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TO KNOW

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Homeless people, many of them with disabilities, in a queue to get inoculated against coronavirus in the capital's Kamalapur yesterday evening. The government's Expanded Programme on Immunisation vaccinated over 200 individuals during the drive.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Vaccination awaits MILESTONE

Govt set to complete giving at least 1 dose to 10cr people, starts inoculating homeless

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Bangladesh is closing in on the milestone of vaccinating 10 crore people with the first Covid-19 dose despite facing many a challenge.

The number of people inoculated with the first dose rose to 9.89 crore as of Saturday. The government is also administering around seven lakh second doses and around 68,500 booster doses along with around three lakh first doses daily.

The first dose has so far been given to 82 percent of the targeted 12 crore people – around 58 percent of total population, according to the Director General of Health and Services (DGHS).

Besides, around 6.5 crore or 53 percent of the targeted population have received second jabs as of yesterday.

"We may need a couple of more days to reach the 10-crore milestone. Despite all odds, we have reached this stage. Obviously, it is a matter of joy for all of us," Dr Shamsul Haque, member secretary of DGHS's National Vaccine Deployment Taskforce, told The Daily Star.

He said, "Now our focus is to fulfil the target of inoculating 70 percent of the population as early as possible. We have enough vaccine supply for that."

The mass inoculation campaign began on February 7 last year.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday started vaccinating Madrasa students and floating people.

As part of the special campaign, on the sidelines of the regulation vaccination drive, 700 students of Jamia Siddiquia Noorani Women's Madrasa in the capital's Mirpur got their first dose, while street dwellers near Kamalapur Railway station were jabbed with Johnson and Johnson's single dose vaccine, according to the DGHS officials.

From November 1 last year, the health directorate started a campaign to vaccinate schoolchildren aged 12 and above.

The government started the mass campaign with Covishield over a week after the trial run on January 27 last year, but suffered a huge setback when the Serum Institute of India suspended the supply of the purchased three crore vaccines, after sending only 70 lakh doses in two consignments following the Indian government's embargo on export in April 2021.

According to a tri-patriate agreement, Serum was supposed to supply the purchased vaccine within six months. Besides, there were commitments of 6.8 crore doses from Covax, a global initiative, by 2021.

Covax's pledge to supply vaccines to low-income countries also suffered a blow as the rich countries secured a majority share of the vaccines produced by global companies for their own population.

Due to dearth of supply, the government was forced to suspend the vaccination campaign from April 26, which was resumed on June 19 on a limited scale with around 11 lakh Sinopharm jabs in hand.

"The suspension of the vaccine campaign was a reflection of incompetency and incapacity of the officials concerned in the government. Despite those, the 10-crore first dose milestone makes us hopeful. We must thank the government for this," Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on

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NEW ELECTION COMMISSION FORMATION

Search panel asks parties for names

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The search committee, tasked with recommending people for appointments to the upcoming Election Commission, has sought names from political parties.

The panel will also hold separate talks with civil society members, media personalities and election experts next week before finalising the names it will send to the president.

In a circular last night, the Cabinet Division said each of the registered political parties can propose maximum 10 names for the posts of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and other commissioners.

People interested in the EC job can recommend their own names as well.

The names must be submitted either to the Cabinet Division or gfp_sec@cabinet.gov.bd by 5:00pm on Thursday, the circular said.

Earlier in the day, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said the six-member search committee, formed by President Abdul Hamid in line with a new law, will submit the names by February 24, the day the tenure of the panel expires.

The president will then appoint the CEC and other commissioners based on the panel's recommendations, according to the law.

"The names will be given before the stipulated time," Anwarul told reporters after the panel's first meeting yesterday. The meeting held at the Supreme

Court Judges Lounge continued for more than two hours.

Asked whether the committee will be able to complete the task before the expiry of the current Election Commission's tenure on February 14, Anwarul said, "We're also considering it. If there is any such obligation, the names will be submitted by that day."

Meeting sources, however, said the committee would submit the names by February 24, not by February 14.

The search committee held the meeting just a day after it was formed by the president. It will suggest two names for each of the posts of the CEC and commissioners. The Cabinet Division is providing it with secretarial support.

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An eatery in the middle of the pavement near New Market in the capital. There are major shopping malls in the area and pedestrians as well as motorists suffer on the road because of such encroachment by hawkers.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

LATA MANGESHKAR 1929-2022



The songbird falls silent

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Lata Mangeshkar's voice is immortal.

Yet if there is one song of hers that perfectly captures tributes to one of India's most beloved and revered singers, who passed away in a Mumbai hospital yesterday after a near month-long battle with post-Covid complications, it is "Naam gum jayega" from the 1977 movie "Kinara".

The song has the lyric "Naam gum jayega, chehara ye badal jayega/ Meri awaaz hi pehchan hai, agar yaad rahe" (My name will be lost, my face will change/ My voice is my identity, only if you can remember).

It is impossible to forget one of India's greatest cultural icons, whose songs spoke to the emotions of millions in South Asia, regardless of age or background.

This became clearer than ever as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi led thousands of mourners, many of them in tears, at Mumbai's landmark Shivaji Park where Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar was cremated with full state honours. Representatives of the army, air force and navy joined others from various walks of life, including cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan among the celebrities, in bidding farewell to her.

At 92, Lata breathed her last in Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital where she was undergoing treatment since January 8 after being diagnosed with Covid and exhibiting mild symptoms. She was also diagnosed with pneumonia.

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Govt worried about high gas prices

Says State Minister Nasrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power, energy and mineral resources, said the government is concerned about the customers' dissatisfaction with the new gas pricing.

"Prices must be kept at a tolerable level," he told journalists yesterday while inspecting the zonal office of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company in Dhaka's Tikatuli area.

"The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission [Berc] has been advised to ensure that the hiked prices are at a tolerable level [for consumers]."

He also said the state-owned Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation is now incurring a loss of an average of Tk 10 crore by selling diesel every day.

"United efforts will be made to reduce energy wastage and to increase

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Govt Okays edible oil price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A one-litre bottle of soybean oil will now cost Tk 168, as the commerce ministry yesterday agreed to the refiners' proposal of hiking the prices of edible oils.

A litre of non-bottled soybean oil will cost Tk 143 while a litre of bottled palm oil will now cost Tk 133, according to the commerce ministry decision.

The price of a five-litre bottle of soybean oil was fixed at Tk 795.

The previous prices were formally fixed on October 19. But the refiners have been selling edible oils at increased prices for a month.

"We formally approved the refiners' proposal," said AHM Shafiquzzaman, additional secretary at the commerce ministry.

The rising prices of crude soybean and palm oil in the international market have pushed the prices up in the local market, officials said.

Bangladesh needs nearly 20 lakh tonnes of edible oil and it has to import 90 percent of it, according to Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission.

5 'robbers' held after 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rab yesterday arrested five members of a robbery gang and seized arms and ammunition following a "gunfight" in the Jangal Salimpur area of Chattogram city.

The arrestees are members of Mashiur Bahini, said Nurul Abser, assistant director of Rab-7 media wing.

After a two-hour-long "gunfight", Rab arrested the five men, while the rest managed to flee, he said, adding 11 arms and huge ammunition were recovered.

They were handed over to Sitakunda Police Station.



Suhrawardy Udyan is being readied ahead of the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela. The book fair got delayed this year amid the rising number of coronavirus cases. The authorities said the health guidelines will be followed during the event.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

COVID-19 ORIGINS PROBE

China, WHO seek 'stronger collaboration'

Aussie PM signals reopening of borders to tourists

AGENCIES

China and the World Health Organization have discussed the need for "stronger collaboration" on tracing the origins of Covid-19, amid tensions over the WHO's plans to further investigate the theory that the virus could have leaked from a Wuhan lab.

This came as WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus met Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in Beijing on Saturday, where they also asserted the need to aggressively pursue vaccine equity.

Tedros, who attended the Beijing Winter Olympic Games opening ceremony on Friday, is visiting China for the first time since January 2020, after the first Covid-19 cases were reported in the central city of Wuhan.

"Pleased to meet with Premier Li Keqiang," the WHO director general tweeted late on Saturday, alongside a photo of the pair with other officials in a meeting room.

"We discussed Covid-19 and the need for an aggressive effort on vaccine equity

this year to vaccinate 70 percent of all populations."

And in a follow-up tweet, he said the two leaders "discussed the need for stronger collaboration on Covid-19 virus origins, rooted in science and evidence".

A statement released by the Chinese foreign ministry after the talks said: "[T]edros said] the WHO adheres to scientific principles in tracing the origins of the virus and opposes politicising it."

The origins of Covid-19 have been a source of tension between China and some Western countries, as well as the WHO, since the Sars-CoV-2 virus behind the disease was identified in China in late 2019.

Last year, a WHO-backed team of scientists released a 300-page report after visiting Wuhan, capital of the central Chinese province of Hubei, where the first outbreak of the virus was reported.

The scientists concluded that it was extremely unlikely for the virus to have come from a lab – a theory linked to the Wuhan Institute of Virology's study of coronaviruses, including those found in bats.

Coronavirus has killed over 5.7 million people worldwide since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to an AFP tally compiled from official sources yesterday.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said yesterday that the reopening of the country's borders to international tourists may not be far away, adding that the parliament will debate the matter this week.

