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SHAH CEMENT



BPL begins amid raging Covid surge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The eighth edition of the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League is set to begin today amid a Covid-19 surge in the country.

The Shakib Al Hasan-led Fortune Barishal is set to square off against Chattogram Challengers in the opener at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur from 1:30pm.

In the day's second match, set to start at 6:30pm at the same venue, Mushfiqur Rahim-led Khulna Tigers will battle it out against Mahmudullah Riyad's Minister Group Dhaka.



Locals with their cattle crossing the Brahmaputra on foot as water level of the once mighty river has dropped drastically. Massive siltation is hampering the free flow of water. As boats cannot ply, people of the chars face difficulties going to the mainland. The photo was taken at Ramna Nau-Ghat of Kurigram's Chilmari on Wednesday.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Star HEALTHLINE
 Know your 'superfoods' MORINGA

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Moringa oleifera is a tree native to the subcontinent.

The pods of the tree, locally called "Shojne data", is a staple in Bangalee cuisine.

The pods are used in curries to be eaten with rice, and almost all parts of the tree can be used as various home remedies due to their medicinal properties.

Moringa oleifera is very nutritious. It contains compounds such as vitamin A, B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B-6 folate, ascorbic acid (vitamin C), calcium, potassium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus and zinc.

Moringa seed oil can be beneficial for hair and skin due to the proteins, hydrating and detoxifying elements it contains. It is often used to heal sores.

The anti-inflammatory properties of moringa may be effective in preventing edema from developing.

Moringa can mildly protect the liver against damage caused by anti-tubercular drugs.

Its extracts might help treat some stomach

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Road crash fatalities leap by 30 percent

Govt report shows

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

After two road safety organisations, a government report now shows that the road crashes and fatalities saw a big leap last year, indicating that the road safety situation deteriorated further.

A total of 5,088 people were killed in 5,472 road crashes in 2021, 30 percent higher than the previous year, according to a police report.

According to experts, operations of a higher number of small vehicles, including motorcycles and illegal three-wheelers, mainly caused the rise in the number of accidents and fatalities.

They said the government's failure

to develop public transport system and non-implementations of different steps including providing training to drivers to be blamed for the situation.

Concerns over road accidents and fatalities led to three students' movements for road safety since July 2018, with the latest one in November last year.

Although the authorities promised and undertake several steps to cut down road crashes, the recent data shows those initiatives remain futile as roads became riskier.

Road Safety Foundation, in a report published on January 8 this year, said 6,284 people were killed in 5,371 road crashes last year, which is 15.71 percent and

14.70 percent higher than the previous year respectively.

On the same day, Nirapad Sarak Chai, a pioneer of road safety movements in Bangladesh, published its annual accident report.

The organisation said 4,289 people were killed in 3,793 crashes last year, which is 12.87 percent and 17.36 percent higher than 2020 respectively.

Both organisations, which prepared the statistics following media reports, held lack of monitoring and enforcement of traffic laws, reckless driving, unfit vehicles, unhealthy competition among drivers, and the increasing number of motorcycles and

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NATURE QUEST
 A verditer flycatcher spotted in Rangpur recently. It is named after its shade of blue and is among flycatchers that forage above canopy level, on electric wires or exposed tree top branches.

PHOTO: SUMATYA SULTANA

Let's continue 'honest conversations'

Outgoing US envoy tells The Daily Star on Dhaka-Washington ties

PORIMOL PALMA

Outgoing US Ambassador Earl R Miller wants Dhaka and Washington DC to have honest and direct conversations on democracy, human rights, and rule of law as partnership of the two nations is indispensable not only for future prosperity and security but also for addressing global challenges.

He said President Biden has called for 2022 to be a year of action for



all democracies to improve governance. The US will continue engaging with Democracy Summit participants and other governments, including Bangladesh, to address democratic backsliding, promote respect for human rights, and defend against corruption both at home and abroad, the envoy added.

"My suggestion would be that our governments continue to have

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 READ FULL INTERVIEW ONLINE

MALAYSIA RECRUITMENT All legal agents can now send workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All authorised recruiting agencies will get opportunities to send workers to Malaysia, said Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad.

The minister has issued a letter in response to one from Malaysia's human resources minister.

On January 14, the Malaysian minister issued the letter that stressed on the involvement of 25 "main" Bangladeshi recruiting agencies, each with 10 "associate" agencies under it.

As the issue of involvement of "selected" agencies is already in the media of both countries, various recruiting agencies in Bangladesh have termed it "syndication" and demanded an end to this, citing that a similar system had led to the labour market closure in Malaysia.

In his letter on Tuesday, Imran said Bangladesh is always in favour of transparent, fair and safe migration, as per relevant charters of International Labour Organisation and the country's Competition Act 2012, by keeping the opportunities open to all the valid licensed recruiting agencies as mentioned in the MoU signed on December 19 last year.

According to the MoU, Malaysia shall select Bangladeshi recruiting agencies through the online system from the list provided by the Bangladesh government, he said.

N Korea 'hints' at a face-off with the US

AFP, Seoul

North Korea yesterday hinted it could resume nuclear and long-range weapons tests as it prepares for "confrontation" with Washington -- its latest threat after a string of sanctions busting missile launches.

Pyongyang has not tested inter-continental ballistic missiles or nukes since 2017, putting launches on hold as leader Kim Jong Un embarked on a blitz of high-level diplomacy.

Since then, the nuclear-armed North has rebuffed US offers of talks while restarting some testing, including of hypersonic missiles, as Kim pursues his avowed goal of further strengthening his military.

When Washington imposed fresh sanctions last week, Pyongyang said it was a "provocation" and ramped up conventional weapons tests, vowing a "stronger and certain" response to efforts to rein it in.

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 Instant hand sanitizer with alcohol
 Kills 99.9% of germs without water
 50 ml

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Hajj Abdul Majid Mondol
 Former Chairman, Mondol Group

The UCB family deeply remembers the esteemed Hajj Abdul Majid Mondol, Former Chairman of Mondol Group on the **first anniversary of his death.**

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