



P6 **'Busy actors don't have time'**
Shakib Khan on recent film actors' polls



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Mud-made post office in operation for 40yrs



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Production and export hampered as orders soar

People in for higher living expenses

Govt looks to raise electricity, gas, fertiliser prices by March to ease subsidy pressure

SUBSIDY: BUDGET 2021-22

SECTOR	ORIGINAL ALLOCATION	REVISED DEMAND
Power	Tk 9,000cr	Tk 25,000cr
LNG	Tk 6,000cr	Tk 32,000cr
Agriculture	Tk 9,000cr	Tk 28,000cr

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

People can brace themselves for yet another round of living expense hike as the government is mulling over raising the prices of electricity, gas and fertiliser by March to bring its subsidy burden down to a tolerable limit.

The prices of electricity and gas could see a rise as early as this month and by March would come the hike in the prices of fertiliser -- whose knock-on effect would be costlier fruits, vegetables and grains -- according to finance ministry officials working on the matter.

However, there is a tug of war going on between the optics-minded and number-crunching officials over the choice to hike the prices of gas and fertiliser at this moment.

A section of the officials believes that an increase in the prices of the key items a year before the national parliamentary election would harm the government.

But the other officials deem a price adjustment is necessary now to prevent the subsidies for electricity and gas from heading towards the unreasonable territory.

The bid to hike the electricity and gas tariffs and fertiliser prices comes two months into the kerosene and diesel price hikes that went on to raise the living expenses for the poor and the middle-class still reeling from the blow dealt by the pandemic.

If the new proposals are approved, it would increase the production costs and fuel inflation further.

In December last year, inflation hit 6.05 percent, the highest in 14 months and overshooting the government's target of 5.30 percent for this fiscal year.

Food inflation was the highest in six months, while non-food inflation came close to the high of 7.05 percent seen in December 2015. It touched 7 percent in December last year.

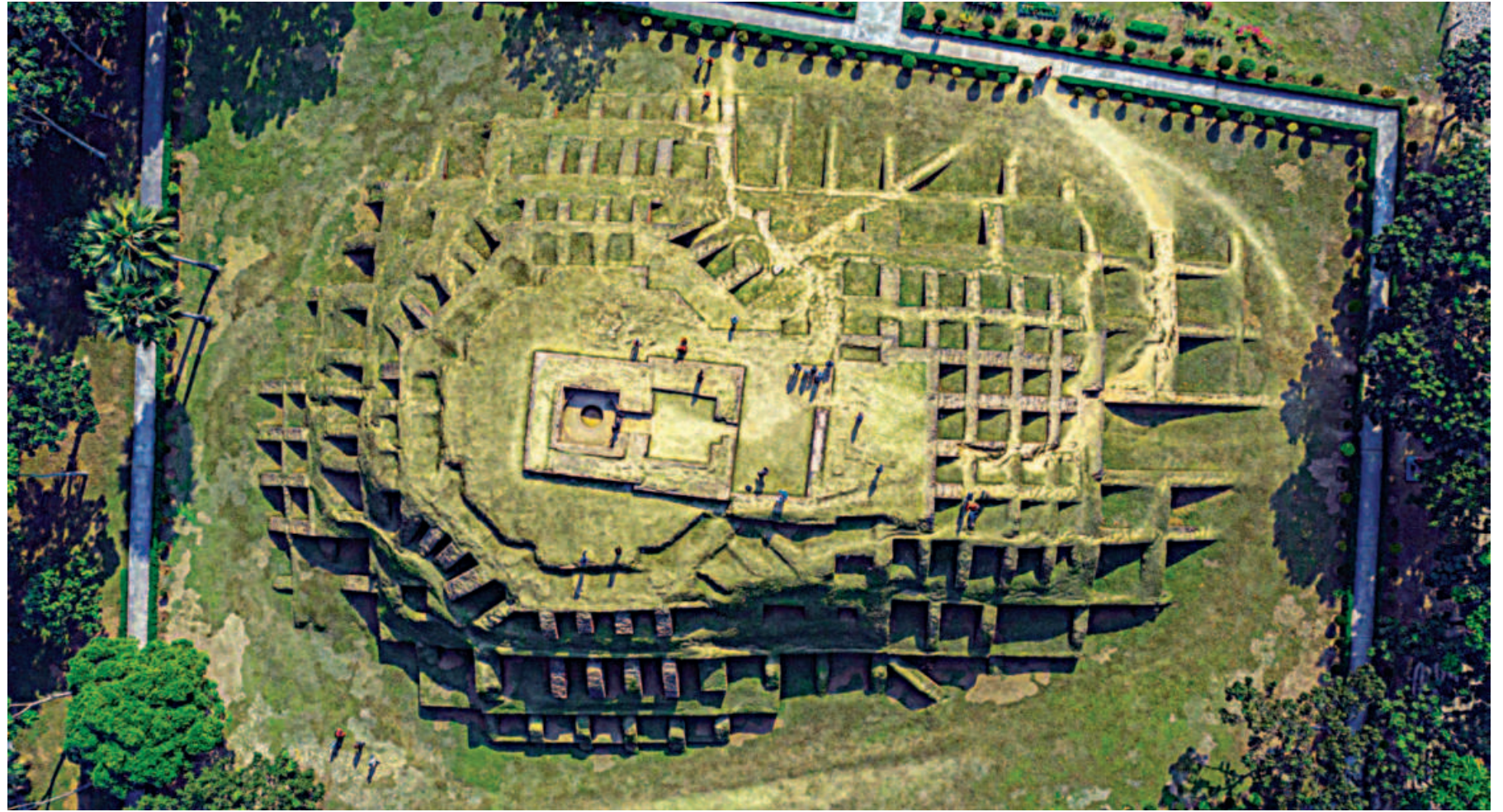
"The increase in prices would be slight but, on the upside, the government's subsidy burden will become bearable," said a top finance ministry official asking not to be named to speak candidly on the issue.

Besides, hiking the prices will help ensure funds for urgent health emergencies like procuring additional Covid-19 vaccines and booster shots.

The government may require additional money to tackle adverse situations should any new variant of Covid-19 crop up.

"We are witnessing a surge in the number of Covid patients due to the Omicron variant. If any new wave hits the country this year too, the government will have to spend additional money for food distribution programmes."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



An aerial view of Behular Basor Ghor, an archaeological site first dug up in Bogura's Gokul village in 1934-36. Excavations uncovered the foundation of a huge Buddhist temple built in the sixth/seventh centuries AD. Later, another temple was built on the ruins of the former. It is popularly known as the abode of Behula-Lakshminder, protagonists of a popular folklore of the region. The number of visitors to this site, around 3km south of Mahasthangarh -- ruins of the ancient capital of Pundravardhana -- has dropped significantly since the pandemic hit the country in March 2020. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUI

I felt I was demanding justice for all 'crossfire' victims

Slain Major (ret'd) Sinha's sister tells *The Daily Star*

ZYMA ISLAM

The verdict in the Major (ret'd) Sinha murder case was not just a victory for his family, but for all the families who have lost their loved ones to "crossfires" in the hands of Teknaf police.

Sinha's elder sister Sharmin Shahria Ferdush said this while talking to *The Daily Star* yesterday.

"Every time I was in court, families of other victims would be there. I was demanding justice for my brother but every time I felt I was fighting for them too... They are so vulnerable, so marginalised."

"I understood them and they understood me. They too lost a

brother, a father or a son. If I am victorious, they will be too." She said it is unacceptable how extrajudicial killings are passed off as "crossfires".



"...To deal with the ultimate evil, you have to be the ultimate good."

"If the person is guilty then make him face the court. The court must decide the crime, not an individual."

"It would have been easier to have Pradeep and Liaqat get 'crossfired', but I did not want the easy way out. My strength was honesty. To deal with the ultimate

evil, you have to be the ultimate good," Sharmin said.

Officer-in-charge Pradeep Kumar Das was the former head of Teknaf police and the one who ordered Sinha's murder, while Inspector Liaqat Ali, who headed Baharchhara investigation centre, shot the fatal bullets.

She went on to say that in spite of the facts, they were unsure till the last moment whether Pradeep would be handed capital punishment.

"Sinha lived with a purpose and died with a purpose. Perhaps that purpose was to give the people of Teknaf the justice they deserved."

His family had been pursuing a campaign demanding justice for Sinha and one of the social media hashtags they used was #stopextrajudicialkilling.

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 2

RT-PCR prices too high here

Global drop in costs of test kits bears no reflection

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

Despite a gradual decline in the prices of RT-PCR testing kits in the market, the government has not lowered the cost of the Covid tests at private hospitals and labs since May 2021.

The high cost is also thwarting the efforts to increase testing at a time when the Omicron variant of coronavirus is causing the number of new cases to soar, said experts.

In 2020, a PCR test kit cost between Tk 2,000 and 3,000. But each kit now costs between Tk 145 and 950. Taking into account the operational costs, officials at different private labs said they would still make a profit if they charged Tk 1,500 for each test.

But most of the private health facilities currently charge at least Tk 3,000 for a PCR test, while the rate is Tk 2,500 for those about to travel abroad.

"I had Covid symptoms last week. But I did not get tested due to the high cost of tests at private labs. I didn't go to the government facilities because of the long queues," said Iqbal Hossain, manager of an apartment building in Tejuri Bazar area.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7



Khaleda back home after 80 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia returned home last night after undergoing treatment at the capital's Evercare Hospital for 80 days.

Khaleda's younger brother Shamim Iskander, his wife Kanij Fatema, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, senior leaders Amanullah Aman, Abdus Salam and some other relatives welcomed her to her Gulshan residence at 8:30pm.

Several hundred party leaders and activists also gathered outside the house to greet Khaleda. She

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A truck in flames on Rajshahi University campus last night after students set it ablaze protesting the death of a fellow student under the wheels of a truck only a few yards away. The demonstrating students also blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway in Kajla Gate area.

PHOTO: STAR

Truck kills RU student on campus

Students burst into protests, urge VC to ensure safety

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

A Rajshahi University student was crushed to death and another injured under the wheels of a construction truck on the campus last night.

The incident occurred near the university's Habibur Rahman Hall around 8:45pm, when the two students were passing by on a motorcycle.

Mahmud Habib Himel, the deceased, was a fourth-year student of graphic design, crafts and history of the university's arts department, said Prof Pradip Kumar Pandey, RU's public relations officer.

Himel, hailing from Natore, was also the general secretary of the RU Drama Association.

The authorities had to struggle to recover his body as angry, protesting students were surrounding it.

Anwar Ali, officer-in-charge of Motihar Police Station, said police were able to recover the body at 10:00pm, an hour and 15 minutes after the incident, and sent it to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

The injured, Rimel, a fourth-year student of ceramics and sculpture department, was taken to RMCH for treatment by protesting students.

The truck, bound for a nearby construction site, hit the motorcycle and then crushed Himel's head, said witnesses, RU teachers and police.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Fastest trial in dist involving death sentence PP on Sinha murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Never in its 37-year history, the Cox's Bazar court has held such a speedy trial that ended with death sentences, according to the public prosecutor.

From the date of the incident till the date of the verdict over the murder of Major (retired) Sinha Md Rashed Khan, it took 33 working days over a period of seventeen months.

To add to this, this timely delivery of justice happened in a case challenging a "gunfight" death, the first of its kind, making it even more noteworthy.

Farid Uddin, the public prosecutor, said the case documents were being sent to the High Court for the approval of the verdict.

The plaintiff's lawyer Mohammed Jahangir told the newspaper, "The hearing on death references will be held within seven days upon receiving the documents from Cox's Bazar court. The lawyers of the convicts can participate in the hearing if they want."

"The convicts, who were awarded death penalty, will have to file an appeal with the higher court within seven days whereas the life term awardees have to file an appeal with the higher court within the next 60 days."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

13,154 more test positive for Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health directorate reported that 31 people died of Covid-19 in the 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

In the same 24 hours, 13,154 people tested positive for the virus, according to a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services.

With the latest count, the total number of fatalities due to Covid-19 rose to 28,425 and the total confirmed cases to 18,11,987.

The DGHS has also reported a positivity rate of 29.17 after testing 45,093 samples.

In the 24 hours, 2721 Covid-19 patients recovered from their illness.

Of the deceased yesterday, 15 were male and 16 female. All of them died in hospitals.

As of yesterday noon, around 2,500 Covid-19 patients were having treatment in hospitals, mostly in Dhaka metropolitan areas, the DGHS said.

Fueled by the Omicron variant, the country has been witnessing a wave of Covid-19 cases since early January.

Both the number of infection and the positivity rate have skyrocketed, but the number of hospital admission has remained low compared to previous waves.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia waves to party leaders while coming out of Evercare Hospital in the capital last night. She returned to her Gulshan home after receiving treatment at the hospital for 80 days.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

CURBING AIR POLLUTION

HC blasts govt for its failures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday blasted the government authorities concerned for their failure in taking effective measures to control air pollution in Dhaka and its surrounding areas despite its repeated directives.

"Public health is at serious risk due to air pollution. The situation is not improving although this court has issued several directives to this effect. In this situation, the court cannot sit idle," the bench of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir said while hearing a writ petition.

The bench directed the director general of the Department of Environment and deputy commissioners of Dhaka, Manikganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, and Narayanganj to be in the virtual hearing on February 15.

The HC also asked them to submit before it separate lists of illegal brick kilns on that day.

The bench delivered the order

while hearing the petition moved by lawyer Manzill Murshid on behalf of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh. The petitioner also presented newspaper reports on the present air pollution level and operation of illegal brick kilns, seeking necessary directives to this

"The situation is not improving although this court has delivered several directives to this effect. In this situation the court cannot sit idle."

effect. The lawyer told the HC that the authorities have failed to take effective steps to control air pollution in the capital and its surrounding areas although this court issued directives eight times in this case.

On February 4 last year, the HC had asked the director general of the Fire Service and Civil Defence

Department to take necessary steps to spray water from its vehicles on an urgent basis at the entrances to the capital, including Gabtoli, Jatrabari, Purbachal, Keraniganj and Tongi.

The fire service and civil defence will do this beside their primary duty of dousing fires, the HC said.

The managing director of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority has been ordered to take measures to supply sufficient water to the Dhaka city corporation authorities for spraying it on the city streets.

The court also asked the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) to spray water on the streets in such a way so that it falls on the small trees planted of the central reservations and air pollution reduces.

Lawyers Amatul Karim Swapna, Md Shahjahan, Sayed Ahmed Raza and Md Muniruzzaman stood for DOE, DNCC, DSCC and fire service respectively during the hearing.

Sri Lanka arrests 21 Indians after clash with navy

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's navy yesterday said it had arrested 21 Indian fishermen after a confrontation with two trawlers poaching in the island's territorial waters.