Australia, which shut its borders in March of 2020, has been going through a staggered reopening in recent months, allowing in only its citizens and residents, skilled migrants, international students and certain seasonal workers, reports Reuters.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern yesterday urged New Zealanders to unite in their battle against Covid-19, as the pandemic forced the country to celebrate its national Waitangi Day online.

"We all have a duty to do everything we can to protect our communities with all the tools that science and medicine have given us," Ardern said in a pre-recorded speech.

Boy dies falling from roof

STAR REPORT

A five-year-old boy died after falling from the rooftop of a building in Dhaka's Uttar Jatra Bari area yesterday afternoon.

The dead is Mohammad Bappi, son of Mohammad Swapan, a pick-up van driver.

Bappi was playing with other children on the rooftop of the two-storey building, with no railings, around 2:00pm. He fell from the rooftop and sustained critical injuries, Swapan said.

Bappi was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, he said.

Woman arrested with 10k yaba pills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a woman and seized 10,000 pieces of yaba pills from her in the capital's Kurmitola area yesterday.

The 39-year-old arrestee was coming from Cox's Bazar with the yaba consignment worth Tk 30 lakh, said the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The woman pretended to be in a religious order wearing burqa, niqab, hand gloves and socks to avoid police attention, the law enforcers said.

One answer for all questions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Shahab Uddin has one answer for all the questions regarding the deaths of one tiger, one tigress, and 11 zebras at Bangabandhu Safari Park in Gazipur.

"An investigation is undergoing," it is.

After his visit to the safari park, he organised a press briefing yesterday.

Journalists there asked him why the deaths of wildlife in the enclosed greenery were hushed up, and what steps would be taken to inform people of any further deaths.

He was also asked why the 12-point recommendation, placed by a committee in 2020, was not followed.

Prof Zahir Uddin Ahmed relieved

Our Correspondent, Sylhet

Prof Zahir Uddin Ahmed is relieved from his position of the director of students counselling and guidance at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

In an order signed by Registrar Mohd Ishfaqul Hussain circulated yesterday, Prof Zahir was relieved on the ground of illness.

Prof Amina Pervin of the Social Work Department is appointed as the new director, according to the order.

Prof Amina is the first woman professor to be assigned to this position.

Search panel asks parties for names

FROM PAGE 1

The previous search committee, in 2017, had sought names from political parties for appointments to the EC. The parties submitted names, but those were never disclosed.

The president held talks with 25 political parties from December 20 to January 17 on forming the upcoming EC. Seven other parties, including the BNP, however, did not participate in the dialogue, terming it "meaningless".

Asked whether the BNP will submit any names to the search committee, party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told The Daily Star, "There is no reason why we should submit them. We have repeatedly said no free

and fair election is possible under the incumbent government.

"This is our stance on the issue."

The cabinet secretary said the search committee would hold talks with civil society members, media personalities and election experts.

The cabinet secretary said in its first meeting, the committee mainly discussed its work procedures. The next meeting will take place at 4:30pm on Tuesday at the same venue.

Asked whether the 10 finalised names would be disclosed, he said, "If the president does not give his approval, how will the names be disclosed."

The committee is headed by Justice Obaidul Hassan, a Supreme Court lawyer. Its other members are Justice

SM Kuddus Zaman, a High Court judge; Comptroller and Auditor General Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury; Public Service Commission Chairman Md Soharab Hossain; former election commissioner Sohul Hussain; and psychiatrist and writer Anwara Syed Haq. All of them attended the meeting yesterday.

Later, Justice Obaidul Hassan told journalists that the cabinet secretary would brief the media after every committee meeting.

Meanwhile, Sushasoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujan) said finding competent people for the EC appointments was possible if the work was done maintaining transparency and neutrality.

Berc, who is in charge of regulating gas prices, approved the proposal and formed a technical committee to evaluate it. After getting a report, they will hold a public hearing.

The songbird falls silent

FROM PAGE 1

"Lata di died at 8:12am due to multi organ failure after over 28 days since her Covid-19 diagnosis," Dr Pratit Samdani, who was treating the singer at the hospital, told reporters.

The Indian government declared a two-day national mourning during which the national flag would fly at half-mast. The Maharashtra government announced a public holiday in the state and the West Bengal government half a day's holiday today as a mark of respect for Lata.

Lata Mangeskar had a prodigious career spanning almost eight decades during which she sang an estimated 25,000 songs in 36 Indian languages, including Hindi, Bangla, Marathi, Tamil and Kannada, of classical and other genres.

Soon after news of Lata's death broke, tributes poured in with President Ram Nath Kovind and PM Modi leading a heartbroken nation in remembering her.

"Lata ji's demise is heart-breaking for me, as it is for millions the world over. In her vast range of songs, rendering the essence and beauty of India, generations found expression of their inner-most emotions. A Bharat Ratna, Lata ji's accomplishments will remain incomparable," Kovind said.

Modi said he was "anguished beyond words".

"The kind and caring Lata Didi has left us. She leaves a void in our nation that cannot be filled. The coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerise people," he said in a tweet.

"Lata Didi's songs brought out a variety of emotions. She closely witnessed the transitions of the Indian film world for decades. Beyond films, she was always passionate about India's growth. She always wanted to see a strong and developed

India," he added.

Lata Mangeskar's cross-border appeal was evident when Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Pakistan's Information and Broadcasting Minister Fawad Hussain paid rich tributes.

Considered one of the greatest playback singers in Indian cinema, Lata received several film awards and Indian government's top civilian honours like Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan, Bharat Ratna (2001), and Dada Saheb Phalke Award, Indian cinema's highest award, and multiple national film awards.

During her career, she had earned many sobriquets – Queen of Melody, Nightingale of India and simply The Legend. Many, including some the biggest music directors and actors, equated her voice with that of Goddess Saraswati.

Among some of her

most popular numbers are "Aye Mere Watan Ke Logon", which brought tears to the eyes of the then Indian PM Jawaharlal Nehru in 1963.

Born in Indore, Lata Mangeskar was the eldest child of Deenanath Mangeskar, a Marathi musician and Gujarati homemaker Shevanti.

The untimely death of her father brought the financial burden of the family on her teenaged shoulders. Family friend Master Vinayak came to the aid of the family and Lata started singing and acting in his father's theatre company.

Since music was the be-all and end-all of Lata Mangeskar's life, it would be apt to wrap up a tribute by recalling the 1966 Hindi film "Mamta" song "Rahen na rahen hum", the lyrics of which loosely translate to "Whether or not I am here, I will remain as a fragrance in this garden". Lata's voice will continue to live long after her death.

Govt worried about high gas prices

FROM PAGE 1

awareness on the economic use of natural gas," he said, adding that gas exploration activities are ongoing.

He spoke on issues

related to the automation process, prepaid metre and the irregularities of Titas.

A price hike for pipeline gases was proposed recently by the state-

owned Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation.

It wanted to raise the price of single burners from Tk 925 to Tk 2,000, and double burners from Tk 975 to Tk 2,100.

Noab asks for tax reduction

FROM PAGE 12

Since this increases the income tax of newspaper employees, the Noab proposed raising the tax-free house rent to 70 percent, Azad added.

It is the only industry that bears the income tax of its employees, Anam said, adding that the issue should be addressed.

In response, NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem said the income tax is usually provided by individuals, not companies. "I will see the corporate tax issue of newspapers," he said.

At present, the newspaper industry is paying 30 percent corporate tax, according to Azad.

"It should not be more than 10 or 15 percent considering the fact that it is an ailing industry," he added.

Devan Hanif Mahmud, editor and publisher of Bangla business daily Bonik Barta, also proposed cutting the source tax and VAT on payment to international news outlets.

On behalf of the Association of Television Channel Owners, its vice-president Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury proposed waiving the duty on import of set-top boxes.

With digitalisation, the government will earn more revenue in the future. "So, an incentive should be offered now," he added.

FROM PAGE 1

Covid-19, told The Daily Star yesterday.

After Serum suspended supplies, the government started exploring alternative sources desperately.

By June, it purchased 1.5 crore doses of China's Sinopharm vaccine and then another six crore in August.

The country also got around one crore doses

of different brands from Covax in phases.

The government has so far been using Covid-19 vaccines developed by six different companies – Covishield, China's Sinopharm and Sinovac, Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson's.

As supplies and the campaign gained momentum, the government reduced the age bar to 18 years, from

55, by August 20 in phases, in an effort to reopen educational institutions.

By this time, the government also implemented multiple special inoculation drives to bring more people under the vaccine coverage, especially for people living in rural areas.

Out of the regular 1,005 regular vaccination centres, the DGHS expanded the vaccination

campaign to union and ward levels. Currently, vaccines are also available in countrywide community clinics.

Meanwhile, there were some complaints of irregularities and sufferings during special drives. At least four people were injured during a scuffle at yesterday's vaccine drive near Kamalapur Railway Station.

When Lata sang for Bangladesh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Among the myriad chapters of legendary playback singer Lata Mangeshkar's illustrious career, one that's close to Bangladesh's heart is the key role she played in mobilising funds and international opinion in favour of our Liberation War in 1971.

During that time, the singer, who passed away in Mumbai yesterday, travelled to different cities by Indian Air Force planes.

The funds raised at musical soirees where Lata Mangeshkar performed across India were channelled for the upkeep of lakhs of refugees who had crossed over to India from Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

She also sang the song "O Dadabhai" in the film "Raktakto Bangla", which was released in December, 1972.

