



**P6 'Taan' releases on Chorki**  
Will it pull audience towards the platform?



**P7 Afghanistan crisis**  
West links aid to human rights in Oslo talks



**P11 Tsitsipas 'in the zone'**  
Greek star sets up semis clash against Medvedev



**B1 Motorcycle sales up**  
High-end bikes see faster growth



Helped by his wife Prof Yasmeen Haque, eminent author Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal giving an exhausted female student a glass of water in front of the residence of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology Vice-Chancellor Farid Uddin Ahmed around 10:20am yesterday. After 163 hours, 28 students of the university ended their hunger strike, which had begun on January 19 demanding the VC's resignation.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## Sust hunger strike ends

Students vow to continue demo for VC removal; 5 alumni get bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

After 163 hours, 28 students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology ended their hunger strike yesterday at the request of former Sust professors Muhammed Zafar Iqbal and Yasmeen Haque.

The demonstrations demanding the resignation of Vice-Chancellor Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed will continue, says a spokesperson for the demonstrators. A new demonstration plan would be chalked out after discussions among the students.

Prof Zafar and his wife Prof Yasmeen reached Sust around 4:00am yesterday and talked to the students on hunger strike.

With their one-point demand, 23 students had been on hunger strike since 2:50pm on January 19. Five others joined them on Sunday and Monday.

The professors requested them to end their strike reasoning that their lives were precious.

The students told the couple that they would end their strike together. The 20 students, who had to be hospitalised, were brought back to the campus and all of them ended their strike by drinking water around 10:20am.

Prof Zafar, a renowned writer, and Prof Yasmeen themselves gave water to the students.

Afterwards, Prof Zafar said every young adult was with the students.

"We have been assured by the upper level of the government that your demands will be met. Both the cases will be withdrawn.

"We would have come even if we had not been sure of it, but then we could not have told you to end your hunger strike."

Commending the students, Prof Zafar said, "Rest assured that the system of the universities and vice-chancellors in the country will be fixed because of what you have done here."

The protesters have forced 34 VCs of the country to spend sleepless nights, he said.

On VC Prof Farid, he said, "I do not want to call this person, who is so determined to stay in his post even after seeing all this, a human being. He is a monster."

"Your lives are very precious. There's no point in risking your lives for that man," Prof Zafar said.

He said it was a matter of great sorrow that when the students were attacked by the police, no teacher came forward to tell the police that the students could not be harmed.

"The process of stopping the movement is inhumane, cruel, and monstrous," he said.

Prof Yasmeen said, "After we got the assurance [from the government high-ups], we talked to the students over phone around 8:30pm [Tuesday]. They requested us to come fast as the physical conditions of the students were deteriorating by the hour. We, at that moment, rushed to Sust. We are grateful to the students that they trust us."

The students on hunger strike were taken to hospital for further treatment, said the spokesperson for the protesters.

The spokesperson said, "Our honourable Zafar sir and Yasmeen madam assured us that high officials told them that our demand will be met. As we honour and trust them, we decided to end the hunger strike. But the movement will continue."

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### DHAKA AIR POLLUTION

## Tejgaon industrial area tops the list

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

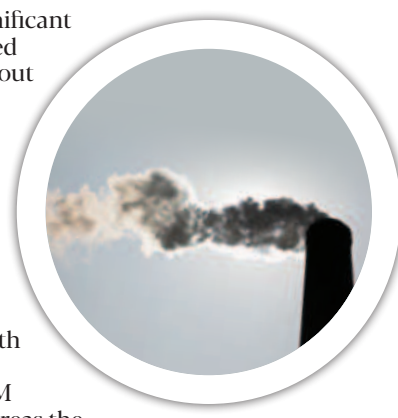
The air quality of 10 significant areas in the capital scored below standard throughout 2021, according to a study of the Centre for Atmospheric Pollution Studies of the Department of Environmental Science at Stamford University.

Tejgaon industrial zone topped the list of the 10 polluted zones with 70 microgrammes (mgs) of particulate matter (PM 2.5) per cubic metre whereas the acceptable level of PM 2.5 is 15mgs per cubic metre.

The study was conducted in the areas that have financial hubs, industrial zones, diplomatic and parliament.

According to the study, Shahbagh scored second on the list with 68mgs PM 2.5 per cubic metre.

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## Money launderers untouched

Authorities fail to submit details of offenders to High Court

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The move to bring money launderers to book is not making any headway as the Anti-Corruption Commission and different government agencies have failed to submit information on the offenders, their deposits in overseas banks, and properties abroad before the High Court despite its orders to do so.

A High Court bench has been holding hearings on a suo motu rule and a writ petition in this regard for over a year but it could not pass any order for prosecuting money launderers who allegedly deposited huge sums of money in foreign banks or purchased properties abroad.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said the commission has limitations in tracing those who

have bought properties abroad with laundered money.

He alleged that the commission sought information from the foreign and home ministries and the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) about the launderers, but they did not give it to them.

Names of Bangladeshi nationals and two corporations came up in Panama Papers in 2016 and in Paradise Papers the following year.

The issue of Bangladeshi money launderers came to the fore on November 18, 2020 when Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at an event revealed that government officials were buying luxurious homes in "Begum Para" in Toronto.

Three days after Momen's comment, the HC issued a

suo motu (voluntary) rule and directed intelligence agencies to take appropriate measures to stop money laundering.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohel also ordered the ACC and government authorities concerned to submit details, including names and addresses of money launderers, to the court by December 17, 2020.

The same HC bench also heard a writ petition filed in February last year, seeking actions against Bangladeshis and companies whose names reportedly came up in the papers.

During the hearing on the petition, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim on

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### EC FORMATION

## Make the names public

Speakers at webinar say people should know the search committee picks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Names to be recommended by the search committee for appointments of the chief election commissioner and other commissioners should be made public for ensuring transparency in the process, eminent citizens told a webinar yesterday.

They also said a parliamentary standing committee should be engaged in the process before the president finally appoints the commissioners.

Shusashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) organised the webinar on the "Appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners Bill 2022" placed in parliament on Sunday.

The government move came nearly 50 years after the constitution prescribed enacting a specific law for forming the Election Commission.

Sources said the Awami League-led government wants to pass the bill as quickly as possible so that the upcoming Election Commission can be constituted through a search committee in line with the act. The tenure of the current EC, led by CEC KM Nurul Huda, expires next month.

At the discussion yesterday, former chief election commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said the search

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SPLASH OF RED... Traders sorting out a harvest of red potatoes at a market in Bogura's Kahaloo upazila yesterday. The potatoes, locally known as *pakri aloo*, were then loaded on trucks to be taken to markets in the capital.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

## EC bill report placed in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After scrutiny, the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry submitted its report on the "Appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners Bill 2022" in parliament yesterday.

It proposed changes in the bill including over the criteria for appointment of the CEC and other commissioners.

The bill is set to be passed today.

Shahiduzzaman Sarker, chairman of the JS committee, placed the report.

The committee changed Section 6 (gha) of the bill where it was mentioned that any person convicted for a criminal offence involving moral turpitude and sentenced to at least two years' imprisonment would not be eligible for the post of CEC and election commissioners.

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# Country marching towards progress

## PM tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that Bangladesh is marching towards progress at an overwhelming pace, dispelling pessimists' takes on the country's future.

In reply to lawmakers' queries, the PM said her government is determined to build a safe and integrated communication network in the country.

"The government is committed to easing traffic congestion, ensuring comfortable public transport, increasing discipline and security on roads... and developing an integrated multimedia communication network by being consistent with the existing system and changing situations of future development," she said in reply to Awami League MP Didarul Alam.

In reply to MP Momtaz Begum, Hasina said, "Bangladesh is marching towards development and progress, disproving all conceptions of pessimists about the future of independent Bangladesh."

In a scripted answer, she said, "In the year of the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence and Bangabandhu's birth centenary celebration, UNDP recommended Bangladesh's graduation to a developing country in 2026. It's a matter of pride for us."

Hasina said to dispel misconceptions about

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Yesterday's winter rain took Dhaka residents by surprise, as many were not prepared to face the downpour. Some, however, were a bit more prudent. This man thought about the weather before going out, and it shows, because his trusty umbrella was by his side all day. This photo was taken from Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



PHOTO: KASHEF CHOWDHURY/URBANA

# Building it right!

## Satkhira's rainwater-harvesting hospital wins UK award for World's Best New Building

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi architect Kashef Chowdhury, director of Bangladeshi architecture firm Urbana, has been announced the winner of the 2021 International Prize for the World's Best New Building by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) for his Friendship Hospital project.

A model of climate-conscious design built with the bare minimum of resources, the Friendship Hospital beat off competition from a Berlin-based gallery by David Chipperfield, and a cycle



and footbridge in Denmark by Wilkinson Eyre.

The RIBA award-winning hospital is located in Bangladesh's Satkhira.

Chowdhury has designed the building to be a machine for rainwater harvesting, with every roof and courtyard surface draining into the central canal, which runs into two storage tanks at either end of the site, according to a report published in The Guardian on January 25.

It is the first "land hospital" for the NGO Friendship, for which Chowdhury has helped to convert several boats into floating hospitals in the past, designed to serve remote communities in the delta region. Built with a tight budget of just under \$2 million, their first permanent building provides a medical lifeline for thousands of people in an area that was heavily affected by a major cyclone in 2007.

Chowdhury told The Guardian: "I am encouraged that this may inspire more of us to commit to an architecture of care both for humanity and for nature, to rise collectively to the urgencies that we face today on a planetary scale."

# A rising health risk

## 67pc of all deaths in country due to non-communicable diseases, says health minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Non-communicable diseases (NCD) are a growing health risk and matter of concern for Bangladesh, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

Such diseases, which include heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease, are collectively responsible for almost 70 percent of all deaths worldwide, according to the World Health Organization.

"Some 67 percent of all deaths in the country are due to non-communicable diseases," Maleque said, referring to different statistics, while addressing the first National NCD Conference 2022 virtually.

Besides, around 20 percent of the population suffer from hypertension, 10 percent from diabetes, and as much as 20 lakh people suffer from cancer each year in the country, the minister said, adding that around 50,000 new patients join the list annually.

Directorate General of Health Services, Bangladesh Health Reporters Forum, Clinical Research Platform and several other organisations arranged the conference.

Researchers and physicians from around 30 organisations in home and abroad participated in the event.

The conference will conclude tomorrow.

Maleque said, "NCDs are increasing due to the change in lifestyle and diet, obesity, tobacco consumption, environmental pollution, and misuse of medicines. To control NCDs, awareness among people, alongside early detection and treatment facilities everywhere, must be increased."

Joining virtually, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "Attaining the SDG has become challenging due to non-communicable diseases. NCDs are increasing due to the use of tobacco and unhealthy lifestyle. The WHO will help Bangladesh

The 4 major categories of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

Cardiovascular Diseases

Diabetes

Chronic Respiratory Diseases

Cancer

PHOTO: COLLECTED

**Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which include heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease, are collectively responsible for almost 70 percent of all deaths worldwide, according to WHO.**

### REASONS

Change in lifestyle, diet  
Obesity, tobacco consumption  
Pollution, misuse of medicines

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness among people  
Early detection  
Better treatment facilities

in the prevention and control of NCDs."

He stressed on ensuring equitable healthcare services at primary level for those who are suffering from such diseases.

On the first day of the conference, researchers from different organisations presented their keynote on non-communicable diseases.

Dr Aliya Naheed, scientific officer at icddr, and secretary of the conference organising committee, said, "As much as half of the rural population do not know they have hypertension. They start medication as per the

advice of local medicine sellers but do not go to doctors."

She said there is a lack of knowledge among both literate and illiterate people about these diseases.

"Everyone has to go for screening at least once a year after the age of 30," she added.

Unicef, UNFP, Orbis International, Trauma Center and different local and international organisations have sponsored the conference.

Tomorrow, on the concluding day, six physicians will be given posthumous awards and six will be given special awards.

# 'One has no licence, another on drugs'

## Says Rab after arresting helper, driver of buses that crushed teen to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One of the two buses, which crushed a teenage boy in Dhaka's Moghbazar area on January 20, was being driven by a helper who has no driving licence.

Monir Hossain (27) took the bus of Ajmery Glory Paribahan from the driver in Gulistan, sat behind the steering wheel and was heading to Gazipur.

Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, shared the information with reporters at a press conference yesterday, after arresting Monir and Md Imran (34), driver of another bus of the same company, from Dhaka's Paltan and Munshiganj areas on the same day.

Facemask vendor Rakibul Hasan (14) was crushed to death between the two buses when

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# ABRAR MURDER CASE

## HC accepts 17 jail appeals for hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday accepted the jail appeals of 17 death-row convicts in Buet student Abrar Fahad murder case for hearing.

The HC bench of Justice Md Rezaul Haque and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil passed the order after deputy attorney general KM Masud Rumi placed the appeals before the judges.

A Dhaka court on December 8, 2021, sentenced 20 Buet students to death for their direct involvement in Abrar's murder inside a dorm room -- an incident that shook the entire nation two years ago.

The court also sentenced five other Buet students to life imprisonment in the case.

The documents of the case reached the HC on January 6 as death reference to examine the lower court's verdict.

PRAYER TIMING JAN 27

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-35	12-45	4-15	5-46	7-15
Jamaat	6-10	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# Mayor does a first-hand inspection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Md Atiqul Islam went inside some newly built drains yesterday to inspect the construction work.

In photos posted on DNCC's Facebook page, Mayor Atiqul was seen observing the quality of work in the capital's Bosila area around 3:00pm.

The post said, "Public money is used to fund urban development projects. It is the responsibility of the people's representative to ensure that the general public receive maximum benefits."

DNCC has been working to recover 2.5 km-long Lautola canal since January 23, and the mayor visited the area as part of it.



Over 50 structures, including some multi-storey buildings and a truck terminal, have been constructed on the Lautola canal, according to DNCC officials.

As part of the drive, Dhaka North City Corporation has already demolished some multi-storey buildings, under-construction markets and a truck terminal.

The city corporation is also working on excavating the canal to restore its water flow, they added.

Earlier, Atiqul also said they will not serve any notice to owners of illegal structures before demolishing them.

"The width and length which are required for the canal have not been ensured as grabbers filled up the canal and constructed structures on it," he said.

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**PROCUREMENT & LOGISTIC SUPPORT DIRECTORATE**

REF: DACPF/INT'L TENDER RE-TENDER/001 & 006/2021-2022      DATED: 26-JAN-2022

**INTERNATIONAL TENDER**


Sealed tenders are hereby invited for supplying following items to Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.