A fast attack craft was damaged in the clashes on Monday night, the navy said in a statement, without giving further details.

"As the Indian trawlers were attempting to evade naval units with their aggressive manoeuvres, they also caused damages to the SLN Fast Attack Craft," the statement said.

It did not say if there were casualties, but said the navy seized equipment used by the Indians for "bottom-trawling", a fishing method banned in Sri Lanka that snares maritime creatures on the ocean floor.

Indian fishermen are known to stray into Sri Lankan waters along the Palk Strait, a narrow strip of sea separating the two South Asian neighbours in the Indian Ocean.

Truck kills RU student

FROM PAGE 1

As the news spread, several hundred students from different halls took to the streets, demonstrating against the authorities' apathy towards ensuring students' security during development activities.

The PRO said the incident would be properly investigated and the culprits brought to justice, adding that RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Golam Sabbir Sattar urged everyone to remain calm.

However, agitating students torched some five trucks and makeshift rooms at the construction site and did not let the authorities touch Himel's body.

When the university's proctor went to the spot to control the situation, they

chased him away. At 9:30pm, the students went to the VC's residence, held a demonstration and smashed his car.

Minutes later, the demonstrators barricaded the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway at the campus's Kajla gate and demanded proper investigation and punishment to the driver of the truck that killed Himel.

RU VC Golam Sabbir Sattar expressed his sorrow and said it was an unfortunate incident.

"All the fair demands of the students will be accepted. We will do whatever is necessary to provide justice for the killed student."

The demonstrators also demanded compensation and ensuring safety for students on campus.

People in for higher living expenses

FROM PAGE 1

Also, the government will have to increase rice procurement to save the farmers from incurring losses.

"That's why the government is considering hiking the price of the items," he said, adding that the final decision lies with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Different ministries are sending in requests for an additional subsidy -- and all are for hefty amounts -- to absorb the spiralling prices in the international markets.

The finance ministry is reviewing the proposals and will come up with a revised budget by March, according to another official.

It would not be possible for the government to allocate the subsidy that the ministries sought in their revised demand. But there will be some increase, they added.

For example, the power division in its proposal

sought Tk 25,000 crore in subsidy to meet the rising energy costs. The amount allocated for subsidy in this budget is about Tk 9,000 crore, of which Tk 5,000 crore has been spent by December.

Now, the finance ministry is considering allocating an additional Tk 2,000-Tk 3,000 crore in subsidy, said another finance ministry official.

On the other hand, the energy division sought Tk 32,000 crore in subsidy if they are to meet the liquefied natural gas (LNG) import bills unless the government increases the price.

While a subsidy of Tk 6,000 crore has been set aside for LNG in this fiscal year, the finance ministry may increase the amount of subsidy by an additional Tk 4,000 crore in the revised budget.

The government allocated Tk 9,000 crore in subsidy for fertiliser import this fiscal year. Of the amount, Tk 5,500

crore has already been spent.

Now, the agriculture ministry sought Tk 28,000 crore in subsidy if the government does not hike the price. It wants the amount to meet the rising fertiliser price, especially urea, in the international market.

A subsidy of Tk 5,500 crore out of the total allocation of Tk 9,000 crore has been provided to the agriculture ministry until December last year. The finance ministry is considering providing Tk 3,000 crore additionally for the farm sector.

Speaking about the subsidy, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque said: "The government was worried about where such a huge subsidy would come from. If such a huge amount in subsidy is given, the other development activities will come to a standstill."

In a statement on January 29, he said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

house to be safer."

The 76-year-old former premier was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis. According to her medical board, she needs to be taken to an advanced medical centre abroad for better treatment.

Khaleda has long been suffering from arthritis, diabetes, as well as dental and eye problems.

She was admitted to the hospital on November 13 last year and moved to the

said she would not raise the price of fertiliser at the moment for the welfare of farmers and to continue the development of the agriculture sector.

A finance ministry official said the government may increase the price of fertiliser after the end of the Boro harvest in March.

"But the increase would not be much," he added.

The government may increase its allocation for incentive expenses for remittance in the revised budget to help the economy absorb the shock stemming from the pandemic. Another Tk 1,000 crore is likely to be allocated for this.

It had earmarked around Tk 3,000 crore in the original budget to pay incentives to the beneficiaries of remittance.

The government may also increase subsidies in the jute sector. About Tk 300 crore would be given to this sector in the revised budget, he added.

Earlier on October 12, she was admitted to the hospital as her temperature started fluctuating.

Khaleda landed in jail on February 8, 2018 in a corruption case. Amid the coronavirus pandemic, she was freed temporarily on certain conditions on March 25 last year.

The term of her release has been extended four times so far.

No embargo on Bangladesh

US Congressman Meeks says

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Congressman and Chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Gregory W Meeks will visit Bangladesh this year to observe the human rights situation and other issues.

He said the US will not impose any embargo on Bangladesh as per the demands of any lobbyist.

Meeks said this at a fundraising luncheon function in the US on Monday, according to a statement of Bangladesh embassy in Washington yesterday.

Man dies in Ctg ship-breaking yard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A man has died in a ship-breaking yard in Dakshin Sonaichhari area of Chattogram's Sitakundu upazila early yesterday, allegedly being hit by an iron rod.

The victim is Mohammad Ariful Hossain Sujon, 29, a worker of the ship-breaking yard that is owned by Kabir Steel Re-Rolling Mills (KSRM).

Abdullah Al Sakib Mubarrat, deputy inspector general of Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, Chattogram, said, "Ariful suddenly felt sick, vomited and fell down."

KSRM Manager Mohammad Tajuddin said, "It is a wrong information that Ariful died after being hit by iron bar."

40 BNP men sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Some 40 leaders and activists, including BNP Central Cooperative Affairs Secretary GK Gaus, have been sent to jail in Habiganj on Tuesday.

Habiganj District and Sessions Judge denied their bail and sent them to jail in their presence in connection with a police assault case.

According to court sources, the leaders and activists received a six-week anticipatory bail from the high court on January 5.

Habiganj BNP Joint Convener Enamul Selim is also among the 40 leaders and activists, said Anisur Rahman, inspector of Habiganj court.

46 gold bars recovered in Ctg airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate recovered 46 gold bars, worth around Tk 3 crore, from a wheel of an abandoned vehicle in GSE area of Shah Amanat International Airport Wednesday.

However, none was arrested in this connection. CIID's Additional Director General (ADG) Basir Ahmed said, "Tipped-off, CIID officials raided a workshop of the airport and recovered the 46 gold bars."

"The gold bars were lying abandoned in that condition so that none could be detained," he said.

RT-PCR prices

FROM PAGE 1

The health ministry set the current price on May 6 last year, reducing the previous maximum rate by only Tk 500, even though the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) sought a reduction of Tk 1,500.

The DGHS last month recommended that the PCR test should not cost more than Tk 2,000 and those travelling abroad should be able to get it for Tk 1,600.

The ministry has yet to make a decision in this regard, said Farid Hossain Mian, director of hospitals and clinics at the DGHS.

A high official of the health ministry requesting not to be named said officials were working on the matter and a decision would be announced soon.

Compared to the cost of testing in India and the drop in prices of kits in the global market, the rate proposed by the DGHS is still high, experts said.

The Delhi government on January 20 set the maximum charge for a PCR test in private facilities at Rs 300, down from Rs 500.

The tests are widely

accepted across the globe because of its reliability and accuracy. Around 50 companies dominate the global market for the testing kit while 23 companies have permission to sell it in Bangladesh.

"The testing fees should be updated in line with the price of the kit," Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19, told The Daily Star on Monday.

A PCR test at government facilities costs as low as Tk 100. But whenever there is a spike in new cases, the facilities take longer to process the result. So, the people who need their Covid test reports soon have no choice but to go to any of the 99 private labs which charge more for tests.

An average of 20,000 tests were done in the private facilities in the last seven days, according to the DGHS data.

Aminal Islam, lab in-charge and chief molecular biologist at Ashiyon Medical College Hospital, said the DGHS's recommendation to lower the test fees should be implemented.

Impose arms embargo

FROM PAGE 12

Tom Andrews released a video, which features the voices of some of those in Myanmar who have suffered greatly and are taking action to defend their country. He implored States to take a more robust course of international action "before it's too late".

"Now is not the time for more rhetoric, it is time for meaningful action," the UN expert said. "The international community

must take strong, meaningful steps to cut the junta's access to weapons, funds and legitimacy."

"The fact that one year has elapsed with no Security Council Resolution imposing a comprehensive arms embargo -- as arms continue to flow to the junta and kill innocent people -- is unacceptable."

He said, "The people of Myanmar deserve better from the United Nations."

HC seeks list of chemical depot, factory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to submit – to the court by April 17 – a list of the names of buildings in Old Dhaka where chemical godowns, stores, and factories are running.

The court also ordered the government's concerned authorities to submit a report on the progress of establishing permanent and temporary chemical sites in Munshiganj, Shyampur, and Tongi by the same deadline in response to a writ petition. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association filed the petition with the HC.



At Dhaka Shishu Hospital, this little one from Mirpur was seen enjoying an oil massage from his mother. But the reality behind the picture is not that pleasant, as the infant was diagnosed with pneumonia about a week ago. As the clasp of winter ceases to relent, the hospital is seeing an increase in the number of patients coming in with pneumonia and other cold-related issues. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Carrying Phensidyl a punishable offence: SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday scrapped a High Court verdict which in 2003 ruled that carrying and possessing Phensidyl is not a punishable offence.

The apex court verdict means that carrying and possessing Phensidyl is illegal in the country, said Deputy Attorney General Bishwajit Debnath.

A full bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, delivered the verdict following an appeal filed by the state challenging the HC verdict.

Citing the documents along with research papers, the DAG said there are elements of drugs in Phensidyl, including codeine phosphate and chlorphenamine, which are produced from opium and are injurious to health.

Still stuck in a BUREAUCRATIC TANGLE

Appointment of psychologists to counsel jailed extremists keeps getting delayed

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The proposal to appoint psychologists for deradicalisation programme remains stuck in a bureaucratic tangle.

This comes despite repeated warnings that arrested militant suspects became more dangerous after being sent to jail and spending time with extremist groups' top leadership there.

A year back, the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit sent a proposal to temporarily appoint psychologists in line with a previously approved project to provide counselling to arrested extremists in jail.

The project, titled "The Construction of

“ We need softer approaches along with the hard approach to prevent extremism. For this, deradicalisation needs to start from jail, and this initiative needs to start immediately. ”

MD ASADUZZAMAN
Chief of CTTC unit

the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime prevention Centre of Bangladesh Police", was approved in 2019 with a budget of Tk 350 crore.

On January 17 last year, under the project, CTTC first sent a proposal to directorate of prisons to obtain permission to provide counselling of extremist prisoners in jail.

The prison directorate responded with a no-objection on February 15 of the year, and requested the government to approve appointment under the project.

However, on March 25, security service division (SSD) of the home ministry refused to allow such a step and suggested police to apply again by informing the public security division of the ministry, according to sources.

As per the suggestions, CTTC applied

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Govt requests EC to probe BNP's lobbyist expenses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has requested the Election Commission to probe whether BNP had shown the expenditure of appointing lobbyist firms abroad in their annual financial report.

State minister for foreign affairs Shahriar Alam sent a letter to the EC requesting them to take necessary actions in this regard.

"We have received the letter two days back. It will be placed at the Election Commission meeting on February 3 for review. We will take steps in line with that," EC Secretary Humayun Kabir Khandaker told The Daily Star yesterday.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on January 26 told parliament that BNP and Jamaat had appointed eight lobbyist firms to ensure that the US stops providing aid and development assistance to Bangladesh. He also said the government has proof that BNP, through appointing lobbyists, was linked to the slapping of the recent sanctions on Rab.

'BID TO LIFT SANCTIONS' Govt spending public money to protect image Says Fakhru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday raised questions about the government allegedly spending public money to lift US imposed sanctions.

"The government appointed lobbyists with taxpayers' money to cover up the actions taken by the US, which was acknowledged by the statement of the foreign minister," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

Addressing a press conference at the party chairperson's Gulshan office, Fakhru claimed that the foreign minister had stated that the government appointed lobbyists to restore the government's image.

"How does the government spend public money in name of protecting its image?"

PRAYER TIMING
FEB 2



	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5:30	12:45	4:15	5:52	7:15
Jamaat	6:05	1:15	4:30	5:56	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Bank Asia

BE A PART OF OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Head of Internal Control & Compliance

Job Responsibilities

- Supervise and coordinate the divisional activities under the guidelines of relevant regulatory authorities.
- Assist Audit Committee in fulfillment of its duties & responsibilities.
- Meet with Audit Committee to discuss internal control weaknesses/audit findings and other matters.
- Develop mechanism for improving internal controls, operating efficiency & effectiveness.
- Establish risk-based audit plans to set out the priorities.
- Run ICC Division complying Core Risk Management guidelines as set by Bangladesh Bank.

Job Grade

Senior Executive Vice President (SEVP)

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

- Masters in any discipline preferably in business background with good academic record.
- Candidates having professional qualifications like CA/CMA/CIA/CFA etc. will be given preference.
- At least 15 years' experience in banking / financial institutions or in related fields.

Head of Islamic Banking Division

Job Responsibilities

- Supervise overall activities of Islamic Banking Division.
- Plan and formulate strategies to achieve business goals of Islamic Banking Division.
- Ensure optimization of business of Islamic Banking Windows.
- Conduct market survey of the Shariah based banking products, redesign new products and develop the existing products to penetrate the market.
- Monitor and ensure all compliance related to issues of Islamic Banking as per Bangladesh Bank guidelines.
- Maintain liaison with Shariah Supervisory Committee of the Bank to run business and operations smoothly.

Job Grade

Senior Vice President (SVP)

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

- Masters in any discipline preferably in business background with good academic record.
- Minimum 15 years of experience in Financial industry (must have 5 years' experience in similar role)
- Must have sound Islamic investment risk and compliance management knowledge.
- Must have proper knowledge/experience in coordination with the Shariah Supervisory Committee.
- Certified Islamic Professional Accountant (CIPA), Certified Shariah Adviser and Auditor (CSAA) will be given preference.

Head of Audit

Job Responsibilities

- Evaluate to ascertain whether the implementations of controls are executed in accordance with prescribed policies & procedures.
- Lead and manage the team effectively for ensuring proper controls over financial as well as compliance functions.
- Prepare the Annual Risk Based Audit plan & get it approved by the Audit Committee of the Board.
- Carry out comprehensive Internal Audit & Inspections of the Branches/Corporate Office divisions/ departments.
- Examine the Internal Control Processes, Records and Transactions on sampling/rigorous basis.

