press conference, Ivy told The Daily Star, "Shamim Osman is a party man

and he can extend his support, but I am reaching out to the voters.

"I want to stand by them as I need their votes. It is up to the party to see who is extending support to me and who is not."

About Shamim breaching the electoral code, Matiur Rahman, Narayanganj district election officer, said they would take action as per the rules.

Taimur said, "It seems the government is putting pressure. There is a big crack in my rival camp and that is why they always blame each other."

He alleged that law enforcement

agencies were intimidating his supporters and asking them to work in Ivy's favour.

Nur Uddin, president of Amra Narayanganj bashi, a non-political and social organisation, said Shamim's press conference was a big push for Ivy as he has a good number of followers in Narayanganj.

"But we have seen in the past that many of his words do not match his actions. It is also true that Shamim had no other option than to support Ivy. Now, those who had kept themselves aloof from the campaign might work to ensure Ivy's victory."

## Covid curbs return

FROM PAGE 1

will have to show a negative Covid-19 certificate and undergo a rapid antigen test.

Only truck drivers will be allowed at the land port, while screenings at all ports will be increased. Embargoes would be imposed on crews to prevent them from leaving the vessels.

The measures are expected to contain the latest surge in Covid-19 cases, driven most likely by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The variant has undergone 50 genetic changes, making it more transmissible than the dominant Delta variant and more likely to evade the immune protection provided by vaccines or previous infection.

Subsequently, it is causing a fresh wave of Covid cases the world over, compelling governments to enforce measures to restrict social mixing.

In Bangladesh, the official tally of Omicron cases stands at 31, after 10 new cases were reported yesterday by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b).

Samples from all of the patients were collected before December 28, according to the data published on the global database GISAIID.

But health officials believe the fast-multiplying variant is causing the spike in cases seen in recent days.

In the 24 hours to 8 am yesterday, the country logged in 2,231 new cases - the highest since

September 10 last year. In the preceding 24 hours, 1,491 new cases were registered.

The case positivity rate yesterday was 8.5 percent - the highest since Sept 5.

Vaccinated patients are more likely to experience milder disease if infected by the Omicron variant, while a booster dose is said to provide bigger and broader protection against the rogue variant.

In Bangladesh, the rate of vaccination is modest: as of January 6, 39 percent of the targeted population and 31 percent of the total population have received both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The health ministry will take necessary measures and initiatives to expedite the vaccination campaigns.

Students, who have thus far not been a major focus of the vaccination campaign, will be given special attention.

Hours before the cabinet division issued the notice, Education Minister Dipu Moni at a press conference said they have taken a target of inoculating more than 75 lakh students aged between 12 and 18 by January 31.

There are about 1.16 crore students aged between 12 and 18. Of them, 44 lakh have got the first dose while another 4.2 lakh have gotten both.

As many as 75.5 lakh students are yet to get the vaccine.

"Earlier, we faced complexities on vaccine preservation and

registration. We have overcome the problem now. The DGHS is not seeking much documentation. The whole process has become easier for our students," she said.

If a student above 12 shows the relevant documents, he/she can get the vaccine, she said, while suggesting the students take at least a dose to attend classes in person.

Meanwhile, the education ministry is due to sit today to discuss vaccination of students of National University, Open University and Islamic Arabic University as a large number of the students from the institutes remain unvaccinated.

As of now, there is no plan to halt in-person classes and SSC and HSC exams will be held in the middle of the year, she said.

The education ministry will also heighten monitoring at the educational institutions to ensure the health guidelines are being followed properly.

## US warns Iran after regime sanctions 50 Americans

AFF, WASHINGTON

Washington said Sunday it refused to be threatened by Iran's weekend sanctioning of some 50 Americans including senior officials, warning that Tehran would face "severe consequences" if it attacked any US nationals.



Daybreak at the capital was greeted with the sound of hurried footsteps yesterday. Marking Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day, the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Dhaka Marathon 2022 began from the Army Stadium around 5:30 in the morning and ended at Hatirjheel Amphitheatre. Over 600 local and foreign runners participated in the marathon, whose energy lit up the streets even before the day began proper. This photo was taken from Hatirjheel.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day observed



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

### STAR REPORT

The nation yesterday observed the historic Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in a befitting manner.

Marking the day, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with her younger sister Sheikh Rehana paid homage by placing wreath at the portrait of the Father of the Nation in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at the capital's Dhanmondi in the morning, reports BSS.

After laying the wreath, the prime minister stood in solemn silence for some time, as a mark of profound respect to the memory of Bangabandhu, the architect of the country's

**Bangabandhu, the undisputed leader of the nation and supreme commander of the country's Liberation War, returned to independent Bangladesh via London and New Delhi on January 10, 1972, after 290 days of confinement in a Pakistan jail. Since then, the nation is observing the day as the Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu.**

independence.

On the occasion, the PM also released a commemorative postage stamp, a first-day cover and a data card at her official residence Gono Bhaban, reports UNB.

Bangabandhu, the undisputed leader of the nation and supreme commander of the country's Liberation War, returned to independent Bangladesh via London and New Delhi on January 10, 1972, after 290 days of confinement in a Pakistan jail.

Since then, the nation is observing the day as the Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

After placing wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Dhanmondi, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud said the anti-liberation forces are still active in Bangabandhu's Bangladesh, and they need to be eliminated.

Marking the day, Gonoforum organised a discussion at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

Attending the discussion virtually, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's close aide and Gonoforum president Dr Kamal Hossain said the day is the most memorable one in his life. "I returned to Bangladesh with Bangabandhu," he said.

Dr Kamal stressed the need for national unity for the greater interest of Sonar Bangla (Golden Bangla), as dreamt by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

### PRAYER TIMING JAN 11



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5:30	12:45	4:00	5:36	7:00
Jamaat	6:05	1:15	4:15	5:40	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## A hectic day for commuters

People suffer due to 7-hour traffic restriction in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While it's usual for the capital's streets to see increased traffic on weekday mornings, yesterday's gridlock was still something out of the ordinary.

Traffic congestion in many streets was caused by the seven-hour traffic restriction on Hatirjheel and surrounding areas to accommodate the Bangabandhu Dhaka marathon. The marathon started from Bangladesh Army Stadium, went through Kakoli-Gulshan-2-Gulshan-1 and ended at Hatirjheel Amphitheatre.

The prior day, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) had requested commuters to avoid roads in the area and take alternate routes from 4:00am to 1:00pm.

After the marathon ended, traffic movement resumed in Hatirjheel area around noon.

During the period, many office-goers and students were seen walking to their destinations as vehicles on the road had ground to a halt.

Besides these areas, the entirety of the Rampura-Badda-Pragati Sarani road was severely congested, while traffic jams were also seen in Malibagh, Moghbazar, Jahangir Gate, and Khilkhet, this correspondent found during a visit.

Meanwhile, the Uttara-Mohakhali route was also clogged. A long line of vehicles were seen on Mohakhali flyover throughout the morning.



Even though the restriction for vehicular movement was placed on the Army Stadium to Hatirjheel route, it ended up affecting almost all of the capital. This photo was taken from Tejgaon Industrial Area yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Commuters complained of their vehicles being stuck on the same spot for hours. One of them, Samiul Alam, who was on his way from Badda to Uttara, said he had to stay at the same spot for hours.

Mir Nazmul Alam, father of an O-level candidate, posted photos of the situation on the Facebook group "Traffic Alert". His caption read, "My son's [exam] centre is in Sector-4, Uttara. We left Rampura at 12:00pm, and after seeing the state of the road, I'm not sure if my son will be able to take the test today [yesterday]."

SM Shamim, additional

deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division (Traffic) Police, told The Daily Star that they had to block 26 different points and create six diversion points to facilitate "zero traffic" at Hatirjheel from 5:00am to 12:00pm.

Over 600 local and foreign athletes participated in the marathon event, which started at 5:30am. A total of 190 people took part in the 42-kilometre full marathon, while 404 participated in the 21-kilometre half-marathon.

As many as 20 elite runners from seven countries and 16 runners from four South Asian countries took part in the event.

### 'Nothing but mockery'

Alleges Rizvi about EC dialogue

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that the ongoing dialogue at Bangabhaban is nothing but a mockery before formation of the Election Commission (EC).

Speaking at a human-chain programme, BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi alleged that the prime minister is staging a mockery through the president's talks on EC's reconstitution, only to mislead people.

"Ultimately, the Election Commission will be formed reflecting the political will of the prime minister," the BNP leader observed.

A faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists jointly organised the programme in front of Jatiya Press Club, demanding immediate release of journalist leader Ruhul Amin Gazi.

On October 21, 2020, police arrested Gazi under the Digital Security Act.

Former BFUJ president Shawkat Mahmud said journalists have been waging a movement for nearly a year, demanding release of Gazi.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



### First death anniversary of Mizanur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Mizanur Rahman Khan, the joint editor of Prothom Alo.

The noted journalist died of cardiac arrest last year at a private hospital in the capital. He was 53. He was buried at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in Mirpur.

He was one of the few journalists who became known for their expertise on writing about judicial matters.

Before joining Prothom Alo, he worked as a journalist in different media including Samakal, Jugantar, Manabjamin, Mukhtakantha, Banglabazar, New Nation, Saptahik Manchitra and two other dailies published from Barishal - Daily Dakshinanchal and Biplobi Bangladesh.

His first book was published in 1995.

His notable books include "Shongbidhan Ebong Tottabodhayak Sarkar Niye Bitorko" (1995), "Bangladesh-er Rajneetir

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## ROCKET Mobile Banking 1<sup>st</sup> for Dhaka WASA Bill Payments



ROCKET was awarded first prize for being the most used mobile banking service by Dhaka WASA for bill payments for its customers.

Mr. Md. Tazul Islam, MP, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives presented the prize as chief guest.

Engineer Taqsem A Khan, Managing Director & CEO, Dhaka WASA presided over the event.

Mr. Abul Kashem Md. Shirin, Managing Director & CEO of Dutch-Bangla Bank received the prize on behalf of ROCKET Mobile Banking.

We are honored to have the privilege of being the trusted partner of the esteemed clients of Dhaka WASA.



16216  
24 hours, from any phone



Dutch-Bangla Bank  
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER

## Keep the pace of development

FROM PAGE 2  
which ideology would be followed by.  
Referring to the assassination of Bangabandhu, Hasina said when he had taken steps for the empowerment and socioeconomic development of the common, poor and grassroots people, the August-15 blow came. This blow was not to assassinate just a president, rather to kill

the ideology and spirit of an independent country, which was reflected on the activities of the successive regimes, she said.  
Former VC of Dhaka University Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and former foreign secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed also spoke at the discussion. Chief Coordinator of the National Implementation Committee Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury delivered the welcome speech.

Mohiuddin received Bangabandhu at Heathrow Airport on January 8, 1972, when he went to London after being freed from a Pakistan jail.  
Cultural personality Asaduzzaman Noor, MP, recited two poems composed on Bangabandhu and Bangamata at the function conducted by Tropa Majumder. The discussion was followed by a cultural soiree.

## Saifuddahar Shahid passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saifuddahar Shahid, the creator of the first Bangla computer keyboard "Shahidlipi" passed away in Albuquerque, New Mexico yesterday at the age of 74.



He was suffering from Alzheimer's and other complications. Shahidlipi was developed in 1985, as a QWERTY keyboard with 182 characters, for what was formerly called Macintosh computers. It was prior to advent of Bijoy. Several publications including the periodical Tarokalok and the Daily Azad were published using this keyboard.

A graduate of Buet, Shahid had established a company called National Computers in Dhaka. It was from there the keyboard was developed. He migrated to USA in the 90's.

Marking the death anniversary, Mizanur Rahman Khan Smriti Sangsad and his family have chalked up various programmes. Humanity Foundation has organised a memorial meeting at Jatiya Press Club around 10:00am today.

## First death

FROM PAGE 3  
Shonkoter Boishisto" (2003), "Tatabadhyak Sarkar: Oshubho Chinho" (2009), "1971 American Gopon Potro" (2006), and "American Nothigulite Mujib Hotya" (2013).

He also conducted a comprehensive study on "the genesis philosophy of the first Constitution" and various aspects of the Liberation War.

Marking the death anniversary, Mizanur Rahman Khan Smriti Sangsad and his family have chalked up various programmes. Humanity Foundation has organised a memorial meeting at Jatiya Press Club around 10:00am today.

## Nothing but

FROM PAGE 3  
Besides, Rizvi alleged that seniority has been ignored when elevating four HC judges to the Appellate Division recently.