S/N	TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	QTY
01.	DACPF/INT'L RE-TENDER/001/2021-2022 DT: 26-JAN-2022.	ALUMINIUM MEAL FOIL LARGE (As Per Specification)	30,000 EA
02.	DACPF/INT'L RE-TENDER/006/2021-2022 DT: 26-JAN-2022.	MEAL FOIL MEDIUM CREW (As Per Specification)	4,00,000 EA

Tender schedule with detailed specifications, terms & conditions will be available at price of BDT 2,500.00 (BDT Two thousand five hundred) only or equivalent US Dollar per set of each schedule (non-refundable) from Manager Accounts, Cash & Banking, Balaka, Head Office, Kurmitola, Dhaka and from Biman's outstation in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Dubai & London on cash payment during all working days up to 14-FEB-2022. A formal application in bidder's letterhead pad mentioning Tender Number and date shall be required for purchasing the Tender schedule. Tender schedule and other related information may also be viewed at Biman's website [www.biman-airlines.com](http://www.biman-airlines.com).  
Last date for submission of tender/offer is: 15-FEB-2022 at 1100 hrs (LT).

Swapan Kumar Dey  
Manager (Commercial Purchase)

GD-158




**brac**

**Invitation for Tender (IFT) for  
Construction Project at Aarong Building, Dhanmondi**


Project Name	Supply, Fabrication, Fitting-Fixing and Installation of Semi Unitized Structural Glazing Curtain Wall, Stick system Structural Glazing Curtain Wall, Stair Railing & Aluminum Composite Panel for Construction Project at Aarong Building, Dhanmondi
Source of Fund	BRAC Fund
Tender Package No.	BPD/2022/IFT-1072
Reference No. & Date	BPD/2022/IFT-1072 Date: 17-01-2022
Tender Name	DOUBLE ENVELOPE: Supply, Fabrication, Fitting-Fixing and Installation of Semi Unitized Structural Glazing Curtain Wall, Stick system Structural Glazing Curtain Wall, Stair Railing & Aluminum Composite Panel for Construction Project at Aarong Building, Dhanmondi.
Time for Delivery	As per Tender Documents
Price of the Tender Documents	1,000 BDT (Non-refundable)
Tender schedule fee to be paid through bkaash (send money) including cash out charge. (bkaash No.-01719262589), Must share company name in bkaash Reference. The Tender applying platform will be enabled after uploading the Tender schedule Fee-related information.	
Tender Security	As per Tender Documents
Tender Documents Available	<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 Package No.)
Date & Time for Documents Availability	From 28 January, 2022 till 20 February 2022, 2.30 pm
Tender Submission Platform, Date & Time	<a href="https://tender.brac.net/">https://tender.brac.net/</a> Before 20 February 2022, 2.30 pm (The offers have to be submitted via eTender portal and procedure will be discussed during the Pre-bid meeting)
Tender Opening Place, Date & Time	Online, 20 February 2022 at 03:00 PM Link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/bni-mgtz-msd">meet.google.com/bni-mgtz-msd</a>
Pre-bid meeting	On 01 February, Tuesday from 11:30 am till 12.30 pm through Google meet link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/vyn-hqpq-eyk">meet.google.com/vyn-hqpq-eyk</a>

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স্মারক নং-৪৬.২০৭.০০০.১৩.০২.১৭৫০.২০২২

**ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	৯ স্থানীয় সরকার, পল্লী উন্নয়ন ও সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়, স্থানীয় সরকার বিভাগ।			
২।	সংস্থার নাম	ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন।			
৩।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর বিভাগ	সম্পত্তি বিভাগ, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন।			
৪।	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM), সিলগালা মুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান।			
৫।	ইজারার মেয়াদ	কার্যালয়ের তারিখ থেকে পরবর্তী ০১ (এক) বছর।			
৬।	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	ব্যক্তির ক্ষেত্রে (ক) পানপাশের সাইজের ছবি-০২ কপি। (খ) ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর/অসারমান কর্তৃক জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি। (গ) হালনাগাদ চিআইএন সনদের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি। (ঘ) কোম্পানীর ক্ষেত্রে হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স এর সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি। (ঙ) ইজারা দরের ৩০% (শতকরা ৩০ ভাগ) অর্থ পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে, ২৫% অর্থ ইজারা মূল্যের সাথে সমন্বয় করা হবে এবং বাকী ৫% অর্থ জামানত হিসেবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে। (চ) সিডিউল ক্রয়ের চালানের ফটোকপি।			
৭।	সিডিউলের টাকা জমা দেয়ার খাত	সিডিউল মূল্য নির্ধারিত অর্থ মেয়র, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন, চলতি হিসাব নং-২০০০১৭৮৩৯ (বিবিধ), সোনালী ব্যাংক লিম, নগর ভবন শাখা।			
৮।	দরপত্র বিক্রির স্থান	বিভাগীয় কমিশনারের কার্যালয়; ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের সম্পত্তি বিভাগ, হিসাব বিভাগ ও সকল আঞ্চলিক নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়।			
৯।	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার স্থান	বিভাগীয় কমিশনারের কার্যালয়; ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের সম্পত্তি বিভাগ ও সকল আঞ্চলিক নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়।			
১০।	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	প্রধান সম্পত্তি কর্মকর্তার দপ্তর, সম্পত্তি বিভাগ, ৪র্থ তলা, রুম নং-৩২৫, নগর ভবন, ডিএসসিসি।			
১১।	সিডিউল ক্রয়ের তারিখ, দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার তারিখ ও খোলার সময় নিম্নরূপঃ				
দরপত্র আহ্বানের পর্ষায়	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র বাজ ও খাম খোলার তারিখ ও সময় (দরদাতার উপস্থিতিতে)		
১ম পর্ষায়	১৪/০২/২০২২খ্রিঃ	১৫/০২/২০২২ তাং- সকাল ৯টা হতে ১২.৩০টা পর্যন্ত	১৫/০২/২০২২ তাং- দুপুর ২.৩০টা		
২য় পর্ষায়	২৮/০২/২০২২খ্রিঃ	০৩/০৩/২০২২ তাং- সকাল ৯টা হতে ১২.৩০টা পর্যন্ত	০৩/০৩/২০২২ তাং- দুপুর ২.৩০টা		
৩য় পর্ষায়	১৪/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ	১৫/০৩/২০২২ তাং- সকাল ৯টা হতে ১২.৩০টা পর্যন্ত	১৫/০৩/২০২২ তাং- দুপুর ২.৩০টা		
১২।	কার্যের বিবরণঃ				
ক্র. নং	ইজারার নিমিত্ত পার্শ্ববর্তী বিবরণ	সরকারি মূল্য	সিডিউল মূল্য	জামানত	মন্তব্য
০১	ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আগতাবীন ৫৫নং ওয়ার্ডস্থিত কন্যা নিয়ন্ত্রণ বেড়াবো শহীদ শেখ ফজিলাতুন নেছা মুজিব মহাবিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ পার্শ্বের জায়গার পার্শ্বি সংখ্যা-১০৫টি	১৭,৮০,৮০০/-	৪,২০০/-	ইজারা দরের ৩০% (শতকরা ৩০ ভাগ) পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে। ২৫% অর্থ ইজারা মূল্যের সাথে সমন্বয় করা হবে। বাকী ৫% অর্থ জামানত হিসেবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে।	এ বিষয়ে যাবতীয় শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলী নগর ভবনের ৪র্থ তলায় সম্পত্তি বিভাগ হতে (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে) জানা যাবে।
১৩।	বিশেষ নির্দেশাবলীঃ সরকারি ছুটি/অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নির্ধারিত দিনে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা সম্ভব না হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে ও একই সময়ে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন দরপত্র/সমুদায় দরপত্র বাতিল বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ রাখেন। টেন্ডার সন্দেশ বিজ্ঞপ্তি তথ্য টেন্ডার সিডিউলে বর্ণিত থাকবে।				
মোঃ রাশেদ সাবরিন (উপ-সচিব) প্রধান সম্পত্তি কর্মকর্তা ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন ফোনঃ ০২২২৩৩৮৫৮৮৬ E-mail: <a href="mailto:cesio@dscc.gov.bd">cesio@dscc.gov.bd</a>					
ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১৭০/২০২১-২২ জিডি-১৬৪					

## EC bill report

FROM PAGE 1

It removed the two-year term from the bill, saying in the report that a person convicted in a criminal offence of moral turpitude for any term shall not be eligible to be appointed as CEC or election commissioner.

The same section of the bill said a person should have at least 20 years' working experience in any important government, judicial, semi-government or private post.

The parliamentary standing committee recommended to amend this to add "autonomous and other professions" to the posts already mentioned in the bill.

If the law is passed with this amendment, people from various professional bodies -- autonomous and other professions -- will be eligible for the posts.

Law Minister Anisul Huq placed the bill in parliament on January 23 seeking to give a legal shield to the current and previous Election Commissions formed through search committees.

The bill was later sent to the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry for scrutiny.

Once passed, the law

will provide legal cover to all activities of the search committees.

The tenure of the incumbent commission, led by CEC KM Nurul Huda, expires on February 14.

Ahead of the general elections in 2014 and 2018, the president picked CECs and other commissioners in 2012 and 2017 following recommendations by search committees.

The government move came nearly 50 years after the constitution prescribed enacting a specific law for forming the EC.

The bill says the previous search committees, their functions and the appointments of the CECs and other commissioners made following their recommendations will be deemed valid, and no question can be raised in any court over the matter.

It will be considered that the incumbent and previous ECs were constituted as per the law.

In the bill, the previous two search committees have been given legal validity.

Although the constitution suggests that the CEC and other election commissioners be appointed under a law, that law was not formulated in the past.

## US may lift Rab

FROM PAGE 12

sanctions against the Rab, Momen said the work on partnership dialogue with the United States will start next month. There will be a security dialogue in April. The process of holding multiple meetings with the US is ongoing.

Indicating that it would take some time for the embargo to be lifted, the foreign minister said, "We have held several meetings with USA. InshaAllah, whenever we will be able to provide the information to them properly, I believe the sanctions will be withdrawn from a very good organisation like RAB."

He said the ban was imposed without any prior discussion and was prompted through propaganda from various

lobbyist firms.

Not only have they given false information to the US government, but they have also been giving negative feedback on Rab to the different human rights organisations.

Momen said Rab has gained the acceptance of the people by reducing the country's terrorism, drugs, human trafficking by and large.

The minister said Rab had not done anything for it to be considered a terrorist organisation.

In his statement, he said the government has hired PR firms instead of lobbyists to stop the spread of false information on Bangladesh, adding that an organisation called BGR was appointed in 2014-15 to stop the anti-Bangladesh campaign.

## One has no licence

FROM PAGE 3

Monir and Imran were driving recklessly and competing with each other at Moghbazar traffic signal on that day. They fled after the incident.

"Rakib was killed due to the bus drivers racing against each other," Moin said.

They drive recklessly and compete with each other to make as many trips as possible in a day, as they are employed on a daily basis, he added.

The Rab officials said Monir arrived in the country three months

back, after staying for five years in a Middle Eastern country, and started a job as a bus helper one and half months ago on a daily wage of Tk 500.

Though he has no driving licence, he used to drive the bus occasionally, he said.

The other driver, Imran, has been driving buses for about 10 years but got his licence three years back.

He abuses drugs and was sued in a case under Narcotics Control Act with Daudkandi Police Station in Cumilla last year, Moin said.

## Country marching

FROM PAGE 3

Bangladesh's advancement, her government has taken various time-befitting steps to implement plans to face global trade challenges, following graduation from a least developed country (LDC).

She added that Bangladesh has taken initiatives to sign preferential trade agreements (PTA), free trade agreements and comprehensive economic partnership agreements with different commercially important countries.

The PM said initially, her government has

taken a step to sign trade agreements with 10 countries and three alliances on priority basis, the 10 being India, Nepal, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Japan, Singapore, the US, Canada, China and Malaysia.

She said Bangladesh signed a PTA with Bhutan on December 6, 2020.

Due to successful diplomatic efforts of Bangladesh, she said, LDCs have been able to obtain a number of facilities, including extending time for the pharmaceutical patent exemption provision till 2033.

## 'Tis the season



FROM PAGE 5

However, the numbers are decreasing by the day as many farmers are opting to sell their trees.

Deputy Director of Jhenidah DAE Asgar Ali told this correspondent that molasses of the district are particularly famous.

"Despite this, a few years back, farmers started selling the date trees after being tempted by timber traders. We are currently trying to convince them not to do this considering the promise of the sector. Some of them are now planting more trees."

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Govt. Shah Sultan College, Bogura  
Sherpur Road, Banani, Bogura  
Website: [www.govssc.edu.bd](http://www.govssc.edu.bd)



Memo No. gssc/bog/idgsp/cedp/2022/07      Date: 26/01/2022


**e-Tender Notice 04/2021-2022**  
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 works	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	652071	Procurement of Furniture and Fixtures for Classrooms, Seminar and Others	16 Feb 2022, 11.30	16 Feb 2022, 14.00

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 16 Feb 2022, 11.30am.  
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. Shahidul Alam-8424  
Principal  
Govt. Shah Sultan College, Bogura  
Phone: 051-65249

GD-159      E-mail: [cedpspogovtshahsultancollege@gmail.com](mailto:cedpspogovtshahsultancollege@gmail.com)



**Patiya Govt. College**  
Patiya, Chattogram  
[www.patiyagovtcollege.gov.bd](http://www.patiyagovtcollege.gov.bd)

Memo No. CEDP/PGC/2021-22/06      Date: 25/01/2022

**e-Tender Notice 03/2021-2022**  
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.	650908	Refurbishment of Classroom, Washrooms, Laboratories, Teachers Council Room, Exam Control Room of Patiya Govt. College, Chattogram	14-Feb-2022 13:00pm	14-Feb-2022 14:00pm


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 bank's branches up to 4:00pm, 13 February, 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)).