Job Grade

Vice President (VP)/ Senior Vice President (SVP)

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

- Masters in any discipline preferably in business background with good academic record.
- Qualified/partly qualified Professional Accountant (CA/CMA/ACCA) with sound banking knowledge & experience.
- At least 15 years' experience in banking / financial institutions or related field is essential.
- Working experience in audit & inspection department in reputed foreign or local banks/ financial institutions/ multinationals/ business conglomerate.

Head of Channel Banking Division

Job Responsibilities

- Manage and drive business for Agent Banking, Alternative Delivery Channel & Financial Inclusion & Financial Literacy (FIFL).
- Plan and execute marketing strategies to increase business volume.
- Engage and inspire agents to expedite business opportunities.
- Ensure achievement of annual business target.
- Monitor and control the overall operations to ensure that all processes and policies are updated in order to meet the business needs and regulatory requirements.
- Maintain liaison with the stakeholders to identify new business opportunities.

Job Grade

Senior Executive Vice President (SEVP)

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

- Masters in any discipline preferably in business background with good academic record.
- At least 15 years' banking experience including 5 years as Divisional Head in the relevant field.
- Must have sound knowledge/experience in the areas of Agent Banking, Alternative Delivery Channel, Mobile Banking Services.

Other Conditions

The conditions that are in practice in the industry may be applicable while offering job to the selected candidates. Candidates who meet the above requirements are invited to send their updated resume with cover letter to the following address mentioning the name of the position in the envelope:

People Management Division

Bank Asia Ltd., Bank Asia Tower (Level-9), 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka.
Interested candidates can also apply through <https://www.bankasia-bd.com/about/career#Availablejobs>

Last date for submission of application: February 15, 2022.

Bank Asia reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason whatsoever at any stage of the recruitment process.

Fastest trial in dist

FROM PAGE 2
The court handed death sentence to suspended police officials Pradeep Kumar Das and Liaqat Ali for the murder of Sinha at an APBn checkpoint in Teknaf on July 31, 2020. Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammed

Ismail also sentenced six others to life in the murder case. The law enforcers claimed that they tried to search the vehicle of Sinha, but the former army official aimed his pistol at them and prompting them to shoot in self defence.

Independents grab

FROM PAGE 12
Most of the independents are disgruntled Awami League men, said party insiders.

So far, 369 chairmen have been elected uncontested because they were the only ones running for the posts.

No need

FROM PAGE 12
The NeoCov virus still does not possess the capability of infecting human beings.

Structurally, it is a hybrid of MERS CoV and SARS CoV2 viruses, which only can infect bats, not humans, he added. The Chinese researchers, however, claimed that a minor change in the spike protein of NeoCov will enable it to infect humans. "Only such mutation can initiate another epidemic. But prior knowledge of NeoCov will be helpful to contain the virus unlike Covid-19," said Mehedi.

Still stuck

FROM PAGE 3
again via the PHQ on August 28, through the public security division.

In the next five months, the letter managed to reach the SSD. However, it's still waiting for approval. In the letter, a copy of which was obtained by this newspaper, CTTC said it is possible to bring back those who were misled by militant outfits into mainstream society, after changing their mentality through proper explanation of religious ideas. For the rehab, psychologists are required as they can analyse the threat posed by the extremist individuals. Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Md Asaduzzaman, chief of CTTC unit, said, "We are still waiting for the ministry's response."

Prof Abdullah made emeritus professor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof ABM Abdullah has been named emeritus professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).



The decision was taken unanimously at a syndicate meeting of the university, making him the first individual to receive such title in BSMMU history.

This title is conferred on those who have achieved outstanding international professional status and have made significant academic contributions to the institute.

Abdullah received Ekushy Padak in 2016 and UGC award in 2013. He was a professor of the dept of internal medicine and dean of faculty of medicine at BSMMU.

For the rehab, psychologists are required as they can analyse the threat posed by the extremist individuals. Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Md Asaduzzaman, chief of CTTC unit, said, "We are still waiting for the ministry's response."

"We need softer approaches along with the hard approach to prevent extremism," he said. "For this, deradicalisation needs to start from jail, and this initiative needs to start immediately," he added.

Contacted, security expert Maj Gen (ret) Abdur Rashid said the use of psychologists could be useful not only for deradicalisation but also for analysing crime. "We have seen such practice in other countries. If we can introduce this, it can only be a positive move," he added.

Meanwhile, Sayed Belal Hossain, additional secretary (jail wing) of home ministry, said they will look into application, mentioning that the process might be delayed because of an official's illness. "We have no update as the concerned desk officer is sick," he said.

A CTTC official involved with the project said the project has a four-year duration, of which three have elapsed just for sending and re-sending files.

"We fear that the project tenure may end by the time the approval arrives."

Sources said a number of militancy supporters who were jailed became more radicalised after they came out on bail.

Take the case of Ariful Karim Chowdhury alias Adnan.

He was first arrested by police in 2015 over his involvement with Harkatul-Jihad.

A year later, he came out on bail and got involved with Ansarullah Bangla Team.

He went on to become ABT's chief for a part of Dhaka and in charge of fund collection, said Rab officials following his second arrest from Mirpur on December 19, 2019.

In another case, one Abdulla Al Noman also turned into a key militant leader inside prison.

He was arrested first in 2018 as a supporter of "Neo JMB".

By the time he came out of jail after 15 months, he had become a top member of its military wing, CTTC unit said following his second arrest on July 24, 2020.

Officials said a number of people arrested for their links to radical websites or for sharing radical thoughts on social media became full-fledged members of militant outfits in prison.

Md Mahfuzul Islam, deputy commissioner of CTTC unit, said it is not possible to win the fight against extremism by policing alone, and such initiatives as those proposed under the project must be undertaken.

ACCORD (GREEN) FACTORY RENT
6th floor foundation but 4th completed garments factory will rent with 382 sewing machine, 350 KVA generator, 450 KVA electric line, Tengory, Zirani Bazar, near to B.K.S.P. Total space-35,000sqft. Cont: 01711521082

Job Vacancy
Required for a Taiwan based company a Branch Manager for their Dhaka Branch office. The candidate must be Graduate preferably M.B.A with experience in Marketing. Remuneration is negotiable. Please apply UNIEXCEL LTD, House-8, Road-8, Sector-13, Uttara, Dhaka-1230. Email: dipankar.unixelbd@gmail.com D-09

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 8181658-61, 8181169, 8181664-69; Website: <http://www.pksf-bd.org>

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), an apex development organization, was established by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in May 1990 for sustainable poverty reduction through employment generation. Since its inception, PKSF has been implementing various poverty alleviation and employment generation interventions through its Partner Organizations (POs) all over the country.

PKSF is going to implement a 5-year project titled 'Recovery and Advancement of Informal Sector Employment (RAISE)' jointly financed by the World Bank & PKSF. The objective of the project is to provide services that can enhance earning opportunities for low-income urban youth and urban youth impacted by COVID-19. PKSF hereby invites applications from the suitable candidates for the following positions:

S.N	Name of the Posts with Number	Consolidated Monthly Salary
1	Deputy Project Coordinator (Training & Skills Development)-01	BDT 2,20,000/-
2	Financial Management Specialist-01	BDT 2,00,000/-
3	Social Development Specialist-01	BDT 1,60,000/-
4	Environmental Specialist-01	BDT 1,60,000/-
5	IT & Database Management Specialist-01	BDT 1,60,000/-
6	Procurement Specialist-01	BDT 1,60,000/-
7	Program Officer (Case Management)-01	BDT 1,20,000/-
8	Program Officer (Database & MIS)-01	BDT 1,20,000/-
9	Program Officer (Communication & Knowledge Management)-01	BDT 1,20,000/-
10	Accounts Officer-01	BDT 90,000/-
11	Assistant Accounts Officer-03	BDT 70,000/-
12	Assistant Officer (Admin & Logistics)-01	BDT 70,000/-

The employees will be recruited initially for one year with an opportunity for performance-based annual renewal during the project period. Interested candidates who fulfill the requirements should apply online by **20 February 2022**. For detailed Terms of References (ToRs) and instructions to apply, please visit PKSF website: www.pksf-bd.org.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. PKSF is an equal opportunity employer. Any kind of persuasion will be treated as disqualification of the candidate. PKSF reserves the right to cancel this recruitment process without assigning any reason whatsoever. **Women are highly encouraged to apply.**

Md. Hasan Khaled
Senior General Manager (HR)

PAN PACIFIC SONARGAON
DHAKA
The Oasis of Luxurious Hospitality and Tranquility

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide contractors/manufacturers/dealers/distributors/suppliers for supply of the following items. The detail Specifications, terms and conditions are mentioned in the Tender Schedule.

SL No.	Name of the Items	Schedule Price (Non-refundable)
1	Disaster Recovery (2nd re-tender) - 01 Lot.	Tk.5000
2	Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP)	Tk.3000
3	Hot Water Tank Temperature Controller Valve (3rd re-tender) - 02 Nos.	Tk.1000
4	Well Pump Motor (4th re-tender) - 01 No.	Tk.1000
5	Heavy Curtains for Lobby & Ballroom Foyer - 02 Lot.	Tk.1000

Interested bidders may obtain Tender Schedule from the Purchasing Department on submission of a letter on their respective letterhead up to **February 22, 2022** during office hours. Tender will be received up to **02:30pm on February 23, 2022** and will be opened on the same day at **03:00pm** in presence of the bidders, if any.

Tender must be supported by an Earnest Money amount in Tk.500,000 (five lac only) for SL No 01, Tk.400,000 (four lac only) for SL No 02 and 5% of the quoted price for SL. No. 03 to 05 in the form of Bank Draft or Pay Order from any Scheduled Bank of Bangladesh in favor of SONARGAON HOTEL.

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel authority reserves the right to accept/reject any tender in part or in full or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Purchase Manager, Tel (880) 2 9128008, Ext: 4164

CMSF
Capital Market Stabilization Fund
BGIC Tower (9th Floor)
34, Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000

Request for Proposal (RFP)

CMSF is inviting Quotations/Proposals from prospective suppliers/authorized representatives such as partners, resellers, distributors for providing laptops, desktop computers, scanner, photo copier machine, B/W laser printer, color laser printer, heavy duty color laser printer, tab and other accessories.

All interested suppliers/authorized representatives such as partners, resellers, distributors are requested to visit either Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website: <https://www.dsebd.org/RFP.php> or Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL) website: <https://www.cdbl.com.bd/article.php?pr=302> as well as Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) website: https://www.cse.com.bd/upload_notice/Proposal-for-equipment-and-Hardware-Infrastructure.pdf for details and submit the proposal within 13th February 2022.

NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

RE-TENDER NOTICE FOR HIRING MICRO BUSES

Tender No. NSU/ 21-22-10

North South University is inviting sealed offers from bonafide vehicle rental service providers to hire 20 (Twenty) nos micro buses. The micro buses must be minimum: 11 seats and 2000 cc (approximately) with 2016 registration Toyota HIACE or equivalent is preferable; for providing transport services to the Faculty Members and Officials of North South University (NSU) as per the terms and conditions stipulated in the tender schedule.

Interested bidders may collect a schedule of tender from the Southeast Bank Ltd. Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on all working days till February 27, 2022, by paying a non-refundable amount of Taka 1,000.00 (one thousand) in cash for each schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the total monthly quoted price for rental service in the form of a Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favour of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **February 28, 2022**, by 2.00 P.M. at the office of the undersigned. The offers will be opened at 2:15 P.M on the same day. Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves all the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

Director (Administration)
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229
Phone: +88-02-55668200, Ext. 1232, 6807
Fax: +88-02-55668202
www.northsouth.edu

Girl's family

FROM PAGE 12

religion," she said. The student said the information that she married a Hindu man was absolutely not true.

Kulaura UNO ATM Farhad Chowdhury said they tried to contact the president and the secretary of the mosque committee several times, but in vain. Both sides have been called for a meeting on February 12.

"The matter will be settled after hearing the statements of both sides. I have also directed the OC and the union parishad chairman to ensure the security of Nurunnahar's family," he added.

Contacted, Shamsul Islam and Amin Mia denied the allegation of ostracising the family.

Shamsul Islam said the mosque committee members kept putting pressure on them about the movement of the girl.

"We wanted to know about the matter from her father a month ago, but he didn't contact us," he said.

On January 26, the committee met at the mosque and discussed the matter.

Amin Mia said, "We did not ostracise Abdul Hai's family. He did not attach importance to the management committee and that's why he will go on his own path and we will go on ours."

Chittagong Medical University
Faujdarhat, Chattogram

Invitation for Tender

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education.
02	Agency	Chittagong Medical University.
03	Procuring entity name	Dr. Bidduth Barua; Deputy Director (Planning & Development); Chittagong Medical University.
04	Procuring entity code	N/A.
05	Procuring entity district	Chattogram.
06	Invitation for	Works.
07	Invitation Ref No.	CMU/Reno/WR-02/OTM/2022/01
08	Date	02/02/2022
KEY INFORMATION		
09	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget and source of fund	Revenue Budget (GOB).
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
11	Project code	N/A.
12	Project name	Renovation works at Administration Building of Chittagong Medical University.
13	Tender Package No.	CMU-WR-02
14	Tender package name	Renovation works of VC's Office, Deans Office, Deputy Director (College Inspection) Office and others.
15	Tender publication date	02/02/2022.
16	Tender last selling date	16/02/2022 at 3:30pm.
17	Last date & time of submission of tender	17/02/2022 at 2.00pm.
18	Tender opening date & time	17/02/2022 at 2:30pm.
19	Name and address of the office selling and receiving tender document	Office of Deputy Director (Planning & Development), Level-02 and Procurement Officers Room, Level-03, BITID Building Salimpur, Faujdarhat, Chattogram.
20	Place of tender opening	Office of Deputy Director (Planning & Development), Chittagong Medical University.
21	Brief description of works	Renovation works of VC's Office, Deans Office, Deputy Director (College Inspection) Office and others.
INFORMATION OF TENDERER		
22	Eligibility of tenderer	1. The tenderer shall have a minimum number 03 years general experience in refurbishment activities (construction/renovation/interior/repair/extension) and physical services. 2. The tenderer shall have satisfactory completion of refurbishment activities (construction/renovation/interior/repair/extension) of minimum BDT 1300,000 (thirteen lac) only under minimum 01 contract in the last 05 years. 3. The required average annual construction turnover shall be greater than BDT 15,00,000 (fifteen lac) over the last 03 years. 4. The minimum amount of liquid asset i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of the tenderers shall be Taka 15,00,000 (fifteen lac). 5. Others criteria mentioned in the tender document.
23	Tender document price	BDT 1500/- (one thousand five hundred) only in cash (non-refundable).
24	Tender name	Location Tender security amount (Tk) Completion time in months
	Renovation and interior decoration works of VC's Office, Deans Office, Deputy Director (College Inspection) Office and others.	Chittagong Medical University, Faujdarhat, Chattogram BDT 35,000 (thirty-five thousand) (refundable) 2.0 months
25	Name of official inviting tender	Engr. Farhad Rashid.
26	Designation of official inviting tender	Executive Engineer.
27	Address of official inviting tender	Level: 03 Room 460, Chittagong Medical University, Faujdarhat, Chattogram.
28	Contact details of official inviting tender	Mobile: 01815-924581, Email: frashid943@gmail.com
29	Tender security is to be submitted in the form of Pay Order of any scheduled bank in favor of Chittagong Medical University, Faujdarhat, Chattogram.	
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept to reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.	