"A judge has been elevated to the Appellate Division, superseding 19 judges. Because, they [govt] need their loyal people in the Appellate Division to reflect the political will of the prime minister."

## Threatened

FROM PAGE 5  
receiving death threats. However, police are not taking any action, he alleged. Asked, OC Mamun said police are investigating the matter and legal action will be taken against those involved.

## Checkmate by little

FROM PAGE 12  
introduced to the sport through the course, they had no idea or interest in chess.

However, once they started attending classes, their interest blossomed. Soon, they taught their fathers the game, and they used to play at night during their free time. This practice helped Poly and Mim hone their skills.

"Their parents played a big role in their success," said Farhadur. "When the tournament started with some 15 players from the classes, some parents objected as they were worried about them

returning home late [from the Bangladesh Chess Federation, located in Motijheel].

"However, we assured the parents and took one of them to the federation building to show them the environment.

"The parents also took notice of their children's growing fondness for chess, and soon enough, they were convinced."

National coach Shakil said he was impressed by the budding chess players. "Their enthusiasm for the game is unimaginable. We have more female participation right now, which is truly inspiring, but

we are also working to get more boys involved as well.

"In terms of funding, AEF is helping us quite a lot," added Shakil. "In the future, we are hopeful that the government and the chess federation will take notice of this initiative, and support our efforts."

With their parents' approval and their mentors' support, underprivileged children like Poly and Mim have been motivated to improve themselves.

From knowing very little about chess, they now see it as a legitimate career path and will surely inspire others like them to do the same.

## Afghan envoy to China quits after six months of no pay

AFP, Beijing

Afghanistan's ambassador to China left a colourful resignation note for his post-Taliban takeover successor yesterday -- revealing that staff had not been paid for months and that a lone receptionist had been left to answer phones.

David Ahmad Qaem took to Twitter to detail how he had to scrape cash from the embassy's bank account to pay staff after the Taliban took control of the South Asian country last August.

"Since we did not receive salaries from Kabul for the last six months, we assigned a committee from within the diplomats to solve the financial issues," Qaem wrote in a letter to Afghanistan's foreign ministry dated January 1 but posted to social media yesterday.

Still, he left some funds for his successor.

## Britain puts pvt health firms

FROM PAGE 12  
5,486,519 people globally since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to an AFP tally compiled from official sources yesterday.

booster shot campaign for frontline workers and vulnerable people aged 60 and above yesterday as authorities grapple with a rapidly escalating outbreak driven by the Omicron variant.

Nearly 180,000 new infections were recorded overnight, up nearly six times from a week earlier, with several urban centres imposing night-time curfews and restrictions on public gatherings.

India began a Covid-19

**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

**Tender No. NSU/21-22-07**

North South University is inviting sealed offer from bona fide/ reputed organization/ distributors/ business partners/ agents for supplying digital video radio equipment (Radio and TV station) for North South University as described in the tender schedule under two envelope system.

Interested bidders may collect a schedule of tender from Southeast Bank Ltd. Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on all working days till **January 17, 2022** by paying non-refundable amount of Taka 1,000.00 (One Thousand) in cash for each schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the quoted price in the form of Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favor of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **January 18, 2022** by 2.15 p.m. at the office of the undersigned. The offers will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on the same day. Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

**Director, Internal Affairs**  
**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229  
Phone : +88-02-55668200, Ext. 1204, Fax: +88-02-55668202  
E-mail to: [procurement@northsouth.edu](mailto:procurement@northsouth.edu), [www.northsouth.edu](http://www.northsouth.edu)

**brac**

**Invitation for Tender (IFT)**  
for Color Pencil & Paper Tray

Project Name	BRAC Education Programme		
Tender Name	Color Pencil & Paper Tray		
Tender Package No.	BPD/2022/IFT-1011		
Reference No. & Date	BPD/2022/IFT-1011 Date: 10-01-2022		
Source of Fund	Government of Bangladesh (GOB)		
Name of Tender	Procurement of <b>Color Pencil &amp; Paper Tray</b>		
Time of Delivery	As Per Tender Schedule		
Price of Tender Schedule	BDT 1,000.00 (Non-Refundable)		
Tender schedule fee to be paid through Bkash including cash out charge. (Bkash No.-01719262589-personal), must share company name & Tender Ref. in Bkash Ref.			
Tender Security	As Per Tender Schedule		
Documents Availability on e-tender platform & Tender Dropping (Online), Date & Time	<a href="https://tender.brac.net/">https://tender.brac.net/</a> (Go to live tender from the dashboard after entering the above URL and search for the Tender Ref. No.)		
Tender Opening Place, Date & Time (Online Opening)	BPD/2022/IFT-1011	11-01-2022 to 25-01-2022, 2:30 pm	
	BPD/2022/IFT-1011	25-01-2022, 3:00 pm through Google meet, link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/zik-gujw-tdd">meet.google.com/zik-gujw-tdd</a>	

**BRAC Centre, 75, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212**  
Phone: 02222281265-72, Ext No 3796 or Mob: 01709647508

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

District Primary Education Office  
Habiganj  
Website: [dpe.habiganj.gov.bd](http://dpe.habiganj.gov.bd)

Memo No. dpeo/hobi/gps/14 Date: 09/01/2022

**e-Tender Notice No.1/2021-22**

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

SL No.	Name of scheme	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Tender/proposal document last selling/downloading date & time	Tender/proposal closing date & time	Remarks
1	Supply of Various Types Furniture at different Government Primary Schools of Habiganj Sadar, Baniachong, Bahubal and Azmiriganj Upazilas in Habiganj District under Need Based Infrastructure Development Government Primary School- 1st Phase (NBIDGPS-1).	623210	NBIDGPS-1/G1.0142	27-January-2022 16:00	01-February-2022 11:00	OTM
2	Supply of Various Types Furniture at different Government Primary Schools of Chunurughat, Lakhai, Nabiganj and Madhobpur Upazilas in Habiganj District under Need Based Infrastructure Development Government Primary School- 1st Phase (NBIDGPS-1).	623399	NBIDGPS-1/G1.0143	27-January-2022 16:00	01-February-2022 11:00	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for tender/proposal document to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

**Mohammed Amirul Islam**  
District Primary Education Office  
Habiganj  
Phone: 0831-54486  
E-mail: [dpeohobig@gmail.com](mailto:dpeohobig@gmail.com)

GD-63

## Know your deshi

FROM PAGE 12  
antidepressant.

-- It may reduce problems with fluid retention, ankle swelling, and circulation.

-- It may help ease insomnia. Many consider this herbal remedy to be a safe alternative to prescription medications used to treat sleep disorders.

-- External use may minimise scarring on the skin.

-- Its anti-inflammatory properties may be useful in treating arthritis.

-- It may be useful against liver and kidney toxicity.

Centella asiatica is generally considered safe to use. However, more research is needed to confirm the effects listed above. This herbal medicine is also not meant to replace any doctor-approved treatment plan.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Office of the Executive Engineer  
Health Engineering Department (HED), Barishal Division, Barishal  
E-mail: [xenhedbsl2015@gmail.com](mailto:xenhedbsl2015@gmail.com), Phone: 0431-63792

Memo No. 45.02.0000.341.07.002.21-13 Dated: 06.01.2022

**Invitation for e-Tender (IFT)**  
**Limited Tendering Method (LTM)**

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following packages.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of works	Document price (BDT)	Tender security (BDT)	Document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
1	644403	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/01	a. Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil Sanitary & Electrical works of Baishari Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Banaripara Upazila in Barishal District. b. Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Bisharkandi Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Banaripara Upazila in Barishal District.	1000.00	41000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	
2	644404	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/02	Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Chandromohon Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Sadar Upazila in Barishal District.	1000.00	17000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	
3	644405	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/03	a. Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Chandpura Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Sadar Upazila in Barishal District. b. Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Kederpur Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Babugonj Upazila in Barishal District.	1000.00	41000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	23.01.2022 13.00 Hrs
4	644406	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/04	Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Rongoshree Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Bakergonj Upazila in Barishal District.	1000.00	20000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	
5	644407	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/05	Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil, Sanitary & Electrical works of Korapur Mother & Child Welfare Center (MCWC) at Sadar Upazila in Barishal District.	1000.00	23000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	
6	644408	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/06	Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil Sanitary & Electrical Works of Male Hostel (5-Storeyed Building) at Institute of Health Technology (IHT) in Barishal District.	1000.00	74000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	
7	644409	HED/BD/GOB-FP/2021-22/07	Repair, Renovation and Maintenance work of Civil Sanitary & Electrical Works of Female Hostel (4-Storeyed Building) at Institute of Health Technology (IHT) in Barishal District.	1000.00	59000.00	20.01.2022 17.00 Hrs	

These are online tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the abovementioned Portal and no offline tender/hard copies will be accepted. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited on online through any registered bank's branches up to time specified in Online Notice. Supplementary information with guidelines are available in the National e-GP System and from the e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)). The procuring entity reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Executive Engineer**  
Health Engineering Department (HED)  
Barishal Division

GD-61

# WINTER'S LITTLE GIFT

The shores of Sunamganj's Tanguar Haor become open grasslands during winter. This prompts farmers from nearby villages to flock to the fields with their cows, which munch on the fresh turf and leave behind fresher cowdung. This dung is in turn collected by others, like these two girls, who dry and use it as fuel for their stoves. This photo was taken recently from Madhyhanagar upazila.

PHOTO: DWOHA CHOWDHURY



Deceased Atique's parents mourn their son. PHOTO: STAR

## Hit by BRTC bus, 2 teens die in Chandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Two teenagers died as a BRTC bus hit their vehicle at Chandpur's Kachua yesterday.

The deceased are Sajib Hossain (18) from Budhunda and Atiqur Rahman (14) from Sachar Gopirdigheer Paar in Kachua. They were cousins.

According to SI Abdur Razzaque of Kachua Police Station, the accident occurred around 11:00am when four teenagers, including the two, were returning home on a tractor and a speeding Kachua-bound BRTC bus hit the tractor from behind near Shimultali area. The tractor fell into the adjacent canal, where Atique and Sajib drowned and died.

Locals rescued tractor driver Mehedi Hasan and Ful Miah and sent them to Kachua hospital.

Monir Hossain, UP chairperson of Sachar, said the Kachua-Sachar-Gauripur road is too narrow, which makes it accident-prone. "We demand that the road be turned into a four-lane one."

OC Md Mohiuddin of Kachua Police Station said no one was arrested yet as the driver fled the scene with the bus.

### LEGALITY OF ICT CASE

## SC to hear Shahidul Alam's appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court will hold a hearing on an appeal against the High Court verdict that rejected a writ petition of internationally acclaimed photographer Shahidul Alam, challenging legality of a case filed under Section 57 of Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006.

The apex court yesterday asked Shahidul to file a leave to appeal petition with this court within four weeks against the High Court verdict delivered on December 14 last year.

A six-member full bench of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, passed the order during hearing a petition moved by lawyer Sara Hossain on behalf of Shahidul — seeking stay on the investigation in the case.

The HC on December 14 rejected the writ petition filed by Shahidul Alam, saying that the petition is not acceptable against the criminal case proceedings.

On March 3, 2019, Shahidul filed the petition challenging the legality of the case, in which he was imprisoned for 107 days.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin represented the state during the hearing.

## Chaos at vaccine centres

Health guidelines being ignored during student inoculation programme in port city



The road in front of Rima Community Centre, one of the three venues selected for the inoculation programme, was full of so many people that vehicles found it hard to move past the spot.

PHOTO: STAR

ARUN BIKASH DEY, City

While authorities have taken an initiative to inoculate students of Chattogram, health guidelines are barely being followed during the vaccination campaign. Students and their guardians crowded the inoculation centres yesterday, with no social distancing in sight.

The vaccination programme kicked off for students aged between 12 and 18 years in the port city yesterday.

Three community centres were selected for this purpose: Rima Community Centre at Askar Dighir Par, Hall Seven Eleven at Dewan Bazar and Abdullah Community Centre on Agrabad Access Road.

Visiting the venues, this correspondent found long queues of students in front of the buildings. The lines spilled onto the roads, creating traffic congestion. Guardians

accompanying the students made the situation even worse.

A long tailback was seen at Agrabad Access Road, in front of Abdullah Community Centre, around 11:30am, and similar scenes were observed in front of the other venues.

Ninth-grader Tanmoy Ghosh was seen standing in line in front of Hall Seven Eleven. He said he was happy to get vaccinated, but at the same time, described the troubles he faced.