Remembering the Liberation War, Lata Mangeshkar had shared an anecdote on her official twitter account on September 14, 2019.

She reminisced about the time she visited Bangladesh soon after the liberation and delighted audiences with her performance.

"Namaskar. As soon as the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war ended, we went to Bangladesh and we did several events with (Bollywood actor) Sunil Dutt's group. At the time, we used to

Lata was part of an Indian cultural delegation which called on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family in Dhaka.



commute all around by Army plane."

Lata was part of an Indian cultural delegation which called on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family in Dhaka. Others in the delegation were actress Wahida Rehman, a young Sanjay Dutt and his father-actor Sunil Dutt.

Following her demise yesterday, West Bengal's music fraternity paid rich tributes to the legendary singer who collaborated with some top music directors like Sachin Deb Burman, Hemanta Mukherjee and Salil Chowdhury to produce memorable hits in Bangla.

Mangeshkar, who had sung some 185 songs in Bengali, is remembered by her fans here for classics such as 'Akash Prodip Jwale' (The light burns in the sky) and 'Prem Ekbar Esehchilo Nirobe' (love came once silently).

Salil Chowdhury collaborated with Lata for some 35 Bengali songs, 20 of them for movies. Among their many hits in Bengali were modern numbers like 'Ja re ure ja re pakhi' and 'Ami Choltte, Choltte Theme Gechi'.

Musicians in Kolkata said while Lata understood Bengali as she had many friends among Bangla music directors and singers, at times she had to be explained the finer nuances of Bangla lyrics. But she picked up and rendered the nuances in a manner which only a great singer like her could have ever done.

Popular singer Haimanti Shukla said Lata Mangeshkar did not have any arrogance and she often fretted over audience response before shows.



Lata Mangeshkar and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. She arrived in Bangladesh in 1971 in an Indian Air Force plane.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

PRAYER
TIMING
FEB 7

	Fazr	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



As the road in front of the Regional Election Office in Agargaon remains closed, local teens took up the opportunity to ride their bikes in style, performing stunts to show-off their moves. With no protective gears on, their moment of enjoyment can turn into a risky endeavour as vehicles still use the road to find parking space. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Aminbazar resident Mohammad Miah used to make a living out of providing boat rides around the area's low-land, where waterlogging was a constant issue every monsoon. But for the last few years, the problem has subsided to an extent. While this is welcome for the area's residents, for Mohammad, it meant the end of his run with this boat. He was therefore carrying it to a suitable place, where he could break it down and use the scraps as firewood. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

9 faulty bridges to be rebuilt in Dhaka

LGRD minister on restoring canal connectivity; permission from DNCC, DSCC must to build structures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Md Tazul Islam yesterday said nine bridges in and around Dhaka, which obstruct the navigability of their adjacent waterbodies, will be rebuilt to restore connectivity among canals.

The minister also urged authorities concerned to take necessary steps in this regard.

He said this at a meeting to review waterlogging issues in Dhaka and Chattogram.

"We will increase connectivity among canals in Dhaka with this restoration work. This will not only increase waterway connectivity but also increase the beauty of the city," said Tazul, who chaired the meeting.

All organisations will have to take permission from the two city corporations to build any structure in the city, and the mayors will have to be alert so that people don't face harassment in the process.

Directing all organisations to take actions against encroachers to recover canals and water bodies, the minister mentioned the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) drive to recover the canal in Basila by conducting eviction drives at illegal truck stands, houses and markets.

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) is also conducting drives against illegal encroachers to recover canals and waterbodies, he said.

Saying all organisations will have to take permission from the two city corporations to build any structure in the city, Tazul also urged the mayors to be alert so that people don't face harassment in the process.

Tazul asked Rajuk to involve the city

We will increase connectivity among canals in Dhaka with this restoration work. This will not only increase waterway connectivity but also increase the beauty of the city.

MD TAZUL ISLAM
LGRD Minister

corporations for its monitoring activities to check whether building owners are constructing their premises as per approved plans.

Criticising Rajuk for their failure to take action when housing companies filled up or encroached canals, DNCC mayor Md Atiqul Islam said some wide canals have been narrowed down to only two feet.

He said they will start works to set up boundary pillars on canals from February 17.

Meanwhile, DSCC mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said they are taking different steps – like keeping 30 pumps for the rainy season, cleaning canals and drains and repairing sluice gates – to keep Dhaka city free from waterlogging during the coming rainy season.

He mentioned the Taltola Jheel, which is under attack from encroachers. Taposh said if the jheel is handed over to the city corporation from the ministry of housing, DSCC will be able to protect it from encroachers by setting up boundary walls.

Criticising Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), he said BIWTA is initiating some projects for which DSCC projects are facing obstacles.

At the meeting, a sub-committee headed by additional secretary of Local Government Division Muhammad Ibrahim has been formed to solve waterlogging problem and recovering canals in Chattogram.

Only GM Quader, Chunnu to make official statements

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To avoid confusion, only Jatiya Party Chairperson GM Quader and Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu will make statements on the party's policy-related issues.

"We have taken this decision as grassroots level leaders and activists are becoming confused due to contradictory statements on policy issues by top leaders," Quader told The Daily Star yesterday.

JP in a press release also said statements of no other leaders except for the two will be considered legitimate. GM Quader will inform the media about such issues while Chunnu will act as JP spokesperson.

Must be neutral, transparent Says Quader on search committee

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said members of the search committee, formed to constitute a new Election Commission), have obligations to follow the principles of transparency and impartiality within its legal framework.

The president will form a new EC from the list of the persons recommended by this search committee, he said in a statement.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said recently the "Appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and Other Commissioners Bill- 2022" was passed in parliament.

Since the country's independence, he said, the EC will be formed for the first time following this specific law.

Responding to an allegation of BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir that the search committee was formed purposively, the AL general secretary said those, who introduced the ill-politics of seizing state power through killing-coup-conspiracy in this country, can make such irresponsible remarks.

Quader said the people of Bangladesh do not tolerate the imperious and irresponsible remarks of any quarter and do not fear any threat of conspirators.



Govt formed 'Awami private committee' Alleges Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that the government has formed a "private" Awami body in the name of a search committee.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office, BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said, "I think it's justified to call it an 'Awami private committee', not a search committee. This committee and those who will be found out by them for the Election Commission are all the passengers of the same boat. They're birds of a feather."

The BNP leader also said all the names that would be proposed by the search committee would be members of the Awami family.

Rizvi said the intended goal of the search committee will be finding out the tested and genuine Awami family members to hold another "managed" election as per a government blueprint.

On Saturday, a six-member search committee, led by Appellate Division Justice Obaidul Hassan, was formed to suggest the names of the chief election commissioner and other election commissioners.

The other members of the committee are High Court Division Justice SM Kuddus Zaman, the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh Md Muslim Chowdhury, Chairman of the Public Service Commission Md Sohrab Hossain, former election commissioner Muhammad Sohul Hussain and noted writer Anwara Syed Haque.

The tenure of incumbent Commission, led by CEC KM Nurul Huda, will expire on February 14.



Benefits for

FROM PAGE 5

"We know about the issue of excluding temporary workers who are more eligible for the grant," he said.

Meanwhile, Bijoy Bunarji, UP chairperson of Rajghat, said, "The union leaders agreed to the scheme because they are elected mostly by the permanent workers' votes."

However, the union's central committee vice-president Pankaj Kanda told this correspondent that they have not been informed about the scheme.

Shukla Gatuwal, a temporary tea worker who is currently unemployed, said she has not been getting regular work in the post-Covid period. "It would be nice if I could get some help right now."

"Union leaders assured us that we will get benefits as well, but the grants have been reserved only for the permanent workers this time as well. I feel helpless, to say the least," she told this correspondent.

পুট বিক্রয়
মিরপুর-১১ মেইন রোডে ৭৫ কাঠার বাণিজ্যিক কনার পুট বিক্রয় হবে। বর্তমানে ঋণ সুপারশপ ভাড়া আছে।
যোগাযোগ: ০১৭১৬-৭২৬৮৭৬

Tumultuous history

FROM PAGE 12

It was followed up by a more ambitious programme of a strike in all the educational institutions of Dhaka city on February 4, a public meeting in the university and a procession after the meeting. All the programmes were successful.

On February 21, the All-Party State Language Action Committee decided to organise province-wide strikes, meetings and processions, but on February 20, section 144 was imposed in Dhaka.

There was a meeting of 11 student leaders on the eastern ghat of the tank adjoining Dhaka Hall in the small hours of the night. The meeting was brief and historical. It was unanimously decided that Section 144 would be defied.

The attitude of the leaders of the political parties was compromising. They were apprehensive of repression. But the students had confidence in the people that unlike 1948 the people of Bengal this time would rally behind them in the struggle.

The evolution of the political situation by the students proved to be correct on February 22.

On February 21, the procession of the students was resisted with bullets, the ultimate weapon in the

armoury of the ruling class.

As the news of the outrageous action of the police in Dhaka got around in other parts of the province, it provoked instant protest strikes and street demonstrations everywhere.

The whole province was in turmoil and the administration was brought to a standstill. In 1952, the language movement turned into a political movement -- and it went on to kindle the spirit of nationhood for the first time.

Gaziul Haque presided over the historic Amtala meeting held on February 21, 1952 in the Dhaka University campus.

This is an abridged version of Gaziul Haque's article published in The Bangladesh Observer on February 21, 1972.