Prof. Mohammad Mozammel Hoque  
Principal  
Patiya Govt. College, Chattogram  
Mobile No. 01876029046  
E-mail: [patiyagovtcollege@gmail.com](mailto:patiyagovtcollege@gmail.com)

GD-156

শেখ হাসিনার নির্দেশ  
জলবায়ু সচিবুঃ বাংলাদেশ

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
প্রোগ্রাম্যাটিক সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব প্রকল্প  
পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর  
পরিবেশ ভবন, ই-১৬, আগারগাঁও  
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স্মারক নং- পথ/প্রোগ্রাম সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব/গাড়ী ভাড়া (অংশ-১)/৪০/২০১৯/০৮

**গাড়ি/মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্টে উল্লিখিত শর্তে "বাংলাদেশের শহরগুলোর (সিটি কর্পোরেশন/পৌরসভা) জৈব আবর্জনা ব্যবহার করে প্রোগ্রাম্যাটিক সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পের দাপ্তরিক কাজে ব্যবহারের নিমিত্ত মাসিক ভাড়ায় একটি ৮ (আট) আসন বিশিষ্ট শীতাতপ নিয়ন্ত্রিত উন্নতমানের মাইক্রোবাস (সিএনজি এবং অকটেন চালিত) ভাড়া করার লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত পরিবহন ব্যবসায়ীদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/ডিরিশন	৯ পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়।
০২।	সংস্থার নাম	৯ পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর।
০৩।	ক্রয়কারী প্রকল্পের নাম	৯ বাংলাদেশের শহরগুলোর (সিটি কর্পোরেশন/পৌরসভা) জৈব আবর্জনা ব্যবহার করে প্রোগ্রাম্যাটিক সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব।
০৪।	অর্থের পদ্ধতি	৯ উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ওটিএম)।
০৫।	অর্থের উৎস	৯ বাংলাদেশ জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন ট্রাস্ট (জিওবি)।
০৬।	দরপত্র আহ্বানের নং ও তারিখ	৯ পথ/প্রোগ্রাম সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব/গাড়ী ভাড়া (অংশ-১)/৪০/২০১৯/০৮; তারিখঃ ২৬/০১/২০২২ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
০৭।	গাড়ি ভাড়ার মেয়াদকাল	৯ ভাড়ার তারিখ হতে ১ বছর।
০৮।	দরদাতাদের যোগ্যতা	৯ একই ধরনের কার্যের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী এবং সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ অথবা দরদাতাদের (১) যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, (২) টিআইএন সনদ, (৩) প্রত্যাবর্তিত গাড়ির আপ-টু-ডেট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, (৪) ট্যাক্স টোকেন, (৫) রুট পারমিট, (৬) গাড়ির ফিটনেস সার্টিফিকেট, (৭) ব্লু-বুক, (৮) বীমা সনদসহ মালিকানার বৈধ দলিলাদি এবং (৯) বৈধ লাইসেন্সধারী দক্ষ চালক থাকতে হবে যার সত্যায়িত কপি দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে। বাংলাদেশের বৈধ নাগরিক হতে হবে এবং নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি দাখিল করতে হবে।
০৯।	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	৯ ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য।
১০।	দরপত্র জামানত পরিমাণ	৯ ২০,০০০/- (বিশ হাজার) টাকা।
১১।	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	৯ কক্স নং-২০৮ (৩য় তলা), পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর (পুরাতন ভবন), ই-১৬, আগারগাঁও শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
১২।	দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলার স্থান	৯ ২১০ (৩য় তলা), পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর (পুরাতন ভবন), ই-১৬, আগারগাঁও শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
১৩।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৯ ১৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২২ তারিখ বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকা।
১৪।	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৯ ১৭ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২২ তারিখ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
১৫।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	৯ ১৭ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২২ তারিখ বেলা ২:০০ ঘটিকা।
১৬।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	৯ প্রকল্প পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশের শহরগুলোর (সিটি কর্পোরেশন/পৌরসভা) জৈব আবর্জনা ব্যবহার করে প্রোগ্রাম্যাটিক সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব প্রকল্প, পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর, পরিবেশ ভবন, ই-১৬, আগারগাঁও, শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
১৭।	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা	৯ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন/সকল টেন্ডার গ্রহণ/প্রত্যাখ্যান করার অধিকার কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।
১৮।	অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	৯ পূর্ণস্বত্ব-২০০৮ (সংশোধনসহ) অনুসারে দরপত্র কার্যক্রম পরিচালিত হবে।

প্রকল্প পরিচালক  
প্রোগ্রাম্যাটিক সিডিএম-২য় পর্ব প্রকল্প  
ফোনঃ +৮৮ ০২ ৮১৮১৭৭৫

জিডি-১৫৭

‘Tis the season to eat molasses

ABIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

It's a relatively small window. For four months a year, from mid-November to March, farmers who sell molasses from date juice hit their peak.

Hundreds of farmers in Jhenidah are no different. Every winter, buckets upon buckets of molasses are made in its six upazilas, which are then sent to Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet, basically all over the country.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Jhenidah, around a 1,000 tonnes of molasses are produced in the district, each kilogramme of which sells for up to Tk 200-250.

After talking to locals, namely Abdur Rahman of Kaliganj upazila and Sujit Kumar of Shailakupa upazila, it was found that each date tree fetches around Tk 10,000. The farmers meet their domestic demand with this and can earn extra money by selling the rest. The "gur" is made mostly by female farmers, who also use it to cook pitha, payesh and other sweets.

However, over this popular and profitable sector looms the shadow of timber traders and brick kiln owners, who are trying to lure them into selling the date trees. According to the DAE, the district is home to 4,32,0000 date trees.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR



Farmers who own lands in Kullibeel, a large farmland of about 700 acres, had to leave their land without any farming for years because of waterlogging. The only drainage canal is filled with silt, making the whole place unsuitable for farming.

PHOTO: STAR

700 acres submerged  
Farmland remains waterlogged for years

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, Savar

Once Nurul Haque used to cultivate different types of crops in his land all around the year.

However, in recent years, the 65-year-old farmer at Dhamrai's Srirampur has been unable to cultivate one single crop in his fields. The reason lies in waterlogging, and such is the plight of hundreds of farmers from 10 adjacent areas.

Farmers who own lands in Kullibeel, a large farmland of about 700 acres, had to leave their land without any farming for years because of this very problem.

Nurul stated other reasons behind not being able to farm the lands. Some farmers have sold their land's topsoil to brickfield owners, and only one drainage canal is filled with silt, making the whole place unsuitable for farming.

Rejaul Karim, chairman of Sutipara Union Parishad, told this correspondent that in 2019, a drain was cut along the canal, which was later filled with silt again. This claim has been confirmed by Dhamrai Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Ariful Hasan.

"I informed the matter to the UNO and other officers concerned. They have recently visited the area and assured the farmers that they will take an initiative to solve the problem," said the UP chairman.

Dhamrai UNO Hossain Mohammad Hai Jocki said, "We have recently visited the area. There was also a bridge over the canal, which got damaged last year and due to that blockage, the drainage system became dysfunctional." The UNO said it is possible to solve the crisis by re-excavating the canal. "We are working on the issue."

‘Stop plastic use, save Kuakata’

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Demanding an end to the use of disposable plastics to protect the environment of Kuakata beach, a memorandum signed by 2,783 people was handed over to the Patuakhali deputy commissioner (DC) on Tuesday.

Lincoln Bayen, Barisal divisional coordinator of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), its network members Shahabuddin Panna, Sohrab Hossain, Parveen Sultana and others handed over the memorandum.



PHOTO: STAR

Additional deputy commissioner (education and ICT) Israt Jahan received it on behalf of the DC and said necessary steps would be taken.

The memorandum noted that defying laws, the use of polythene and disposable plastics has been increasing, which is causing environmental pollution. In particular, piles of plastic waste can be seen at the country's various beaches, including Kuakata.

Therefore, to protect the natural beauty and environment of the tourist area, the memorandum called for taking steps against use of disposable plastics.

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

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Executive Engineer

District: Munshiganj

[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)

Memo No. 46.02.5900.000.07.001.21-244

Date: 26-01-2022

**e-Tender Notice No. 19/2021-22 Procurement of Works (NCT)**

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

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID No.	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time	Procurement method
1.	GDP-3/ MU-84	Improvement Gabtala Masjid-Dogachi Road By BC at Ch. 0.00-2250m, Upazila: Sreenagar, District: Munshiganj, Road ID: 359845041.	651547 (Re-Tender)	Upto 12:00 14-Feb-2022	At 14:00 14-Feb-2022	OTM
2.	GDP-IV/ MUN/ Tongi/ WR-367	Improvement of Tongibari-Dighirpar UZR-Biania Bazar Road By BC at Ch. 1555-2665m Under Upazila: Tongibari, District: Munshiganj, (Road ID: 359943009). (Salvage Material Cost BDT: 22,14,124.00)	652600 (Re-Tender)	Upto 12:00 14-Feb-2022	At 14:00 14-Feb-2022	OSTETM
3.	GDP-IV/ MUN/ GAZ/ WR-370	(1) Improvement of Vhabanipur Fazul Karim House-Shikdar Bari Road By BC at Ch. 00-250m Under Upazila: Gazaria, District: Munshiganj, (Road ID: 359245075) (Salvage Material Cost BDT: 3,91,552.00) (2) Improvement of Gudhara Ghat-Denga Fakir Bari via Aralla GPS Road at Ch. 00-650m Under Upazila: Gazaria, District: Munshiganj, (Road ID: 359244047). (3) Improvement of Doulotpur-Andermanik (Ibrahim Dargi) Road By BC at Ch. 350-1470m Under Upazila: Gazaria, District: Munshiganj, (Road ID: 59245049). (Salvage Material Cost BDT: 9,19,679.00)	652723 (Re-Tender)	Upto 12:00 14-Feb-2022	At 14:00 14-Feb-2022	OSTETM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System 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.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from the e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

**Md. Monaser Sarker**  
Executive Engineer  
LGED, Munshiganj  
Phone: 02-7612038  
E-mail: [xen.munshiganj@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.munshiganj@lged.gov.bd)

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**Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute**

"Seaweed Culture & Seaweed Product Development in Bangladesh Coast"

Research Project Marine Fisheries and Technology Station, Cox's Bazar

Memo No. 33.04.0000.124.03.005.21-113

Date: 25.01. 2022

**Request for Expressions of Interest (3<sup>rd</sup> call)**

Ministry/Division:	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Bangladesh	
Agency:	Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute, Mymensingh	
Procuring Entity:	Director General	
Expression of Interest for Selection of	An International Sea weed Culture & Value Addition Consultant (1 no's); Package No. S1 and an International Sea weed culture & Value Addition Technician (1 no's); Package No. S2	
Duration:	03 months in two phases	
EoI Memo No.:	Memo No. 33.04.0000.124.03.005.21-113 & Date: 25.01. 2022	
Date:	25.01. 2022	
Procurement Sub Method:	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)	
Budget and Source of Funds:	Development Budget and GoB	
Development Partners:	N/A	
Project / Programme Code:	224256500	
Project/Programme Name:	Seaweed Culture & Seaweed Product Development in Bangladesh Coast Research Project	
EoI Closing Date and Time:	Date: 24/02/2022 and Time: 05.00 p.m. (Bangladeshi Time)	
Information For Applicant:		
Outline of the assignment and required qualifications & experiences [Details provided in the Standard Request for Application (SRFA)].		
Position	Outline of the Assignment	Qualification & Experience
<b>An International Seaweed Culture &amp; Value Addition Consultant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explore Seaweed resources in the Bangladesh coast and assist in identification of Seaweed species</li><li>Explore the different Seaweed cultivation techniques and adopted them to local conditions</li><li>Develop techniques for potential use of Seaweed as food items and other industrial uses</li><li>Explore export potential of Seaweed: where, how and in which form Seaweed can be exported</li><li>Explore different alternative uses of Seaweed, where and how Seaweed can be used</li><li>Explore import of high yielding sea weed germ lingfrom aboard for cultivation in Bangladesh coast</li><li>To assist the scientists of BFRI in Seaweed culture, processing and product development.</li><li>Prepare periodic project reports</li><li>Relevant any other task assigned by the Project Director/project management as and when required.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The position requires minimum Master's degree in Marine Fisheries/Biology with 10 year's experience in Seaweed Culture &amp; Value Addition. Preference will be given to PhD holder in relevant field with experience in Asian countries. He/She must have a broad international exposure in his field of specialization.</li></ul>
<b>An International Seaweed culture &amp; Value Addition Technician</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide technical guidance and support about the seaweed culture, identification, processing and product development of seaweed processing laboratory complex.</li><li>To assist the scientists of BFRI in Seaweed culture, processing and product development.</li><li>Prepare periodic project reports</li><li>Relevant any other task assigned by the Project Director/project management as and when required.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Must have minimum graduation degree in Fisheries/ Aquaculture/ Marine science with at least 6-8 years working experience on Seaweed culture in abroad.</li><li>Or</li><li>In case of highly practical experienced person educational qualification might be relaxed.</li><li>Highly trained person will be preferred</li></ul>
Other Details:	Applicants are requested to provide information as per the format provided in Standard Request for Application (SRFA) indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (complete CV in prescribed form with other details as applicable). SRFA may be obtained from the websites: <a href="http://fri.portal.gov.bd">fri.portal.gov.bd</a> or <a href="http://www.mof.gov.bd">www.mof.gov.bd</a> or from the address below either through email or in person from the office of the undersigned. The applicants shall submit supporting documents in favor of their experience and qualifications along with the SRFA. The services of the specialist will commence as per practical need of incumbent which will be determined once recruitment process is completed.	
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EoI(s) without assigning any reason thereof.		
Procurement Entity Details		
Name of official inviting EoI	Md. Mohidul Islam	
Designation of official inviting EoI	Project Director	
Address of official inviting EoI	Seaweed Culture & Seaweed Product Development in Bangladesh Coast Research Project, Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute, Marine fisheries and technology station, Cox's Bazar-4700, Bangladesh	
Contact details of official inviting EoI	Cell: +88-01719355655 Email: <a href="mailto:seaweed.projectbfri@gmail.com">seaweed.projectbfri@gmail.com</a> , <a href="mailto:mohidbfri@gmail.com">mohidbfri@gmail.com</a>	

(Md. Mohidul Islam)  
Project Director

**National Housing Authority**

Office of the Executive Engineer

Mirpur H&S Division-2

Section-2, Mirpur, Dhaka

[www.nha.gov.bd](http://www.nha.gov.bd)

Phone: 02-48040117

Memo No. 25.38.2648.701.73.003.19.1606

Date: 26.01.2022

**e-Tender Notice**

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP:

Tender ID	Name of works	Tender publication & closing date & time
648391	Construction of B+G+8-Storeyed Residential Flats Building at Plot No. 38/C, 39/C Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur H/E, Dhaka under the Project "GRIHAYAN DHANMONDI".	27-01-2022, Time: 13:00 27-02-2022, Time: 15:00

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. 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)) and NHA site [www.nha.gov.bd](http://www.nha.gov.bd).