"We had to stand in a long queue on the road. So, traffic movement stood still for a long time in the area. If the programme was conducted at every school, students would have benefitted," he said.

However, many students and their guardians did not wear facemasks nor maintained social distancing while standing in lines. Rafiq Ahmed, a guardian, expressed his worries over the matter. "No one is following

health guidelines. No one is maintaining social distancing. I'm worried about my child getting infected," he said. "The administration should've been strict to maintain health rules during the programme."

Contacted, Dr Elias Chowdhury, civil surgeon of Chattogram, said they are aiming to vaccinate 28,000 students in the city and 50,000 in 15 upazilas every day till January 18. "The number of community centres will be increased in two to three days, so students can get vaccinated easily," he said.

Asked, Dr Hasan Shahriar Kabir, Chattogram divisional director of DGHS, said the programme was arranged at community centres and not hospitals due to safety concerns.

"To administer Pfizer vaccines, AC venues are needed, but we could only manage three such venues," he said. "We will increase that number soon."



"We had to stand in a long queue on the road. So, traffic movement stood still for a long time in the area. If the programme was conducted at every school, students would have benefitted."

Ninth-grader TANMOY GHOSH

### BOAT CAPSIZE

## 3 more bodies recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Naganj

Three more bodies were recovered yesterday from the estuary of Dhaleshwari and Buriganga rivers in Narayanganj, six days after a motorboat capsized in the district.

The deceased are Tanim (8), Abdullah (22), and Shamsuddin (62), said Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy assistant director of Narayanganj fire service.

Fire service recovered the bodies after locals noticed them floating near Dharmaganj Kheyaghat area around 7:00am. The bodies will be handed over to their respective families.

Six bodies were recovered on Sunday. Two more passengers of the motorboat are still missing. On January 5, the motorboat, with nearly 70 people on board, overturned as a Dhaka-bound passenger launch Farhan-6, hit it near Dharmaganj in Fatulla.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD  
Road Division, Brahmanbaria  
Phone: 0851-59632  
eebra@rhd.gov.bd

**e-Tender Notice No. 18/2021-2022**

Memo No. ৩৫.০১.১১৩.৪০৬.১৪.২৫৯.১৬.৫৪ Date: ১০/০১/২০২২

e-Tenders are invited from only the enlisted tenderer for LTM in Brahmanbaria Road Division in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Brahmanbaria for the procurement of:

S.L No.	Package No.	Tender ID	Name of the works
1.	18/e-GP/EE/RHD/ BrahLTM/2021-2022	646496	Construction of Saucer Drain & Cross Drain at Isapur Bridge Approach at 20th km., Kasti Bridge Approach at 24th Km. & Balavadra Bridge Approach at 25th km. of Sarail-Nasiragar-Lakhai Road (R-220) under Road Division Brahmanbaria during the year 2021-2022.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). e-Tender details can be downloaded from 10/01/2022 to 25/01/2022 & time 17:00 on e-GP System Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> for pursue. e-Tenders will be accepted only up to 26/01/2022 & time 12:00. Accepted tenders will be opened online immediately after 26/01/2022 & time 12:00.

Pankaj Bhowmik  
ID No. 602209  
Executive Engineer (c.c), RHD  
Road Division, Brahmanbaria

GD-67

আপনার সমস্যা-পরামর্শ  
চতুর্থমাস সিটি কর্পোরেশনের  
১৬১০৪ নম্বরে জানান।

মরশা আবব্বনা নালা,  
নর্দমায়ে ফেলাবেন না।

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Chattogram City Corporation  
Tigarpass, Chattogram  
[www.ccc.org.bd](http://www.ccc.org.bd)

Memo No. 46.11.1600.38.002.229.22.2005 Dated: 09-01-2022

**e-Tender Notice-CCC/ADP/2021-22**

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of following packages from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to the time given below.

Sl No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID	Last date of selling documents	Last date of submission documents	Opening date & time
1	229/2021	Supply of 01 (One) Unit 1.5 Ton Capacity Hydraulic Beam Aerial Lift With Registration	645306	30-01-2021	30-01-2021	30-01-2021
2	229/2021-Part	Supply of 01 (One) Unit 3 Ton Capacity Hydraulic Beam Aerial Lift With Registration	645339	30-01-2021	30-01-2021	30-01-2021
3	230/2021	Supply of 2 (Two) Unit Double Cabin Pickup with Registration	645341	30-01-2021	30-01-2021	30-01-2021

CCC/PRD-79/21-22  
Size: 5"x4 col  
GD-66

Sudip Basak  
Superintending Engineer (Mech)  
Chattogram City Corporation

## Threatened by smugglers, customs DC files GD

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Deputy Commissioner of Benapole Customs House Md Abdul Qaiyum has filed a GD with Benapole Port Police Station, seeking protection.

OC Mamun Khan of the station confirmed the matter to The Daily Star. In the GD, Qaiyum said he was being threatened with death for seizing smuggled goods from a party travelling to India through the Benapole check-post.

Benapole's customs commissioner Azizur Rahman said due to strict surveillance, smugglers are now unable to bring goods by evading tax.

Contacted yesterday, Qaiyum said he is still

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

**Murarichand College, Sylhet**  
[www.mccollege.edu.bd](http://www.mccollege.edu.bd)

Memo No. ৩০-এমসি/বি/২০২২/২০(ক) Date: 09.01.2022

**e-Tender Notice 05/2021-2022**

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

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of supply	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1	643496	Supply of Laboratory equipment and instruments for the science labs of Murarichand College, Sylhet	25-Jan-2022 02:00pm	25-Jan-2022 03:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks' branches up to 24 January, 2022. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Professor Md. Saleh Ahmed  
Principal  
Murarichand College, Sylhet  
Phone: 02 996641634  
E-mail: [mccollegesylhet@gmail.com](mailto:mccollegesylhet@gmail.com)

GD-63

## Pori Moni announces marriage to Sariful Razz Couple expecting first child

**Pori Moni shook the entire entertainment industry yesterday, by not only announcing her marriage to actor Sariful Islam Razz, but also confirming that they are expecting their first child.**

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The actress herself confirmed the news to The Daily Star. "Nothing can be more joyful than this," she said. "I feel like I am floating in the wind."

Pori Moni further said that she tied the knot to Razz on October 17, while shooting for Gias Uddin Selim's forthcoming feature film "Gunin". At the same time, Sariful Razz posted on his social media, thanking Pori, and congratulating himself for being a father.

Rumours of the couple dating circulated online during that time, when they were seen spending time and taking many pictures together. On Pori's birthday on October 24, 2021, they were spotted being intimate with each other.

Pori Moni also told the media that she is going to take a year-long break, in order to take care of the child.

"While shooting for the film, they fell in love and tied the knot," says Gias Uddin Selim. "A while ago, they came to visit me with sweets to announce that they are expecting their first child."

"I pray for their child and a happy future," added Selim.



## Asaduzzaman Noor returns to radio after 30 years

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Eminent actor and Member of Parliament Asaduzzaman Noor is set to come back on radio with the drama, "Tahar Kotha", after 30 years. He will play the role of a school teacher in the production.

Asaduzzaman Noor has been a listed radio artiste for a long time. "I was an active performer on radio in my initial days, and loved it as much as I loved theatre," he shares. "However, after the

Bangladesh Betar office shifted from Shahbag to Agargaon, I started getting detached from it."

The actor also shares how radio had a lot of listeners back in the day. "I started becoming more involved with television and theatre. Slowly, the small interval became a long gap of three decades. Nevertheless, I am finally back and it feels great," he adds.

"Tahar Kotha", the Syeda Farida Ferdousi Jatri directorial, is written by Parimal Sarkar. It will air on January 12.



## 'People have been messaging my grandmother about Atrangi Re'

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan said that her father, Saif Ali Khan, cried after watching her latest film, "Atrangi Re". She also revealed that her grandmother, Sharmila Tagore, has been receiving words of praise for her performance, and forwarding those messages on to her.

Sara said that she has never experienced a reaction as positive as this.

## COUNTRYWIDE

### Danger at Kulaura health complex Age-old hospital lies in dilapidated condition

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Sadek Mia recently went to Kulaura Upazila Health for the treatment of his child. But soon an eerie feeling gripped him looking at the bleak surroundings.

The two-storey building is worn out and crumpled.

"When I entered the building, I got panicked. The building might collapse anytime," said Sadek Mia.

His wife Husna Begum said the hospital itself is sick and battered. It needs to be treated first.

Not only Sadek or Husna but also most of the patients coming to the hospital also feel the same, since some 30 rooms inside the building are in most dilapidated conditions.

The building's roof might collapse anytime, feared the officials concerned, adding that they have no other options but to work there as alternatives have not been arranged.

The building has a total of 30 rooms on the first and second floors. These rooms include the emergency department, two wards for male and female patients, a warehouse, a children's ward and offices.

During a recent visit, cracks were found on ceilings and walls. Plasters were seen falling off the walls and water kept on dripping from the ceilings. There were patches of rust on the doors and windows due to a lack of maintenance.

"We need to examine patients, which require time. But I am too scared to stay inside the building," said Resident Medical Officer Dr Zakir Hossain.

According to health department sources, the activities of the health complex started in 1967 in this two-storey building. At that time, it had 31 beds. It was upgraded to 50 beds by constructing another concrete building next to the old building in 2006.

Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Ferdous Akter said every day about 200 patients come to the hospital for treatment in the emergency and outpatient departments of the health complex.

Monirul Haque, assistant engineer of the Department of Health Engineering in Moulvibazar, said a proposal to renovate the building at a cost of Tk 25 lakh has been initially approved by the higher authorities.



## Aman harvest faces water stagnation problem

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Farmers in Pirojpur and Jhalakathi are facing problem to harvest Aman paddy as most of the paddy plants have remained under rainwater.

The growers said the ripe paddy in large areas of the two districts got damaged as the recent rain caused by Cyclone Jawad caused water stagnation in the fields.

Due to this, they are facing serious troubles in harvesting paddy of the fallen plants in the waterlogged fields, said farmer Nurul Islam of Charkhali village in Pirojpur's Indurkani upazila.

"It takes three to four days to

harvest paddy of fallen plants on one bigha of land while it took only one day to harvest standing paddy on the same land," said Nurul.

Another grower of the village Abdul Halim said labourers are also not showing interest to harvest paddy of fallen plants, much to the worry of farmers.

The farmers added that they store straw of Aman paddy as fodder of domestic cattle. They also use the straw to make roofs of houses.

"But this year we will have to face straw crisis as mostly of them have been damaged due to the rain," said farmer Saiful Islam of Bhajihora

village in Pirojpur Sadar upazila.

The delay of harvesting Aman paddy for over three weeks will also badly delay robi plantation as it will take long time to dry up the fields, he added.

"This year we are anxious of being delayed of robi crop cultivation for around a month," said another farmer Mohammad Ali from the same village.

SK Tayebur Rahman, agriculture extension officer in Indurkani upazila, said the natural disaster has caused damage to average 30 percent mature Aman paddy of the upazila. It has also caused huge damage

to robi crops as mostly lentil plants grown in the Aman paddy fields got damaged, he added.

As Aman plantation is being delayed, it will lengthen the process of the plantation of robi crops including boro, said the officer.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Pirojpur, this year 61,630 hectares of land in the district have been brought under Aman cultivation.

Meanwhile, 48,000 hectares of land in Jhalakathi have been brought under Aman cultivation, said Md Monirul Islam, deputy director of DAE in Jhalakathi.





Musicians and artists take part in a rally in Athens, Greece yesterday, as they protest against the new Covid-19 health measures banning the music from bars, nightclubs and restaurants.

PHOTO: AFP

HINDUTVA SUMMIT
Pak PM blasts Modi for 'silence'

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday said the Narendra Modi-led government was "a real and present threat to peace" in the region, adding that all minorities in India were at the target of extremist groups operating under the patronage of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Last month, leaders from several far-right groups in India had issued calls for the ethnic cleansing of minorities in the country, especially targeting its 200 million-strong Muslim population. A report by The Quint had said that the "hate speech conclave" was organised by Hindutva leader Yati Narsinghanand from Dec 17 to 19 in Uttarakhand's pilgrimage city of Haridwar, where multiple calls to kill minorities and attack their religious spaces were made.

PM Imran, in a series of tweets yesterday, blasted Modi for his "continuing silence" and inaction against extremist Hindutva groups calling for genocide of minorities in the country.