Adopt

FROM PAGE 12

It said strong evidence supports the conclusion that the crimes committed against the people of East Pakistan during the war were widespread and systematic and carried out by the Pakistan Army, other militia forces (Razakars, Al Badr, Al Shams), and pan-Islamic political forces, including Jamaat-e-Islam, Nezam-e-Islam and the Muslim League.

Railway inks deal

FROM PAGE 5

Talking to The Daily Star in December last year, Mizanur Rahman said another three years after the expiry of the revised deadline of June 2022 is needed. In June 2018, BR took up the Tk 3,602 crore project, with loans from Asian Development Bank, that would substantively enhance its operational capacity in three years.

But come June 2021, let alone complete the project -- which entails procuring 40 locomotives, 125 luggage vans and 1,000 wagons -- BR has failed to complete even the signing of agreements with all vendors, in a development that has become a characteristic of BR.

Of the 37 projects it

is implementing, 26 -- including this one -- has been extended at least once.

The project is procuring all these locomotives, luggage vans and wagons under five packages while contract for a fourth package was signed in December last year. The fifth and last one was signed yesterday.

The project authorities blamed cancellation of tender process, delay to get concurrence from ADB and the pandemic for the delay in the project's implementation.

Talking at yesterday's contract signing ceremony, Suján said it is not possible to develop Bangladesh without the development of railway.

Four killed in road

FROM PAGE 5

In Durgapur upazila yesterday. The victim is Rasel Mia (20) from Sadar upazila in Jamalpur.

Durgapur Police Station

Officer-in-Charge Mir Mahbubur Rahman said the accident occurred as the driver lost control over the steering due to poor visibility amid dense fog.

Notice
In the Supreme Court of Bangladesh
High Court Division
(Statutory Original Jurisdiction)
Arbitration Application No. 21 of 2021
In the Matter of:
Nazara Pte Ltd. -Versus- i-Vas Solutions and others.
Notice is hereby given to the Respondent No. 1 (i-Vas Solutions) that an application for servicing the summons upon the respondent No. 1 through publication in a newspaper was moved before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the Petitioner. Whereupon the Hon'ble Court presided over by Lordship Mr. Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar was pleased to allow the said application on 05.12.2021 and permitted the petitioner to serve a notice upon the respondent No. 1 through publication in a daily newspaper addressing to House No. 98, Block: C, Road: 11, Banani Model Town, Dhaka 1213 as well as through e-mail. Any one desirous of opposing the matter may appear before the Hon'ble Court either personally or through Advocate on the date fixed. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary charges.
Omar Sadat, LLM (Cantab), Barrister-at-Law,
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Sadat Sarwat & Associates
Chamber: House No. 28, Road No. 23, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Phone: 8824852, 9850355

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
Position Vacancy Announcement
Position: Project Management Specialist (M&E/Budget), FSN - 11
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Bangladesh is seeking applications from qualified Bangladeshi nationals for the position of **Project Management Specialist (M&E/Budget), FSN - 11** in the Office of Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG).
Location: USAID/Bangladesh, Deadline for application submission: February 21, 2022.
For a complete job description, required qualifications and detailed information on how to apply please visit USAID/Bangladesh website: <http://www.usaid.gov/bangladesh/work-with-us/careers> and www.bdjobs.com

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
অধ্যক্ষের কার্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম কলেজ, চট্টগ্রাম
College Education Development Project (CEDP)
College Road, Chawkbazar, Chattogram
Phone No. 031615007, ctgcollege@yahoo.com
Memo No. ctgcoll/cedp/otm(g)/eift03/2022 Date: 06/02/2022
e-Tender Notice: ctgcoll/cedp/otm(g)/eift-03/2022
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 package	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	652045	Procurement of furniture and interior decor for classrooms, college library, science laboratory, ICT lab and auditorium in Chittagong College, Chattogram	24-February-2022 02:00pm	24-February-2022 03:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks' branches up to 23-February 2022, 4pm.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Professor Mohammed Mozahidul Islam Chowdhury
Principal (Acting)
Chittagong College
Phone: 02 3333 65007
E-mail: ctgcollege@yahoo.com

GD-222

Career Opportunity
Sanko Optical Co., (BD) Ltd., is looking for the post of "Technician - Optical Lens", is located at the CEPZ, Chattogram, Bangladesh.
Educational Requirement:
■ High School Degree.
Experience:
■ Minimum Five (05) Years of experience required in Optical Lens Manufacturing Company.
■ Ability to Speak and Write in Japanese will be preferable.
Application Deadline:
■ 16 February 2022.
Sanko Optical Co.(BD) Ltd.
Plot No: 20,21,22,12 & 13, Sector-06, CEPZ, South Halishahar, Chattogram. Tel: +88 02333341416, +88 02333340310

GOVT. OF THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
GAIBANDHA.
Invitation for e-GP-Tender
Tender Notice No: e-GP-09/VER/Maushi/Gai/2021-22 Date: 06.02.2022
Memo No: EED/XEN/GAI/ 393 Date: 06.02.2022
e-Tender is hereby invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works/goods mentioned below.

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Works	Online Tender Publishing Date (On/After)	Online Tender Opening & Closing (Date & Time)
1.	584473	Vertical Extension of Existing Academic Building in/c Sanitary water supply & electrification works at at Vati Kapasheya High School,Sundargonj,Gaibandha.	07-02-2022	24-02-2022

ii) This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal according to the above tender ID and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
iii) To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
v) The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Package from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the Procuring Entity Office, National e-GP System Portal in accordance with tender ID and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

SD/-
(Md. Belal Ahmed)
Executive Engineer

GD- 223

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়
সিলেট পওর বিভাগ
বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড, সিলেট
মোবাইল নং-০১৩১৮-২৩৫৭৮৯
Email: xen.bwdb.sylhet@gmail.com
Office of the Executive Engineer
Sylhet O&M Division
Bangladesh Water Development Board, Sylhet
Email: xen.bwdb.sylhet@gmail.com
বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Invitation for Tender
Tender Notice No. O&M/2021-22/N-4
Invitation Reference No. Memo No. WBD/EE/T-12/1621 Date: 06-02-22

Sl No.	e-GP Tender ID	Name of the work
1.	657405	Repair & Rehabilitation of Executive Engineer's Residence Damaged in Earth Quake under Operation & Maintenance Budget under Sylhet O&M Division, BWDB, Sylhet during the FY-2021-22. (Package No. OM/W-9/Colony/2021-22)

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders 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 (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details please contact support desk contact number (01762625528-31).

পানি-৫৪৯/২০২১-২২
৪×৩
জিডি-২২৫

Asif Ahmed
Executive Engineer (C.C)
Sylhet O&M Division
BWDB, Sylhet

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Commerce
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000
www.mincom.gov.bd
Request for Expression of Interest (Eoi)
26.00.0000.125.033.26.21-12 Date: 07.02.2022

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Commerce.
2.	Agency	FTA Wing, Ministry of Commerce.
3.	Procuring entity name	Md. Selim Hossen, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Commerce.
4.	Procuring entity code	Not used at present.
5.	Expression of Interest for Selections of	National Consulting/Survey Firm.
6.	Procurement method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (OCBS).
7.	Budget and source of funds	Government of Bangladesh Fund.
8.	Project name	Logistics Sector Survey of Bangladesh.
9.	Eoi Reference No.	26.00.0000.125.033.26.21-12
10.	Place of Eoi	FTA Wing, Ministry of Commerce.
11.	Eoi offer date	07 February 2022.
12.	Eoi submission closing date	28 February 2022 at 2:00pm.
13.	Eoi opening date	28 February 2022 at 3:00pm.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
14.	Brief description of the assignment (Details stated in ToR)	Ministry of Commerce invites eligible National Consulting/Survey Firms to submit their proposal as per ToR published in notice board of Ministry of Commerce in the following website www.mincom.gov.bd .
15.	Experiences, resources and delivery capacity	The National Consulting/Survey Firms must have: • 10 years of general experience with at least 5 years in the respective sector/relevant field. • vast knowledge, understanding and experience in the sector. • sufficient number of researchers and Staff to conduct the work. • sufficient financial capacity to conduct the work. • evidence in support of required experience, resource and delivery capacity.
16.	Associated with foreign firms	Not applicable.
17.	Phase of service	Not applicable.
18.	Others information	• The consulting/survey firm will be selected in accordance with the provision of PPA, 2006 and PPR, 2008. • It is expected that the Consulting/Survey service will commence in April/2022. • The consultant's contract duration will be subject to his/her performance. • Expression of Interest (Eoi) shall be submitted by 28 February 2022 in sealed envelope clearly marked "Eoi for Technical Survey on Logistics Sector". • Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) criteria will be available at the website of Ministry of Commerce www.mincom.gov.bd • The Eoi offer needs to be submitted in person/through Post in the mentioned address.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
19.	Name of the official inviting Eoi	Md. Selim Hossen.
20.	Designation of the official inviting Eoi	Deputy Secretary (FTA-5), Ministry of Commerce
21.	Address of the official inviting Eoi	Building No. 3, Room No. 133, Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000.
22.	Contact details of the official inviting Eoi	+88029540199, E-mail: fta5@mincom.gov.bd
23.	The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Expression of Interests (Eoi).	