**Md. Abu Horaira**  
Executive Engineer  
Mirpur H&S Division-2, NHA

GD-165

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

Gurudayal Government College

Kishoreganj

Website: [www.gdc.gov.bd](http://www.gdc.gov.bd)

Memo No. GDGC/CEDP/CEDP/Goods/G8/2021-22/88(4)

Date: 26/01/2022

**e-Tender Notice 04/2021-2022**

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 works	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	653357	Procurement of Furniture with related services for Classrooms, Office, Library, Labs and Conference Hall.	14 February 2022 12.00pm	14 February 2022 1.00pm

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 bank's branches up to 13 February 2022, 4.00pm.

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. Jamalur Rahman**  
Principal  
Gurudayal Govt. College, Kishoreganj  
Phone: 0941-61857  
E-mail: [gdgckishoreganj@gmail.com](mailto:gdgckishoreganj@gmail.com)

GD-166



Bubly in “Taan”.

“The title ‘Taan’, in a broader sense, can be explained in many ways. It might be interpreted as attraction towards someone, or addiction to drugs,” says Rafi.

SHARMIN JOYA

Raihan Rafi has recently been on a roll – presenting one stellar production after another. His recent productions – “Janowar”, “The Dark Side of Dhaka”, and “Khachar Bhitore Ochin Pakhi” have all been praised by critics.

“Taan” is his first production for 2022, which will release today (Thursday).

In a conversation with The Daily Star, the director shared insights about his exciting project, which will release on streaming site Chorki today.

Siam Ahmed, the lead actor of the film, had previously with Rafi on “Poramon 2”, later “Dohon” and “Damal”. However, this is

Shobnom Bubly’s first time working with the Raihan Rafi.

“The title ‘Taan’, in a broader sense, can be explained in many ways. It might be interpreted as attraction towards someone, or addiction to drugs,” says Rafi.

The story revolves around lovers Abani and Rashed, who elope from their respective homes. As they begin their new life, they encounter unprecedented circumstances.

“My previous projects reflected dark and mysterious vibes. However, I wanted to start the year with a romantic project” shares Rafi. “Unfortunately, the rise of Covid-19 brought

the new film releases to a halt once again, thus “Taan” will be a treat to the audience, one that they can avail from their homes.

“I like to experiment with every project, so this time I thought of introducing Bubly opposite Siam,” shared Rafi. “Honestly, she performed beyond my expectations. We perceive her as a face for more commercial films, but she proved that she is exceptional given the right script and role.”

The film is set in locations around Old Dhaka, the Buriganga river, and more.

The director informs that the biggest challenge while shooting was maintaining the safety protocols during the pandemic.

A good number of films directed by Raihan Rafi are on the pipeline, including “Noor”, “Ittefaq”, “Swapnobaji”, “Poran” and “Damal”. He informs that

“Poran” is expected to release on Valentine’s Day, while “Damal” is slated for release on Independence Day (March 26).

The trailer for the film showcases a thrilling plot, in which Siam portrays an addicted lover, with Bubly as his wife, a working woman who struggles to put up with his antics. While we cannot wait to see the film as it releases today, only time will tell if “Taan” pulls even more audiences to Chorki, which jostles hard to try to be a cut above other local streaming sites.



Raihan Rafi



Siam and Bubly in “Taan”

## ‘Padma Shri demeaning for a singer of Sandhya Mukherjee’s stature’

Legendary singer’s daughter says

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Legendary Bengali singer Sandhya Mukherjee has refused an offer of a Padma Shri award, when she was contacted on phone by Indian government officials for her nod, her daughter Soumi Sengupta said last night.



Sandhya Mukherjee told the senior Home Ministry official, who called from New Delhi, that she was not willing to be named as a Padma Shri recipient, Soumi told the media soon after the list of awardees was announced on the eve of India’s Republic Day parade.

“At the age of 90, with a singing career spanning more than eight decades being chosen for Padma Shri is demeaning for a singer of her stature,” she said.

READ FULL NEWS ONLINE

## Popy breaks silence after 14 months

Asks members to vote for Ilias-Nipun panel

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Renowned Dhaliwood actress Popy was deemed ‘missing’ from the media from December 23, 2020, when she posted ‘I saw you in my dreams, a light of love amidst the darkness’ on Facebook.

The actress finally broke her silence and appeared on social media through a video, in which she asked members to vote for the panel of Ilias Kanchan and Nipun in the upcoming Film Artists’ Association election tomorrow.

The 3-time National Award winner explained that she felt insulted by the activities of the former panel, who allegedly wanted to cancel her membership. “I was hurt, angry and humiliated; this is why I was away from everything. I will open up more about this later.”



# COUNTRYWIDE

## Illegal sand lifters choking Brahmaputra

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Lalmouriha

A gang of sand lifters has been choking the flow of the Brahmaputra river in Roumari upazila of Kurigram district by creating a road across the river in Kartimari Boat Ghat area.

They have been filling the river to construct the road to facilitate their business, locals said.

Once the road is complete, it will obstruct the natural flow of the Brahmaputra river, they added.

The gang has been extracting sands illegally for several years from the middle of the river. Now, they have started constructing a 200-metre-long road that will connect the river bank and the mid-point of the river.

The road will cost around Tk three lakh and the sand

lifters will collectively bear the expenditure, said the locals and the sand traders.

“They are constructing the road spending their own money to facilitate the transportation of sand,” said a resident in the area seeking anonymity.

“If the road is constructed, the river’s natural flow will be obstructed. Even, boatmen would face difficulties to navigate their boats,” said Abdullah Al Mamun, the lessee of Kartimari Boat Terminal.

“They (illegal sand lifters) are influential. That is why none dare to protest it,” he said.

However, Zahidul Islam, president of Jadurchar Union Tractor Owners’ Association and also a sand trader, claimed that they were constructing the road to help farmers transport their crops.

Meanwhile, local people said they were passing days in

fear of river erosion due to the unbridled extraction of sand from the riverbed.

Many families have already become homeless due to river erosion. Hundred hectares of arable land and a number of mosques have been devoured by the river, said farmer Mojibar Rahman in the area.

Even, Chaktabari-Dhanarchar-Rajibpur dyke collapsed due to river erosion,” said the 65-year-old grower.

However, sand trader Zahidul Islam denied the claim and said, “Sand is being lifted from the middle of the river that is far away from the shore; it does not cause river erosion.”

Contacted, Roumari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Al Imran said he was not aware of the matter.

He would take necessary legal steps after investigation, said the UNO.



A gang of illegal sand lifters has been constructing a road on their own obstructing the natural flow of the Brahmaputra river in Kartimari Boat Ghat area of Kurigram’s Roumari upazila. Such flagrant violation of law remains unnoticed by the administration.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Money launderers untouched

FROM PAGE 1

February 28 wanted to know the names, addresses, and current status of the Bangladeshis who deposited laundered money in overseas banks.

The court asked the authorities and the ACC to give details of such individuals and organisations to it by March 30 last year.

But little progress has been made since then.

On December 5 last year, the ACC submitted a “compliance report”, containing only the names of 43 people reportedly published in the papers in 2016 and 2017 but gave no details.

Irked by the graft watchdog’s inaction, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice AKM Zahirul Huq the next day blasted the ACC for its failure to provide the court with any finding of its own.

The HC bench also directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and BFIU to submit separate reports to it by January 9 this year, explaining why they failed to provide information and documents on money

launderers to the ACC.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman is scheduled to hold hearing on the matter on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the BFIU yesterday submitted to the HC a report containing names of 69 Bangladeshis and entities disclosed in Panama Papers and Paradise Papers as money launderers.

According to the report, Panama Papers named 43 and Paradise Papers 26 people.

Contacted, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said his ministry is not responsible for finding who laundered money and purchased properties abroad.

“It is the Anti-Corruption Commission who is responsible for finding out money launderers and corrupt people and bring them to book,” he told The Daily Star on January 14.

About his November 2020 statement, Momen said he came to know about it unofficially from a person.

“A person had unofficially told me that 22 to 24 homes have been

bought by Bangladeshis in ‘Begum Para’ in Canada. Most of them are high-profile bankers and retired government officials. There are a few politicians among them. This information was unverified and unofficial. I had told this to the media without verifying it,” the minister said.

He said it was very difficult to get details about the money launderers as foreign governments are reluctant to share information.

Supreme Court lawyer Abdul Qaim Khan, who jointly filed the writ petition, said the ACC did not conduct any enquiry into those Bangladeshis who deposited money in Swiss banks and purchased properties abroad with laundered money.

“If the ACC had given the list of names and addresses of those corrupt people, the High Court could have issued necessary directives to bring them to book,” he said.

ACC lawyer Khurshid said the BFIU is not authorised to disclose information about individuals without permission from the countries concerned where the money was laundered

to “under the relevant provision of the Egmont Treaty”.

The Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units is an international organisation that facilitates cooperation and intelligence sharing between national financial intelligence units (FIUs) to investigate and prevent money laundering and terrorist financing.

Qaim, however, said the Egmont Treaty was not a barrier.

Several money launderers were punished in India following its Supreme Court directives for taking legal action based on information in the Panama and Paradise papers, he added.

BFIU officials declined to make any comment in this regard.

Yesterday, the BFIU submitted its report to the HC through Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik.

Citing the report, the DAG told this newspaper that the BFIU found information about money transaction to Australia, Thailand and Malaysia by 13 Bangladeshis. An inquiry was going on in this regard.

## Make the names public

FROM PAGE 1

committee should be neutral and unbiased in recommending names for the EC appointments.

“The recommended names should be made public so that we can see the people’s reaction to it,” he said, adding that those with any sort of controversies should not be eligible for the appointments.

He pointed out an elaborate discussion on the crucial EC bill was required in parliament, but it has not taken place yet.

Both Shamsul and M Sakhawat Hussain, a former

election commissioner, said a parliamentary standing committee should be engaged in the process to fill in the EC posts before the president makes the appointments.

Sakhawat said the search committee can forward the names to the JS body.

He said a previous EC, led by Shamsul Huda, had prepared a draft law on the appointments and proposed that the search committee recommended names be sent to the Business Advisory Committee of parliament for scrutiny.

“The proposed names should be discussed at meetings of the Business Advisory Committee. The prime minister, who is the leader of parliament, and the leader of opposition are members of that committee.”

He said the election commissioners should be neutral and they must be capable of ensuring enforcement of law.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar alleged that the proposed law has scopes for the government to form the search committee with

people of its choice. “There is also scope of appointing election commissioners who will be obedient to the government.”

“The recommended names should be revealed to the people for ensuring transparency in the process. Democracy dies in darkness,” he said, while presenting a key note paper.

Moderating the webinar, Prof Rounaq Jahan, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said political consensus and transparency were two key issues in the appointments.

## All 3 nominees from W Bengal refuse honour

**NDTV ONLINE**

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All three people from West Bengal on the BJP-led government's honour list have refused the Padma awards -- a situation deeply embarrassing in a state where the BJP suffered a stunning electoral defeat last year.

Former CM Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee -- an arch critic of PM Narendra Modi -- was the first to decline on Tuesday. Since then, two eminent artistes from the state, tabla maestro Pandit Anindya Chatterjee and eminent vocalist Sandhya Mukhopadhyay, have said they too, have turned down the awards, which, meanwhile, have sharpened the rift within the opposition Congress.

Sandhya Mukhopadhyay, the 90-year-old who has a singing career spanning eight decades, refused a Padma Shri – the fourth highest civilian honour – saying it suits a junior artiste and not someone of her stature.

Buddhadeb, who was conferred the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award, issued a statement declining it.

The Congress, meanwhile, stands divided over the Padma Bhushan to senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad. While leaders like Anand Sharma, Kapil Sibal and Shashi Tharoor have congratulated Azad over the government recognition, senior leader Jairam Ramesh has commended Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's refusal of the award.

“Right thing to do. He wants to be Azad not Ghulam,” his tweet read.



An Indian soldier salutes while standing on a vehicle during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi, India, yesterday. Lumbering tanks and the deafening roar of fighter planes echoed through New Delhi yesterday as India's military showcased its might on Republic Day. The annual January 26 event marks the adoption of India's constitution. PHOTO: REUTERS

PHOTO: REUTERS

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday hit back at US threats of direct sanctions against President Vladimir Putin, saying moves against the Russian leader would be ineffective and hurt efforts to lower tensions over Ukraine.

Officials from France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine meanwhile started talks in Paris yesterday in the latest bid to ease a crisis sparked by fears that Moscow is preparing an invasion of its pro-Western neighbour.

The West has warned Russia of severe consequences if it does invade, and on Tuesday, Washington said there could be sanctions personally targeting Putin.

Reacting to the news, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed the threats as worthless because senior Russian officials are barred from holding assets abroad.

But such a move, he said, would do serious damage to diplomatic

efforts to ease ratcheting tensions over Ukraine.

“Politically, it’s not painful, it’s destructive,” Peskov told reporters.

The Kremlin has previously said any US sanctions personally targeting Putin would be akin to crossing a red line, warning the move could result in a rupture of bilateral ties.

US President Joe Biden said Tuesday that any Russian military attack on Ukraine could even “change the world”.

Russia is expecting this week to receive written US responses to sweeping security demands Moscow made last year that seek to dramatically limit Nato's reach and capabilities in Eastern Europe and the ex-USSR.

Russia FM Sergei Lavrov yesterday warned in an address to lawmakers that Moscow would take "all necessary measures" if it didn't receive constructive responses and if the West continued its "aggressive policy".

**AFP, London**

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson braced Wednesday for a potentially damning report into lockdown-breaching parties, after the launch of a police inquiry dramatically upped the stakes.

The report from an investigation by senior civil servant Sue Gray is complete, but has not yet been submitted to Downing Street, the government said.

The explosive confirmation that London's Metropolitan Police force has now started its own investigation could complicate the release of Gray's report, but opposition parties insisted on its publication in full.

Otherwise, according to senior Labour MP Chris Bryant on BBC radio, the public will "simply say this is a cover up".

It was unclear whether Downing Street would release the report later yesterday or some other time, with Johnson facing another grilling in parliament at the weekly joust of Prime Minister's Questions from noon. He again yesterday refused to resign as opposition MPs heaped pressure on him.

At least seven backbench Conservative MPs have called publicly for Johnson's resignation. A total of 54 letters are required to trigger a party vote of no confidence.