Suu Kyi jailed for another 4yrs

AFP, Yangon

A Myanmar junta court yesterday convicted Aung San Suu Kyi of three criminal charges, sentencing her to four years in prison in the latest in a slew of cases against the ousted civilian leader, a source familiar with the proceedings said.

The Nobel laureate has been detained since February 1 when her government was forced out in an early morning coup, ending Myanmar's short-lived experiment with democracy.

The generals' power grab triggered widespread dissent, which security forces sought to quell with mass detentions and bloody crackdowns in which more than 1,400 civilians have been killed, according to a local monitoring group.

A source with knowledge of the case told AFP the 76-year-old was found guilty of two charges related to illegally importing and owning walkie-talkies and one of breaking coronavirus rules.

Junta spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun confirmed the verdicts and sentences and told AFP Suu Kyi would remain under house arrest while other cases against her proceed.

Defeated 'coup' Says Kazakhstan leader, vows Russian troops will leave

AFP, Almaty

Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said yesterday that his country had defeated an attempted coup d'etat during violence last week, and insisted that Russian-led troops called in to help quell the unrest would go home "soon".

During a video-conference of leaders from several ex-Soviet countries in a military alliance that sent in the troops, his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin confirmed they would leave as soon as their mission ended.

Life in Kazakhstan's Almaty appeared to be returning to normal yesterday, with internet coverage restored as the nation observed a day of mourning for dozens killed in the clashes.

Tokayev told the video-conference that "armed militants" had used the backdrop of protests to try to seize power. "The main goal was obvious...the destruction of government institutions and the seizure of power."

US-RUSSIA TALKS OVER UKRAINE CRISIS
Expectations low

Nato chief warns Moscow of 'severe costs' if Kyiv attacked

AGENCIES

With diplomats publicly pessimistic, the United States and Russia began difficult negotiations in Geneva yesterday that Washington hopes can avert the danger of a new Russian invasion of Ukraine without conceding to the Kremlin's far-reaching security demands.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has said the diplomacy could end after a single meeting, and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken played down expectations for the high-stakes talks. "I don't think we're going to see any breakthroughs in the coming week," Blinken said in a CNN interview on Sunday night.

The talks between Ryabkov and Deputy US Secretary of State Wendy Sherman began at the US diplomatic mission in Geneva with US-Russia relations at their most tense since the Cold War ended three decades ago. The pair made only brief eye contact when they posed for photographs beforehand.

Sherman said "the US will listen to Russia's concerns and share our own" in an earlier Tweet from Geneva, adding that no discussions on European security would be held without the presence of other allies. Discussions will move to meetings in Brussels and Vienna later this week.

Nearly 100,000 Russian troops are gathered within reach of the border with Ukraine in preparation for what Washington and Kyiv say could be a new invasion, eight years after Russia seized the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine.

Russia denies invasion plans and said it is responding to what it calls aggressive behavior from the Nato military alliance and Ukraine, which has tilted toward the West and aspires to join Nato, reports Reuters.

Last month, Russia presented sweeping demands including a ban on further Nato expansion and an

end to the alliance's activity in central and eastern European countries that joined it after 1997.

The United States and Nato say large parts of the Russian proposals are non-starters.

Meanwhile, Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg yesterday warned Russia of "severe costs" if it launches a further attack on Ukraine, saying he hoped crunch talks could chart a way towards a diplomatic solution, reports AFP.

"We are working hard for a peaceful political path and we are ready to continue to work with Russia to try to find that path towards a peaceful solution," Stoltenberg said before meeting Ukraine's deputy prime minister.

Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Olga Stefanishyna, appearing alongside him, said Russia's demands "cannot be considered as a negotiating position".

She told reporters the "aggressor is not in a position to put conditions" while Russian tanks remained near the Ukrainian border.

US President Joe Biden has repeatedly warned Russian President Vladimir Putin that the United States and European allies would impose tough sanctions if Russia chose to invade Ukraine. Putin said new sanctions could lead to a "complete breakdown in ties."

In a preliminary meeting with Ryabkov on Sunday evening, Sherman emphasized Washington's commitments to sovereignty, territorial integrity "and the freedom of sovereign nations to choose their own alliances," the State Department said.

Ryabkov told reporters his meeting with Sherman had been "complex but businesslike," Russian news agency Interfax said.

If diplomacy fails, and Moscow acts against Ukraine, the US has been discussing with allies and partners in Europe and Asia a range of trade restrictions against Moscow, a source familiar with the plan said.

Graphic with quote: 'We are close to a good deal, but to reach this...it must be pursued by the other side.' attributed to Iran's FM Abdollahian.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Port Authority (BPA) regarding a tender for cargo handling services. Includes contact info and terms.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA) regarding a corrigendum to a tender for cargo handling services.

Advertisement for Khulna Shipyard Limited regarding a tender for ship repair and maintenance services.

Advertisement for Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET) regarding a tender for procurement of books.

Advertisement for Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh regarding an e-tender for air conditioning and interior design services.

# The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

## Scourge of the road Implement ban on three-wheelers on highways

THERE was nothing wrong with how the problem was approached: First, the government banned three-wheelers on 22 major highways in August 2015 to prevent accidents. Then, in January 2017, the High Court reinforced that diktat by ordering a ban on such vehicles on all major highways of Bangladesh. But the problem was with the enforcement of that prohibition. The ban has been followed more in its breach than its execution. The situation, according to a report by this daily, has now turned so bad that the number of road accidents involving three-wheelers tripled last year compared to 2020, according to the Accident Research Institute (ARI) of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

The causative factors have been well-identified, corrective measures have been recognised, and orders have gone out from time to time to the relevant people. Yet, we see a continued rise in the number of traffic accidents, because all the honest intentions of the administration flounder in the face of either lack of capability to implement the relevant rules and regulations or unwillingness to do so.

The question is: Why? There can be nothing more disheartening, and indeed frustrating, than to hear the minister for road transport and bridges express his helplessness—and many times, too—in enforcing the ban on three-wheelers. One need not be reminded that non-implementation of the orders of the court amounts to violation of its order.

The villain of the piece, according to the minister, are the local representatives who create obstructions in the way of implementing government orders. But imposing the authority of the government in this regard is literally a matter of life and death. Reportedly, along with the number of road accidents involving three-wheelers, the number of these vehicles has also given a quantum jump in that time.

But it is not only the authorised three-wheelers that compound the problem. The situation has been exacerbated by the appearance of contraptions of various shapes and sizes, powered by various devices that should not be seen anywhere, let alone on the roads and major highways. Are we to believe that the law of the land should be subjugated to the might of the local representatives—more so when that law has the backing of a court order?

Given the current state of road safety, one can be forgiven for questioning the seriousness of the government in addressing this issue. The sluggishness in implementing the so-called Road Transport Act is an index of the government's sincerity in this regard, as well as an indication of its helplessness against the might of the transport owners and operators who run the sector. The situation brooks no laxity. The laws and regulations should be implemented strictly and impartially. It is a question of people's lives.

## How can demolished brick kilns resume operation?

### Was the demolition drive an eyewash, then?

IT is frustrating to learn that two illegal brick kilns in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, demolished by the Department of Environment (DoE) in February last year, have resumed their operations in full swing. In fact, as alleged by the locals, these brick kilns actually never stopped their operations. Right after a mobile court of the department demolished them, the owners repaired them and started their operations.

The brick kilns were demolished reportedly after protests by local farmers, as their croplands were losing fertility due to the heat generated by the kilns, as well as the toxic emissions. Now that they have started running in full capacity again, the farmers fear that it will further aggravate the situation, resulting in less agricultural production.

Unfortunately, this is not the only case in which powerful businessmen have ignored directives from the authorities concerned and continued with their mindless business. In the past two years, many such closed or demolished brick kilns resumed their operations, ignoring orders from the authorities to stop them permanently. Only last year, five illegal brick kilns in Barguna district resumed their operations after being demolished by the local administration. According to reports, this has been happening in other districts, too.

The question that arises is: How can the owners of these kilns violate orders from the High Court in this regard without facing any consequences? The sincerity of the DoE as well as the local administrations in carrying out demolition drives and stopping the kilns for good also come under question.

In case of the brick kilns in Lalmonirhat, what the DoE did was partially demolishing the kilns, leaving scopes for the owners to repair those immediately and run them without much delay. Does the DoE's job end with just conducting a mobile court drive? Do they have no responsibility to monitor what happens afterwards? Would one be wrong in assuming that the demolition drive was nothing but an eyewash?

It's well known that brick kiln owners are usually powerful people, and the affected local residents and even those in the local administrations hardly raise their voices against them, fearing consequences. It is also common knowledge that, sometimes, people in the administration work as their cohorts, emboldening them to go on with their business.

We, therefore, urge the higher authorities to take immediate action against the owners of these illegal brick kilns, whose action is not only reducing our overall agricultural production, but also polluting air and ruining the surrounding environment.

# How do we keep Omicron at bay? Together.



**A CLOSER LOOK**  
Tasneem Tayeb  
is a columnist for The Daily Star.  
Her Twitter handle is @tasneem\_tayeb

TASNEEM TAYEB

WITH Omicron spreading rapidly across the world, Bangladesh is bracing itself for the battle against a potential third wave of the pandemic. The health minister has already stressed that the country is prepared to fight the new variant. Earlier, health authorities had issued a set of 15 soon-to-be-enforced guidelines covering screening at entry points in the country, testing, quarantine, vaccination, and public movement and gatherings.

Meanwhile, according to media reports, the government has also been able to partly reinforce healthcare infrastructure to better handle the new wave, increasing the number of Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and High Dependency Units (HDUs) dedicated for Covid-19 patients.

In addition, more than 1,000 ventilators have been provided to hospitals at the upazila level and over 130 hospitals equipped with a central oxygen system. Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, the DG of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), has been quoted as saying that oxygen generators are being installed in around 40 hospitals across the country. The government is working on installing more oxygen generators to support rising Covid caseloads.

However, the authorities must not lose sight of the fact that in the face of a full-fledged outbreak of the new wave, these reinforcement measures might not be sufficient. Over the last few weeks, there has been a noticeable spike in Covid-19 cases, with more Omicron patients being identified every day. On Monday morning (January 10), the country recorded a 8.53 percent Covid infection rate—with 2,231 new cases registered—a jump from 6.78 percent recorded on Sunday morning. Health experts fear a further rise in cases is imminent.

While the new measures being taken point to the farsightedness of the health authorities, including the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19, DGHS, and other related bodies, their effectiveness would depend on how well they are enforced.

In the past, we have seen people “escaping” quarantine from hotels; public transports running over capacity despite restrictions; people grossly flouting social distancing guidelines, roaming around and enjoying long drives even during lockdowns (including misuse of the “movement pass” introduced to control public movement), or crowding restaurants, shopping malls, kitchen

markets and other public spaces, often without wearing masks—the list goes on.

Even while many countries, including our next-door neighbour India, struggle in the face of Covid-19 surges, the people here could not help but celebrate the New Year or Christmas. Then there are those grand winter weddings that come with about half a dozen side events where hundreds, if not thousands, gather to

other states including West Bengal and Karnataka have had to impose various other restrictive measures and weekend curfews to cope with the rapid increase in Covid cases.