MD. Selim Hossen
Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Commerce
+88029540199
E-mail: fta5@mincom.gov.bd

GD-224

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
জাতীয় নদী রক্ষা কমিশন
হোসাইন টাওয়ার (১২তলা)
বীরপ্রতীক গোলাম দস্তগীর রোড
১১৬, নয়াদিল্লি, ঢাকা-১০০০
www.nrcrb.gov.bd
বাঁচলে নদী, বাঁচবে দেশ, বাঁচবে গ্লোব বাংলাদেশ
তারিখ: ২৩ মার্চ ১৪২৮
তারিখ: ৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২২
নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি
জাতীয় নদী রক্ষা কমিশনের অব্যবহৃত গ্রাস পার্শিশন, থাই এ্যালুমিনিয়াম, টেম্পার ডোর, স্লাইড ডোর, পুরাতন ফ্যান ও পুরাতন লাইট নিলামে বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্ত প্রকৃত ক্রেতা/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নিজস্ব প্যাডে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে ২০/২/২০২২ তারিখ, রবিবার বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে কমিশন কার্যালয়ের ১১তম তলায় রক্ষিত বাক্সে দর দাখিলের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য যে, একই দিন বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দাখিলকৃত দর উন্মুক্ত করা হবে। নিলামে বিক্রয়যোগ্য মালামালসমূহ কমিশনের কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত আছে। মালামালগুলো অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরেজমিনে দেখা যাবে এবং উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ) নিকট হতে এতদসংক্রান্ত সকল তথ্য জানা যাবে। নিলামে বিক্রয়যোগ্য মালামালের তালিকা নিম্নে দেয়া হলোঃ

ক্রম	মালামালের বিবরণ	পরিমাণ/সংখ্যা	নিলামে প্রদত্ত দর	
			একক দর	মোট মূল্য
১	গ্রাস পার্শিশন	২.২৪১ বর্গফুট		
২	থাই এ্যালুমিনিয়াম	২০৬৬ ফুট		
৩	টেম্পার ডোর	১০ পিস (৩ ফুট x ৭ ফুট)		
৪	স্লাইড ডোর	১৪ পিস (৩ ফুট x ৭ ফুট)		
৫	ফ্যান	২৩টি		
৬	লাইট	৭৪টি		
সর্বমোট মূল্য			১০% ভ্যাট	
ভ্যাটসহ সর্বমোট মূল্য				

১. এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে আগামী ১৭/২/২০২২ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরেজমিনে দেখা যাবে;
২. অগ্রাধী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে দর দাখিলের সময় একক মূল্য ও মোট মূল্য নিজস্ব প্যাডে দাখিল করতে হবে। সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতার নিকট মালামাল বিক্রয় করা হবে;
৩. দাখিলকৃত দরদাতাকে দরপত্রের সাথে উদ্ধৃত দরের ১০% জামানত পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে (ফেরতযোগ্য) চেয়ারম্যান, জাতীয় নদী রক্ষা কমিশন বরাবর জমা দিতে হবে;
৪. নির্বাচিত ১ম সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতাকে অফিস আদেশ দেওয়ার ২(দুই) দিনের মধ্যে উদ্ধৃত টাকা সরকারি কোষাগার/ট্রেজারি চালানের মাধ্যমে জমা দিতে হবে;
৫. অফিস আদেশ অনুযায়ী নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে মালামালসমূহ গ্রহণের নিমিত্ত উদ্ধৃত টাকা সরকারি কোষাগার/ট্রেজারি চালানের মাধ্যমে জমা না দিলে দরপত্রের সাথে জমাকৃত জামানত বাজেয়াপ্ত করা হবে।
৬. নির্বাচিত দরদাতাকে নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে নিজ দায়িত্বে মালামাল সংগ্রহ করতে হবে অন্যথায় তার জমাকৃত উদ্ধৃত টাকা বাজেয়াপ্ত করা হবে;
৭. দাখিলকৃত দরদাতা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে দর দাখিলের সময় হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট ও আয়কর সনদ দাখিল করতে হবে; এবং
৮. কোনো কারণ দর্শনা ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দর গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে।

Hossain 06/02/2022
ড. খ ম কবিরুল ইসলাম
উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ)
দুরালাপনীর ৫৮৩১৪০৯৭
জিডি-২২১



This winter, vegetable farmer Azmol Ali was blessed with a good yield, which bore him a profit twice that of the preceding years. While he cultivated different kinds of vegetables, Azmol took a leap of faith and decided to grow a hybrid variety of sweet pumpkin, that grows well despite minimum care. As its lush flowers start to bloom, they signal hope for Azmol. This photo was taken from Sylhet’s Mogalgaon union.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Four killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed in road accidents in four districts during the last two days, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Dinaipur, a motorcyclist was killed after a truck hit him on Dinaipur-Gobindaganj road in Birampur upazila yesterday.

The deceased – Minarul Islam (38) from Nilphamari – was an employee of a local NGO.

Ershad Mia, a sub-inspector of Birampur Police Station, said Minarul was going to Birampur from his home riding a bike.

In Rangpur, another motorcyclist was killed as a bus hit the bike from the opposite direction at Dewti village in Pirgachha upazila yesterday. Sagar Mia (30) died on the spot, said police.

In Joypurhat, another biker was killed as the motorcycle hit a roadside tree in Radhanagar village on Saturday night.

The deceased – Kausik Chakraborty (22) – was from Panchbibi municipality area in the district.

Panchbibi Police Station OC Polash Chandra Deb said the accident occurred as Kausik lost his control over the bike.

In Netrakona, a lorry driver was killed as the vehicle fell into a ditch beside Durgapur-Nazirpur road at Dashedal village

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Benefits for some, but what about the rest?

Govt excludes temporary tea workers from welfare scheme

MINTU DESHWARA

The government has recently started listing beneficiaries for a special programme to improve the lives and livelihoods of tea workers of the country, under the “Cha Sramikder Jibanman Unnayan Karmasuchi” scheme.

While an appreciable step, the scheme leaves out temporary tea workers, despite their number being significantly higher than the permanent workers.

According to the latest data from the Statistical Handbook on Bangladesh Tea Industry-2019, Bangladesh currently has 166 tea gardens in total, where there are 1,03,747 permanent workers and 36,437 temporary workers.

The total tea population, i.e. those who are dependent on the income of the permanent and temporary workers, is 4,72,125.

According to Central Committee of the Bangladesh Tea Workers Union’s data, the tea population in the country is approximately seven and a half lakhs.

However, after reviewing the data of 166 tea gardens, this correspondent found that there are no permanent tea workers in many of the gardens, including Baban Tea Garden of Habiganj; Sayilan, Dahuk, Karotoa and MM Tea Garden of Panchagarh; Greenfield Tea Garden of Thakurgaon and Hamidia Tea Garden of Moulvibazar.

This means the government’s scheme will exclude the vast number of workers employed by these gardens from its benefits.

Talking to The Daily Star, Koloti Rabidas, a temporary tea worker from Kulaura upazila, said they get no benefits other than the regular wage. “We work the same hours as permanent workers, but the limited grants and opportunities are



As the government starts listing the beneficiaries of its special scheme for tea workers around the country, temporary workers of the tea gardens remain excluded from its benefits. With the sense of uncertainty looming over their heads, they have only one question: What does the future hold?

PHOTO: STAR

always reserved for them,” he said.

“With the government following the same policy in their scheme as well, our woes keep going overlooked,” he added.

The fact that benefits are mostly given to permanent workers was confirmed by Nipen Paul, Bangladesh Tea Workers Union’s acting general secretary.

He informed that permanent workers get medical treatment, ration, homestead and provident fund benefits under the scheme, while temporary workers get close to nothing.

“This population is in dire need of these benefits, considering their living condition,” added Nipen.

Pranesh Goala, Kalighat’s UP

chairperson, said, “All voters in this union are from the tea gardens. Each vote was counted to form the current government, but it has only allowed benefits to permanent workers in return.”

He added that the new rules are in clear violation of the “Cha Sramikder Jibanman Unnayan Karmasuchi Bastobayan Nitimala-2013”, which prioritises worse-off workers.

Md Shah Jahan, deputy director of the social services (Bede, backward and transgender people) department, told this correspondent that they have talked to union leaders about introducing the scheme for permanent workers.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

420 WAGONS

Railway inks deal with Indian company

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) yesterday signed a contract with an Indian company to procure 420 Broad Gauge (BR) wagons, aiming to increase its capacity to operate more freight trains.

As per the contract, Hindustan Engineering and Industries Ltd will provide the wagons within two and half years from the date the contract will be effective, at the cost of Tk 231.19 crore.

Project Director Mizanur Rahman and Pradip Guha, vice president (marketing) of the Kolkata-based company, signed the contract on behalf of the organisation at Rail Bhaban, in presence of Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan.

The agreement was signed only five months before the expiry of the revised deadline of the project, meaning another lengthy extension is most definitely in the offing.

As per the contract, Hindustan Engineering and Industries Ltd of India will provide 420 broad gauge wagons within 2.5 years from the date the contract will be effective, at the cost of Tk 231.19 crore.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



CTG METRO RAIL

Govt to start feasibility study

Says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to start a feasibility study for launching the metro rail service in Chattogram city, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.


Apart from the feasibility study, a long-term and comprehensive transport masterplan for the port city will be prepared under a Tk 77 crore project. Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) will provide Tk 51 crore as grant. The study is slated to be completed within one year, he said.