Engr. Farhad Rashid
Executive Engineer

GD-198

World Health Organization
Bangladesh

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

1. **RFP/BAN/2022/003:** Provision of Cleaning and Janitorial Services for WHO Bangladesh under Long Term Agreement.

Deadline for the submission of RFP: **14:00 hrs, 15 February 2022**

Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP documents from: <https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice>.

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Country Office for Bangladesh, House 1/A, Road-8, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

272 women, girls faced violence in Jan

Reveals BMP report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 272 women and girls faced violence in the first month of this year, said a report prepared by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

Of them, 70 females, including 39 girls were raped, according to the media monitoring report of BMP.

Six girls were gang-raped, one was killed after rape and two girls died by suicide after rape in this period.

Attempts have also been made to rape 10 females, including five girls, as per the report based on information taken from 13 national dailies.

Five females, including three girls, have faced sexual violence during the time, while two have been burnt with acid. 16 females, including 12 girls, have faced sexual harassment, the report mentioned.

On the other hand, 10 females, including six girls, were abducted in January this year and 18 have been tortured due to dowry, out of whom 12 including one girl was killed.

A total of 13 females, including four children, were physically abused in this period, while 44 women and girls were killed for various reasons.

Attempts have also been made to kill 18 women including six girls.

Six women and girls were victims of cybercrime, according to the report.

Forty-seven mysterious deaths of women and girls were reported, of whom, six were children. Four incidents of child marriage also took place.



Load-workers from all over Khulna city gather at Rupsha Ghat in search of work every day. One of their more regular jobs is unloading sand from cargo ships, walking delicately through narrow, makeshift bridges. Each basket of load gets them Tk 3.5, with the average worker unloading 120-150 baskets a day. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Right back at it

A day after eviction, hawkers occupy both sides of Savar Bazar bus stand again

AKLAKUR RAHMANA AKASH, Savar

Occupied footpaths have been a longstanding problem for commuters and pedestrians of Savar Bazar Bus Stand area.

Finally on Monday, Savar Highway Police evicted around 1,500 makeshift shops in a day-long drive.

In the evening, the hawkers came down to the Dhaka-Aricha Highway and blocked it for one-and-a-half hours, protesting the eviction that they say were done without prior notice.

By yesterday, the hawkers were back to occupying the footpaths. However, they said they only did this after getting assurance from local authorities.

Hawkers said during their protest they demanded rehabilitation. They said they would continue the blockade, but at one point police as well as local MP and State Minister for Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief Dr Md Enamur Rahman rushed in and assured them, which is when they left the highway.

Kabir Mollah, Savar upazila unit general secretary of Bangladesh Hawkers' League, said the police and state minister, in the face of their demands, told them to setup shop in a way so that there's no obstruction in the movement of transport and pedestrians.

"This is why we've gone back to the footpaths," he said.

But OC Atikur Rahman of Savar highway Police Station refuted Kabir's claim, saying, "Yes, we did assure them of rehabilitation, but did not ask them to set up shops in the area." He said they will conduct another drive if the shops were found at the footpaths.

The Daily Star could not reach Md Enamur Rahman for comments.

MONTHLY RENT?

Meanwhile, some hawkers said they have to pay Tk 7,000-9,000 to setup shop. The amount is paid to "leaders", although no names were provided. However, hawker leader Kabir Mollah denied this, saying his organisation doesn't do anything like that.



BARISHAL AIRPORT

Barely holding it together

Probe team finds damaged runway, dilapidated terminal

RASHIDUL HASAN

Landing aircrafts at Barishal Airport has become a risky endeavour. This is due to the dilapidated condition of its runway as well as other structures, a high-level investigation team of the civil aviation ministry found.

Led by Sukesh Kumar Sarker, additional secretary (Biman and CA) at the ministry, the team found that 75 metres off the northern end of the runway, Sugandha River was moving into the airport due to severe river erosion.



The ministry's team visited on January 3 to inspect the airport first hand.

In its report, the team mentioned the fragile state of the terminal building, unprotected runway, complexities centring the apron area and damaged asphalt surfaces as well.

In light of this, the ministry recently sent the report to Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh for taking necessary measures, sources said.

The report said Barishal Airport is located on the banks of Sugandha, a tributary of Arial Kha River. The border wall on the airport's north side is also at risk due to the severity of the river's erosion.

Regarding the airport's unprotected condition, the report said there are several openings between the boundary wall, through which people trespass.

During the visit, several people were seen wandering

around the airport, the report said. Such movement poses risks to landings and take-offs.

The team made several recommendations, including starting repair and maintenance work of the entire terminal building, repairing asphalt surfaces of the runway immediately, and constructing security walls.

It also recommended taking immediate measures to protect the airport from river erosion by coordinating with water resources ministry and Water Development Board.

In 1963-64, the plant protection department acquired 13.09 acres of land to spray pesticides by aircrafts and made a small airstrip at Barishal's Babuganj upazila. After this, commercial flight operation started there in 1995.

The three airlines of the country - Biman, US Bangla and Novoair - operate a total of eight flights on Dhaka-Barishal route daily.

ISSUES

- Fragile terminal building
- Unprotected runway due to trespassing
- Damaged asphalt surfaces
- Border wall at risk due to river erosion

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Repairing damaged structures
- Constructing security walls
- Measures to protect airport from river erosion

"If the ongoing trend of erosion continues, landings and take-offs will become quite risky," the team said in its report. "Amid this situation, if the runway is not repaired quickly, accidents may take place when landing aircrafts," Sukesh told The Daily Star.

CEC should apologise

Say 37 noted personalities on allegations against Shujan secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-seven eminent personalities yesterday called upon CEC KM Nurul Huda to make a public apology if he fails to prove allegation of irregularities against Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar within a week.

In a joint statement, they strongly criticised the CEC's remarks, saying, "Chief Election Commissioner Nurul Huda at a programme on January 27 made some baseless, indecent and hostile statements and brought allegations of Tk 1 crore irregularities against Badiul Alam Majumdar." Badiul has already termed CEC's statement fabricated and motivated, and challenged to prove the allegations.

In 2020-21, based on information and media reports, the Shujan secretary and 42 citizens sent two letters to the president, appealing to investigate allegations of misconduct and corruption against the Huda-led commission.

"We think the allegations against Badiul are part of an attempt to cover up these misdeeds," reads the statement. The signatories include Prof Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury, Justice MA Matin, former caretaker government advisers -- Sultana Kamal, Hafiz Uddin Khan and Rasheda K Choudhury, former diplomat Mohiuddin Ahmed and rights activist Hameeda Hossain.

Rajshahi Wasa triples water tariff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi Water Supply and Sewerage Authority has tripled water tariff from yesterday. Rajshahi Wasa announced it through notices on its website and newspapers last month.

Managing Director Md Zakir Hossain said the decision was taken to keep the production costs and supply to a bearable level, in line with the law.

The residential rate, which was Tk 2.27 per thousand litres till January 31, has been increased to Tk 6.81. At the same time, the commercial rate, which was Tk 4.54 per thousand litres before, was increased to Tk 13.62. Zamat Khan, general secretary of Rajshahi Rakkha Sangram Parishad, said, "The decision is against people's interest."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Kumarkhali, Kushtia
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.5071.000.14.123.21-103 Date: 01-02-2022

e-Tender Notice
e-Tender Notice No. 06/2021-22

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

Tender ID No.	Package & name of work	Procurement method	Last selling date & time	Last time for tender security submission	Closing date & time
645144	Construction of additional classroom Kumarkhali J.N Primary School under Kumarkhali, Kushtia	NOTM	Date: 16.02.2022 Time: 17.00pm	Date: 17.02.2022 Time: 11.30am	Date: 17.02.2022 Time: 12.00am

These are online tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd, also from email ue.kumarkhali@lged.gov.bd or call to 07025-76614 & Mob. 01708161496. Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Abdur Rahim
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Kumarkhali, Kushtia
E-mail: ue.kumarkhali@lged.gov.bd

GD-197

Sonali Bank Limited
Information Technology Division
(IT Procurement & Maintenance)
Head Office, Dhaka

Memo No. HO/ITD (IT P&M)/purchase Date: 31/01/2022
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 tender	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	653178	Procurement of Automated Teller Machine (ATM) for Sonali Bank Limited.	27/02/2022 15.00	27/02/2022 15.30

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 respective time schedule. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Mohammad Iqbal Kabir
Deputy General Manager

GD-196

Actors busy with work have no time for ELECTIONS

SHAKIB KHAN

Tell me this— have you ever seen Bollywood artistes like Shah Rukh, Salman and Amir participate in film elections like these?

ZAHID AKBAR

Dhallywood's number 1 star, Shakib Khan has been residing in the USA for a while now, as news recently broke out that he will be the ambassador of one of the biggest Bengali festivals around the world, the North American Bengali Conference.

Shakib talks to The Daily Star over the phone about his current work, the industry's recent controversies, and more. **How do you feel about being a part of the North American Bengali Conference?**

I am honestly very excited for this festival, as I have heard about it for a long time. I was invited by Indian producer Srikanth Mehta in 2017, but could not go due to other commitments. Being among people from two Bengals in Las Vegas is honestly very enticing, especially as the festival's ambassador.

This is one of the biggest Bengali festivals in America, having been inaugurated 52 years ago by the Cultural Association of Bengal. I am especially stoked because I can interact with my fans in the festival.

You were supposed to shoot for a film in the USA. What is the latest update on that?

It's not like I can start shooting at will – there are technicalities to that. Meetings are currently being held regarding this, and I can provide an update at the end of February. Rest assured that you will get some projects that you can be proud of.

What is your opinion on the Film Artistes' Association's elections?

Tell me this— have you ever seen

Bollywood artistes like Shah Rukh, Salman and Amir participate in film elections like these? Is Amitabh Bachchan fighting over a post in a film association? I don't think so. We should stop glorifying these activities and focus on making more cinema. Actors busy with work have no time for such 'elections'.



PHOTOS: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

Aranyak Natyadal celebrates 50th anniversary

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Theatre troupe Aranyak Natyadal will celebrate its 50th anniversary yesterday. Noted thespian Mamunur Rashid, along with other noted theatre artistes, founded the troupe right after Bangladesh's liberation.

"We formed this theatre troupe amidst numerous crisis and problems. After the independence of Bangladesh, I just had one dream, which is to found a troupe of our own. With the presence of Aly Zaker, Shubhash Dutta, Dr Enamul Haque and Nazmul Hossain, we were able to create our own theatre troupe," said the noted playwright.

The name of Aranyak Natyadal was given by noted playwright and filmmaker Abdullah al Mamun. Besides staging shows in the country, Aranyak Natyadal has staged many plays overseas as well. Their first show, "Kobor", written by martyr Munir Chowdhury, was featured on February 20 in the year of their establishment.



Kangana to host 'Bigg Boss' based reality show

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut is all set to make her hosting debut with Ekta Kapoor's upcoming reality show.

The format of the show is very similar to Bigg Boss. Here, the participants will be 'locked up' inside a particular space for 8-10 weeks.

The entire space will be bugged with cameras, and contestants will have to take part in tasks and dares given by the show.

The reality show is slated to release on Alt Balaji & MX Player soon.



COUNTRYWIDE



PHOTO: STAR

BAGERHAT SADAR HOSPITAL

Health service limps due to manpower shortage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Medical service for nearly 18 lakh people in Bagerhat is limping amid severe manpower crisis.

The 100-bed government hospital has been running with less than half of its required manpower for long.

As a result, thousands of patients of different upazilas of the district and nearby areas are being deprived of desired health service.

On the other hand, the hospital authorities are also struggling to provide treatment to a large number of service seekers.

Hospital sources said apart from 18 lakh inhabitants of the district, fishermen, bawalis (honey collectors) and forest dwellers from the Sundarbans come to this hospital for treatment.

According to Bagerhat Civil Surgeon's Office, the hospital started its journey in 1970 with 50 beds in Muniganj area of the town.

Although the hospital was later upgraded to 100-bed in 1997, it has been running with the same number of manpower for the last 27 years.

Currently, two doctors are working against 12 posts at the hospital, while seven out of 12 posts of consultants are lying vacant for long.

Adnan Hossain, resident medical officer at the hospital, said people are being deprived of healthcare as there is a crisis of doctors.

Service seekers said due to shortage of doctors at the hospital many patients are compelled to go to different others district for treatment.

Besides, posts of a nursing supervisor, a health educator, 20 medical technologists, two cardiographers, four assistant nurses and an office assistant also lying vacant.

Bagerhat Civil Surgeon Jalal Uddin Ahmed said he has informed the authorities concerned about the crisis of doctors at Bagerhat Sadar Hospital and hope the matter will be solved soon.

Canal grabbed for fish farming

21 acres of a canal in Barguna's Amtali grabbed by local influentials; irrigation badly hampered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A section of influential locals has grabbed a canal in Barguna's Amtali upazila and has been using it as a fish enclosure, obstructing the natural water flow.

Gamrbania canal is situated in Tarikata village of Arpangashia union in the upazila.

Villagers aren't allowed to bath, use the water for irrigation and household purposes, locals said.

Local sources said that Gamrbania canal covers 28 acres of land from Tarikata bazar to Gamrbania flood control dyke.

Shahidul Islam of Tarikata village along with Hafizur Rahman, Chunnun Talukder and Md Hai Talukdar took a lease of seven acres of land of the canal for three years in 2019 to cultivate fish on the canal.

However, local influential Mezbah Uddin Faisal Talukder and Arifur Rahman Talukder of Tarikata village are cultivating fish by occupying the remaining 21 acres of the canal without taking lease.

They have built enclosures at seven places on the canal for fish farming. The grabbers are not allowing about 5,000 people from Tarikata, Islampur and Gamrbania villages to use the canal waters for bathing or irrigation purposes.

Around 5,000 farmers of the villages depend on the canal water for the production of various crops including Boro and Aman paddy. But the grabbers do not allow the farmers to use the water of this canal for irrigation.