In view of the current scenario, the government in Bangladesh should consider planning ahead for the worst-case scenarios, including by determining the size and scope of stimulus packages,

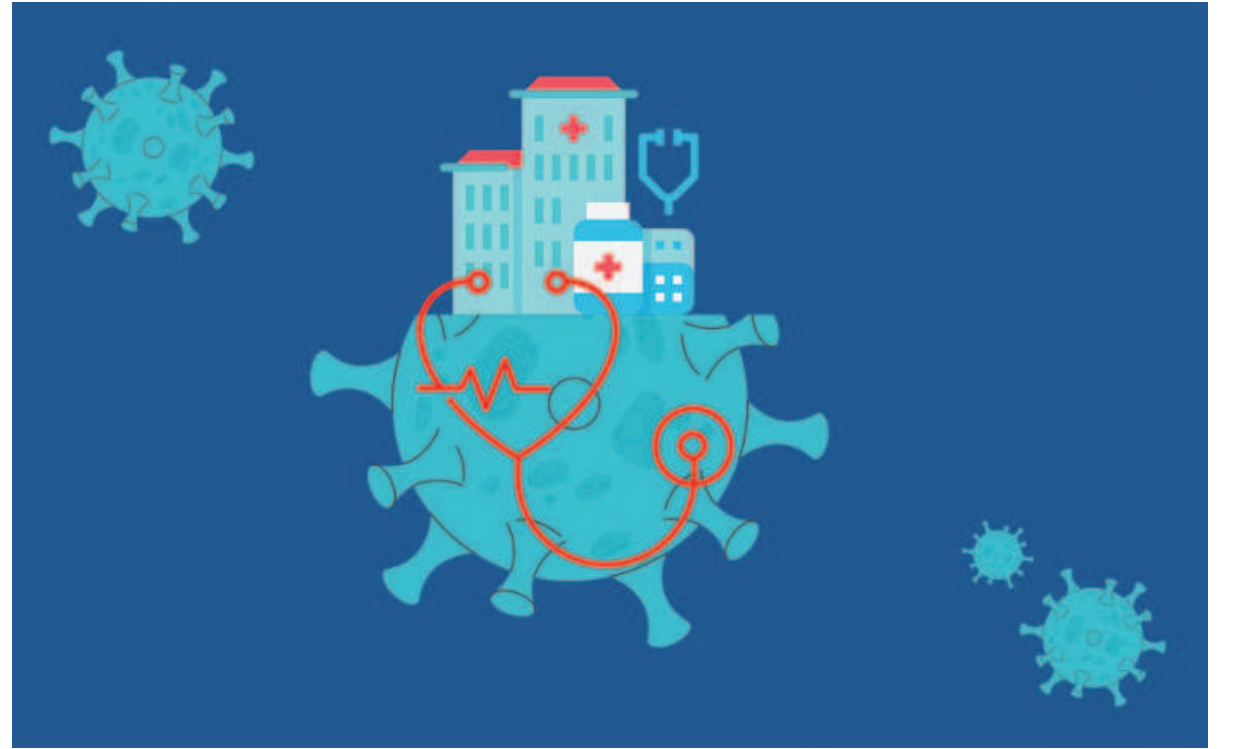


ILLUSTRATION:  
STAR

“bless” the brides and grooms. There are also the weekend parties with family and friends. These occasions provide the perfect breeding grounds for the Covid-19 virus. Unfortunately, these can only be contained with state-imposed curbs.

For the government, managing the crowd at airports is another sticking point, which has emerged as a major concern in recent weeks. With international flights being suspended for eight hours every day at the Dhaka airport due to on-going construction work for the third terminal, the airport authorities are under increasing pressure to accommodate the cramped flight schedules. It is only natural that the health desks and testing counters would be crowded too, and there should be strict enforcement of social distancing and testing guidelines for both in-bound and out-bound passengers to ensure their safety.

It is understandable that blanket curbs on public movement, including lockdown, are an extreme measure, with profound implications for countless people. Nonetheless, in our case, it would be worthwhile to consider the possibility of such measures in the long run, especially considering that many nations are having to resort to this to contain the new wave. In India, for instance, curfews have been imposed in Delhi and Mumbai and

support mechanisms and related logistics for those who would be most affected—especially small businesses and the underprivileged segments. This will help reduce public sufferings and the likely economic backlash. Pre-planned measures are usually better implemented. And in the context of the fast-changing Covid landscape, one cannot be too careful.

Omicron is highly contagious but comparatively less severe than other variants, with lower hospitalisation rates. Therefore, it might not be as demanding on our healthcare infrastructure as the Alpha or Delta variants. But the danger still persists. And with the virus mutating constantly, we cannot risk becoming complacent. We need to be on our guard at all times so that we can anticipate the new challenges and minimise the damage of the new wave. The new set of 15 guidelines also need to be enforced at the earliest.

The general public must also take ownership of their responsibilities and do their part to keep Covid-19 at bay. The government alone is not responsible for fighting the pandemic; it is the responsibility of each and every single citizen of this country. No matter how clichéd it sounds, we are in this together, and we can only flatten the curve if we put up a united front.

**We need to be on our guard at all times so that we can anticipate the new challenges and minimise the damage of the new wave.**

## PROJECT SYNDICATE

# Victims of the Unvaccinated



Peter Singer, professor of bioethics at Princeton University, is founder of the non-profit organisation The Life You Can Save.  
Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2022  
www.project-syndicate.org  
(Exclusive to The Daily Star)

PETER SINGER

NOVAK Djokovic, the world's top-ranking tennis player, has just been granted a medical exemption to take part in the Australian Open. Djokovic, who has won the event nine times (one more victory would give him a record-breaking 21 major titles), refused to show proof of vaccination, which is required to enter Australia. “I will not reveal my status whether I have been vaccinated or not,” he told *Blic*, a Serbian daily, calling it “a private matter and an inappropriate inquiry.”

The family of Dale Weeks, who died last month at the age of 78, would disagree. Weeks was a patient at a small hospital in rural Iowa, US, being treated for sepsis. The hospital sought to transfer him to a larger hospital where he could have surgery, but a surge in Covid-19 patients, almost all of them unvaccinated, meant that there were no spare beds. It took 15 days for Weeks to obtain a transfer—by then, it was too late.

Weeks became another of the many indirect victims of Covid-19—people who never had the virus, but died because others who did were taking up scarce healthcare resources, especially beds in intensive care units. His daughter said,

“The thing that bothers me the most is people's selfish decision not to get vaccinated, and the failure to see how this affects a greater group of people. That's the part that's really difficult to swallow.”

Last month, Rob Davidson, an emergency room physician at a hospital in Michigan, wrote an essay for the *New York Times* that provided a vivid picture of life in a hospital that had consistently been at or near capacity for several weeks. The overwhelming majority of the patients had Covid-19, and 98 percent of those needing acute critical care were unvaccinated.

What happened to Weeks was happening at Davidson's hospital, too: those in need of more specialised treatment could not be transferred to a larger facility, because nearly every hospital in the region was already full or close to it. Davidson is unable to view the choice not to get vaccinated as a private matter. “It forces patients with ruptured appendixes and broken bones to wait for hours in my emergency department; it postpones surgeries for countless other people and burns out doctors and nurses.”

There has been considerable opposition to vaccine mandates—opposition that I have argued is misguided. With earlier variants, the unvaccinated are more likely to infect others. With the more contagious Omicron variant, the extent to which current vaccines reduce infection and the ability to spread the virus is less clear. But we do know that vaccination reduces the severity of the illness, and therefore the need for hospitalisation.

For the situation that Davidson described, and that Weeks' children

believe led to their father's death, a different solution is available, one that respects the decisions of those who choose not to be vaccinated, but requires them to bear the consequences of their choice. Hospitals that are at or near capacity should warn the populations they serve that, after a certain date—far enough in the future to allow ample time for people to get fully vaccinated—they will give vaccinated patients priority over unvaccinated patients with Covid-19. The unvaccinated patient, or the family of that patient, may object. But if the move is in accord with a previously announced policy, and everyone had the opportunity to be vaccinated before the policy took effect, people who make choices that are likely to harm others, and have been warned of the consequences of those choices, must take responsibility for them.

Hospitals with sufficient capacity should, of course, continue to treat unvaccinated patients with Covid-19 as best they can. Despite the extra strain this puts on hospital staff, everyone should have sufficient compassion to try to save lives. Exceptions should be made for those few patients for whom vaccination is contraindicated on medical grounds, but not for those who claim to have religious grounds for exemption.

Such a policy is likely to increase vaccination rates, which will benefit the currently unvaccinated as well as the vaccinated, and save lives—just as vaccine mandates have saved lives by increasing the number of vaccinated people. But even if the policy does not persuade more people to get vaccinated, at least fewer people would die from health conditions over which they have no control.

**Hospitals with sufficient capacity should, of course, continue to treat unvaccinated patients with Covid-19 as best they can.**



# 2021 gives us reasons to hope for climate justice

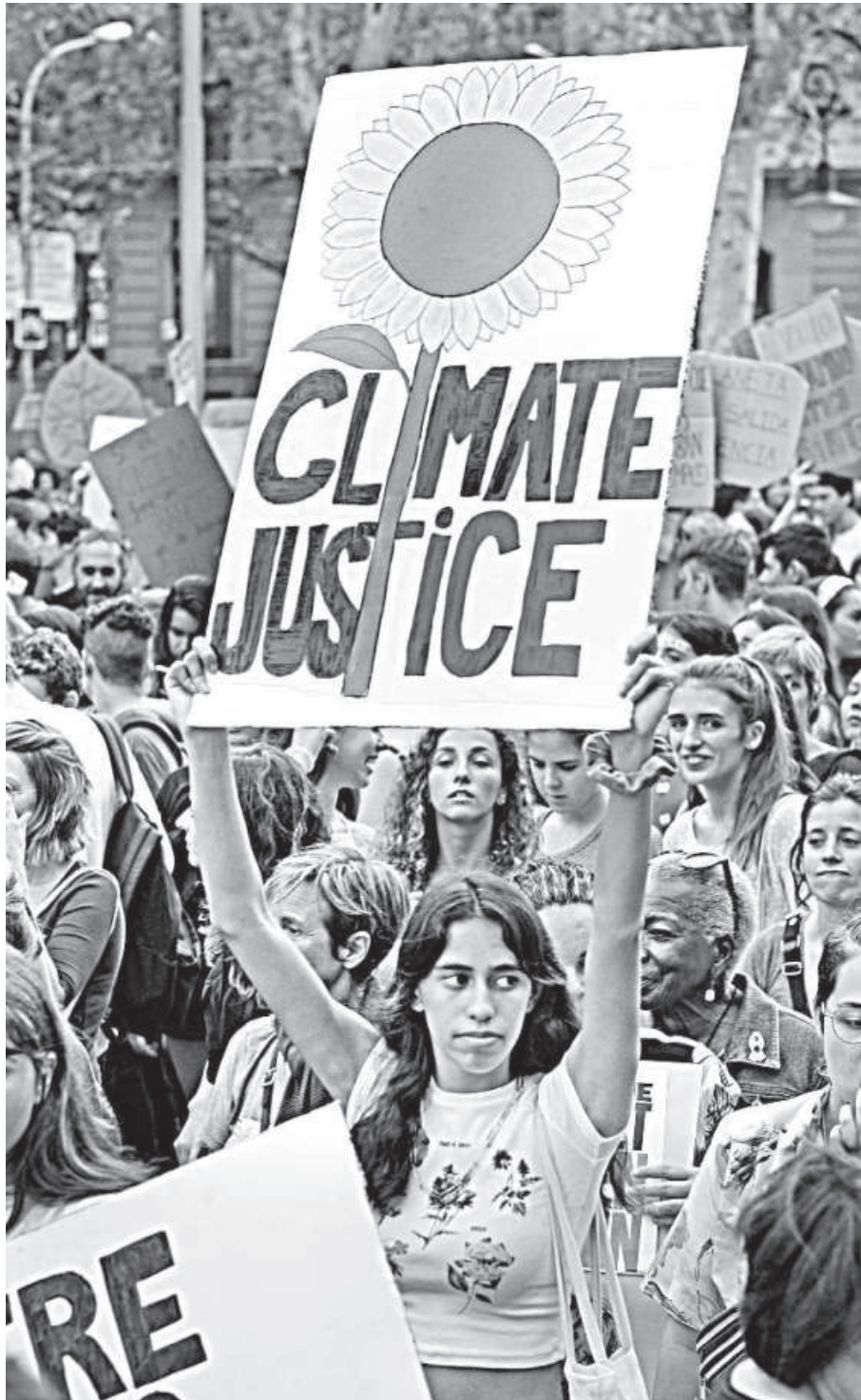


Dr Mohammad Zaman is an international development specialist and an advisory professor at the National Research Centre for Resettlement of Hohai University in Nanjing, China.

MOHAMMAD ZAMAN

CLIMATE crisis aside, 2021 will be remembered with anguish and misery around the world due to the Covid-19 storms. Without a doubt, 2021 felt like a terrible repeat of 2020. The pandemic now seems like a lifetime experience, threatening us with new variants every now and then and unnerving the global experts and

activists, led by Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, held a "funeral" for COP26. The high hopes for COP26 in Glasgow meetings were perhaps never going to be fully met in view of the pandemic, which indeed forced the summit to be delayed by a year. The build-up to COP26 left no doubts that 2021 experienced extreme weather events globally in terms of floods, droughts, heatwaves, and wildfires. Amid all these disappointments, a US climate activist reported, on a positive note, some climate justice "wins" for 2021. The wins are a mix of climate actions and land and indigenous people's rights, which are very fascinating stories in their own right.



leaders who are unable to find an exit anytime soon.