The study will be implemented by Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority, he told reporters after holding a meeting with South Korean ambassador Lee Jang-keun at the Secretariat. The move comes a month after the prime minister at an Ecneec meeting on January 4 called for a metro rail from Chattogram airport to the railway station in Chattogram.


However, the discussion to construct metro rail in port city has been going on for longer. Back in October 15, 2019, Quader said the PM had asked him to start a feasibility study for the project.

Quader yesterday said feasibility study for the metro rail will be carried out along with the preparation of a comprehensive transport plan for port city and adjacent areas.

A Korean expert team has already arrived in Bangladesh and they will hold series of meetings with stakeholders in Chattogram and collect necessary data from February 8 to 12, he said.



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There will never be another LATA MANGESHKAR

India's Nightingale passes away at 92

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

As celebrations of Saraswati Puja ended, the world incurred the irrevocable loss of the 'Saraswati' of music, the next morning.

Lata Mangeshkar, India's indomitable songstress, passed away at 8:12 am yesterday at the age of 92, due to post-covid complications.

She left behind a legacy of more than 30,000 songs across 36 different languages.

Intriguingly, that is not why she is considered one of the greatest musicians to ever live – her longevity, exceptional humility, sheer conviction and god-gifted voice made her second to none. For more than 7 decades, she was the top singer in a country, in which music is held in the highest of regards. Her accomplishments had earned her the moniker of "Nightingale of India".

India declared a two-day national mourning following the news, and its national flag would fly at half-mast.

"I consider it my honour that I have always received immense affection from Lata didi," wrote Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Twitter. "My interactions with her will remain unforgettable."

"A great void has been created in



Lata Mangeshkar was the face of Indian music for over 7 decades.

Lata Mangeshkar's rendition of "Aye Mere Watan Ke Logon, Zara Aankh Me Bhar Lo Pani" moved India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to tears, in 1962.

Some of her iconic songs are "Lag Ja Gale", "Ek Pyar Ka Nagma Hain", "Ajeeb Dastan Hain Ye", "Baahon Mein Chaale Ao", "Meere Khwabon Mein Jo Aayein", "Kora Kaagaz Tha," among many others.

Among countless other accolades, Lata Mangeshkar was the recipient of three National Awards, the Padma Bhushan award in the 1969, and the Padma Vibhushan in 1999.

Lata Mangeshkar, on various occasions, had said that if she could, she would keep singing until her last breath. In recent times, the legend had reservations about the direction that Bollywood had taken in terms of music, but kept singing a in other mediums.

Words will never be enough to encapsulate the legacy of Lata Mangeshkar, as noted by eminent Indian lyricist Javed Akhtar. "If there is anything called perfection, Lata Mangeshkar had achieved it," he told the media yesterday.

Lata Mangeshkar was not just a musician; she was the personification of music. As the world bids goodbye to her physical existence, she can never truly die as an entity, as an institution.

the subcontinent's musical arena with the demise of the Sursamraggi," said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her condolence message.

People from all over the world, irrespective of national borders, paid tribute to the songstress on social media. From actors and entertainers to politicians and cricketers, the entire world was heartbroken.

Lata Mangeshkar was born on September 28, 1929 to Marathi musician Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar and Shevanti in Indore. She was the oldest of her siblings Meena Khadikar, Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar and Hridaynath Mangeshkar.

Before making a mark as a singer, Lata had faced the camera as an actress. She worked as an actress in over eight films from 1942 to 1948.

Lata Mangeshkar's debut song 'Nachu Yaa Gade, Khelu Saari Mani Haus Bhaari' for Marathi film 'Kiti Hasaal' (1942) was dropped from the final cut of the film.

Her first Hindi song was "Mata Ek Sapoot Ki Duniya Badal De Tu" for the Marathi film "Gajaabhaau", in 1943.

She did not have to look back after that, as she went on to become the top name in the music industries of not just Bollywood, but lent her god-gifted voice to regional films as well. She also directed the music for 5 films.



Taken on the day of Lata Mangeshkar's first recording: September 9, 1938. Photo taken from Instagram.

"I will continue to sing till my last breath. We Mangeshkars are a family devoted to music. Take music away from our lives, and we are nothing."

Lata Mangeshkar to Indian media in 2018

An unparalleled career

Interesting facts about Lata Mangeshkar

Although Lata Mangeshkar's importance in the world of music can be talked about for days on end, her greater legacy was that of a humble artiste, whose passion for her craft was unparalleled. That being said, let us look at some interesting facts about her career.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

1. Lata Mangeshkar's first recorded song was "Naachu Yaa Gade, Khelu Saari Mani Haus Bhaari" in 1942 for the Marathi movie, "Kiti Hasaal." However, the song was removed from the film's final cut.
2. Her last recorded song was "Saugandh Mujhe Is Mitti Ki". It was a tribute to the Indian Army, and it was released on March 30, 2019.
3. Lata Mangeshkar's last full album was from the film, "Veer-Zaara", in 2004. In the movie, she lent her voice to songs like "Tere Liye", "Aisa Des Hai Mera", and "Yeh Hum Aa Gaye Hain Kahaan", among others.
4. The Guinness Book of World Records' 1974 edition listed Lata Mangeshkar as the artiste with the most recordings. However, Mohammed Rafi, contested the claim. As a result, her entry was removed in 1991 until 2011, when Guinness listed Lata's sister Asha Bhosle as the most



Lata Mangeshkar was the first Indian artiste to perform at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

a special perfume was created in 1999, which was called the "Lata Eau de Parfum". It has a mixture of 78 different essences, with hints of a floral scent.

7. The legendary singer received 25 rupees as her first salary, for singing on stage.
8. Lata Mangeshkar's breakthrough song was "Aayega Aanevala", picturised on Madhubala, in the film, "Mahal".
9. She once said while speaking to Bollywood

A perfume launched in honour of Lata Mangeshkar, in 1999.

Hungama that she does not listen to her own songs as if she did, she would find a hundred faults in her singing.

10. Lata Mangeshkar was the first ever Indian to perform in the prestigious Royal Albert Hall, London. The government of France feted her with

the 'Officer of the Legion of Honour' in 2007, which is the country's highest civilian award.

11. The veteran artiste sang on the radio for the first time in December 16, 1941. Since then, she had recorded over 30, 000 songs in 36 languages.
12. In September 2021, celebrated filmmaker and composer, Vishal Bhardwaj, treated fans by releasing an unreleased track by her, titled, "Theek Nahi Lagta". Recorded in the 90s, the song was written by Gulzar, and later got shelved.
13. Ritu Nanda, Raj Kapoor's daughter, revealed that Lata Mangeshkar was the inspiration behind his film, "Satyam Shivam Sundaram", and he wanted to cast her in the film.
14. Lata Mangeshkar launched her music label, LM Music, in 2013. By this time, she had thousands of songs in several Indian languages, from Punjabi to Tamil, Bengali, and across genres from Gurbani to ghazals, qawwalis, and classical compositions.



Lata Mangeshkar with Raj Kapoor

recorded artiste. Currently, Pulapaka Susheela holds the record.

5. Lata Mangeshkar made her movie debut in the Marathi film, "Pahili Mangalaa-gaur" in 1942, at the age of 13. She essayed the role of the younger sister of the lead actress, Snehprabha Pradhan.

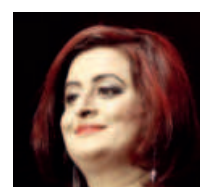
6. Honouring the legendary singer,



Sabina Yasmin



Ferdausi Rahman



Alif Alauddin



Runa Laila with Lata Mangeshkar.

The voice that inspired millions

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Every year on my birthday, she would send me a sari: Runa Laila

The voice that has inspired millions like me is now singing for the angels in heaven. Over the years, we built up a beautiful relationship of love and mutual respect. We exchanged messages on a daily basis and had long telephone conversations, talking about music in general.

Every year on my birthday, she would send me a sari. When we spoke last, she told me that I was her younger sister and she loves me very much and respects my talent. I am filled with a sense of desolation and emptiness that will remain with me forever, that I won't hear that lovely voice again, saying Runa ji Aap kaisi hain? (How are you dear Runa?). I shall cherish your blessings and love till the end, Saraswati Maa. My Didi.

I could not sing in front of her: Sabina Yasmin

SD Burman had come to the Bangladesh Film Festival in India, and asked me to perform. When I saw Lata Mangeshkar in the hall, I immediately froze, as I could not believe that I was seeing her in person. I could not bring myself to sing in front of her.

Nonetheless, I performed, and she listened attentively. She smiled at me, and blessed me afterwards. I will never forget that day.

I will always regret for not being able to meet her in person: Ferdausi Rahman

I doubt we will have another great artiste like her in this continent ever again. She won the hearts of people of all ages. She had such a melodious voice. Although I have visited Mumbai numerous times, I never got to meet her. I will always regret not meeting her in person. She was really lucky to receive love from millions of people during her lifetime.

My mother and I listened to her songs every afternoon: Alif Alauddin

Celebrating 400 years of Kolkata, I went to the city with my parents, and Lata Mangeshkar also attended the occasion. Runa Laila and Bhupen Hazarika along with Abbu (Alauddin Ali), were invited among others at the Kolkata Stadium.

My mother was very excited, as we were staying at the same hotel as Lata Mangeshkar. She called me close to her, and took a picture with me. I was amazed with the respect my parents paid to her. My mother and I listened to her songs every afternoon. Thank you, for all the memories.