Sultan Ghazi, a farmer of Tarikata village, said local influential persons including Shahidul Islam Gazi, Hafizur Rahman Chunnun Talukder, Md Hai Talukder, Mezbah Uddin Faisal Talukder and Arif Talukdar are cultivating fish in Gamrbania canal. No one can go to the canal for fearing them. Nobody can use the water for irrigation as well.

If anyone protests, they harass them with various lawsuits,

said Sultan.

Contacted, Shahidul Islam Gazi said they took a lease of seven acres of the canal for three years in 2019. Their tenure of the contract will expire this year.

However, he denied the allegations that the villagers were being barred from using the canal water.

Mezbah Uddin Faisal Talukder, an occupier, said no one was being barred from using the canal water.

Replying to a query that how they are cultivating fish without taking a lease he said they have applied for a lease.

Jasim Uddin, a local union parishad (UP) member, said local influential people have been cultivating fish in Gamrbania canal obstructing the natural flow of water.

He demanded that fish cultivation be immediately

stopped and the canal be freed for the villagers.

Soheli Parveen, the chairman of Arpangashia UP, demanded that the local administration take necessary steps to open the canal.

Amtali Upazila Fisheries Officer Halima Sardar said seven acres of the canal have been leased out for three years. The remaining 21 acres have not been leased yet.

Meanwhile, Amtali upazila administration formed a probe body headed by CM Rezaul Karim, upazila agriculture officer, on January 27.

The probe body has been asked to submit its report within seven working days.

Rezaul Karim said, "I am trying my best to submit a report in time after proper investigation."



A group of local influential people have grabbed Gamrbania canal in Barguna's Amtali upazila depriving villagers of irrigation facility.

PHOTO: STAR



People pray to mark the start of the Lunar New Year of the Tiger at a temple in Surabaya, Indonesia, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

DRUG TRAFFICKING Production surges in Myanmar

REUTERS

Increased instability in Myanmar since a military coup a year ago has seen a surge in narcotics production there and trafficking into Southeast Asia and beyond, Jeremy Douglas, UNODC's regional representative in Southeast Asia told Reuters.

Authorities in Laos, Thailand and Myanmar seized at least 90 million methamphetamine tablets and 4.4 tonnes of crystal methamphetamine last month, most of it manufactured in the remote border areas of Myanmar's Shan State.

Israel enforcing 'apartheid'

Amnesty says treatment of Palestinians amounts to 'crime against humanity', urges arms embargo

REUTERS

Amnesty International yesterday accused Israel of subjecting Palestinians to a system of apartheid founded on policies of "segregation, dispossession and exclusion" that it said amounted to crimes against humanity.

The London-based rights group said its findings were based on research and legal analysis in a 211-page report into Israeli seizure of Palestinian land and property, unlawful killings, forcible transfer of people and denial of citizenship.

Israel said the report, the second by an international rights group in less than a year to accuse it of pursuing a policy of apartheid, "consolidates and recycles lies" from hate groups and was designed to "pour fuel onto the fire of antisemitism". It accused Amnesty UK of using "double standards and demonization in order to delegitimize Israel".

Amnesty said Israel was enforcing a system of

oppression and domination against Palestinians "wherever it has control over their rights", including Arab citizens of Israel, Palestinians in Israeli-occupied territory and refugees living abroad.

The measures included restrictions on Palestinian movement in territory occupied in the 1967 Middle East war, underinvestment in Palestinian communities in Israel, and preventing the return of Palestinian refugees. Alongside forcible transfers, torture and unlawful killings, which Amnesty said were intended to maintain a system of "oppression and domination", they constitute "the crime against humanity of apartheid".

Amnesty said the UN Security Council should impose an arms embargo on Israel for killing scores of civilians during weekly protests on the border with Gaza in 2018-19. Amnesty also called on the International Criminal Court to consider the accusation of apartheid in its investigation into possible war crimes committed by both sides during several bouts of conflict in the Palestinian territories.

I get it and I will fix it.

British PM Boris Johnson remains defiant after critical report on Covid lockdown-breaching parties at Downing Street

WHO warns of Covid medical waste threat

REUTERS, Geneva

Discarded syringes, used test kits and old vaccine bottles from the Covid-19 pandemic have piled up to create tens of thousands of tonnes of medical waste, threatening human health and the environment, a World Health Organization report said yesterday. It estimates that some 87,000 tonnes of personal protective equipment (PPE) has been ordered via a UN portal up until Nov 2021 - most of which is thought to have ended up as waste. The report also mentions some 140 million test kits with a potential to generate 2,600 tonnes of plastic trash and chemical waste. In addition, it estimates that some 8 billion vaccine doses administered globally have produced an additional 144,000 tonnes of waste.

9,200 tree species still undiscovered

AFP, Washington

Researchers estimate there are significantly more species of trees on Earth than currently known, with more than 9,200 species yet to be discovered, according to a study published Monday. About 64,100 tree species have already been identified. According to the study the total number of tree species is about 73,300 - 14 percent more. Overall, the study said that "roughly" 43 percent of all tree species are found in South America, followed by Eurasia (22 percent), Africa (16 percent), North America (15 percent) and Oceania (11 percent).

NZ allows stranded journo to return home

AFP, Wellington

A pregnant New Zealand journalist who claimed to have nowhere to go but Afghanistan will be allowed to return home, after officials granted her an exemption from strict Covid-19 entry restrictions amid public outcry. Reporter Charlotte Bellis was working for Al Jazeera in Kabul when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban. She did not realise she was pregnant until she was at the media company's headquarters in Doha, Qatar, where it is illegal to be pregnant and unmarried. After her request was turned down by New Zealand, she called senior Taliban contacts and was told she could give birth there.

Chattogram City Corporation
Nagar Bhaban
Tiger Pass, Chattogram
www.ccc.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.11.1600.002.36.06.348.22 Dated: 01/02/2022

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) Selecting Consultancy Firm

1	Ministry	Local Government and Rural Development.
2	Agency	Chattogram City Corporation.
3	Project name	Development of Bus/Truck Terminal.
4	Procuring entity	Chief Engineer, Chattogram City Corporation.
5	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Consulting Firm for Design & Supervision of Development of Bus/Truck Terminal.
6	Works name	Selecting Consulting Firm Construction of Bus/Truck Terminal.
7	Procurement method	Competent experienced firm will be selected on the basis of its overall experience, technical and organization capacity and consideration of the financial proposal, QCBS (Quality and Cost Based Selection) method will be followed for Selection of the Consulting Firm (OSTEM).
8	Budget & source of funds	CCC (own fund maximum 6.00 million).
9	EOI Invitation Reference No.	Reference Number-29/ED-6/2021-2022
10	EOI publication date	Date: 02/02/2022
11	EOI closing date & time	Date: 02/03/2022, Time: Up to 14.00.
12	Name & address of office	Chattogram City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban, Tigerpass, Chattogram.
13	Receiving of EOI documents	Executive Engineer-6, Engineering Department, Nagar Bhaban, Tigerpass, Chattogram.
14	Eligibility of firm	To prepare a short list of the Expression of Interest (EOI) shall be evaluated on the basis of the following: a) The intending consulting firm shall have adequate knowledge to perform Road design and such a job Engineer (Geo- Tech) and Architect and other technical staff personnel on their pay roll, they will have to provide necessary information having qualification to do the services brochures, description of seminar, assignments, experience in seminar nature of work, availability of appropriate, professional, qualification and experience among staff etc. b) Consulting firms have at last 5 (five) years business experience in: • Successful completion of the similar nature of works government/autonomous organization etc. • Documentary evidences such as up-to-date trade license, VAT, up-to-date income tax certificate, bank solvency certificate & experience certificate(s) with work order be submitted. c) Collaboration/shared services with other firms of similar nature allowed. • The firms registration certificate. • Company profile including management personnel, firms specialist performance. • The latest annual report. • The average annual turnover in the last 03 (years). • History of litigation in courts or any arbitration proceedings (if any). • Audited Financial Attachment for the last 03 years.
15	Brief description of service	Consultancy services for preparation of digital survey, soil test, road design & traffic count survey, Architectural & structural, Electrical & plumbing Drawing fire protection and sanitation system limited interior design and landscaping BOQ, Assisting full time supervision.
16	Brief description of the assignment	The Consultant's responsibilities shall include: a) Sub-soil investigation & preparation of report to be submitted. b) Design of Bus Truck Terminal. c) Preparation of preliminary & final architectural drawings for the project including plan 3D perspective Views, Model of Buildings elevation and all architectural details with necessary report. d) Preparation of Preliminary and final architectural and structural drawing for the project including plans, 3D, perspective Views and model of buildings, Elevation and all architectural details as per design criterion outlined. e) Preparation of details working drawing structural, electrical & Mechanical, Design & Drawings. f) Preparation of detailed sanitary & plumbing designed drawings. g) Preparation of BOQ Estimate specification and tender document & assisting full time supervision related to construction and design. h) Assist to obtain all necessary Sanctions, Permissions and approval from government local authorities. All government fees will be borne by the owner. i) Preparation of component wise detailed estimates and tender document etc. j) Full time supervision during construction works. k) Intensity test recruitments of structure construction as per BNBC guideline and ensure sample collection by respective contractors and ensure post submission report analysis. l) Any other allied works. m) Mode of payment will be determined during final signing of agreement.
17	Designation of official invitation EOI	Executive Engineer-6, Engineering Department, CCC.
18	Contact details of the official inviting EOI	Phone No. 0155629450

Mohammad Shahin-ul Islam Chowdhury
Executive Engineer-6
Chattogram City Corporation

CCC/PRD-90/21-22
GD-199



Won't back down Says Russia amid sanctions threats; Ukraine announces plan to boost military

AGENCIES

Russia's embassy in Washington yesterday said that Moscow will not back down in the face of US sanctions threats over Ukraine, ahead of a phone call between the top US and Russian diplomats.

"We are not going to back away and stand at attention, listening to the threats of US sanctions," the embassy said on Facebook, adding that it is "Washington, not Moscow, that generates tensions."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was due to speak to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken later yesterday for the first time since Washington formally replied to Russia's security proposals last week. The West formally rejected Russian demands to bar Ukraine from ever joining Nato and pull out Nato forces from eastern Europe, while expressing willingness to talk about arms control and confidence-building measures.

Tensions between the two countries have skyrocketed in recent weeks as the US accuses Moscow of planning an imminent invasion of Ukraine.

The White House said Monday that it is ready to impose sanctions on President Vladimir Putin's "inner circle" if an attack on Ukraine goes ahead.

Meanwhile Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a decree on Tuesday to boost his armed forces by 100,000 troops over three years and raise soldiers' pay, but said this did not mean war with Russia was imminent.

Zelenskyy urged lawmakers to stay calm and avoid panic as he prepared to host the leaders of the Netherlands, Britain and Poland - all Nato members - as part of efforts to defuse tension with Russia and shore up international support for Kyiv. There are currently nearly 250,000 people in Ukraine's armed forces, compared to Russia's overall strength of around 900,000.

বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন
নগর ভবন, বরিশাল
(প্রশাসনিক শাখা)
www.barishalcity.gov.bd

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখঃ ৩০/০১/২০২২খ্রিঃ

মারক নং-বিসিসি/প্রজ্ঞা/নিয়োগ-১২/১৯-৪২

বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আওতাধীন নিম্নবর্ণিত পদে ০৩ (তিন) বছর মেয়াদী সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিম্নে হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রঃ নং	পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা (টি)	০২/০৩/২০২২ তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স	প্রয়োজনীয় শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা	চুক্তিমূল্য
(১)	(২)	(৩)	(৪)	(৫)	(৬)
০১.	নিরাপত্তা পরিদর্শক	০১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে উচ্চমাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণ; (খ) সূত্রাৎ মেহের অধিকার ও ৫'-৬" উচ্চতা; এবং (গ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে পাঁচ বছরের বাস্তব কর্ম অভিজ্ঞতা; তবে শর্ত থাকে যে, সামরিক বাহিনী, বর্ডার গার্ড অব বাংলাদেশ, পুলিশ বাহিনী ও আনসার বাহিনীর অবসরপ্রাপ্ত প্রার্থীগণকে অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হইবে।	আলোচনা সাপেক্ষে
০২.	মেকানিক	০২ (দুই)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণ; এবং (খ) কোন স্বীকৃত ইনস্টিটিউট বা প্রতিষ্ঠান হইতে মেকানিক ট্রেড কোর্স পাস। (গ) অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিলযোগ্য হবে।	
০৩.	ওয়েল্ডিং অপারেটর	০১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণ; এবং (খ) কোন স্বীকৃত ইনস্টিটিউট বা প্রতিষ্ঠান হইতে ওয়েল্ডিং ট্রেড কোর্স পাস। (গ) ইলেকট্রিক আর্ক ওয়েল্ডিং ও গ্যাস ওয়েল্ডিং সম্পর্কে অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। (ঘ) অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিলযোগ্য হবে।	

আবেদনপত্রের সাথে আবশ্যিকীয় দাবিলযোগ্য কাগজপত্রঃ

- প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত মূল চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র। এছাড়া, সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদ, অভিজ্ঞতার সনদ (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে), জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি এবং সম্প্রতি তোলা ০৩ (তিন) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রবিন ছবি ও প্রয়োজ্য অন্যান্য কাগজপত্র প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত হতে হবে।
- স্থানীয় ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত নাগরিক সনদপত্র।
- আবেদনকৃত পদের নামসহ, আবেদনকারীর নাম (স্পষ্টাক্ষরে), পিতার নাম, মাতার নাম, বর্তমান ঠিকানা, স্থায়ী ঠিকানা, জন্ম তারিখ (০২/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখে বয়স), নাগরিকত্ব/জাতীয়তা, নিজ জেলা, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা (বোর্ড/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, বিভাগ, সন, ইত্যাদি উল্লেখসহ), অভিজ্ঞতা (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) ইত্যাদি উল্লেখপূর্বক জীবন বৃত্তান্তসহ ডাকটিকেট সংযুক্ত ফেরত খামে আবেদনকারীর পূর্ণ ঠিকানাসহ আবেদনপত্র আগামী ০২/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে মাননীয় মেয়র, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, নগর ভবন, বরিশাল, বরাবর পৌছাতে হবে।
- আবেদনপত্রের সময় মূল সনদপত্র প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।
- টাকা মূল্যমানের অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট সংযুক্তপূর্বক উহার নম্বর আবেদনপত্রে উল্লেখ করতে হবে (পোস্টাল অর্ডার গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়)।
- চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীদের স্ব-স্ব নিয়োগ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদনপত্র প্রেরণ করতে হবে।
- অসম্পূর্ণ, ভ্রটিপূর্ণ এবং ভুল তথ্য সংবলিত বা বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র সরাসরি বাতিলযোগ্য বলে গণ্য হবে।
- প্রার্থীদের লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে এবং তার জন্য কোন টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না। মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় মূল সনদপত্র প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।
- বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লেখিত পদের সংখ্যা হ্রাস/বৃদ্ধি, বাতিল/প্রত্যাহার এর সকল ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারি করা হলো।

প্রধান নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা
বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন
বরিশাল

জিডি-১৯৪

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

A landmark verdict on 'shootout'

But the fight for justice is far from over

In a landmark verdict on January 31, 2022, a Cox's Bazar court handed down death sentence to suspended police officers Pradeep Kumar Das and Liaqat Ali in connection with the "pure and simple murder" of Sinha Rashed Khan. After over a year of speculation over the fate of the case, the verdict not just confirms what happened to the ill-fated retired major, but also marks the first time that law enforcement officers in the country have been brought to book for staging a "shootout." The court also sentenced six others, including three cops, to life while acquitting seven other police personnel. This is truly a momentous occasion for the victim's family as well as the defenders of human rights.