The climate crisis also rages on. The United Nations Climate Change Conference (26th Conference of Parties—COP26), held in Glasgow, Scotland in November 2021, remained off target from the most ambitious goal of 2015 Paris Agreement to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level. While, to some, COP26 was a "turning point," others criticised the lack of commitments demonstrated by the decision to "phase down"—instead of "phase out"—the use of coal and other inefficient fuel subsidies. Climate

The first and foremost of the climate justice wins in 2021 was the US rejoining the Paris Agreement under the Biden administration. This was definitely a big win. In 2017, President Donald Trump withdrew from the Paris Agreement, making the US the first country to formally leave the accord. The US was an important force behind negotiating climate deals, with the Kyoto Protocol never ratified. The withdrawal from the Paris Agreement obviously hurt the US reputation. The deal was drafted to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change.

The swearing-in of Deb Haaland, the

**The 2021 climate justice wins underscore the importance of people's power and representation. As evident, many grassroots organisations around the world are working to deal with the climate crisis, empower the people at risk, and mobilise resources for adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts.**

first Native American to be appointed as the US interior secretary, was another victory in 2021. A fierce Democratic Congresswoman, Haaland always focused on combating the climate crisis. As the secretary of the Department of the Interior, Haaland will play a crucial role in the Biden administration's ambitious efforts to combat climate change and conserve nature. The appointment was both historic and symbolic. Under her leadership, the department will now manage all public lands, endangered species and natural resources in the US, and establish rights of Native Americans.

To many, climate justice is a racial justice too. In 2021, the US city of Evanston in Illinois has begun the process of slavery reparations by giving out housing grants of USD 25,000 to 16 Black residents towards housing repair or costs. The city has established an initial fund in the amount of USD 10 million for distribution to its Black residents for the legacy and trauma of past racist housing policies. Experts consider this a "noble start," which may serve as a model for the future. Many more cities may take this step as an example in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement in the US and elsewhere.

Canada, in February 2021, joined a global movement to recognise both indigenous law and the rights of nature by declaring Magpie River a legal entity. The majestic Magpie River runs nearly 300km in Quebec's northern region, and is culturally significant to the local Innu people. This will help the Innu to uphold their rights of sacred and ancestral rivers, forests and mountains for the benefits of all. Likewise, the Peruvian Kakataibo tribe formally secured 370,000 acres of their ancestral lands in July 2021 to keep them protected from stealing by non-indigenous outsiders. The Australian government recently moved to return 395,000 acres of land to the eastern Kuku Yalanji people. The transfer of land to the Natives put them in direct control and management of their ancestral lands—a key step to helping address and reverse the climate crisis.

Another important victory in 2021 was the scrapping of the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline Project by President Joe Biden that aimed at building a massive crude oil pipeline

from Alberta, Canada to refineries in Illinois and Texas in the US. This was the result of a decade-long indigenous-led resistance and campaigns by environmentalists in Canada and the US. Similar stories of resistance were reported from many other corners. For instance, a predominantly Black community in Memphis, Tennessee came together to stop the 49-mile crude oil pipeline from becoming a reality, because the residents feared that the pipeline would harm their way of life and general well-being.

There are also other wins in many different countries, particularly those living through and adapting to climate changes. For example, the Maldives, which is no stranger to climate risks, is beginning to turn the tide by working closely with local communities to manage wetlands that are critical to reducing climate change impacts for creating a safer archipelago. For Pacific Islanders, both land and ocean have a huge economic, political and cultural significance. Tuvalu, a small island country, is in peril, but its residents are fighting back by introducing measures to protect the environment and natural resources. Bangladesh, already viewed as a climate success story due to its determined policies and adaptive strategies, is currently the chair (2020-2022) of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), a platform of 54 countries from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean Islands, Latin America and Oceania that are facing climate crisis. The CVF, under the leadership of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, held a strong lobby at COP26.

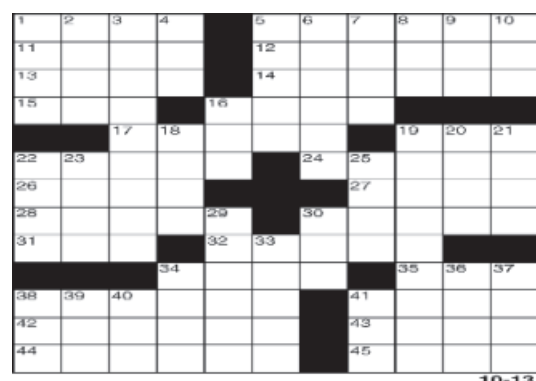
The 2021 climate justice wins underscore the importance of people's power and representation. As evident, many grassroots organisations around the world are working to deal with the climate crisis, empower the people at risk, and mobilise resources for adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts. From this point of view, and all that has been already said and won, it seems that 2021 was not as bad a year for climate justice. However, it was not enough, as the UN secretary-general described. We should, therefore, be better prepared for COP27, to be held at Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt in November 2022.

Despite many challenges, 2021 saw some improvement on the climate justice front.

PHOTO: ILIAS BARTOLINI/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 Aspirin target  
5 Gave orders  
11 Wow 'em at the comedy club  
12 On the go  
13 Account  
14 Tidy up  
15 Cobbler's tool  
16 Not quite closed  
17 Honeydew, e.g.  
19 Implore  
22 Deli fixture  
24 Long look  
26 Melodies  
27 Stepped down  
28 Comes to  
30 Bars on cars  
31 Sinking signal  
32 Outfit  
34 Severe criticism  
35 Museum
- DOWN**  
1 Nick and Nora's dog  
2 Hammer part  
3 Symbols of quality  
4 Retina setting  
5 Bluegrass instrument  
6 Globe features  
7 Teacher's reward  
8 Plop down  
9 Cain raiser  
10 Cub's cave
- 16 Pub pint  
18 Otherwise  
19 Diamond settings  
20 Pennsylvania port  
21 Obtains  
22 Cutting tools  
23 Italian sendoff  
25 Fare carrier  
29 Phone photo  
30 Penguin's cousin  
33 Persian Gulf nation  
34 Evergreen trees  
36 Stairway sight  
37 Kind  
38 Fitting  
39 Ruby of films  
40 Harry's friend  
41 Letter before omega



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ  
স্বাধীনতা সড়ক, ফরিদপুর

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Divisional Forest Officer  
Social Forest Division, Faridpur.

No. 22.01.2900.361.06.001.22.38 Dated: 09/01/2022

**INVITATION FOR TENDERS (For Outsourcing Services)**

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD).
3	Procuring Entity Name	Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
4	Invitation for	Procurement of Physical Service (Non-Consulting)
5	Name of the Package	Supplying of Manpower through Out-Sourcing for Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
6	Invitation Ref. No.	22.01.2900.361.06.001.22.38
7	Date	09-01-2022

**KEY INFORMATION**

8	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) (One Stage Two Envelope): National Competitive Tender (NCT)
---	--------------------	---

**FUNDING INFORMATION**

9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget, Government of Bangladesh
10	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not applicable

**PARTICULAR INFORMATION**

11	Tender Package No.	1 (One)/2022
12	Tender Publication Date	11-01-2022
13	Tender Last Selling Date	Date- 30-01-2022 (During Office Hours)
14	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date- 31-01-2022 Time- 12.00 PM
15	Tender Opening Date and Time	Date- 31-01-2022 Time- 12.30 PM
16	Name and Address of the Office(s)	Address Selling Tender Document Office of the Officer-in-Charge, Purbo-Gangabordi SFNTC (Social Forestry Nursery and Training Center), Faridpur. Receiving and Opening Tender Document Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.

**INFORMATION FOR TENDERER**

17	Eligibility of Tenderer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the Contract under the Applicable Law.</li> <li>Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh.</li> <li>Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh</li> <li>Others Eligibility are in Tender document.</li> </ul>
18	Brief Description of Physical Services	This Supply (Non-Consulting Physical Services) includes 02 (two) numbers of Mali for Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
19	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	Tk. 500.00 (Five Hundred) only (Non-refundable).

Lot No.	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount in BDT (Refundable)	Completion Time in Months	
20	1	Supplying of Out-Sourcing Physical Services of Mali	Office (s) of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.	Tk. 25,000/- (Taka Twenty-Five Thousand)	12 months after signing the contracts

**PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS**

21	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Kabir Hossain Patwary.
22	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Divisional Forest Officer.
23	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
24	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone: 0631-63083, E-mail: dfofsdf@gmail.com
25	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings. This tender shall be governed in all respect by "The Public Procurement Act, 2006 and The Public Procurement Regulations, 2008 as amended by 2016.	

(Md. Kabir Hossain Patwary)  
Divisional Forest Officer  
Social Forest Division, Faridpur.

GD- 60

EXPERIENCE

# Enhancing learning experience with state-of-the-art campus

AMID HOSSAIN CHOWDHURY

Educational institutions play an essential role in our lives for our growth into responsible and independent individuals.

The education sector has come a long way from what it used to be years ago. Continuous technological advancements and developments have blended into the system. The heart of an institution lies with the people – the students, staff, and faculty. However, the physical premises and cutting-edge technology are important pieces for creating a state-of-the-art campus.

An ideal campus helps in building the

foundation of a student's intellectual, conceptual, and emotional growth. The combination of technology-based learning environment and a comprehensive curriculum, skill-building workshops, and other educational programmes make learning more efficient. As a result, teachers and educators can effectively shape students as future assets of society.

In Bangladesh, many educational institutions are adopting groundbreaking technologies to develop a campus that provides better experiences for students and visitors. The country's premier transnational educational institute,

Universal College Bangladesh (UCB), notably, is bringing affordable, world-class international education to the doorsteps of Bangladeshi students, along with an amazing campus.

UCB is transforming the learning experience in the country with its wide range of unique facilities. The institute features 'counseling pods' which embrace the authentic culture of Bangladesh with sitting arrangements that resemble rickshaws.

Their flexible learning space not only supports varied learning styles, but also enables teachers and educators to interact. Keeping this in mind, UCB has a contemporary 'educator space' as well as a resource-enabled library, designed for collaborative learning. Campus learning spaces that foster collaboration encourage students to take more creative risks as a group and lean on their peers for support.

UCB has introduced several other cutting-edge technologies in their campus to create innovative learning areas with 86-inch touchscreens and laboratories with integrated testing areas. As an exclusive partner for Monash College in Bangladesh, UCB seeks to create an atmosphere where students can participate in the campus community and engage with their lessons long after classes end. Their campus has a vibrant rooftop café, enabling numerous co-curricular interactions.

Besides academics, a campus that embraces technology is essential for enhancing the learning experience of students. Studying in campuses that use technology and offer more than just bookish knowledge will help them flourish as individuals.

The author is Head of Marketing at UCB.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF UCB

YOUNG ACHIEVER

## Shayla Bithi conquers Island Peak of the Himalayas

LABIBA ANJUMI KABIR

Bangladeshi mountaineer Shayla Parvin Bithi successfully conquered the Island Peak of the Himalayas, a 6,160-metre mountain in Nepal.

Born in Swarupkathi Pirojpur, Shayla has been visiting hill tracts since 2014. She visited Chandranath Hill with her friends, where she was introduced to Bangla Mountaineering and Trekking Club. Through this club, she went trekking up the Himalayas for the first time in 2015.



PHOTO COURTESY: SHAYLA PARVIN BITHI

Her recent achievement was conquering the Island Peak of the Himalayas, which was also her first self-organised adventure. After three days of preparation, Shayla started her journey on October 28 of last year from Lukla, Nepal. After three hours of journey to Phakding, Shayla and her guide reached Namche Bazaar on second day. Her planned itinerary took a turn as she visited Thame and Lungden. After that, she started her extended trekking, including three challenging 5,000 m passes: Renjo La on November 2, Cho La on November 4 and Kongma La Pass on November 6. After these treks, Shayla reached Chukung, the last village before the Island Peak basecamp. On November 7, Shayla and another Indian team started their journey from Chukung to the basecamp.

She completed climbing the Island Peak on the evening of November 8; it took her 11 days to reach the peak. She trekked back to Lukla on November 11. "A part of my plan is to conquer an 8,000 meter mountain in 2022," asserted Shayla.

She also expressed her concerns regarding the trend of young people visiting mountains across the world. "I hope the younger and future mountaineers will take proper preparation and advice as well as equipment along with them, when they decide to go trekking, because faulty or unsuitable equipment do not just hinder the journey, but also create discomfort, which essentially ruins the fun of trekking," she says.

In celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the independence of Bangladesh, Shayla took a portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and another placard to promote her anti-rape campaign on her journey.

The author is a freelance journalist. Email: labibakabir99@gmail.com.