UK papers herald ‘Queen Camilla’

AFP, London

Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II has announced that she wants daughter-in-law Camilla to hold the role of queen consort once her son Charles ascends to the throne, in a major statement timed to mark her unprecedented seventieth jubilee.

The move cemented a remarkable journey to public acceptance for Camilla, after being vilified for her role in the break-up of Charles’ marriage to Princess Diana -- and shows that the Queen is planning for the future after her death.

Predictably the news dominated Sunday’s front pages, with the Daily Mail -- Britain’s highest-circulation newspaper -- declaring “Camilla WILL become Queen”.

The move was a long time coming for the Mail, which splashed on its Sunday front page that the queen’s statement “ends years of speculation” over the future role of the Duchess of Cambridge as well as quashing rumours that she might abdicate.

The decision, the tabloid declared, represented “the clearest sign yet not just of the Queen’s unwavering support for her daughter-in-law but proof of her enduring affection for the woman who has secured her eldest son’s happiness”.

The Mail’s main conservative tabloid rival, The Sunday Express, also led with the story, describing it as the Queen’s “Platinum Jubilee Gift to Charles” and offering readers a free eight-page souvenir special to mark Elizabeth II’s 70 years as monarch.



A couple take a selfie photograph before an image of Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II at Piccadilly Circus in central London, yesterday, to mark the start of Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee Year. Queen Elizabeth II yesterday became the first British monarch to reign for seven decades.

PHOTO: AFP

CYBERATTACKS UN says North Korea making profits from it

REUTERS, United Nations

North Korea continued to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programs during the past year and cyberattacks on cryptocurrency exchanges were an important revenue source for Pyongyang, according to an excerpt of a confidential United Nations report seen on Saturday by Reuters.

The annual report by independent sanctions monitors was submitted on Friday evening to the UN Security Council North Korea sanctions committee.

“According to a member state, DPRK cyberactors stole more than \$50 million between 2020 and mid-2021 from at least three cryptocurrency exchanges in North America, Europe and Asia,” the report said.

In 2019, the UN sanctions monitors reported that North Korea had generated an estimated \$2 billion for its weapons of mass destruction programs using widespread and increasingly sophisticated cyberattacks.

The report also said that the country’s “humanitarian situation” has worsened.

Putin keeping all options open

Say US officials, Ukraine says diplomatic solution more likely than full-scale invasion



AFP, Washington

Russia has stepped up preparations for an all-out invasion of Ukraine but it is not clear if Moscow has decided to take such a step, US officials have said citing intelligence assessments.

Russia has assembled 110,000 troops along the border with its pro-Western neighbor but US intelligence has not determined if President Vladimir Putin has actually decided to invade, according to the officials who in recent days briefed members of Congress and European allies.

The officials warned lawmakers that the assembled Russian force on the frontier is growing at a rate that would give Putin the force he needs for a full-scale invasion -- some 150,000 soldiers -- by mid-February.

They said Putin wants all possible options at his disposal: from a limited campaign in the pro-Russian Donbas region of Ukraine to a full-

scale invasion. Russia denies that it is planning to invade Ukraine.

If Moscow does opt for a full-scale attack, the invading force could take the capital Kyiv and topple President Volodymyr Zelensky in a matter of 48 hours, the officials said.

They estimated such an attack would leave 25,000 to 50,000 civilians dead, along with 5,000 to 25,000 Ukrainian soldiers and 3,000 to 10,000 Russian ones.

It could also trigger a refugee flood of one to five million people, mainly into Poland, the officials added.

However, Ukraine’s presidency yesterday insisted the chance of resolving soaring tensions with Russia through diplomacy remained greater than that of an attack.

“An honest assessment of the situation suggests that the chance of finding a diplomatic solution for de-escalation is still substantially higher than the threat of further escalation,”

‘Little Rayan’ dies before rescue

AFP, Morocco

Morocco was in shock yesterday after emergency crews found a five-year-old boy dead at the bottom of a well in a tragic end to a painstaking five-day rescue operation that gripped the nation and the world.

The ordeal of “little Rayan” since he fell down the well on Tuesday afternoon gained global attention and sparked an outpouring of sympathy online, with the Arabic hashtag #SaveRayan trending.

Throughout the operation to extricate him from the bottom of the 32-metre (100-foot) well shaft, authorities had cautioned that they did not know whether he was alive.

And reflecting the emotions provoked by the drama, it was Morocco’s royal cabinet that announced he had been found dead.

Tributes poured in in the wake of the news that the rescue efforts had failed to recover Rayan alive.

“I want to say to the family of little Rayan and to the Moroccan people that we share your pain,” French President Emmanuel Macron said on Facebook.

Guterres urges China to allow ‘credible’ visit by UN rights chief

REUTERS, United Nations

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told Chinese leaders on Saturday that he expected authorities to allow UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet to make a “credible visit” to the country, including Xinjiang, the United Nations said.

Guterres met with China’s President Xi Jinping and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the Winter Olympics, according to a UN readout of the meetings. Bachelet’s office in Geneva said last month that conversations were underway for a possible trip to the area in northwest China in the first half of the year.



Pakistan a priority in neighbourhood diplomacy: China

NDTV ONLINE

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Saturday said that Pakistan is a “priority” in China’s neighbourhood diplomacy as he met his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan who ensured him that his government will do its utmost to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals and projects in his country.

Li, the second-ranking leader of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) after Chinese President Xi Jinping, has expressed China’s willingness to strengthen all-dimensional practical cooperation with Pakistan, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Khan is in Beijing at the invitation of the Chinese government and attended the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics on Friday. Khan is also expected to meet President Xi during which he may discuss the state of “all-weather ties”, the problems faced by the President’s pet initiative, the \$60 billion CPEC and Chinese loans and investments to shore up Pakistan’s sagging economy.

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The president’s decision is illegal.

Youssef Bouzakher, top Tunisia judge, after Kais Saied dissolves top judicial body

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মুজিব শতবর্ষ

পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন কার্যক্রমে ব্যবহার অনুপযোগী ও কনডেম ঘোষিত বিভিন্ন সাইজের কাঠের পোল/পোলের খন্ডাংশ, কাঠের ক্রসআর্ম, কাঠের এ্যাংকর লগ ৮০ টি পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি-তে যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে নিলামে বিক্রয় করার লক্ষ্যে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। প্রাথমিক হিসাবে এসকল কাঠের মোট পরিমান আনুমানিক ৫,০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার) মেট্রিক টন। তবে কায়িক ওজনে এর পরিমান কম-বেশী হতে পারে। এসকল ব্যবহার অনুপযোগী কাঠ Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) ড্রিটেড থাকায় এগুলি কোনভাবেই জালানী কাঠ হিসেবে ব্যবহার করা যাবে না। পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক ২০১০ সালে প্রণীত 3R Strategy (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle) for Waste Management নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী বৈদ্যুতিক লাইন হতে অপসারিত এসকল কাঠ শুধুমাত্র কম্পোজিট উড তৈরীর মাধ্যমে পুনঃচক্রায়ন (Recycling) করার বিষয়ে সক্ষম ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন আগ্রহী শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠান তাঁদের নিজস্ব প্যাডে আবেদন করা সাপেক্ষে সর্বোচ্চ গ্রহণযোগ্য দরপ্রস্তাবকারীর অনুকূলে বিক্রয় করা হবে। আগ্রহী দরদাতাগণকে “বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড” এর অনুকূলে যেকোন তফসিলি ব্যাংকের যেকোন শাখা হতে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকার (অফেরতযোগ্য) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার জমা প্রদানের মাধ্যমে আপাতী ০৭/০২/২০২২ খ্রিঃ তারিখ হতে ২২/০২/২০২২ খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন পবিস মনিটরিং ও ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালন (উত্তরাঞ্চল) পরিদপ্তর, বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড, সদর দপ্তর ভবন (৯ম তলা), রুম নং-৯০৩, নিকুঞ্জ-২, খিলক্ষেত, ঢাকা-১২২৯ হতে দরপত্র দলিল সংগ্রহ করতে হবে। দরপত্র দলিলের শর্তানুযায়ী দরপ্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে হবে।

বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড
BANGLADESH RURAL ELECTRIFICATION BOARD

পরিচালক
পবিস মনিটরিং ও ব্যঃ পঃ (উত্তরাঞ্চল) পরিদপ্তর
বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড, ঢাকা।

বাপবিবো/জন-(২২০২-১১৩)/২০২১-২০২২

GD-220

Why is the DoE dormant?

Its failure to contain single-use plastic unacceptable

IT is disheartening that the Department of Environment (DoE) has completely failed to comply with a High Court directive to stop the use of single-use plastic in hotels, motels, and restaurants in the coastal areas. Reportedly, the HC gave the order in January 2020, asking the DoE to put an end to such plastic use by 2021. Already, two years have passed with no visible progress made to contain its use. Moreover, the department is yet to submit a compliance report in this regard to the HC.

What has it done in these two years then? Apparently, it undertook a project to stop the use of throwaway plastics in 12 coastal districts last year, and held one meeting with the hotel-motel owners in Cox's Bazar. That's it. Now, if a government department responsible for saving our environment has a lacklustre attitude towards such a serious problem, can we blame the owners of the hotels, motels and restaurants for not complying with the order (since using throwaway plastics is convenient for them anyway)?