While we await the release of the full verdict, our reading of the judgment leaves no room for doubt about the July 31, 2020 incident: that it was not a shootout, as the police had claimed, but a premeditated murder planned in cold blood. We get a rare minute-by-minute glimpse into—and indeed a judicial acknowledgment of—how a shootout/crossfire story is cooked up. We have heard several variations of this story in the past. But what all of them have in common is how the law enforcers encounter a "threat" from a "criminal" or his associates, and how they are "forced" to respond (read: fatally shoot) in self defence. Now that the court has laid bare the truth behind the Sinha shootout drama, is it possible that some of the many such incidents reported over the past years were staged too? Should those accused law enforcers be put on trial to check if there were vested interests at play?

Unfortunately, when it comes to a shootout or crossfire incident, a case is hardly ever filed by the victim's family. Police don't want to record such cases. Even when they do, they hastily file the final report with the court, saying they had found nothing. Meanwhile, bodies of the victims keep piling up. In 2020, the year Sinha died, 195 people were killed in "shootouts" across the country, according to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

Interestingly, during Pradeep Kumar Das' two-year tenure as OC of Teknaf police station, over 80 people were killed in 48 "gunfights" (another code for extrajudicial killing) involving Teknaf police alone. After Pradeep's conviction, it is only logical that those incidents are investigated to check if there was also any foul play. We urge the appropriate authorities to take steps in this regard.

The Sinha verdict has opened the gate to a world that was shrouded in official secrecy until now. There is no turning back now. It is more urgent than ever to unearth the underlying truths, and we urge the government—particularly the home ministry—to launch internal investigations into all such cases of extrajudicial killings committed either by police or other security forces. The judiciary may also follow suit with its own investigations. The victims' families should also be empowered and assisted to pursue justice.

What's the purpose of a 'rights cell'?

Govt must improve its actions regarding human rights first

WHILE we welcome the government's stated willingness to improve the state of human rights in Bangladesh, we are not sure whether setting up a "human rights cell" under the supervision of the foreign ministry director general (UN) would be the best initiative to this end. As per Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, the purpose of this cell would be to better analyse the country's human rights situation and "rightly" present it before the international community, "especially those who work on human rights in Geneva and New York." So, is it for PR purposes, or is it to help improve our human rights situation?

We cannot miss the link between this sudden initiative and the US-imposed sanctions on some high-ranking officials of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in December last year. For years, the media, civil society and rights bodies have cried out about the country's human rights violations, but nothing happened. Are we to believe that the government is now prioritising it of its own volition?

The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has been requesting the Bangladesh government since 2013 to invite it for a visit for an impartial investigation into such cases, but to no avail, as per the group's 2021 report. And while it has transmitted cases of enforced disappearance to the government since 1996—and is currently waiting for information about 76 such cases—the working group has only ever received clarification regarding one case in the last 25 years. Violations of human rights in the forms of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings are not uncommon in Bangladesh, and certainly must be investigated thoroughly in order to be eradicated completely.

To reduce the number of extrajudicial killings at the hands of security agencies, there must be a system of internal accountability preventing the members of police, Rab, CID, etc from committing such deeds. If the January 31 verdict on the Sinha murder case is anything to go by, the government must also investigate how many of the tens, or even hundreds, of annual "crossfire" incidents truly result from law enforcers being "provoked to retaliate." Most importantly, our own Human Rights Commission must be strengthened before we attempt to present a positive picture of our human rights scenario to the international community. We hope the government will commit itself in earnest to ending all human rights violations.

Using stranded gas could cure the price hike syndrome



Dr Badrul Imam is a former professor of the Department of Geology at Dhaka University.

BADRUL IMAM

A declining trend of gas production from the local gas fields against an increasing gas demand has led Bangladesh to partially depend on importing high-priced liquefied natural gas (LNG). At present, more than 20 percent of the total gas supply in the country is met through imported LNG. An increase in LNG import means that the economic burden gets bigger and the government seeks to mitigate that by raising gas prices. This is what has happened now. However, the scale of gas price hike proposed this time has been widely criticised by various quarters, who termed it abnormally high and outrageous for an economically overstretched public already suffering the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The gas distribution companies have proposed to raise gas prices by 117 percent on an average, meaning that a household using a single burner stove will pay Tk 2,000 per month instead of the present rate of Tk 925, while converted natural gas (CNG) will cost Tk 76 per unit in place of Tk 35, the industries will pay Tk 23 per unit instead of Tk 10, and so on. The Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) rejected the proposal outright for what they termed an unethical demand, and also on the ground that the gas distribution companies have no room to ask for a gas price hike; it is the parent company, Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla), that may ask for a tariff increase. Whatever the mechanism may be, one thing is certain: Bangladesh is facing an economic challenge to come to terms with the LNG import bill.

There are two points of interest on the issue of gas price hike. The first one concerns the proposal of doubling the gas prices in a single stroke. Bangladesh procures LNG through two purchasing modes. One is through long-term contracts with two countries, Qatar and Oman, at a rather fixed price of USD 11 per unit, under which about 17 percent of the country's total gas supply is provided. The second one is the spot market purchase, where LNG price is unstable and volatile, under which only five percent of the total gas supply is provided. The LNG price in the spot market dipped to USD 5 per unit in the early months of 2021, but shot up to as high as USD 40 per unit in December the same year. Bangladesh, at one stage, purchased LNG from the spot

market at a rate of USD 35 late last year and temporarily stopped buying because of the very high price. The suggestion that gas prices be doubled on the grounds that the spot market registers sky-high prices is not justified because of the fact that we buy only five percent of the total gas supply from the spot market. Bangladesh is likely to procure most of its LNG from

supplying gas to local industries. In the early 2000s, Niko Resources, a foreign company, was engaged to drill another well in the field, but the well exploded due to an accident caused by Niko's negligence in 2005. Bangladesh and Niko went to the international court for compensation settlement. Strangely enough, 17 years have passed without the case being fully



▲ Before getting heavily dependent on importing LNG, we must look into the options of utilising the gas that's left stranded in several gas fields across Bangladesh.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

long-term contracts where the price is stable.

The second point of interest is the high dependence on LNG import, which will make the economy vulnerable to negative pressure. The LNG import already costs Bangladesh dearly, and the cost will rise even more as the import volume increases over the years. A decreasing volume of local gas means a higher share of LNG in the supply chain. That will eventually lead to gas price hike. But is it inevitable for a country which is rated highly prospective for natural gas? If not, then why do we have this problem and what is its solution?

A point is often made that to make a new local gas source available, exploration and time are needed. And time is not on our side. The question is, why was there so little exploration over the last 20 years? Why did the large offshore discoveries in Myanmar and India do so little to nudge Bangladesh to explore its own offshore gas sources?

Nevertheless, Bangladesh has significant gas reserves stranded underground for reasons other than technical. The Chhatak gas field in Sunamganj with significant reserves went onstream in 1960, with a single well

settled, leaving the remaining gas in Chhatak field stranded underground. Another gas reserve in Feni, which was also given to Niko Resources, remains stranded as well.

In 2018, Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex) discovered a significant gas reserve north of Bhola. This gas cannot be extracted and supplied to the national grid because of the lack of a pipeline! A pipeline of a relatively short distance to cross a channel cannot be built on an emergency basis, while thousands of crores of taka is being spent to pay for LNG imports! For the same reason, gas cannot be extracted from Shahbazpur gas field, also in Bhola, in full capacity. There are other cases of stranded gas, which can be lifted with little effort—the wells in Zakiganj and Salda, for example.

Fast actions to add the gas from these fields to the national grid as soon as possible would reduce the dependency on LNG import to a large extent. It needs emergency outlook, nationalistic feeling and courage to overcome the slow bureaucratic processes with fast actions. The present administration apparently lacks these qualities.

PROJECT ■ SYNDICATE

Will Russia's Anti-NATO Gambit Succeed?

Hilary Appel is a professor and director of the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies at Claremont McKenna College. Jennifer Taw, a former policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, is associate professor at Claremont McKenna.

HILARY APPEL and JENNIFER TAW

RECENT talks in Geneva between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken regarding the crisis over Ukraine achieved little. Russia asked for a written response to its demands, which include a halt to NATO enlargement. For now, Russian President Vladimir Putin might be as relieved at the current standstill as the US and its NATO allies are.

That is because Putin is playing a dangerous game of brinkmanship vis-a-vis Ukraine. True, he has succeeded in calling into question the strength of NATO's commitment to the country, highlighted its internal divisions, and forced the world to pay greater attention to Russian power. And he may yet manage to wring concessions from the US and NATO. But Putin also risks putting himself in the position of having to launch a materially and politically costly invasion of Ukraine.

Stopping NATO expansion has been one of the Kremlin's main foreign policy objectives for a decade, but Putin's approach has yielded few results. Russia's aggression against Ukraine since 2014 has succeeded only in making NATO membership more appealing in Ukraine and Georgia. Moreover, Russia's actions failed to prevent smaller candidate countries from acceding to the Alliance, with Montenegro and North Macedonia joining in 2017 and 2020, respectively. Worse yet, Putin's bellicose foreign policy

led to NATO membership being seriously considered by mainstream politicians in neutral countries like Sweden and Finland.

The escalation of tensions over Ukraine also carries enormous domestic risks for Putin. The Kremlin's 2014 annexation of Crimea and intervention in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region required little sacrifice and massively increased Putin's political support at home. Invading eastern Ukraine now is unlikely to yield a similar political dividend, as opinion polls in Russia have long shown low public support for such a move; just a quarter of Russians currently support the incorporation of Donbas into Russia.

Given the risks, what could Putin hope to gain by seemingly backing himself into a corner?

Despite his repeated claims that NATO poses a threat to Russia, Putin may regard the current standoff as a way to demonstrate to Ukraine and other Eastern European states that the NATO and US commitments to them are actually quite weak. US President Joe Biden arguably reinforced this impression at his press conference on January 19, 2022, when he appeared to suggest that a "minor incursion" by Russia into Ukraine would elicit a milder Western response. (Biden and other administration officials subsequently scrambled to walk back the comment.)

Russia benefits from such gaffes, because the Kremlin obviously wants to sow discord and highlight fissures among NATO members. While the US and several Eastern European countries have supported Ukraine's accession, the Alliance has long been divided over the issue, owing to its members' differing economic, security, and energy relations with Russia.

In the days leading up to the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, Ukraine

presented Germany and France with a letter requesting their support for its entry into NATO. But France's then prime minister, Francois Fillon, emphasised his country's opposition to Ukraine (and Georgia) joining the alliance. "We think it is not the right response to the balance of power in Europe and between Europe and Russia, and we want to have a dialogue on this subject with Russia," Fillon said. The then German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier expressed a similar view.

But publicly, at least, the US and NATO officials have reaffirmed the Alliance's continuing unity. While Biden suggested at his news conference that America's European allies were not united on how to respond to a small Russian incursion into Ukraine, there have been no bilateral negotiations between other Western powers and Russia regarding Ukraine.

On the surface, Putin seems to have unnecessarily boxed himself in by making unacceptable demands on an issue—Ukraine's NATO accession—that was unlikely to materialise anyway. But Putin has, in fact, made real gains by exposing the West's disarray and the weakness of its commitment to Ukraine.

If the US and European negotiators make even symbolic concessions, Putin can use them to burnish his image. Even if he de-escalates tensions without the written guarantees he wanted, the stationing of Russian troops in Belarus, and the recent deployment of a Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization "peacekeeping" mission in Kazakhstan, demonstrate Russia's continued leadership role among former Soviet states.

But Putin's brinkmanship over Ukraine remains dangerous. One can only hope that when the US and Russian officials return to the negotiating table, they will find a way to prevent a manufactured crisis from turning into a hot war.

While the US and several Eastern European countries have supported Ukraine's accession, the Alliance has long been divided over the issue, owing to its members' differing economic, security, and energy relations with Russia.

Women don't want to be superhumans



AFIA JAHIN

Afia Jahin is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star.

OFTEN as children, my female peers and I would lament over the myriad privileges our male counterparts enjoyed in society, from being allowed to play for hours in the sun (a tan would not diminish their value as human beings) to going out any hour of the day (with their prime fear being that they might be mugged, not that they might be raped and killed). The "best" way our parents and elders discovered of appeasing our (those born after 1980, thereabouts) budding feminist selves was to reprimand us for even *wanting* to be like boys, when we were allegedly so far ahead and above them. It did work on many of us, but sadly I believe a lot of us were unable to see past the rosiness of such a sentiment.

This brand of feminism but not really feminism tends to hyper-humanise women—meaning that, far from being "equal" to men, we are told we are so much stronger, smarter, and more valuable than them. Why? Usually for our ability to birth life within our bodies, and then to work tirelessly and without a whisper of complaint to raise that life while having to put ours on hold, because the father caring for the child in the same way would be emasculating in our cultural context, but the same done by mothers proves them to be superhumanly strong.

While the words used to describe such traditionally maternal characteristics may seem like compliments of the highest degree—"sacrificing," "selfless," "unconditionally loving"—they are often just a way of making women continue to

perform physical and emotional labour, so others (and not always men only) don't have to. And when a girl child grows up seeing her mother's woes being remedied by empty praises alone, she learns to expect and accept the same wherever she goes. This is why corporations, for instance, can get away with discriminating against women in terms of wages, positions, participation, etc (while a single Women's Day bouquet and a few candy bars work to establish them as being a "feminist" organisation).

But how can we expect our local businesses to be genuinely feminist, when we always succumb to the same issue of hyper-humanising women in our homes? One social media post I recently came across was by a father who essayed on about how his daughter gave up her packet of chips because her little brother was not satisfied with only his own, and how she silently cried in a corner, not letting her father see her sorrow and not boasting about her sacrifice. I was expecting to read that the father had, by the end, taught his children that his daughter should not have to make sacrifices to cater to her brother's needs, and that she did not need to appear strong by hiding her tears. Instead, it was all praise about how daughters are even better than men *because* of their sacrificial nature.