# West links aid to human rights

**AFP, Oslo**


Western diplomats Tuesday linked humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to an improvement in human rights after meeting a Taliban delegation on a landmark visit to Europe. On the final day of the Taliban's first official trip to Europe since returning to power in August, the fundamentalists held talks behind closed doors with several Western diplomats. The Taliban are seeking international recognition and financial aid. No country has yet recognised the fundamentalist regime. The Taliban delegation, led by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, met senior French foreign ministry official Bertrand Lotholary, Britain's special envoy Nigel Casey, and members of the Norwegian foreign ministry. Western diplomats laid out what they expected from the Taliban during the talks. Apart from seeking guarantees of education for both boys and girls, Norway also called on the Taliban to respect human rights, in particular those of women and minorities.

**AFP, Riyadh**


Saudi Arabia and Thailand have announced the resumption of diplomatic ties, after more than three decades of frozen relations linked to the theft of jewels from a Saudi palace. Thai-born janitor Kriangkrai Techamong stole \$20 million worth of precious gems in 1989 from the home of a Saudi prince, triggering a spate of murders in Bangkok and a feud between the countries dubbed the "Blue Diamond Affair". The two countries announced in a joint statement late on Tuesday "the full re-establishment of diplomatic relations" during a visit by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha to Riyadh. The two countries agreed to appoint ambassadors in the near future.

**AFP, Miami**

The US Coast Guard has launched a search for 39 people reported missing when a boat capsized off the coast of Florida in a "suspected human smuggling venture." A survivor said the boat left Bimini in the Bahamas on Saturday night, and had encountered rough weather before it capsized. Human smugglers use the Bahamas as a jumping off point for transporting people, many from other Caribbean countries to the United States.



**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD**  
**Dhaka Zone Office, Allenbari, Dhaka.**  
**Phone: 9136138, 01730782592**  
**Email: achedha@rhd.gov.bd**



**MD. SABUJ UDDIN KHAN**  
**Additional Chief Engineer**

Memo No.35.01.2690.007.07.001.22-378

Date 25-01-2022

**Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)**  
**For**

Feasibility study of (i) Nayakandi (Sripur)-Chalakchar (Monohardi)-Shakerbazar Road (Z-2122), (ii) Shibpur-Bannerbazar-Palas (Taltali) Road (Z-2036), (iii) Dohar (Bashtala)-Kartikpur-Jhowkanda (Mainut) Road (Z-8207), (iv) Dohar-Kartikpur-Balirtek Road (Z-8209), (v) Kapashia-Pabur-Fuldi-Kaliganj Road (Z-3025), (vi) Lakpur-Kamargaon-Gagutia-Katiadi (Motkhola) Road (Z-2034) and (vii) Keraniganj (Konakhola)-Kholamura-Hazratpur-Itavara-Mirpur (Hemayetpur) Road (Ch. 7+000 to 23+500) = 07(Seven) under Roads & Highways Department, Dhaka Zone, Dhaka. (Approx. length is 121.47 Km.)

Ministry Division	: Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, Road Transports Highway Division
Agency	: Roads and Highways Department
Procuring Entity	: Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Dhaka Zone, Allenbari, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215.
Procuring Entity District	: Dhaka
Project Name	: Feasibility study of (i) Nayakandi (Sripur)-Chalakchar (Monohardi)-Shakerbazar Road (Z-2122), (ii) Shibpur-Bannerbazar-Palas (Taltali) Road (Z-2036), (iii) Dohar (Bashtala)-Kartikpur-Jhowkanda (Mainut) Road (Z-8207), (iv) Dohar-Kartikpur-Balirtek Road (Z-8209), (v) Kapashia-Pabur-Fuldi-Kaliganj Road (Z-3025), (vi) Lakpur-Kamargaon-Gagutia-Katiadi (Motkhola) Road (Z-2034) and (vii) Keraniganj (Konakhola)-Kholamura-Hazratpur-Itavara-Mirpur (Hemayetpur) Road (Ch. 7+000 to 23+500) = 07(Seven) under Roads & Highways Department, Dhaka Zone, Dhaka. (Approx. length is 121.47 Km.)
EOI for Selection of	: National Consultant
EOI Ref No.	: DZ/02/Important District Highways/2021-2022
Date	: 25-01-2022
Procurement Method	: Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
Source of Fund	: GoB
EOI Closings	: With all supporting documents, the EOI must be delivered on or before 24-02-2022; 12.00 AM in sealed envelopes
Submission Date s Time	
EOI Submission Place	: Office of The Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Dhaka Zone, Allenbari, Dhaka-1215.
Brief Description of Assignment and Project	<b>To carry out:</b> i. Feasibility study for this road (Approx. length-121.47 Km.) ii. Topographic survey, hydrological survey, sub-soil investigation, classification traffic count survey, O-D survey, travel time survey etc. iii. Preliminary engineering design drawing. iv. Sociological and Environmental study. v. Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) study. vi. Cost estimate of this project. vii. Economic and financial evaluation. viii. 3D image and animation video.
Experience, Resources and Delivery Capacity Required	Interested Firms(s) must provide information emphasizing that they are qualified to perform the services (Brochures) registrations. Profile availability of appropriate skills/experts among staff etc. The EOI's will be evaluated on the basis of the following to prepare shortlist: 1. Age of the firms (minimum 8 years); 2. Background of the firm (s) (limited to two pages); 3. General experiences of the firm(s) (limited to two pages); 4. Summary of similar projects / services completed in last 5 years with total professional man month. i. Experience in Service lane, drains, footpath, flexible & rigid pavement etc.

ii. Feasibility study of at least 50 Km. of highways including detailed design in a single project in RHD.

5. Average Annual Turnover of the firm(s) during the last 3 years (Audited financial reports of the firm(s) for the last 3 years);

6. Availability or appropriate skills/experts among staff demonstrated capacity to handle such assignment in terms of resources :  
VAT & IT certificates.

**Other Details** : Interested firm(s) will be required to submit the EOI in closed format mentioning the name and address of the applicant, EOI no. & date and be addressed to the EOI issuing Authority in 3(three) copies; 01(One) marked as "ORIGINAL" and other 2(two) as "COPY" in separate envelope in the form of book binding, Both the "ORIGINAL" and "COPY" shall have to cover within a single envelope to the address below before the EOI closing date & time. The applicant shall mention the page no. serially in every page of submitted EOI document. EOI will be opened on 24-02-2022 just after closing time. In case of any unavoidable circumstances such as strike, civil commotion, Govt. declared holiday etc. EOIs will be received and opened on the following working day. Upon receipt of EOIs the interested firm(s) those are deemed best suited to perform the assignment will be short listed. There after Request for Proposal (RFP) document will be issued to the short-listed firm(s). The consulting firm(s) will be selected based on Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the PPR 2006 and PPR 2008 of GOB

**Association with other local/foreign firm:** :  
 a. Interested firms may associate with other firms (Local) to local firm enhance their qualifications but should mention whether the association in the form of "Joint Venture" or "Sub-Consultancy". In case of association all member of such "association" should have real and well defined input of assignment.  
 b. In addition to the above the JV shall have to indicate all documents mentioned in "Experience, Resources and Delivery Capacity required" collectively.  
 c. The lead partner shall not authorize any other partner to sign the

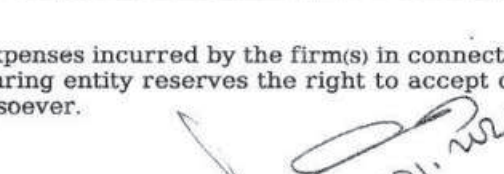
**Time for performing the study & Reporting** : 06 (Six) months from the date of signing the contract and notice of award.

**Name of Official Inviting EOI** : Md. Sabuj Uddin Khan, Additional Chief Engineer

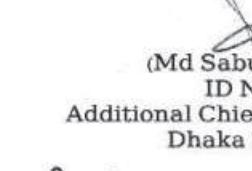
**Designation of Official Inviting EOI** : Additional Chief Engineer, Dhaka Zone, Allenbari, Dhaka.

**Address of Official Inviting EOI** : Office of The Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Dhaka Zone, Allenbari, Dhaka-1215.

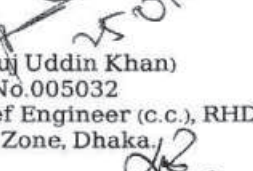
The client shall not responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by the firm(s) in connection with the preparation on delivery of the EOI. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOI's without assigning any reason whatsoever.



(Md Sabuj Uddin Khan)  
 ID No.005032  
 Additional Chief Engineer (c.c.), RHD  
 Dhaka Zone, Dhaka



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## Are we becoming incorrigibly corrupt?

Latest CPI score paints a sorry picture of Bangladesh's progress

THE latest edition of the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International (TI) is now out. And just as predictable as this publication is at this time of the year, it pains us to see that Bangladesh's performance in this annual undertaking by the global corruption watchdog has become equally predictable. In the 2021 edition, the country has once again scored 26 out of 100—the same as in 2020, 2019 and 2018. Once again, we have ranked second-worst in South Asia, above only Afghanistan, and third-lowest among 31 countries in the Asia Pacific region. In fact, a 10-year CPI trend analysis shows that Bangladesh has stagnated in the neighbourhood of the same score over the last decade, meaning there's been no real progress during the two latest tenures of this government.

Since the CPI measures "perceived" levels of public-sector corruption, we may soon see a firm rebuttal from the government, disputing this badge of shame. True, there are questions about the methods used for measuring corruption. But one doesn't need TI to reaffirm what we already know to be true: that corruption has permeated every aspect of our lives, ranging from bribery, use of public office for private gain, diversion of public funds, and nepotism in public sector appointments to red tape and ineffective mechanisms for corruption control—to name a few areas of measurement cited by TI. We have seen repeatedly how a section of officials and politically influential people, including public representatives, indulged in various forms of corruption using their connections and poor institutional safeguards, and how they have been let go. In fact, the all-encompassing nature of corruption means that spillover effects of public sector corruption have ruined any chance of progress in the private sector too.

As a consequence, corruption has become a way of life. We can't get rid of it, but since the system has become so crooked, we can't live without it either. A key factor in the non-delivery of the pledges of "zero-tolerance" for corruption, according to the chief of the Bangladeshi chapter of TI, is the intrinsic linkage among politics, money and corruption, causing a disconnect of public decisions and actions from the common people's interests. "Without a paradigm shift in our political culture to put public interest first, replacing the practice of treating political affiliation as a licence for abuse of power, corruption cannot be controlled," he says. We cannot agree more.

To see a change in this scenario, we need drastic reforms, starting with building a political consensus on the need for insulating public institutions from the influence of politics, money and criminality. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) must be empowered to do its job. There should also be legal provisions to manage conflict of interest transparently, depoliticising institutions of accountability, and establishing professional integrity and impartiality of all vital institutions, including public service, administration and law enforcement agencies. We can't continue to repeat the mistakes of the past or allow the corrupt elements to eat away at the hard-earned achievements of our nation.

## A war heroine can't beg for survival

Take urgent steps to address her woes

IT is disheartening to know that a brave woman who had endured torture during Bangladesh's War of Independence is now facing eviction from her house for failing to pay her rent. According to a report in this daily, Birangana Shila Guha said she had been abused by her landlord for money and, not finding any help or way out, was contemplating suicide. The 70-year-old now has to beg for survival in the streets of Sreemangal.

It is disturbing enough that her supreme sacrifice in 1971 has not been officially recognised yet. She has not been listed as a Birangana even though 50 years have gone by since those days of horror. The declaration was supposed to come by December 16 last year, but it has not happened till date. That she is going through such trouble and harassment at this stage of her life also speaks volumes about the negligence of the state about our poor elderly individuals.

Shila Guha's story of misfortune is as horrendous as that of other girls and women who had been taken to the Pakistan Army camps. She survived that experience by a stroke of luck. Her second round of tryst with fate began when her father refused to take her in after the war ended, as she had been picked up by the Pakistanis. Her life since then has been one of despair, denial and betrayal. Even her husband, when he came to know about her war-time ordeal, left her. She has been fending for herself and her daughter since then.

Shila Guha saw a ray of hope when the prime minister, in a video conference on June 20 last year, reportedly assured her that she would be accorded due respect, and her days of misery would end soon. In this regard, Sreemangal Upazila Nirbahi Officer Nazrul Islam told *The Daily Star* that her documents had been sent to the authorities concerned, but he had yet to receive any reply. We hope the government will soon intervene in this regard, and Shila Guha will finally find peace and recognition. Meanwhile, she needs succour on an urgent basis in the form of cash and kind. It's a shame for the nation when a war hero has to beg for survival.

# We must be rational in fighting the new Covid wave



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

TASNEEM TAYEB

IN view of the surging Covid-19 cases across Bangladesh, the government issued new sets of guidelines earlier this week to curb the spread of the virus. The directives that were issued on January 21, 2022 directed the closure of educational institutions for two weeks—from January 21 to February 6. It also said that any event—government, religious, social or political—should not allow more than 100 people to attend, and even those attending must produce their vaccine card or PCR test results, not older than 24 hours prior to the event. Individuals working in various offices and factories must have their vaccine certificates, and the guidelines also made mask wearing mandatory in all public places, including shopping malls, bus stands, launch terminals, mosques, etc.

However, how effective these new set of directives will be in containing the new wave of the pandemic needs thorough scrutiny.

If one takes a closer look at the three set of guidelines the government issued on January 10, January 21, and January 23, respectively, covering 17 rules in total, one would see that significant emphasis has been attached to social distancing measures and Covid hygiene practices. Looking at these, one can safely assume that perhaps the end objective of issuing these guidelines is to fight the pandemic through social distancing in public spaces and adherence to the best Covid-19 hygiene practices.

However, while the initial 15 guidelines issued on January 10 and another one issued on January 23 had been well contemplated, the five directives issued on January 21 could perhaps be better thought out—especially the one regarding the closure of educational institutions.

To start with, while in-person classes in schools and colleges have been suspended for two weeks to lower the risk of infection among students, the children remain exposed to high-density public gatherings, as multiple fairs are taking place across the country: the Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF), for one.

A video by this daily of the Police Women Welfare Association (Punak) fair in Lalmonirhat, which began on January 12, shows the unhealthy gathering of people at the fair premises. And the crowd



▲ **No masks, no social distancing—people crowd around street food stalls in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). The photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

▲ **Half-hearted, hasty measures will only increase public sufferings, which will not be a palatable outcome for any party involved.**

the effectiveness of closing down the educational institutions to lower the risk of infections among children, the education minister said, "Effectiveness depends on everyone maintaining the hygiene rules." If that is the case, the parents who are taking these children to these fairs are not following hygiene rules.