Despite the alarming rate of global warming, electricity generation and transportation industries are still heavily reliant on conventional fossil fuels. Burning of fossil fuels can bring drastic consequences for the planet – from climate-damaging greenhouse gas to health-endangering environment. On top of that, an accelerated depletion rate of these natural resources is posing a tremendous threat on the future energy security. Particularly, in a country like Bangladesh, it is critical to maximize renewable-based power generation to ensure diversified energy supply and reduce dependence on imported fuels. However, such an option has the challenges of its own. With that in mind, Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) department of United International University (UIU) held the International Conference on the Developments of Renewable Energy Technology (ICDRET) on December 28-30, 2021. Due to continued COVID uncertainties, the conference was held on the virtual platform. This was the 6th time that the university organized this unique conference to bring together researchers, policy makers, students, and other stakeholders to exchange their ideas.

The inaugural ceremony of ICDRET was held on December 28, 2021. Hon'ble Adviser (Minister) to the Prime Minister for Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Dr. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, BB graced the ceremony as the chief guest. Mr. Moinuddin Hasan Rashid, Chairman & Managing Director of United Group and member Board of Trustees and Professor Dr. Moshikul Hoque, Chair of IEEE Bangladesh Section were present as special guests. Professor Dr. Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman, Vice Chancellor of UIU presided over the programme.

The audiences were welcomed by Professor Dr. Intekhab Alam, Head of the EEE department and Technical Chair of ICDRET 21 followed by a speech from Dean of School of Science and Engineering Professor Dr. Raqibul Mostafa and Professor Dr. M. Rezwana Khan, Organizing Chair of ICDRET 2021.

Mr. Moinuddin Hasan Rashid expressed his delight to see ICDRET being held for the 6th time and reiterated his support to UIU for the advancement of research in RE and other fields. United Group being one of the major power producers (IPP) of the country, he stressed the importance of the IPPs to come forward to install RE based power stations.

In his inaugural speech, the chief guest Dr. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury pointed out the technological challenges like food security and land usage for PV farms, power system stability due to intermittent nature of RE based sources, importance of innovation in energy storage like battery to address the peak power problem in the evening etc. In his opinion, we should focus more on clean technology like nuclear power than specifically on renewable energy. There can always be limited use of fossil fuel-based power generation if carbon capture technology can be made cost effective. He also stressed the importance of innovation in adopting clean technology for power generation.

Expressing his gratitude to all parties involved in ICDRET, Professor Dr. Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman said that UIU is always supportive to Research and Development activities and as an example mentioned the enviable success of Mr. Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury, Director, Centre for Energy Research (CER) in establishing solar mini-grids, providing consultancy services to the large scale govt. funded solar PV projects and achieving international awards like UN's 'Momentum for Change' award, Intersolar award etc.

Mr. Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury, Director, Center for Energy Research (CER), UIU and Co-chair of the Organizing Committee of ICDRET 2021 gave the vote of thanks to the involved parties to make the conference a success.

History of ICDRET

UIU organized the first ICDRET in 2009 when need for awareness and effective platform for exchange of views amongst the policy makers, researchers and implantation agencies was strongly felt. It was the first international conference on renewable energy in Bangladesh. Following the success of the event, the organizers decided to bring back ICDRET in 2012, by when the falling prices of solar PV panels had indicated that renewable energy is a viable option, economically. ICDRET became a bi-yearly event, and was held in 2014, 2016 and 2018. It was supposed to be held in 2020. However, the aggravating COVID situation has delayed this event.

Invited Talks

Five invited talks were delivered at the ICDRET 2021 by eminent researchers and policy makers. The first invited talk was presented by Dr. M. Ryyan Khan, Assoc. Professor of East West University on "Techno-economic Prediction of Agrivoltaics: Prospects of Long-Term Sustainable Energy Growth in Bangladesh". He presented his research findings on the possibility of using crop fields for the PV power generation and its opportunities and threats. As investment in a specific area of land can be 30 to 50 times higher with PV in comparison to the crop, it will be a natural tendency to go for PV power generation instead of crop production. So, such a co-generation will require policy intervention so that the crop fields are never



# ICDRET 2021

## 6th International Conference on the Developments in Renewable Energy Technology

used for intense PV installation and the crop yield does not drop more than 5-10%. Even with a 5% compromise in the crop production, the net return from an Agrivoltaic project can be 10 to 20 times higher than a crop only field. Without any proper policy, there will be a tendency for total PV installation as it is economically more rewarding by a factor more than 10.

Mr. Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury in his invited talk "Renewable Energies in Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities" discussed in detail the challenges, including both technical and economic challenges, that Bangladesh may face when the percentage of renewable share in the power system gradually increases. He also pointed out possible options like floating PV farms that can minimize the land usage to address the issue of food security. He presented a proposed road map for the growth of renewable energy integration in our power system to move towards a carbon neutral power system.

Professor Dr. Nowshad Amin, UNITEN, Malaysia, a distinguished researcher in the field of solar cell technology expounded on "Thin Film Photovoltaic (PV) Technology – From Inception to Successful Commercialization of CdTe" presented his talk on the future prospect of Cadmium Tellurium PV cells as a viable alternative for silicon solar cells (the most popular solar cell material of present time). It is a lower cost material, easier to process and manufacture solar cells and can lead to cheaper solar electricity. Its market share is already on the rise.

Dr. Al Jumlat Ahmed of University of Wollongong, Australia discussed on the possibility of using thermal waste energy to

generate electricity using thermoelectric junctions and the new trends in the design and materials that is expected to enhance the conversion efficiency (which is still quite low, less than 5%). Perovskite based metal oxides are promising thermoelectric material for heat to electricity generation. However, their energy conversion efficiency is low mainly due to high thermal conductivity. It has been proven that nano-porous and nanostructure in SrTiO3 and BaTiO3 bulk materials can reduce lattice thermal conductivity significantly by scattering phonons and this mechanism can be used for other thermoelectric materials also.

Mr. Mohammad Alauddin, Chairman of the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), presented a presentation titled "Promotion of Renewable Energy in Bangladesh: SREDA's Role." SREDA is the only cell dedicated to promoting renewable energy and is committed to mitigating climate change challenges by boosting renewable energy and implementing energy efficiency measures. Currently, the total contribution of renewable energy is 777.31MW (including off-grid). He discussed the challenges of generating 10% of total capacity from renewables, including land scarcity, institutional capability, a comprehensive RE map, intermittency, financing, subsidized energy tariff and location reliance, and etc. SREDA's successes in RE promotion include a national database, net metering rooftop solar system calculators, and an E-service desk for solar. In addition, the Kushtia Municipality, the International Center for Climate Change and Development,

performance analysis and performance improvements of large-scale solar power plants. Solar power plants are subject to performance degradation due to dust deposition on the PV panels. A paper was presented that highlighted how increase in the cleaning frequency can substantially increase the power generation. Authors also presented few articles on improving the efficiency of the solar cells by considering various materials. One of the papers proposed a standalone hybrid microgrid for Rohingya refugees. Some presented articles analyzed the feasibility of floating solar system and use of hydrogen as energy storage solution. In the other RE category, an article was presented that evaluated the feasibility of electricity generation from biogas produced by solid municipal waste.

Besides the technical sessions, a workshop on State-of-the-art solar cell technology and Factors affecting Solar PV Generation was conducted on the first day of the conference.

Prof. Muhammad H. Rashid Best Paper award

In the closing session, Technical Chair Professor Dr. Intekhab Alam declared the winners of the 'Prof. Muhammad H. Rashid Best Paper Award'. Professor Dr. Muhammad H. Rashid, University of South Florida, USA, is a life fellow of IEEE and is a well-known name in the field of Electronics and Power Electronics for his outstanding research in the field of power electronics and his widely studied text books on electronics and power electronics. This year, the award winners were

First position

Ronnieta C. Mendoza, Glendy D. Aguilar & Alexander T. Demetillo, 'Title Design of Floating Solar Power System for a Local Community Application with Sample Prototype for a Single Panel'

Joint Second Positions

Nadim Reza Khandaker, Mohammad Moshir Rahman & Farzana Islam Khan, 'Action Research in Bhutan: Production of Biogas from Rice Cooking Generated Wastewater'

And

Sabrina Nurhan Hasan, Abrar Jawad Haque, Tawseef Ahmed Khan & Mustafa Habib Chowdhury, 'Use of Aluminum-Silica Core-Shell Plasmonic Nanoparticles to Enhance the Opto-Electronic Performance of Thin-Film Solar Cells.'

Co-organizers and Sponsors

Organized by United International University, ICDRET 2021 was co-organized by TERI (India), Micro energy International (Germany), UC Berkeley (USA), IDCOL (Bangladesh), alongside partners Oldenburg University (Germany), Kathmandu University (Nepal), Center for Energy and the Global Environment (Virginia Tech, USA), National University of Singapore (Singapore). The technical co-sponsors of the event were IEEE Bangladesh Section, United Group, IDCOL, GIZ, Chint Solar and the Daily Star extended their support to make the event a success.



**UNITED INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**  
United City, Madani Avenue, Dhaka 1212.  
Phone: +88 09604-848-848



Bangladesh opener Mohammad Naim looks at his shattered stumps after the debutant was bowled by New Zealand pacer Tim Southee during the second day of the second Test in Christchurch yesterday. [Inset] New Zealand's elder statesman Ross Taylor, playing his 112th and final Test, received a guard of honour on his way to the middle from the Bangladesh players.

PHOTO: AFP/TWITTER

## BPL postponed by two weeks

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to postpone the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) by two weeks but remained unmoved to consider appointing foreign referees to conduct its important matches as the league is scheduled to begin on February 3 at venues outside Dhaka.

"The clubs have requested us to provide full fixtures with venues after giving a good period to the new coach [Javier Cabrera] of the national football team ahead of two friendly matches against Indonesia [on January 24 and 27]," said league management committee chairman and BFF senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy after a meeting at the BFF House.

Participating clubs in the Independence Cup and Federation Cup have raised serious questions over the standard of the surface at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium and the quality of refereeing.

"The league matches will not take place at the astro-turf," Murshedy continued.

"We aren't thinking of foreign referees because they won't have an idea about who is a big team or a small team and it will lead to another controversy. Rather, we want to stay in the same sequence by appointing and promoting local referees," Murshedy concluded.

Meanwhile, the league committee allowed three more teams – Azampur FC Uttara, Gopalganj SC and BFF Elite Football Academy – to play the I2 team second-tier football league titled Bangladesh Championship League, set to begin on Feb 20.

## Tamim returns to action

SPORTS REPORTER

After over three months of injury rehabilitation, Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal is all set to return to competitive cricket today through the ongoing Independence Cup.

The dashing lefty batter will feature for Islami Bank East Zone against BCB South Zone in Sylhet in the fifty-over tournament.

Tamim, since injuring his left thumb during the Everest Premier League in Nepal back in October last year, had to miss out on the two Test series, first against Pakistan at home before the ongoing one in New Zealand.

Tamim's East Zone lost their first game by 22 runs against Shakib Al Hasan's Walton Central Zone.

Central Zone will play their second game by taking on North Zone, who won their first game in another low-scoring affair against South Zone, registering a comfortable eight-wicket win by chasing 163 runs.

## 'PITCHES AT HOME don't help us learn these trades'

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

The pitch at the Hagley Oval threw specific challenges at Bangladesh which the Tigers are not yet close to unraveling after day two of the Christchurch Test.

The pitch looked green as a viper but that perhaps deceived the Bangladesh bowlers, who did not bowl optimum length to get that minimum movement. Bangladesh pacers struggled to use the favourable conditions but following a process can help them learn the trade of bowling on such surfaces. More importantly, it is the country's cricket structure that has to focus on pitches back home where bowlers can learn the trade.

The last time Bangladesh produced exciting wickets, which had everything for bowlers and batters, was during the 1998 ICC KnockOut Trophy, also known as the mini World Cup. The curator for those pitches was none other than Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, a mentor to national team stars and also involved as national game development manager. If anyone can talk about surfaces, it is him.

What is a half volley on other surfaces becomes the most potent delivery at the Hagley Oval.

"It's the half volley length that troubles batters, provided you swing the ball. Our bowlers expected the swing from looking at the pitch, but it came as a shock when it didn't," Fahim dictated.

"Their bowlers managed to get the swing.