Do we ever stop to wonder if this sacrificial nature of women is truly inherent, or a trait that they are trained to adopt? Probably not, given how that would mean we would need to acknowledge that women, like everyone else, are just human. They get tired, frustrated, and are not always beautiful and "presentable." Nor should they have to be.

Then there is this notion that has become default: "Men just aren't as good at doing stuff around the house." While there is no logical explanation behind *why* men would not be able to perform household tasks "as well as women do," this



▲ STOCK ILLUSTRATION

is something that most men and women in our society have internalised and practise extensively. This further hyper-humanises women in the sense that now, in the modern world, women are expected to not only have full-time jobs, but also maintain the household and rear children, all at once. For that, she gets a cursory bouquet and a dessert or two in the name of Women's Day or celebratory Facebook posts about the all-sacrificial mother on Mother's Day.

We need to realise that we are doing the opposite of helping the cause of feminism when we term women as superhumans

and only reward them when they adhere to that narrative. We must teach young boys that home is as much theirs to care for as it is of their female counterparts'. We need to break away from the traditional definition of femininity, so that young girls, at home and everywhere else, don't grow up thinking they are somehow less of a woman if they don't cater to every need of everyone around them. We need to stop thinking of flowers and chocolates as compensation for forcing women to try and live up to others' image of them as demi-goddesses, instead of what they are—simple and complete human beings.

The unmet promise of universal healthcare



AHMED MUSHTAQUE RAZA CHOWDHURY

Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, PhD, is the convenor of Bangladesh Health Watch and former vice-chair of Bruc.

Like many countries, the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of Bangladesh's healthcare system. But it has also given us the opportunity to reconsider our approach to healthcare. What we have achieved in terms of socioeconomic development over the last 50 years as an independent nation is the envy of many. While we celebrate it, we should not let it extrapolate into a sense of complacency. Our neighbour Sri Lanka, for example, is way ahead of us when it comes to most development indicators; their maternal mortality ratio, for instance, is 36, while ours is still 173, as per the latest World Bank data.

Our goal as a nation is the all-encompassing "Vision 2041." As we work towards it, we should not lose sight of keeping the different moving parts in our system in a healthy and functional state—this will allow us to realise that vision in a sustainable way. The healthcare system is one of those critical moving parts. I believe the pandemic has given us the

opportunity to ponder and do something significantly different. Never in the past has the health sector received so much national and international focus. And this is precisely the reason that I think our prime minister should take advantage of this opportunity and do something big and meaningful, which will make her legacy indelible.

I am talking about universal health coverage (UHC). Our prime minister, on a number of occasions, has made a commitment for UHC—most recently at a high-level UN meeting in New York in September 2019. This is also reflected in several policy documents of the government, including the Health Care Financing Strategy 2012-2032, and the 8th Five-Year Plan. Unfortunately, little is seen to have happened on the agenda to make UHC a reality.

UHC is achieved when every citizen receives the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. The key to achieving UHC is by reforming the healthcare financing system. In particular, it requires switching from a system of private financing (mostly people paying for services out of pocket) to a compulsory public system. This has happened in every high-income country of the world—the US is an exception. Many countries in Bangladesh's income level have made tremendous progress

UHC has an important poverty reducing effect as well, as this will save two to three million Bangladeshis from falling into poverty annually due to catastrophic health-related expenditures.

towards UHC, including Sri Lanka, Vietnam, the Philippines, Egypt and Morocco. Interestingly, Sri Lanka's universal healthcare system originated from a national crisis caused by a malaria epidemic in the 1930s, similar to the threat posed by Covid-19 today. Thailand achieved UHC in 2002 after the Asian financial crisis, when its GDP per capita was about the same as Bangladesh's today.

UHC, therefore, is perfectly affordable in Bangladesh, even in the midst of a global pandemic and economic challenges, if there is political will to do so. Experiences from other countries indicate that kick-starting successful national UHC reforms typically requires around an additional one percent of GDP in public financing. All this funding would not be needed immediately, but could be done using a phase-in approach over a period of two to three years.

UHC has an important poverty reducing effect as well, as this will save two to three million Bangladeshis from falling into poverty annually due to catastrophic health-related expenditures. As Bangladesh experiences an increasing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), evidence shows that long-term treatment of such conditions can be nearly as financially debilitating as short-term catastrophic health incidences.

Evidence from around the world shows

that the best UHC strategies focus on achieving full population coverage of a modest package of services, focusing on primary healthcare, but also including selected hospital services. These should and can be provided totally free to everyone.

Because UHC reforms always require significant increases in public financing, they tend to be led by leaders who have the power to reallocate public budgets. Progressive leaders often take this initiative because UHC reforms are extremely popular. Across the world, politicians who have delivered UHC to their people have become national heroes. This was the case in Germany, the UK, France, Australia, Japan, Canada, Korea, Thailand, Brazil, Mexico, and Indonesia.

In the virtual "International Conference on Covid-19 and the Future Health Systems," organised last month jointly by Brac James P Grant School of Public Health and Bangladesh Health Watch, top health experts from across the world called for implementing UHC as the basis for future healthcare systems. Some of the experts even mentioned our prime minister and strongly urged her to make UHC her top agenda for the next five years. This will make her, as they predicted, the hero for UHC.

We do expect to see her in this role.

QUOTABLE Quote



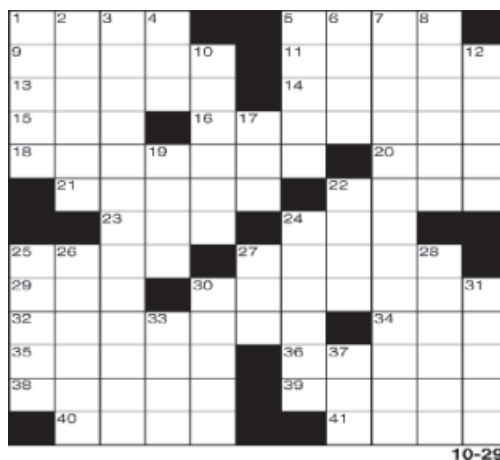
ZHUANG ZHOU

(369 BC-286 BC) Chinese philosopher

We cling to our own point of view, as though everything depended on it. Yet our opinions have no permanence; like autumn and winter, they gradually pass away.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



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পরিচালক (প ও উ) এর কার্যালয়
ফোনঃ ০২-৪২১৪২১৬৫, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০২-৪২১৪২১৬৬

শেখার বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
যশোর

Director of Planning, Development and Works, JUST

No. JUST/PTR/01(21)170 Date: 30/01/2022

Invitation for e-GP (OTM) Tender

Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method of Lab Equipment and Reagent	
Tender ID 654242	JUST/MB/01(21)190 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am
Tender ID 654243	JUST/GC/40(21)164 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am
Tender ID 654244	JUST/GEBT/01(21)24 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am
Tender ID 654245	JUST/PTR/01(21)170 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am
Tender ID 654247	JUST/Chem/01(21)774 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am
Tender ID 654692	JUST/Phar/892(21) 533 Date: 30/01/2022	Tender Published 03/02/22 at 10.00am

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System.

Paritosh Kumar Biswas
Director
Planning, Development and Works, JUST, Jashore

GD-195



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

It's a granary... it's a hut... no it's a post office!

Mud-made post office in operation for 40 years

While it looks like an age-old abandoned structure, waiting to be dissolved with time, it is the only way to receive official and registered letters for residents living within a six-mile radius.

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Looks are more than often deceiving, and this post office in Chattogram is proof of that.

In an era when letters have become almost obsolete, a 40-year-old post office — that too a structure made of mud — stands beside the Chattogram-Anwara-Banskhali Highway, still functional.

The Taylardwip Post Office, brandishing a small red post box on its wall, is a 50-feet long and 15-feet wide mud-made structure with a tinshed ceiling and walls made of clay and rice husk.

While it looks like an age-old abandoned structure, waiting to be dissolved with time, it is the only way to receive official and registered letters for residents living within a six-mile radius.

According to Amir Hossain, Taylardwip Post Office's extra departmental agent, it was built on land owned by the family members of former MP Sarwar Zamal Nizam.

"Since our childhood, we have borne witness to the mud-made structure, as our residence was nearby," said the 55-year-old.

Perhaps it's this history that makes Amir especially dedicated to the structure's maintenance. Because regardless of the air



of nostalgia attached to it, the post office has its woes as well.

"During last monsoon, water started leaking from the ceiling. There is no maintenance bill centrally allocated for the office. I tried to repair the wall on my own multiple times," said Amir.

"I am given only an additional Tk 15 for carrying official cost," said Amir, adding that he also bears the electric bill of the office from his own pocket.

He joined as the EDA in 2017. Every morning, the runner brings letters from the

Patiya Post office, which are later registered and distributed by office assistant Md Monir.

This correspondent found from the register that a total of 61 letters were received and delivered in December 2021.

Amir said post officials had attempted to build a modern structure, but the initiative did not see light due to a lack of land.

Contacted, Muhammad Abdullah, deputy postmaster general of Chattogram, said he had no knowledge of such an establishment. "I have noted down the issue.

Unfortunately, I am yet to visit the office. I will see to it personally," he said.

Wildlife boom at CU

Lockdown, awareness campaigns played key role

NAIMUR RAHMAN

The 2,100-acre Chittagong University (CU) campus is blessed with biodiversity. It's filled with wild animals, mostly due to its geographical location as little forests, massive trees and hillocks surround the entire campus.

According to researchers and CU's Department of Zoology, there are 90 species of snakes in the country, 36 of whom can be found at CU alone. In addition, more than 150 species of birds, 22 species of frogs, wild boars and approximately 368 species of insects have been discovered at CU so far.

Mohammad Forhadul Islam, lab assistant at CU and a wildlife rescuer, said, "To keep this area in tact, we must not cut down large trees and deep forest bushes so that wild fauna can live in a favourable environment."

The pandemic has had a crucial effect on this situation, as the university campus was shut down for a long period, he said. During this time, wildlife around the campus enjoyed favourable conditions to breed.

For example, a 12ft python was seen in broad daylight at the university's social science research institute. In the past, snakes of similar stature wouldn't get to live so long, as locals used to kill them without informing the authority.

"Squirrel and snake population is booming since they have had less predators and less human interactions on the campus," said Wahed Chowdhury, assistant professor of zoology at CU.

"Locals have become more lenient and aware of the significance of the flora and fauna due to our promotion of co-existence as well," he added.

"However, the number of Indian muntjac (a species of deer) has been decreasing due to poaching, while bird and fox populations are also on the wane for food and habitat shortage," he added.

However, some wildlife rescue teams are working on the campus to restore the balance. One of them is "Snake Rescue Team BD", which is working to save snakes and other reptiles.

The team has released over 2,000 snakes in campus adjacent areas over the course of the last two years. Arshad Nafiz, a member of the team, said, "We rescue reptiles and examine if it's venomous or not and release them in their natural habitat."



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Guliakhali beach to get a makeover

Guliakhali isn't your regular sea beach. As opposed to an expected sandy setting, its green grass beds, hundreds of small channels and trees give it a unique identity. During high tide, salt water flows through the canals combined with the fresh breeze coming in from the deep seas, which means tranquility is never too far away.

SIFAYET ULLAH

To preserve these natural bounty, the government has chalked up a special plan for the beach, which falls under Sitakunda upazila, by declaring it a protected area.

The government has issued a gazette notification in this regard on January 11. Following this, a development project has been undertaken, under which restaurants, resorts, scenic wooden bridges, shopping complexes and parking spaces will be constructed in Guliakhali.

According to the Beach Management Committee, a 5km long, 24ft wide road will be constructed from Sitakunda to Guliakhali, while an international standard resort and restaurant will be built in the beach area.

A one-acre parking lot, a washing block and a mini shopping complex, as well as umbrellas, will be set up along the beach as well.

"The bridge will be constructed to ease travel during monsoon," said Md Shahadat Hossain, member secretary of the committee and UNO of Sitakunda. "The beach will be open to all without any entry fee," he added.

During a recent visit to the beach, 40km



from Chattogram city, hundreds of people were seen enjoying their time there.

"Cox's Bazar's development has flourished based on tourism. If Guliakhali becomes a tourist zone, the socio-economic conditions of Sitakunda will change," said Nasir Uddin Anik, a local resident.

If Guliakhali becomes a tourist zone, the socio-economic conditions of Sitakunda will change.

"But the natural conditions of the beach must be preserved, since we've come across many instances where natural beauty was destroyed due to lack of proper planning and rampant urbanisation," said Md Shahin Islam Khan, chief town planner of Chattogram Development Authority. "If the new infrastructures are built in an eco-friendly manner, it will carry a positive message for everyone."



Afghanistan series in Dhaka, Ctg

SPORTS REPORTER

Chattogram and Dhaka are set to host Bangladesh's home series against Afghanistan, who are expected to arrive in the country on February 12.

The series, comprising three ODIs and two T20Is, is expected to begin in Chattogram, where three ODIs are scheduled for February 23, 25 and 28. The teams will then travel to Dhaka, where two T20Is will be featured on March 2 and 4.

"We have planned to host the three-match ODI series in Chattogram and then the two-match T20I series will take place in Mirpur," said Jalal Yunus, BCB's cricket operations chairman. "To ease travel complications and maintain the bio-bubble smoothly, we have shifted the T20I series from Sylhet to Dhaka. Also, there were concerns about the Sylhet pitch, which is the other reason for the change."



Shakib Al Hasan scored a 31-ball 50 and took three wickets as Fortune Barishal beat Chattogram Challengers by 14 runs in the second match of BPL at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. (Bottom) Mahmudullah Riyad's unbeaten 70 off 41 deliveries ensured Minister Group Dhaka a 50-run win against Comilla Victorians in the day's first match. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Five Tigers in IPL auction

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib Al Hasan and Mustafizur Rahman alongside Liton Das, Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam from Bangladesh made the cut into the shortlisted players for the upcoming 2022 Indian Premier League (IPL) auction, according to a press release from the IPL authorities yesterday.

The auction for the most glamorous franchise-based T20 cricket league in the world, scheduled to be held during February 12-13, will see 10 teams fight to recruit their desired players among 590 cricketers, shortlisted from 1024 players, which includes 220 players from outside of India.

Bangladesh's ace performers Shakib and Mustafizur, who have featured in the IPL on a regular basis, are included in the highest base price category of 2 crore rupees while Liton, Taskin and Shoriful find themselves in the category of 50 lac rupees.