And not just these fairs, the children are being taken out to attend weddings—this being the "wedding season"—and parties, shopping malls and hangouts. When this is happening, how the two-week school closure alone would help prevent the spread of the virus among the students, one might be pardoned for asking.

In addition to this, the decision to allow the fairs to continue and the shopping malls to run like business as usual, while restricting the number of people who could attend events, also does not make much sense. So many people visit these fairs every day, and so many people visit shopping malls every day, so why this curb on events only? If the government's objective is to prevent public gathering, then they must come up with a holistic strategy to discourage people from congregating in one place. This should include fairs, shopping malls, airports—especially the one in Dhaka, which is turning into a breeding ground for the

virus, given the 16-hour packed flight schedule and the lacklustre enforcement of social distancing rules—and other places where people might gather.

The government's U-turn to allow buses and launches to operate in full capacity, despite previously instructing them to run in half capacity that came with the set of 11 guidelines issued on January 10, also does not help in

enforcing social distancing in public. Under the pressure from various actors in the transport sector, the authorities allowed public transports to operate in full capacity, meaning people are now being forced to commute in cramped public buses and water vessels.

If containing the infections through enforcement of social distancing and adherence to basic Covid hygiene is the objective, then the government needs to adopt a strategic way forward that will facilitate achieving this, not the contrary.

Also the authorities must realise that piece-meal measures and knee-jerk reactions such as closing down in-person classes, while still leaving the children vulnerable to exposure at public gatherings, would not help in keeping them safe. Nor would it help if their parents keep commuting in cramped public transports, potentially exposed to the virus. The same goes for restricting the number of people at events only.

The government must take a hard look at the measures taken so far, and its strategic plan to battle the new wave—if it has one in the first place—and take a rational and comprehensive approach that would yield effective results. Half-hearted, hasty measures will only increase public sufferings, which will not be a palatable outcome for any party involved.

## The unenviable camaraderie of public university vice-chancellors



Shahidul Islam is an education policy researcher. Email: shahidul.islam@queensu.ca

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

I see—and perhaps others do, too—some lights at the end of the tunnel. Reportedly, 35 public university vice-chancellors have expressed their willingness to resign from their posts if the controversial Vice-Chancellor Farid Uddin Ahmed of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) has to resign. I see some positivity in their declaration of solidarity with their favourite "cousin" in SUST, as this may well help resurrect the spirit of Bangladeshi higher education.

About 25 years ago at Dhaka University, most of my friends who studied the economics course under the now-VC Farid had failed to secure passing marks and had to retake the course or sit for an improvement examination. It is well-known that students of the economics department are considered as the highest-ranking ones, and the word "failure" does not align well with their academic records. So, why did a majority of students fail the current SUST VC's course? According to them, they could not ask any questions to this professor. He came to class with his ancient, handwritten notes, followed a copy-and-paste routine on the board, and silently departed from the class when the time was up. He would be annoyed, even angry, at the questions of his students.

As an education researcher interested in the political economy of education, I was curious to know about his personal profile, and browsed a research database

to read his peer-reviewed journal articles—but found none. With some anticipation, as a last resort, I downloaded his CV from the SUST website. It says the gentleman acquired a second-class 11th position for his Bachelor's degree, a first-class 6th for his Master's, and received a second Master's from Monash University in Australia. Without going into excessive detail, his CV also read that



▲ **Waving goodbye to all 35 vice-chancellor friends of VC Farid Uddin Ahmed of SUST may well resurrect Bangladeshi higher education from its ashes.**

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

he had written "20 articles and/or books published in national and international journals." What is most interesting in his profile, however, is that the number of professional associations he is involved in is half of the number of recreational clubs he belonged to.

Some months ago, the education minister observed that most of our teachers were "teachers by accident." Now I realise what she may have meant. The VC of SUST may be a good example for this phenomenon. Such an "accident" is detrimental to Bangladesh's aspirations of being an upper-middle-income country and having a knowledge-based society.

So, why should we let the like-minded VCs leave? In an undergraduate research interview, the Dean of the Faculty of Law at DU shared an interesting story. Once, a group of student leaders went

to him with the recommendation to hire the then-second-best student as a lecturer at his faculty. He explained to the student leaders why universities need the brightest students as its faculty members. Even if the student in question did not perform well, the judiciary could still place him in various non-critical positions. However, the university did not have that luxury. A second-class teacher may continue teaching in a third-class manner, which would be a disservice to students for years to come. This seems to me a good reason for why we should welcome the wishes of VC Farid's comrades and arrange a grand farewell for all 35 of them.

One may argue that the VC's job is administrative and is therefore "non-critical", with no chance of denting the quality of education in classrooms. The controversial individual in question, however, has failed to prove his ability to safeguard his students and has reportedly relied on law-enforcing agencies and student cadres of the ruling party to protect himself from the agitating students. Police, as always, went the extra mile. They hurled sound grenades, beat up the students, and filed cases against hundreds of them, many of whom were injured and hospitalised. The students' attempt to exercise their freedom of speech did not please the university administration.

A more serious (rumoured) misconduct is of the VC's gratuitous comments about the female students of Jahangirnagar University, which do not warrant repetition here. I believe this person and his 35 friends do deserve a grand farewell as a first step towards improving the academic environment in our universities. The next critical step would be to ensure that people with better academic and leadership qualities, as well as integrity and self-respect, are chosen to lead higher education in the country.

# Proposed EC bill doesn't ensure one's impartiality

**Dr Badiul Alam Majumder**, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (SHUJAN), discusses how the new Election Commission bill undercuts the ultimate exercise of democracy, in a conversation with Zyma Islam of The Daily Star.

**Why are our Election Commissions deemed partisan?**

Certain laws are only implemented to protect the interests of the current regime. A sheer lack of transparency led to the formation of the current and immediate past election commissions, such as the 2012 and 2017 gazettes issued by President Zillur Rahman and President Abdul Hamid, respectively, which decreed that the election commissioners would be chosen by a search committee. The criteria that the search committees had used for selecting the commissioners were such that anyone would fit the bill.

The criteria included being 50 years

able to nominate a person as an election commissioner. Based on the initial scrutiny, the search committee would come up with 20 people, of whom five would be women, and host public hearings for feedback. People with something to hide would automatically stay away, rather than face public scrutiny. Later, they would send seven names to the president along with a report, and make both the documents public.

We wanted one to two months for the process. But according to the law, the government will have only 10 working days to do this. This is nothing.

The search committees that created the incumbent and immediate past Election Commissions never disclosed the names of their proposed candidates. Not even a right-to-information request yielded that. This lack of transparency enables the president to ignore the search committee's recommendations. According to Article 48 (3) of the constitution, the president's decisions must be as per the advice of the prime minister. If no one knows the names, there is no guarantee whether the commission would be formed as per the prime minister's choice.

The search committee, too, needs to be constituted differently. The search committee we proposed would comprise a retired justice of the Appellate Division, and three parliamentarians—of whom one is nominated by the leader of the House, one by the leader of the opposition, and the third by the third largest party in parliament. There would also be one constitutional position, one media personality, and one member of civil society. The media personality and the civil society member would be selected by the other five members of the search committee, unlike what the proposed EC bill stipulates. This would ensure that there is one independent voice or more.

**Can you reflect on the major points of failure of this Election Commission and the past?**

Looking back, some of the most critical moments of failure of the current commission were when they refused to take responsibility for election time violence, allowing law enforcement agencies to wilfully repress the opposition candidates and their supporters, taking no action against election offences, and ballot stuffing, as revealed by the BBC, TIB, and centre-wise voting records. The Nurul Huda commission had said they would not use the electronic voting machines (EVMs) without the consensus of political parties. But he changed his mind and went ahead with EVMs in spite of a lot of resistance. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury was the head of the technical committee, and he refused to sign the recommendation to buy EVMs without voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT).

SHUJAN analysed centre-wise data from the 11th parliamentary elections and found 213 centres with over 100 percent votes. In more than 1,200 centres, BNP had zero votes, and Awami League had 100 percent votes in 600 centres. The local government elections have been rife with violence, bloodshed and people dying, but the commission has squarely evaded responsibility, claiming that it was the administration's fault. A total of 42 of us petitioned the president in December 2020 and asked him to constitute a supreme judicial council to investigate the allegations of corruption and gross misconduct against the commissioners, but to no avail. It is clear that the commission is partisan and has committed fraud with the citizens.

of age, having 20 years of experience in important government or judicial service, etc. The disqualifications included having foreign citizenship, being sentenced for more than two years for criminal offence, etc. There are no mechanisms in place to test the history of honesty, courage and impartiality of the candidate. This paved the way for the appointment of our current chief election commissioner (CEC), KM Nurul Huda.

Huda was a bureaucrat of the 1973 batch—the batch that was appointed without any rigorous exams, just based on allegiances. Throughout his career, he was viewed to be anti-BNP. As a result, he was victimised by the BNP when they came to power in 2001. They sent him into forced retirement when he was only a joint secretary, and he had to take them to court. He won the case, but the BNP government made him officer-on special duty (OSD). After the Awami League came to power, he was made a secretary with retroactive effect. If the search committee had worked properly and transparently, people would have realised that he would have an axe to grind against the BNP.

The search committee itself needs to comprise fair and impartial members, and the president's gazettes or the proposed Election Commission bill do not ensure that. The search committee right now is made up of two sitting judges, the chairperson of the Public Service Commission, the auditor general, and two civil society members. All of these posts would have people who are either direct beneficiaries or not independent.

**How do we ensure that the criteria of a fair, impartial commissioner can be met?**

This cannot be done by setting any criteria. These need to be met by hosting public hearings and people speaking up. The committee is there to sieve through and find out what the truth is. The critical issue here is transparency and people's voice. The names being considered and recommended should be made public. Political parties should not be the only ones giving names. Anyone should be

# We need logical thinkers now more than ever



Debra Efroymsen is the executive director of the Institute of Wellbeing, Bangladesh, and author of "Beyond Apologies: Defining and Achieving an Economics of Wellbeing."

DEBRA EFROYMSON

FOR many people, education means sitting in a class and mindlessly repeating what the teacher tells you. But is that really what education is about?

At the Institute of Wellbeing, we have a sizeable internship programme. We engage the interns in a number of activities, exposing them to new ideas and challenging them to think critically on a range of topics. After the internship, the interns are required to submit a reflection. I take the time to read each one. Most of the remarks are unsurprising: they are thrilled to participate in a live talk show, to interact with a transgender person, to have opportunities to debate issues with their peers. All those who have been forced to do the internship remotely due to Covid-19 wish that it could have been offline.

But there are also the surprising comments that make me take a pause and sit back for a moment, stunned. One of those that has come up a few times is their gratitude for being heard. Let me say that again. They speak; I am interested in what they have to say. The internship is not about rote learning—about them repeating what I tell them. I am actually interested in their ideas. I often disagree; I enjoy arguing with them. But I encourage them to express their own ideas.

The topic came up strongly with a couple of Pakistani students, so I asked my Bangladeshi students if they faced the same issue here. Perhaps, I thought, it was a problem mainly in the Pakistani educational system. Surely by the time they go to university, students are no longer expected to just regurgitate what their

professors tell them? Alas, my Bangladeshi students said they experienced the same thing in most universities.

What kind of education do we offer our youth if we do not encourage them to learn to think logically and critically? It is not hard to notice the damage done by blindly trusting what you see on Facebook and other social media sites, while disbelieving doctors, scientists, and the print media. Obviously, people need to be able to apply an analytical mind to misinformation, sifting through the lies, deceptions and garbage to see if there is anything worthwhile, and knowing where to turn for better information. It has always been dangerous not to possess the power of logical thinking, but as we are inundated with misinformation, and as the potential costs go up—not believing in the safety and efficacy of vaccines, believing that the climate crisis is a hoax—knowing how to think for yourself becomes more important than ever.

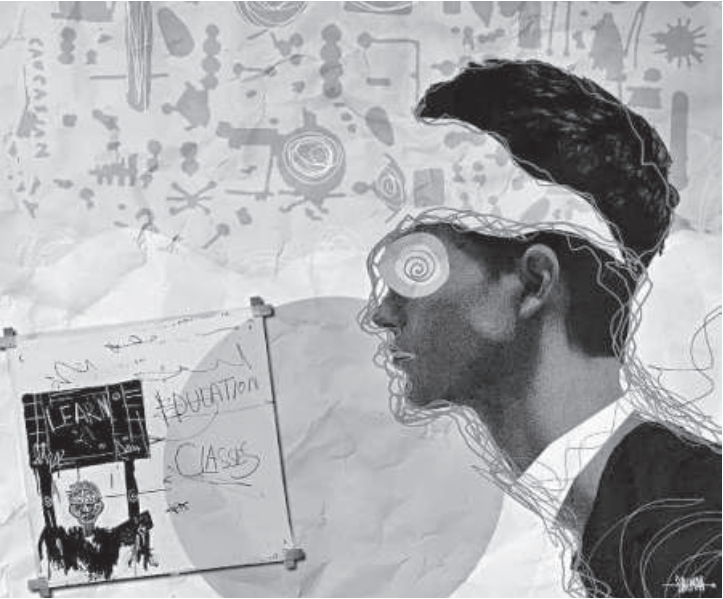
Certainly, many of the most powerful among us would prefer that people not ask questions. That we accept the gig economy, the lack of secure jobs, the gross income and gender inequality that keep the rich rich, and men powerful at the expense of so many others. That we accept the idea that the environment is dispensable; all that matters is the economy, and the economy specifically refers to the ability of the wealthy to gain ever more money and power. But do billionaires control our educational system? Do we allow them to control our minds?

As our fascination with technology continues, we seem to have lost touch with so much that is basic in our societies. Many people say they have never read a book. Children are so absorbed by smartphones that they have lost the ability to hold a conversation. Our desire for ease, speed and convenience causes us to trash our planet with plastics, and throw away our lives on the roads.

Part of why I love working with the youth is that they, like me, tend to be optimists and idealists. They believe in a brighter future. I hope to show them that that brighter future, while still possible, is fading away quickly—and will never be obtained by trusting in the wealthiest and most powerful to make decisions on our behalf. We need to regain control of our lives, our thoughts and our politics, so that we can work together to achieve a better world for this and future generations—not by repeating what we are told, but by using our minds and hearts to search for, and achieve, something truly worthwhile.