**It's all about the length here, of us getting them on the front foot and encouraging them to drive down the ground ... pitching the ball up and hopefully we can get 10 (wickets) pretty quickly again.**



TRENT BOULT

You don't have to be a Kiwi to swing the ball. Only the seam control gets you that swing, a wobbly seam is not going to do it. The seam has to be vertical so it swings in the air before pitching and the ball itself has to stay in air long enough for the swing to occur. Our bowlers didn't have that seam position which is the primary condition for swing and thus pitching further up may not have produced the movement needed," he added.

However, a pace unit lacking in experience cannot be expected to get it right on first opportunity.

"Particular pitches have different challenges and bowlers also have their natural lengths which are not easy to adjust. You need the experience and the knowledge to create artificial circumstances [at home]

that bowlers can work with.

"Right now our home pitches don't have such conditions to learn those trades because here the batsmen can't provide the same challenge," Fahim dictated, pointing to the true bounce at the Hagley Oval which makes stroke playing easier than surfaces at home.

"At home we don't have people who think about pitches. There should be people with know-how regarding where the good grass, good fertilisers and the best soil are present. They can seek help from the agriculture department," Fahim said, but till date such a body with expertise on the matter has not been sought.

Bangladesh batting crumbled too on day two, slumping to 126 all out. Yasir Ali, who stayed the most still and played late, was able to show the most application. Tushar Imran, a veteran in the domestic circuit, believed lack of experience of such surfaces was showing.

"I think our batters are not accustomed to bat in such pitches and it will be harsh to blame them. The more our batters play on similar pitches at domestic competitions, it will help them to adjust whenever they go abroad," Tushar opined while he remained hopeful of gaining something for the future.

"It's not the end of the world and if we can display a better performance in the second innings, it will help us to gain confidence for the coming days."

## RAJIB seals chess title

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Enamul Hossain Rajib became champion in the Golden Jubilee of Independence 46th National Premier Chess Championship by beating FM Subrota Biswas in the 13th and final round in Dhaka yesterday.

Rajib had to wait for day's outcome between GM Niaz Murshed and IM Minhaz Uddin Ahmed Sagar before celebrating his fifth title of the national championship as Rajib avoided a title deciding play-off match after Niaz lost to Sagar. Had Niaz beaten Sagar, Rajib and Niaz would have been tied on 10 points, prompting a title-deciding play-off.

With the defeat in last match, Niaz finished in third position with nine points while GM Ziaur Rahman, who beat CM Sharif Hossain, finished second with 9.5 points.

"This time the championship was very competitive as I had to face challenges from all GMs and IMs while the promising players also gave some tough time to all," Rajib said. "The race was initially confined among Niaz bhai, Zia bhai and me before the race turned into a two-way battle between Niaz bhai and me once Zia bhai lost to Niaz bhai."

Praising the junior players highly, Rajib said that emergence of talented players is a good sign for Bangladesh chess.

"Tahsin Tajwar produced really good results which I did not expect. Some other junior players including Subrota performed well which is a positive sign for Bangladesh chess," said Rajib.



## Djokovic drama continues

REUTERS, Melbourne

World tennis number one Novak Djokovic was released from Australian immigration detention on Monday after winning a court challenge to remain in the country, but the government said it was still considering another move to deport him.

Djokovic said he was "pleased and grateful" at the judge's decision to reverse the cancellation of his visa and he still hoped to play in the Australian Open.

"Despite all that has happened, I want to stay and try to compete @AustralianOpen. I remain focused on that," he tweeted.

Judge Anthony Kelly ruled the federal government's decision last week to revoke the Serbian tennis star's visa amid a row over his medical exemption from COVID-19 vaccination requirements was "unreasonable" and ordered his release.

Djokovic, who arrived in Australia last week in pursuit of a record 21st Grand Slam title at the upcoming Australian Open, spent the day at his lawyers' chambers and did not immediately appear in public or make any statement after the ruling.

A spokesman for Immigration Minister Alex Hawke said he was considering

using his personal power to again revoke Djokovic's visa.

"The minister is currently considering the matter and the process remains ongoing," the spokesman said.

The controversy has been closely followed around the world, creating diplomatic tensions between Belgrade and Canberra and sparking heated debate over national vaccination rules.

Serbia's parliamentary speaker, Ivica Dacic, said he was concerned Hawke could still deport Djokovic, a move that would bar the 34-year-old from the country for three years. Spanish rival Rafa Nadal called the drama surrounding the build-up to the tournament, which starts on Jan. 17, a "circus".

"Whether or not I agree with Djokovic on some things, justice has spoken and has said that he has the right to participate in the Australian Open and I think it is the fairest decision to do so," Nadal told Spanish radio Onda Cero.

There has been huge global interest in the case, but the authorities' efforts to let the media and public follow events in court at times descended into farce as pranksters hijacked the internet links to stream loud music and porn.



A supporter of Novak Djokovic holds his photo during a rally in Melbourne. There were chaotic scenes in central Melbourne on Monday night as fans crowded around a car they thought was carrying the Serbian tennis player and chanted "Free Novak! Free Novak!".

PHOTO: REUTERS

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

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT

**BSRM**  
building a safer nation

**Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant**

Work in progress using Shah Cement

**SHAH CEMENT**



A motorcyclist wedges his vehicle between a road divider and a bus in the middle of traffic on the capital's Topkhana Road. While road accidents are claiming lives every day due to reckless driving, violation of traffic rules continue unabated. The photo was taken yesterday noon.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Bus, launch fares likely to go up

Unvaccinated won't be allowed to man commercial vehicles, vessels

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government yesterday decided that only those vaccinated would be allowed to staff vehicles and vessels.

The sector has to face trouble if the decision is implemented, as the number of those who received the Covid shots is poor, say people involved in the business.

Another decision that buses and launches will have to operate at half capacity might push up the fares again. The owners have already hinted at that.

A Cabinet Division circular, issued yesterday, said the restrictions will be effective from Thursday, but it has empowered the authorities concerned to set the date from when the transport-related restrictions would come into force.

Following the sharp rise in Covid-19 cases, the government yesterday issued a set of restrictions to reduce virus transmission.

The circular said buses, trains, and launches would be operated at half capacity and drivers and assistants of all types of vehicles must have Covid-19 vaccination certificates.

The government in March 2020 and April 2021 imposed restrictions on carrying passengers in buses, trains and launches. At that time, bus and launch fares

were increased by 60 percent on condition that they would carry 50 percent their capacities. But the train fare remained the same.

Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation, said they have no exact data on how many transport workers have had the vaccines.

However, the number would be around 40 percent, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Osman said they had demanded the government take steps to job the transport workers at bus terminals on a priority basis as they have to deal with people.

But the government did not pay heed to their demands, he said, adding that if the government enforces the decision, the transport sector would face the scarcity of drivers.

Shah Alam, president of Bangladesh Noutjan Sramik Federation, said very few of their 2 lakh workers were vaccinated. Operations of launches would be hampered if the government wanted to implement the decision, he said.

Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, said it would be difficult to operate buses with 50 percent passengers without increasing bus fare by 50 to 60 percent.

Badiuzzaman Badal, senior vice president of Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carrier's) Association, said, "We asked the authorities to talk to us before implementing any decisions."

The bus and launch fares were raised 28 percent and 43 percent respectively in November last year after the government increased diesel and kerosene prices by Tk 15 a litre.

Railways Ministry Secretary Humayun Kabir yesterday said they would sit today to decide when

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

**Star HEALTHLINE**

Know your deshi 'superfoods':  
**THANKUNI LEAVES**

STAR HEALTH DESK

Thankuni leaves or *Centella asiatica* is one of the most revered herbal medicines used in traditional home remedies in the subcontinent.

Commonly known as Asiatic pennywort, Indian pennywort, or thick-leaved pennywort, its usage can also be traced in traditional Chinese and Indonesian medicine.

Herbal practitioners claim the medicinal plant can boost brainpower, heal skin issues, and promote liver and kidney health.

Some of the benefits of the plant are:

— Various formulations of the plant (ointment, cream, and gel) can heal wounds.

— It may boost cognitive function, especially memory.

— It may help reduce anxiety and stress.

— Its positive effect on brain function may also make it an effective

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## Checkmate by little geniuses

Slum kids with less than 3 months' training defeat FIDE rated players

FAISAL BIN IQBAL and SAKIB SUBHAN

With less than three months' training, Poly Khatun and Mim Akhter, children from the slums of Mirpur, have defeated internationally rated chess players.

The success of Poly and Mim, aged around 12 and 15, would undoubtedly be a source of delight for them, but it is as auspicious for Farhadur Rahman, the coach who armed them with the skills to achieve the feat.

It all started when Agami Education Foundation (AEF) — an NGO promoting basic education for the underprivileged children in Bangladesh — reached out to chess players Farhadur and Sadat Ibna Sultan, to teach the sport to underprivileged school children in the capital's Mirpur and Mohammadpur areas.

National chess coach Abu Sufiyan Shakil advised AEF in the initiative.

Farhadur teaches chess to underprivileged children at Shohag Shopnodhora Patshala

in Mirpur's Doaripara, while Sadat teaches at Switch Tahmina Banu Bidya Niketon in Mohammadpur.

The initial plan was to conduct a two-month course on chess, but Farhadur insisted that the programme go on for at least two years.

**Soon, they taught their fathers the game, and they used to play at night during their free time. This practice helped Poly and Mim hone their skills.**

"At first, I was asked to conduct classes for two months, but I wanted at least two years," said Farhadur. "My idea was not just to push chess as an extracurricular activity in these schools, but to get professional chess players from them. And fortunately, our efforts paid off, that too in just a few months."

The chess classes began

in October 2021. Most of the students were girls. Poly and Mim were among the first students, and they participated in the championships which started on December 29 and ended January 8.

Mim and Poly's mothers work as domestic help in the capital and their fathers earn money doing odd jobs, Farhadur said.

Eighth-grader Mim beat Sima Khatun, who has 1,152 rating points, while Poly, studying in fifth grade, defeated Sheikh Taposhi Tahura who has 1,194 rating points. Poly also played a draw against Fahmida Afroj, who has 1,102 rating points.

"Mim will get her rating next month, and we have entered Poly in another tournament, after which she should receive her rating too," Farhadur said.

The International Chess Federation (FIDE) provides rating to players based on the rated players they compete with and defeat.

Both girls were elated when they realised what they had achieved. Before being

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## 5 lakh yaba pills seized, Rohingya held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rab-15 arrested a Rohingya for smuggling around five lakh yaba pills into the country in Cox's Bazar on Sunday night.

The arrestee is Sayedul Amin, 24, resident of Balukhali Rohingya Camp. The pills were recovered from Balukhali Pan bridge area, Rab officials said at a press briefing yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab-15 Company Commander Major Sheikh Yusuf Ahman said they were informed about a big consignment coming to Bangladesh through the Myanmar border near Balukhali. They then took position near the bridge.

The team of law enforcers had been following movements of a drug peddling team from 7:30pm. Around three hours later, they noticed the gang moving the contraband on an easy bike.

Sensing Rab's presence, all the smugglers except Sayedul fled, leaving the consignment on the spot.

During primary interrogation, Sayedul confessed to smuggling yaba.

**The circular said buses, trains, and launches would operate at half capacity, and drivers and helpers of all vehicles must have Covid vaccination certificates.**



Poly Khatun, a student of class five, makes a move against Grandmaster Enamul Hossain Rajib during a chess festival in the capital's Mirpur. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: FARHADUR RAHMAN

## OMICRON SURGE

# Britain puts pvt health firms on high alert

India begins booster campaign as Covid cases soar

AGENCIES

Britain yesterday put the biggest private health companies on high alert to deliver crucial treatments should Omicron overwhelm National Health Service hospitals in England.

The United Kingdom's death toll from the Covid-19 pandemic stands at 150,154, the world's seventh worst official Covid toll after the United States, Brazil, India, Russia, Mexico and Peru.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has bet on refraining from lockdowns to deal with the Omicron variant which in recent weeks has swept across the United Kingdom, albeit with death rates significantly lower than previous waves.

In a sign of just how stretched the

National Health Service could become, Health Secretary Sajid Javid ordered England's NHS to strike a 3-month deal with private health companies to allow patients to get treatments such as cancer surgery outside.

"Millions of patients have already got their tests and treatment quicker thanks to our existing deal with independent providers," said David Sloman, NHS England chief operating officer and Covid incident director.

"It also places independent health providers on standby to provide further help should hospitals face unsustainable levels of hospitalisations or staff absences," Sloman said.

The coronavirus has killed at least

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

**Hyginex** Instant hand sanitizer

BEACON Pharmaceuticals Limited