Dhaka coming into view

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CHATTOGRAM

Minister Group Dhaka's BPL did not start the way they would have liked, especially after bagging three big-name national stars in Tamim Iqbal, Mahmudullah Riyad and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. They began with two defeats and the top-order not scoring fast runs and only skipper Mahmudullah finding consistency. Coming into the Chattogram leg, Tamim Iqbal's stormy hundred in the very first match may just have provided the gust for something more significant from this BPL. Yesterday, coming across another tournament favourite in Comilla Victorians, the key players once again turned up.

Tamim gave the start at the top with a 35-ball 46 before Mahmudullah joined the party with a smashing knock. Hitting some incredible T20 shots during an unbeaten 41-ball 70 -- his highest knock in T20s -- laced with three fours and three sixes, he took his side to a strong total of 181 for six. That ensured a 50-run win and took Dhaka to top of the table alongside Comilla.

Mahmudullah joined the 5,000-run club in T20s and also became the third batter to join the 2000-run club in BPL behind Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim.

However, it was evident that there were problems for Dhaka to sort out, with the likes of Andre Russell not yet having the expected impact. Another curiosity was national opener Mohammad Naim featuring at number seven, having to make way for more aggressive openers in Tamim

and Mohammad Shahzad.

"How they sort out their combination is up to the franchise. We can't intervene. Since he's not playing at the top, it's a matter of concern. The BPL is a big platform for young players. Youngsters can create guidelines by seeing how experienced players perform," national selector Minhajul



Abedin told reporters at Chattogram yesterday.

ADRS making things even more difficult
In the 11th over of the evening match between Fortune Barishal and Chattogram Challengers, Barishal's Nazmul Hossain Shanto tried to cut away an Afif Hossain delivery but as the ball went through to the wicket-keeper, Chattogram went up in appeal with Afif looking certain that Shanto had nicked the delivery. The umpire Masudur Rahman did not respond but Afif immediately asked for the review. The third

umpire instructed that there was definite sound when ball passed the bat and the on-field umpire should overturn his decision. Masudur had an incredulous look at his face while Shanto continued to shake his head as he was given out. Shakib Al Hasan told Shanto to wait while talking with the umpires but the call had already been made. However, given out due to noise seems rather unconvincing in these days of hot spot and Snickometer. A source of sound might have come from another source altogether, but above all, without a real DRS in place, the decision was wholly inconclusive, bringing BPL ADRS reviews back into focus.

Shakib and Mritunjoy troika
Barishal skipper Shakib Al Hasan had been getting into some form with the bat in an earlier match and yesterday struck his first fifty of this edition of the tournament. In the 15th over of the match, Shakib made his presence felt, hitting spinner Nasum Ahmed for three consecutive sixes to push the tempo. However, having reached his 20th T20 fifty, he fell to Mritunjoy after a 31-ball 50. Mritunjoy, who had bagged a hat-trick in the previous game, found the mark again at the death, picking up three wickets in the penultimate over of the innings with his cutters and change of pace. But there was no hat-trick this time around as he bowled a no-ball to Mehedi Hasan Rana after sending back Irfan Sukkur and Mujeeb Ur Rahman in back-to-back deliveries.

Burkina Faso's added motivation

AFP, Yaounde

Burkina Faso coach Kamou Malo admitted that news of political unrest in the country is spurring his team on at the Africa Cup of Nations as they prepare for Wednesday's semi-final against Senegal.

"These goings-on give us added motivation," said Malo, whose side are through to the last four after edging Tunisia 1-0 in the quarter-finals.

"We dedicated that victory to the people back home who are going through a turbulent time politically and socially."

The west African nation has been battling a jihadist insurgency, while last week President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was overthrown in a military coup. On Monday Burkina Faso was suspended from the African Union. "We have been dealing with this terrorism for a number of years now and it continues to plunge our people into mourning, so our objective is to give them something to smile about," Malo said.

"We won't hold back if through our efforts on the field we can offer some hope. People are already asking me to bring back the trophy and that is what we would love to do."



Nadal feels lucky to be part of 'Big Three'

REUTERS

Rafa Nadal said he was lucky to be part of an era of tennis that included Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic after the Spaniard won a men's record 21st Grand Slam title at the Australian Open to move one ahead of his two great rivals.

Nadal paid tribute to Federer and Djokovic. "At the end of the day, it's just a game and in some way we achieved more than what we ever dreamed of when we were kids," Nadal told reporters. "It doesn't matter that much if one is 21, one is 20, or the other finished 23 and the other with 21."

"I think we did very important things for our sport and we achieved our dreams and we enjoy it. I feel lucky to be part of this era that has been very special for our sport."

The 35-year-old said the satisfaction of winning his second Australian Open crown was impossible to describe.

"It's amazing to have this trophy with me," Nadal said. "I tried hard during my career here in Australia, finally, it was probably the most unexpected year for me to achieve, one more time this beautiful trophy so I'm super happy."

Nadal said he was not thinking about his next tournament.

"I have my schedule planned, but I'm enjoying the moment... I need to see how my body recovers from an amazing month and I'm going to make my decision," Nadal said.

Busy deadline day in England

AFP, London

Christian Eriksen made a remarkable return to football on Monday by signing for Brentford, while Everton brought in Dele Alli and Donny van de Beek on the day they announced Frank Lampard as the club's new manager.

Eriksen suffered a cardiac arrest on the pitch while playing for Denmark at last year's Euro 2020 and had to have an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) fitted as a result. The 29-year-old left Inter Milan in December by mutual consent as ICDs are not permitted in Italian football.

However, there are no such limitations in the Premier League, allowing Eriksen to return to England, where he spent nearly seven years with Tottenham.

"At his best, Christian has the ability to dictate games of football. He can find the right passes and is a goal threat," said Brentford boss Thomas Frank, who worked with Eriksen while in charge of Denmark's Under-17s earlier in their careers.

"I expect him to have an impact in the dressing room and at the training ground." Brentford have an eight-point cushion over the bottom three but have played more games than all the sides below them.

Everton, Newcastle and Burnley were all active on Monday as the sides towards the bottom of the table were responsible for most of the business done.

Lampard was unveiled as the Toffees' new boss, bringing to an end a dramatic two-week search for Rafael Benitez's successor.

The former Chelsea boss made two quick signings with Van de Beek joining on loan from Manchester United and Alli opting for

a fresh start away from Tottenham after a disappointing few years.

"It is a huge honour for me to represent and manage a club the size and tradition of Everton Football Club," said Lampard. "I'm very hungry to get started."

Newcastle have been the biggest spenders anywhere in England over the past month in their first transfer window under the ownership of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund.

Brighton defender Dan Burn and Aston Villa left-back Matt Targett made the move to St. James' Park on Monday to join Kieran Trippier, Chris Wood and Bruno Guimaraes.

Burnley have replaced Wood with Dutch international forward Wout Weghorst, who has signed from VfL Wolfsburg for a reported £12 million (\$16 million) fee.

Tottenham boss Antonio Conte has made clear his demand for fresh faces in recent weeks and finally got his wish with the double signings of Swedish international forward Dejan Kulusevski and Uruguayan midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur from Juventus.

Arsenal's forward line is looking threadbare with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang set to join Barcelona on a free transfer.

Aubameyang had been shut out by manager Mikel Arteta in recent weeks for a breach of discipline and did not travel to Dubai for a warm-weather training camp.

Premier League leaders Manchester City have signed forward Julian Alvarez for a reported £14 million, but the Argentine will remain with River Plate on loan until at least July. The 22-year-old has scored 36 goals in 96 games for River and has five Argentina caps to his name.



Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Xavi Simons (L) passes by as Nice players celebrate winning the penalty shootout against Paris Saint-Germain in French Cup Last 16 at the Parc des Princes in Paris on Monday. Goalkeeper Marcin Bulka, on loan from PSG, emerged with two saves in the shootout as Nice edged the tiebreaker 6-5 following a goalless draw in regulation time. PHOTO: AFP



STUDY ABROAD

Girl's family 'outcast' over rumours

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The family of Nurunnahar Chowdhury, who recently went to the USA for higher education, has allegedly been ostracised by a local mosque committee in the district's Kulaura upazila over her wearing short dresses and rumours over marrying a Hindu man there.

Her father Abdul Hai Chowdhury Gulab said they lodged a written complaint with the Kulaura upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Monday afternoon.

According to the family, Nurunnahar from Krishnapur village went to the USA on December 26 last year. After seeing Facebook posts of the student, some locals started spreading false information about her.

The local mosque management committee called an arbitration on December 28. But Abdul Hai, 70, could not join due to illness.

Following the orders by Shamsul Islam Makhon Mia and Amin Mia, president and secretary of the committee, the family was ostracised, said the complaint.

Speaking to The Daily Star over the phone, Nurunnahar said, "Some locals from the mosque informed me over the phone that my family has been ostracised. I asked my father to join the meeting. However, he couldn't attend as he was suffering from dementia.

"When I heard about my family being ostracised, I asked Amin Mia what my father's fault was. He replied that I went to America and married a man from another

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The Public Works Department constructing a walkway bordering the lake inside Ramna Park in the capital. The authorities have taken the step as a part of its beautification work across the recreation site situated right at the heart of Dhaka. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

No need to worry about NeoCov

Say 2 Bangladeshi experts

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

As a group of Chinese researchers flagged concerns about NeoCov, claiming this new virus has a latent potential to mutate and penetrate the human population, two Bangladeshi experts think the fear is illogical and there is no need to panic.

The experts said people should not draw any conclusion as it is yet to be studied how threatening this virus can be for humans.

"It will be illogical to be worried about NeoCov. Because, the speculation by the Chinese researchers is a hypothesis, not yet real," Arifa Akram, an assistant professor of virology at the National Institute of Laboratory Medicine and Referral Centre, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The World Health Organisation on Friday also pointed out that the potential of the virus to pose a risk for humans would require further study.

The Chinese scientists said NeoCov, a close relative of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV), was discovered in a bat population in South Africa and is currently spreading only among animals, reports Indian news portal Livemint.

The focus of their study, yet to be peer reviewed, is based on a simple theory that if NeoCov picks up a particular mutation only then it could use the same pathway to infect humans as the Sars-CoV-2 virus.

They also hinted infection with NeoCov could not be cross-neutralised by antibodies targeting SARS-CoV-2 or MERS-CoV.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Hawkers sell used jackets to a large number of underprivileged people, who cannot afford clothes to keep them warm in the shivering winter, living in the capital. Each jacket costs between Tk 100 and Tk 300. The photo was taken in the capital's Gulistan area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

JHENAIDAH-JASHORE HIGHWAY EXPANSION

Good start, but end still afar

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

In a rare move, the authorities appointed a project director just after five days of the approval of the Jhenaidah-Jashore highway expansion project in November 2020.

The move came after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina while approving the project at the Ecneec expressed serious discontent over the five-year tenure of the project.

Following her directive, the project period was cut to three years and a deadline for December 2023 was set.

But uncertainty looms over the project's completion by then as authorities have spent 14 months to appoint consultants for detailed design, preparing bid documents and other work.

Roads and Highways Department (RHD), the implementing agency for the Tk 4,188 crore project, is scheduled to sign a contract with a joint-venture company for the consultancy services tomorrow.

The firm will get one year to

draw up the design and prepare documents, Project Director Zabid Hasan said.

They expect to start the bidding process after June.

"We want to complete all the process within this year," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

This means the entire work of expanding the road to a dual carriageway will get only one year to be completed.

"We will try our best," he said about meeting the deadline.

She asked why it would take five years to improve on a 48.5-kilometre road and ordered its completion in 3 years.

Cost escalations and delays in development projects are common in the country and the prime minister expressed discontent over the issue on several occasions.

JHENAIDAH-JASHORE HIGHWAY

The 48.50km Jhenaidah-

Jashore highway is a part of a 260km road corridor that would be developed under a programme called "Western Economic Corridor and Regional Enhancement Programme (WeCARE)".

The RHD will improve the 260km road corridor into four lanes along with service lanes on both sides, aiming to improve cross-border connectivity.

When the Jhenaidah-Jashore highway expansion project was placed before the Ecneec on November 24, 2020, with a stipulated deadline of October 2020 to December 2025, including a one-year defect liability period, the PM expressed discontent.

She reportedly questioned why it would take five years to improve a 48km road and asked for its completions within 2023.

Asked why they took 14 months to appoint consultants, the project director said they had to get approval from both the government and the World Bank at every stage, which took time.

Impose arms embargo on Myanmar

UN special rapporteur urges UNSC

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar Tom Andrews has made an urgent call to the UN Security Council to impose an arms embargo on the Myanmar military and significantly increase financial pressure.

The call was made on the first anniversary of the illegal coup by the Myanmar junta yesterday.

During the year, some 1,500 civilians were killed and thousands of others detained, leaving the country in a complicated conflict that is akin to a civil war.

"The military junta is functioning as a criminal enterprise, committing murder, torture, abductions, forced displacement, all the while stealing the revenue and seizing the assets that rightfully belong to the people of Myanmar," he said.

"What is worse, they appear to be getting away with it. Their attacks continue unabated. The suffering of the Myanmar people is steadily increasing," Tom Andrews said in a statement yesterday.

He said recent months have seen an even further escalation of violence, and a campaign of terror now widespread across the country.

"I have received more reports of mass killings, attacks on hospitals and humanitarian targets, and the bombing and burning of villages," he added.

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Biman buys 2 Boeing 737s

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has bought two Boeing 737-800 aircraft, which it had been leasing from Ireland's Celestial Aviation Trading Ltd since 2009.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal, managing director and CEO of Biman, said the planes were purchased at a fair price.

Sources in the civil aviation ministry said Biman bought the two aircraft for Tk 168 crore with its own funds.

Boeing 737-800 is commonly used on mid-haul routes and is Boeing's most popular aircraft.

Biman now boasts one of the youngest fleets in Asia with 21 modern planes, including four Boeing 777-300 ERs, four Boeing 787-8s, two Boeing 787-9s, six Boeing 737-800s and five De Havilland Canada Dash 8 aircraft.

Of the 21, the national flag carrier owns 18 and the rest are on lease.

Kazi Wahidul Alam, aviation expert, said that despite the new planes, the national airline still remains in bad shape as it has failed to spread its wings to new destinations or revive suspended ones due to the absence of proper planning, marketing policy, and expert professionals.

6TH PHASE UP POLLS Independents grab 95 chair posts, AL 117

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR



In the sixth phase of Union Parishad elections held on Monday, independents bagged chairman posts in 95 UPs and Awami League nominees in 117 UPs, according to Election Commission data unveiled yesterday.

The omission said voter turnout was 69 percent in 216 UPs of which the unofficial results have been published. Since the first phase of the election, the EC has announced unofficial results of a total of 3,893 UPs. AL nominees won in 2,132 UPs and independents in 1,692 UPs.

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