Obviously, people need to be able to apply an analytical mind to misinformation, sifting through the lies, deceptions and garbage to see if there is anything worthwhile, and knowing where to turn for better information.

ILLUSTRATION: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR



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4.	Last date & time for submission of e-Tender	:	03.03.2022 up to 11.00am.
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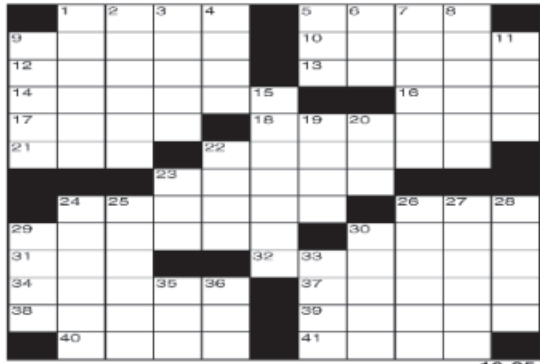
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GD-155

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 Gives the axe  
5 Poker round  
9 Train stop  
10 Scarlett's last name  
12 Martini garnish  
13 Trims  
14 Sparkles  
16 Catch some z's  
17 British raincoats  
18 Asserts  
21 "— we there yet?"  
22 Stadiums  
23 Hog the mirror  
24 Fellow player  
26 Chemist's place
- 29 Platitude  
30 Give the axe  
31 Ready to go  
32 Prepares  
34 Loses color  
37 Planet's path  
38 Brainy  
39 Strong winds  
40 Influence  
41 Pub pints
- DOWN**  
1 Basement  
2 For each  
3 Exploding stars  
4 Flower's support  
5 Little jump  
6 Cry of insight  
7 Aslan's place  
8 Visions  
9 Church
- doctrine  
11 Nile snakes  
15 Horror movie sounds  
19 Lusty look  
20 Columnist  
Landers  
22 Fine study  
23 Letter before omega  
24 Defeats decisively  
25 Desperado  
26 Prone  
27 Warring groups  
28 Defeats  
29 Recipe amts.  
30 Untamed  
33 Forum garb  
35 Geological period  
36 Pig's place

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## SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

R	A	S	P		G	O	A	D	S
A	S	P	I	C		A	N	V	I
B	L	I	G	H		L	E	A	V
A	E	R		E	T	A		T	E
T	E	A	S	E	R		M	A	R
P	L	T	R	A	V	E	R	S	
			A	I	M	E	D		
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S	N	O	B	S		M	E	S	S



BOOK REVIEW: GRAPHIC FICTION

# ‘SHAPOD SHONEY’

## A beast of a graphic novel

For the very first time in the country, a Bangla novel has been adapted as an unprecedented, 400-page graphic novel and published just a few months back.

KAISAR KABIR

What comes to your mind when you encounter a graphic novel called *Shapod Shoney* (Graphic Bangla, 2021), which translates to ‘Along with the Beast’, the cover art showing a man holding a rifle under the dark sky? My first impression was that it could be something along the lines of Jim Corbett out in the wild, hunting a man-eating tiger. But as I would find out soon, the hunt here is for something more sinister than a deadly beast; *Shapod Shoney* falls more squarely under the category of the supernatural, with horror as its subgenre. The target audience for this graphic novel, consequently, excludes anyone below 18 years because of its graphic and gory imagery, the use of alcohol and cigarettes, and the explicit language in the dialogues.

The story revolves around two main characters. First, we have the paranormal investigator, Shiplu, who would go to the farthest corners of the world for a taste of the supernatural. It is his passion more than his profession. On the other hand we have Jamshed, an SAF gold medalist shooter, with a problematic and tragic past. Quick to lose his temper and quicker to draw a gun, he accompanies Shiplu on several of his paranormal adventures. This time, however, Shiplu asks for his help in investigating a case in a remote village in Rangpur. Little does Jamshed know, it will be the most terrifying one yet.

The characters here are flawed and operate in different shades of grey. The novel explores how human beings are capable of diabolical deeds with dark motivations that even the deadliest animals don’t seem to have the stomach for.

The source material was first published in 2016 as a standalone novel. A doctor by profession, Nabil Muhtasim has gained popularity as an author from a very young age for his brilliantly imaginative work. Some of his fan-favourites include *Bajikor*, an espionage thriller trilogy (Batighar Prokashoni, 2017), sci-fi thriller *Bibhong* (Abhijan Publishers, 2019), and of course, the first *Shapod Shoney* itself.

Muhtasim’s plots characteristically have climactic twists, and the way he misleads a reader from predicting them correctly is rewarding, which was something I enjoyed in both *Shapod Shoney* and *Bajikor*. He is also adept at describing intense action scenes, and writing great dialogues in line with each character’s personality. Most of all, though, I enjoy his intricate plot lines written with a nuanced simplicity, which makes it easier for any reader to follow through.

In *Shapod Shoney*, for example, the chapters alternate between Shiplu and Jamshed’s points of view, and while in Jamshed’s chapters the story progresses in a linear fashion, Shiplu’s sections jump back in time through flashback sequences to several of his paranormal cases. The juxtaposition allows us to witness both protagonists in their elements, their diverging personalities, motivations, and reactions, while experiencing some blood-curdling sub-plots along the way. With the author himself hailing from Rangpur, there is generous use of local dialect delivered by the inhabitants of the village in Rangpur where our two protagonists move.

Adrian Anik, meanwhile, has been a prominent artist in the comic book industry for a while now, and is known mostly for his

work in the horror comic book series, *Pishach Kahini* (Dhaka Comics). Talented as he may be, making a 400-page graphic novel can be a back-breaking and time-consuming process, but it was Anik himself who approached Nabil, who graciously agreed. What you will observe in the novel is his passion and determination to tell a story through his art. In the black and white colour palette, Anik’s talent shines the brightest when it comes to the anatomical detailing of the ‘body horror’ elements and in conceptualising nightmarish creatures.

There are, however, rooms for improvement—spelling mistakes in the prose could have been avoided, and the facial expressions on some panels could have been more nuanced in certain scenes. In one chapter, for example, the detailing of facial expressions—jaw lines, nasolabial folds, frown lines, etc.—are entirely missing.

Nevertheless, reading this graphic novel has made me feel optimistic about our local comic book industry. There are so many great novels in Bangla literature, and Graphic Bangla’s *Shapod Shoney* is one huge step towards adapting them into visual work that should reach a wider—and more varied—readership. After all, as Art Spiegelman, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Maus A Survivor’s Tale* tells us, “Comics are a gateway drug to literacy”.

Kaisar Kabir is a pop culture enthusiast and a former radio show host currently earning dough in the content industry.



ILLUSTRATION: SHEHZIL MALIK

## INTERVIEW

### Pakistani artist Shehzil Malik illustrates ‘Sultana’s Dream’

SARAH ANJUM BARI

A designer and illustrator whose work focuses on human rights, feminism, and South Asian identity, Pakistani artist Shehzil Malik has just created an artwork based on Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’s novella *Sultana’s Dream* (1905). Daily Star Books editor Sarah Anjum Bari got in touch with Malik to discuss her motivations and inspirations for the artwork.

**When and how did you first encounter *Sultana’s Dream*?**

My younger sister is my go-to person when I need to talk about my feminist ideas (and she also studied literature), so she knew I’d love this story! Other artists have also drawn *Sultana’s Dream*—there is a brilliant rendition by Durga Bai in the tradition of Gond tribal art; as well as a collection of stunning linocuts by Chitra Ganesh. I was curious with what I would come up imagining a South Asian science-fiction feminist utopia!

**What about the language did you find “fresh and subversive”, as you mention on your social media?**

I think I felt it was subversive and tongue-in-cheek because even though it’s now 2022, we in Pakistan are still arguing over whether girls should be educated; whether it’s wrong to marry girls off when they’re underage; whether a woman is capable to do a job or become financially independent; whether a good Muslim woman should step out of the house... it feels like the world that Begum Rokeya was escaping, is still the world I live in.

And the pandemic has only exacerbated the situation for women. The few freedoms women had—in terms of leaving the house and having a support network—in many ways were snatched away, and the incidences of domestic violence worldwide have skyrocketed. In the early phase of the pandemic, everyone was instructed to stay home, and while the women easily complied, many men refused. It was unthinkable for them to have their basic freedom taken away, and yet they still don’t understand why women are angry and dream of a different world.

**How did you conceive of the physical landscape of Lady Land, the feminist utopia Begum Rokeya imagines in her novella?**

I was inspired by Indian and Persian miniature paintings and their use of space and time. These paintings often show many interactions happening in a single artwork, and take the viewer through multiple perspectives and scales to tell a story. There’s no one hero in these paintings, but it gives the viewer the chance to find their own meaning in the artwork. I think combining these pre-colonial methods of artmaking with a story from colonial India—and then drawing the artwork digitally in post-colonial times—it makes me excited to see the possibilities!

**As an artist who works with feminist and South Asian identity, what place do you think *Sultana’s Dream* holds in the contemporary landscape of South Asian women’s lives?**

I think everyone in South Asia (and beyond) needs to know this story! It is so ahead of its time, and talks about the kind of technology we still don’t have! It presents a sustainable and ecological future (beyond screens and the kind of dystopian science fiction that is popular today) and really gets to the heart of why we want labor-saving devices and how we can structure our work and relations with others so that it brings us peace.

OPINION

# Growing up with Narayan Debnath’s ‘Nonte-Phonte’

RASHA JAMEEL

On a particularly slow day, all I have to do is sit down with a *Nonte-Phonte* comic book, and my troubles will lay forgotten to one side. I imagine it’s the same for most people who are fans of Narayan Debnath and his fictional characters from the small town of Paschimpara, West Bengal.

The unique illustrations coupled with quirky and colourful Bangla vocabulary that the author undoubtedly carried over from his childhood in Shibpur, Howrah, all make for a wholesome reading experience every time one picks up a copy of these books. As a fan, I’m eternally grateful that Debnath opted to stray from their family business of gold retailing, after dropping out from the Indian Art College in the 1940s, to pursue freelance work in art and design. While he illustrated plenty of children’s books throughout the 1950s, it wasn’t until 1962 that he released his first comic strip, *Handa Bhonda*, in *Shuktara* magazine.

The *Nonte-Phonte* series—and the witty humour with which Debnath weaved together his stories of small-town kids and their proclivity for pranking unsuspecting targets—started out in 1969 as a comic strip in the *Kishore Bharati* magazines.

It all went down in an unnamed boarding school for boys in West Bengal, where the eponymous Nonte and Phonte were best friends studying and residing together as juniors alongside their constantly-scheming senior, Keltu Kumar, all under the strict supervision of the boarding’s hostel superintendent sir, Patiram Hati. Over time, I even began to regard one of my cousins as the real-life counterpart of the fictional Keltu from the series—such was the comics’ influence on my childhood.

Narayan Debnath succeeded in offering me that which no other comic book writer-illustrator could: comfort in my personal identity. As a Bangladeshi with roots in West Bengal, the *Nonte-Phonte* comics



COLLAGE: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

were a source of bibliotherapy for me, providing me with insight into the lives my ancestors had led. The more I read about that small town of West Bengal, the more I began to understand how the inhabitants

of said region carried themselves and interacted with each other. Having never visited my ancestral lands myself, the *Nonte-Phonte* comics helped me draw a parallel with the stories I’d always heard from my grandparents. I eventually came to have a better understanding behind the little things that made up parts of my cultural background, from items of food to slang from a bygone era.

What added to this sense of comfort was that, unlike most children’s books that were widely available at the time, the *Nonte-Phonte* comics didn’t come with an obvious set of moral codes for children to follow. Instead of lecturing kids on how to be a kid—which was a rather prevailing tone in the didactic children’s books in the 1990s-2000s, such as *Winnie the Pooh*, *Dr Seuss* and *Beatrix Potter*—Debnath truly understood what it meant to be a child. There were no apologies made for playing a prank on an elderly member of the community, or for stealing homemade

food from classmates.

There were other books by Debnath that left a mark on my childhood. *Handa-Bhonda* (Shuktara), a spiritual predecessor to *Nonte-Phonte*, set in the same universe, and *Bantul The Great* (Shuktara), which gave Bengalis our own version of Superman in the form of Batul. As an adult, however, it is with *Nonte-Phonte* that I relate to the most, picturing myself wandering about the streets of Paschimpara with hostel superintendent sir Patiram Hati in tow, or gorging on the cream cakes and chicken kabiraji from Abar Khabo Restora.

The wordsmith and artist behind this childhood-defining comic books is no more, having breathed his last on January 18, 2022. His legacy will continue to live on through his iconic creations.

Rasha Jameel studies microbiology whilst pursuing her passion for writing. Reach her at [rasha.jameel@outlook.com](mailto:rasha.jameel@outlook.com)

## South American stars sweating on qualification

AFP, Montevideo

Three of South American football's biggest stars – Luis Suarez, Edinson Cavani and Alexis Sanchez – risk missing out on the World Cup in Qatar as South American qualifying enters its final straight.

With Brazil and Argentina already qualified, seven nations are battling it out for the final two automatic qualifying spots with just four matches remaining.

Right now Suarez and Cavani's Uruguay and Sanchez's Chile are both sitting a point outside the crucial fourth spot held by Colombia. Uruguay are currently seventh and have changed coaches since the last round of matches in November.

After a record-breaking 15 years at the helm, iconic veteran coach Oscar Tabarez was fired following a disastrous fourth straight qualifying defeat in which Uruguay conceded 11 goals and scored just one.

Diego Alonso will take charge of the team for the first time in a bid to negotiate the tricky path towards Qatar.

Twice former winners, Uruguay have not failed to qualify for the World Cup since 2006.

Uruguay travel to Paraguay on Thursday before hosting Venezuela – the only team in the single 10-nation qualifying group with no realistic hope of reaching Qatar – on February 1.

Only Venezuela and the top two – Brazil and Argentina – have nothing to play for. But even though Paris Saint-Germain teammates Neymar and Argentina's Lionel Messi have been left back in Europe, neither side will be expected to take their remaining matches lightly.

"In the few matches that remain, no coach is going to do a lot of experimenting," Brazilian commentator Paulo Calcade of the Disney sports channels told AFP.



Chattogram Challengers head coach Paul Nixon was seen demonstrating the stance and right technique for reverse sweep to right-handed batter Sabbir Rahman during practice at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. The Challengers, despite not having a star-studded squad, sit second in the points table with two wins from three games. Now that the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League moves to Chattogram for its second phase, to begin tomorrow with the game between Chattogram and Khulna Tigers, Chattogram would hope to further solidify their chances in the title race as they are set to play their next four fixtures at home.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# Ctg phase to find cure for low-scoring pitch?

### SPORTS REPORTER

Pitch remained at the centre of all discussions as the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League fixtures shift from Dhaka to the port city of Chattogram tomorrow.

Among the eight matches played so far in the Dhaka leg, 112.5 was the average first-innings total in four games played under the daylight. In sharp contrast, the four games played under the lights at the same ground produced an average first-innings total of 173, where Khulna Tigers even chased down a target of 183 against Minister Group Dhaka. At night, the highest total of 190 for 7 was posted by Chattogram Challengers against Khulna.

Interestingly, like the difference of the nature of surfaces between the day and night games, there were different opinions from the players of the participating teams regarding the lacklustre display from the batters so far.

According to Sylhet Sunrisers captain Mosaddek Hossain, it is difficult for the batters to score runs freely in the day games in Mirpur whereas the pitch does

the rest for the bowlers, who only have to hit the right areas.

However, Bangladesh ODI skipper and Dhaka opener Tamim Iqbal stated that the batters are to be blamed for the poor show instead of the pitch after his side were bundled out for just 100 runs against Sylhet to face their third defeat in four games on Tuesday.

Veteran local coach Sarwar Imran resonated with Tamim's stance. However, he points to the curators eventually.

"These are not ideal T20 pitches, to be honest. But still, the batters need to adjust with the surface no matter how the pitch behaves. It's also about the mindset you get in as a batsman. And when scoring boundaries are difficult, you need to look for the singles and doubles," Imran told The Daily Star.

"Another thing is, most of our batters lack T20 techniques as they don't have the proper balance and position for a big hit. But at the same time, I really wonder why the curators are unable to prepare good pitches."

According to a former Bangladesh Cricket Board curator Badiul Alam

Khokon, curators' lack of knowledge is also a big reason for failing to produce high-scoring pitches in Dhaka.

He also revealed the reason why the upcoming Chattogram leg is expected to produce high-scoring encounters compared to Mirpur.

"First of all, the curators don't roll the Mirpur pitch enough. It's simple math, the more you roll the surface, the better it gets for batting. The other thing is the dew, as you noticed the night games produced runs because the ball skids on the surface for the dew factor," informed Khokon.

"I've seen the curators in Dhaka have been using cut grass in the pitch and when you have dead grass, it tends to take the pace off the ball once it lands on the surface. When the pitch gets dry it also tends to slow gradually.

"Chattogram surface, on the other hand, has live grass in it which allows the ball to generate more pace after pitching. It's also because we don't play many matches in Chattogram, so the curators get enough time to take care of the pitches properly," said Khokon.

## Djokovic to play in Dubai

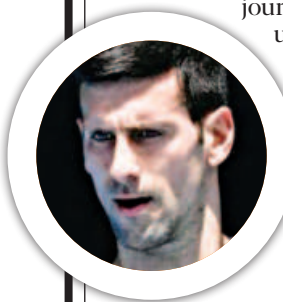
AFP, Dubai

Unvaccinated world number one Novak Djokovic has signed up to play at next month's ATP Dubai tennis tournament, reports said on Wednesday.

A leaked entry list shared by tennis journalists on social media and picked up by several outlets showed Djokovic named as the top seed for the February 21-26 event.

The 34-year-old Serb lost a legal battle to remain in Australia and defend his Australian Open crown this month in a Covid controversy that made headlines around the world.

Djokovic's next moves have been unclear since he flew out of Melbourne and home to Belgrade, via Dubai, as the tournament he has won a record nine times got under way in Melbourne.



## Rashford, Lingard condemn anti-Semitism

REUTERS

Manchester United's Marcus Rashford and Jesse Lingard have said they do not condone any form of discrimination after a photo of them with controversial British rap artist Wiley drew criticism. Wiley, who had his Twitter account suspended after posting a string of anti-Semitic comments on his social media accounts in 2020, posted the photo on Instagram before deleting it.

The Jewish Chronicle newspaper published the picture, which it said was taken in Dubai on an unconfirmed date.

"I'd like to reinforce that I do not and will not condone discriminative language or behaviour of any kind aimed at the Jewish community or any other community," Rashford tweeted.

"I truly believe that tackling anti-Semitism in and outside of the game requires a greater level of attention and should very much form part of the game's anti-racism stance."

## Gunathilaka back from ban

AFP, COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Danushka Gunathilaka will return to international cricket after a ban for breaching Covid rules with his inclusion for next month's Twenty20 tour of Australia, selectors announced Wednesday.

Gunathilaka, 30, had his ban lifted following an appeal and the payment of a \$50,000 fine, and is among the 20-man squad named for Australia under Dasun Shanaka.

The first two T20 matches will be at the Sydney Cricket Ground on February 11 and 13, followed by one match in Canberra and two in Melbourne.

# Dazzling Tsitsipas 'in the zone'

AFP, MELBOURNE

Stefanos Tsitsipas said he was "in the zone" after producing his best match of the tournament to demolish Jannik Sinner and storm into his third Australian Open semi-final on Wednesday.

The Greek fourth seed was at his dazzling best to romp past the 11th-seeded Italian 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in 2hr 6min and into a semi-final against Daniil Medvedev, who fought back from two sets down to beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-7, 3-6, 7-6, 7-5, 6-4.

It was a most impressive performance from the world number four who grasped control of the quarter-final on Rod Laver Arena with a break in Sinner's opening service game and did not relinquish his firm grip.

Tsitsipas said his tennis was "way better" than his previous four matches at the year's opening major. "It was the most consistent and the best match I've had in the tournament," Tsitsipas said.

"I feel like I'm in the zone. I have no plans of getting out of it. It's part of my game.

"I was really fired up to bring the best out of my game today, and I tried to get my level as high as possible."

Not even a rain interruption which forced the stadium's retractable roof to be closed and change match conditions early in the second set could derail the Tsitsipas momentum.

Tsitsipas also revealed that his doctor had warned him that he would not be recovered in

time from right elbow surgery late last year to play in Melbourne.

"Dr Frank spoke from experience that he had with other players that he treated and he was surprised that my healing process was faster than he would have expected," he said.

Last year's French Open finalist recaptured his fluency and timing and hit the ball majestically, reeling off 30 winners – 17 on his forehand – and breaking Sinner's serve four times. Sinner, rated one of the hottest young talents on the men's circuit, did not get a break point in any of Tsitsipas's 14 service games and was blown away.

Tsitsipas broke immediately when the Italian overhit a forehand and served out strongly to take the opening set in 36 minutes.

The Greek grabbed another break in the third game of the second set before rain stopped play and forced the stadium roof to be closed with more threatening weather forecast. He was relentless and powered his way to a double break in the third set which gave Sinner no way out.

Tsitsipas has reached the semi-finals twice before in Melbourne and became the first Greek player to reach a major final when he lost a two-set lead to Novak Djokovic in last year's French Open.

"He served better," said Sinner. "He moved the ball better than me. He was moving better than me.

"It's tough to play against him when especially he plays like this."



Greek star Stefanos Tsitsipas celebrates winning the men's singles quarterfinal against Italy's Jannik Sinner in the Australian Open in Melbourne on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP



# Crashes claim 11 lives in two districts

**STAR REPORT**

Four female workers of Uttara EPZ died when a train hit a battery-run three-wheeler in Nilphamari Sadar upazila yesterday, while five people were killed as a bus rammed a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Bogura's Sherpur.

Besides, crashes claimed two other lives in Bogura.

In Nilphamari, the Chilahati-bound Rupsha intercity train from Khulna crashed into the three-wheeler when it was crossing an unauthorised level crossing in Sonarai Dhonipara village around 6:00am, locals said.

Three women were killed on the spot while five others and the driver of the three wheeler were critically injured.

Locals said nine female workers of the nearby EPZ hired the three-wheeler, locally known as easy bike, to go to work at different factories.

The four critically injured women and the driver were rushed to Nilphamari Sadar Hospital, from there they were referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital as their condition was very critical.

Later, another injured woman died at the medical college.

The deceased are Romana Akhtar, 25, Shefali Begum, 35, Sayra Banu, 24, Minara Begum, 25. They are from Sonarai Dhonipara and Koranipara villages.

Witness Afazuddin, 50, said the three-wheeler driver could not notice the approaching train as there was dense fog.

Abdur Rahman Biswas, officer-in-charge of Saidpur Railway Police, said the level crossing is unauthorised and it has no gate and guard.

In Bogura, a bus rammed a CNG-run auto-rickshaw on the Bogura-Rangpur highway in Sherpur's Mirzapur around 5:00pm yesterday, killing five people, including a



Parts of a building, which were razed during a drive to reclaim the old channel of the Buriganga, are being reconstructed in the capital's Kamrangirchar yesterday. Only a month has passed since BIWTA and district administration conducted the drive against such illegal and risky structures. *Inset*, a crane pulling down the building during the December 26 drive.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



woman, on the spot and injuring another.

AKM Baniul Anam, inspector of Sherpur highway police camp, said all the deceased were auto-rickshaw passengers.

There were six people in the vehicle, including the driver, he said, adding that the auto-rickshaw driver was also killed in the accident.

Pias Ahmed, a passenger of the Bogura-bound bus, said, "Near the accident spot, the road condition is bad. The auto-rickshaw came into the middle of the road. At the same time, our bus also overtook another vehicle. Hence the head-on-collision occurred."

Three of the deceased are Hridoy, 25, and his wife Sathia, 21, of Dhunat, and Anwar, 35, of Sherpur. The identities of two others could not be known.

In another accident, Motiur Rahman Mintu, 40, of Bogura's Kahalu, died when an intercity train hit him while he was crossing Belghoria level crossing on a motorcycle around noon.

Ashraful Haque, 55, an independent chairman candidate of Shukanpukur Union Parishad elections, was also killed in a crash around 4:00pm yesterday.

[Our correspondents in Nilphamari and Bogura contributed to this report.]

# US may lift Rab sanctions if given 'accurate info'

Foreign minister tells parliament

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The government hopes the US will lift sanctions on Rab if it is provided with accurate information, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told parliament yesterday.

He came up with the remarks while delivering a statement in parliament under Section 300 of the parliamentary rules of procedures.

Momen informed the House that BNP and Jamaat had appointed eight lobbyist firms to ensure that the USA stops providing aid and development assistance to Bangladesh.

He also said the government has proof that the BNP, through appointing lobbyists, was linked to the slapping of the sanctions on Rab. He alleged the party also appealed to the United Nations Department of Peace Operations to ban the law enforcement agency from UN deployment.

Momen said the lobbyists have given statements that would offend the people of the country.

"BNP has told them [the US] that its security will be hindered due to Bangladesh. How can they write this? Shame on them [BNP]," the minister said amid thumping of desks by the treasury bench MPs.

He questioned how the BNP paid the lobbyists and demanded an investigation in this regard.

He said there might be differences of opinion between the government and the BNP, but the country cannot be harmed by that.

Momen said hiring lobbyists in the United States is a legal process under the US law. India, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and other countries and organisations around the world appoint lobbyists to improve political and economic relations.

"But here the main issue is the purpose of hiring lobbyist [by BNP]," he said.

He said that in 2014, Jamaat hired a firm to stop the trial of war criminals, for which they paid one and a half lakh dollars. They hired another lobbyist firm to stop the trial process.

He said BNP had spent \$1.20 lakh each month as retainer fee and \$27 lakh each year from February 2015 to April 2017. The BNP had hired four lobbyist firms till 2017 and then one in 2019. And to prevent the trial of war criminals, Jamaat-BNP appointed three lobbyist firms.

The minister said some BNP members had written to the UN secretary general to declare Bangladesh's parliament illegal.

**SANCTION ON RAB**

Saying that the government is working on the US

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# Info minister trashes TI graft report

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday dismissed the 2021 Corruption Perception Index, in which Bangladesh ranked 147 out of 180, saying the report is based on wrong data.

"Many neighbouring countries including India and others do not give emphasis to such reports," he said at a press briefing at his secretariat.

Bangladesh scored 26 out of 100 in the latest edition of Transparency International's annual flagship report, which is more or less the same as in the past decade.

Among the eight South Asian countries, Bangladesh remains the second-lowest both in score and rank.

"When a report is based on wrong data or motivated, the image of the organisation gets damaged – their recent report is biased and conventional," he added.

Meanwhile, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah said the government agency does not have any reaction to the report.

"We don't have any reaction on the matter. It is not a matter to accept or refuse. We will go through the report. If the report has any recommendations for us, we will try to follow those for our improvement."

# Omicron risk remains very high: WHO

**AFP, Geneva**

The risk level related to the Omicron variant remains very high, the WHO said late Tuesday, with the numbers of new Covid-19 cases hitting another record high last week.

"Over 21 million new cases were reported, representing the highest number of weekly cases recorded since the beginning of the pandemic," the World Health Organization said in its weekly epidemiological coronavirus update.

The UN health agency said the number of new infections increased by five percent in the week to Sunday – compared to the 20 percent rise registered the week before.

The WHO said, of the available data, Omicron accounted for 89.1 percent of the cases. Delta – previously the world's dominant variant – now makes up 10.7 percent.



Amid a chilly morning yesterday, farmers collecting seedlings of IRRI-49 from a partially-submerged seedbed in Bara Bayra Swashanghat area of Khulna city. The seedlings were then planted in a nearby paddy field. Local farmers say they always get a better yield of this variety.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# Updated Covid guidelines to be published soon

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The health directorate will soon publish an updated version of the Covid-19 clinical guideline to combat the Omicron variant of the coronavirus as it is the main reason behind the ongoing surge in cases.

The symptoms of the Omicron variant have been included in the fresh guideline, said Md Nazmul Islam, a spokesperson of the Directorate General of Health Services, in a media briefing yesterday.

"If we follow the health guideline, we will be able to control the pandemic," he added.

Meanwhile, 17 Covid-19 patients died and 15,527 tested for the viral infection in the 24 hours to 8 am yesterday, according to a press release from the DGHS.

The DGHS reported a 31.64 percent positivity rate during the period, down from 32.40 percent in the preceding 24 hours.

Of the deceased yesterday, 13 were male and four female.

Of them, the highest deaths were recorded in the Dhaka division (10), followed by Chittogram (4). There were one death each in Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal and Mymensingh divisions.

The fresh numbers took the country's total Covid fatalities to 28,273 while the caseload went up to 1,731,524 yesterday.