Environmentalists believe that there is no reason why the DoE cannot do all that is required to stop the use of single-use plastics. With the support of law enforcers, they can easily monitor the situation on the ground and take action against those not complying with the order.

Meanwhile, plastic usage in the country has been increasing at an alarming rate. Bangladesh has already become one of the top plastic polluting countries in the world. According to a 2020 World Bank report, the per capita plastic use in the country has increased to 9kg in 2020 from 3kg in 2005. A majority of the plastics used eventually end up in the oceans, threatening the very existence of marine life. The situation calls for stronger commitment and greater action from the authorities concerned. However, we must also remember that, in order for the hotel, motel and restaurant owners to stop using throwaway plastics, there should be better and sustainable alternatives.

The government has a big role to play here. They need to come forward to support the scientists who have already invented biodegradable alternatives to plastics, such as jute molymmer and biodegradable packaging materials from corn, etc. Popularising the use of traditional jute bags can also help beat the use of plastic bags. Needless to say, the DoE has to lead the way. Since they, in cooperation with the World Bank, have prepared a roadmap to stop the use of single-use plastic in our coastal regions, and also undertaken a three-year project, they must now focus on implementing their plans and projects and bring us some results.

Time to be sensible about the Ukraine crisis

Dialogue, not military action, should be the way to resolution

WE are deeply concerned about the escalating tensions between NATO and Russia over Ukraine. While the current crisis has been building up for years—some say even decades, since the USSR broke up in 1991 and Ukraine began leaning towards the West—it now seems to have reached a boiling point. The US claims that Russia is gearing up to launch an attack on Ukraine and that it has already assembled at least 70 percent of the military firepower it likely intends to have in place by mid-February. Though Ukraine only receives US and allied military support and training as of yet, it does wish to be a NATO member—something that Russia, especially President Putin, has been firmly against since long. But the biggest concern is how the safety of Ukrainian citizens is now hanging in the balance between Russia's wish to not let NATO get any closer to itself (via Ukraine) and the West's reading of Russia's behaviour as a threat to pro-West Ukraine.

Several questions arise here: Why has Russia reportedly amassed 100,000 troops on the Ukrainian border? And is the US correct in seeing this as an imminent threat to Ukraine and its NATO neighbours? While Russia's routine exercise of strategic nuclear forces may be one explanation for the gathering of its troops, the US may be right to wonder why it was shifted to be held from mid-February to March instead of in the Fall, as is usual. But if Russia was adamant before about NATO not taking Ukraine under its wing, this demand has become an ultimatum now—something which the West will never bow to. Russia's concern that NATO may be getting closer to itself by eventually taking in Ukraine is also not something that can be brushed aside. After all, will the West gain much in terms of security if Ukraine is made a NATO member?

This may all seem a faraway issue for Bangladesh, as it is happening between countries we are not regionally connected to and over issues that do not, at first glance, concern us directly. However, being ever-committed to world peace, and having first-hand awareness of the dire consequences of war, we would like to call upon NATO members (especially the US) and Russia to engage in diplomatic dialogue and make efforts to de-escalate tensions over Ukraine immediately. If the current situation is allowed to fester, it will only lead to more war-mongering and trading of arms and weapons. That may set precedence for existing conflicts between other regions to worsen as well. War cannot be an option.

No respite from high food prices



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

PEOPLE around the world are grappling with inflationary pressure.

Many have lost their jobs or are earning a lower income. Prices of daily essentials and fuel have spiralled, further draining people's purses. Businesses have also been affected, particularly small businesses, who are yet to recover from pandemic-induced shocks. Though countries are on the path to recovery, the emergence of Omicron coupled with the high inflationary pressure might slow down their recovery in the short term. Meanwhile, since global economy is recovering, demand has gone up while supply could not match the demand.

Bangladesh has been in the recovery trajectory, too. However, like other countries, high inflation has been a major concern for Bangladesh. The inflationary pressure on Bangladesh's economy started around June 2020 following the outbreak of the pandemic. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), point-to-point inflation rose to 6.05 percent in December 2021 compared to 5.29 percent in December 2020. Food inflation went up to 5.46 percent in December 2021, as opposed to 5.34 percent in December 2020.

The price hike in Bangladesh is often linked with the global price hike. Bangladesh is a net importer of fuel oil. It also imports edible oil, food, sugar, intermediate goods and raw materials for production. Therefore, any price increase in the global market is felt in Bangladesh almost immediately. This is a regular phenomenon and has been the case for decades. During periods of crisis, it becomes even more prominent. It may be recalled that during 2000-2008, increasing global fuel and food prices were transmitted into Bangladesh economy. The inflationary pressure started to ease following a global meltdown towards the end of 2008 and in 2009, which caused prices of major commodities to fall. However, inflation started to rise once the global economy started to turn around towards the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010. In the following decade, till the outbreak of the pandemic, the inflationary trend fluctuated.

In 2011, the global food price index increased significantly. After a decade, food prices are alarmingly high again. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that the FAO Food Price Index in 2021 was 28.1 percent higher than in 2020. Globally, the cost of logistics such as



▲ **In the absence of high growth, good agricultural production and a proper market monitoring system, high food inflation may continue to be a reality.**

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Higher domestic food prices are a dominant factor for high inflation in Bangladesh's urban and rural areas.

is one of the reasons for high prices. A key component of high inflation in Bangladesh is high food inflation in the domestic market. Since food comprises about 60 percent of the total Consumer Price Index in Bangladesh, higher domestic food price is a dominant factor for high inflation both in urban and rural areas. Lower production is a key reason for the high price. Before the harvesting season, there is a lean period when supply is relatively low. This is a time when prices tend to go up. However, often markets do not follow the rule of demand and supply. For example, vegetable prices continued to be high even after the winter supply came in. The impact of higher supply was not reflected in prices. The cost of transportation and other logistics also contributed to this. For non-perishable commodities, there are market manipulators, hoarders, and syndicates—all of them take advantage of moments of crisis.

The global prediction for agriculture production is not promising in view of the impact of climate change, which is manifested not only through flood and cyclones but also through drought and wildfire. In the absence of high growth and good agricultural production, the inflationary pressure will continue to prevail. Indeed, due to uncertain climatic conditions, high input costs and the

an exorbitant price.

Therefore, Bangladesh needs to take measures well in advance. As a climate vulnerable country, it faces a high risk in terms of production disruption. On the other hand, the demand for rice and other food items is increasing. Hence, to have a proper market signal and price stability, a correct demand estimation for rice is needed. It is also essential to monitor the role of market players, including rice millers and importers, who control prices by manipulation.

Inflationary pressure always has an adverse impact on the consumers through reduction of their purchasing power and income erosion. High inflation, particularly high food inflation, affects the poor and people in the fixed income group. They are yet to absorb the burden of diesel price hike in November 2021. Now, with the continuous price hike of essential commodities, they find it difficult to live a decent life. The government's support measures in the form of direct cash transfer to the poor, social protection to low-income families as well as stimulus for the small businesses, can provide some respite in the short term. In the medium term, higher production through higher investment will help create jobs and income, which is crucial for absorbing price shocks.

Bangladesh RMG: Old perceptions die hard



RMG NOTES

Mostafiz Uddin is managing director of Denim Expert Limited, and founder and CEO of Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE) and Bangladesh Denim Expo.

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

IN Bangladesh's RMG industry, we view ourselves as fighting for a position as the world's second most important garment sourcing hub. We are neck-and-neck with Vietnam and also forged ahead of our nearest competitor this year after we posted record garment export receipts. Of course, both Bangladesh and Vietnam lag behind China, a textile powerhouse which will take some considerable time to catch up to because of the huge investments it has made in technology and innovation.

So, it was quite sobering to read a recent UN-World Trade Organization report which appears to place Bangladesh in a tier below Vietnam (and China) in terms of apparel sourcing. I have to say, my eyes did a double-take when I read this report, which claims that executives ranked Vietnam higher in 10 out of 12 indices. These covered such issues as production quality, lead time, innovation, vertical integration and sustainability.

The only two areas where Bangladesh was ahead of Vietnam were price and tariff advantages. The latter of these is hardly anything to shout about, while the former simply confirms the idea that Bangladesh is where executives go for cheap prices.

The findings led the authors to conclude that Bangladesh, along with other Least Developed Countries (LDCs) such as Cambodia, are "part of [fashion's] diverse sourcing base... Overall, China and Vietnam are regarded as more critical sourcing bases."

"However, these LDC countries are not

regarded as competitive in terms of speed to market, flexibility of order quantity, or innovation and ability to develop products. There are also concerns about the relatively high social and environmental compliance risks when sourcing from such significant suppliers as Bangladesh and Cambodia," the report states.

I would not be so presumptuous as to question the findings of a report by two organisations as prestigious as the UN and the WTO. These findings are also based on a survey of representatives from fashion brands and retailers, therefore, the UN/WTO would argue that they are only reporting back what they have been told.

Even so, to see that brands have concerns about relatively high social and environmental compliance risks in Bangladesh comes as a real surprise. It cannot be repeated enough that Bangladesh has undertaken the largest safety overhaul of any industry on record in recent years, thanks to the pioneering work of the Bangladesh Accord and the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety. This work is ongoing, and Bangladesh remains a global leader in this area.

On the issue of environment, while we are not perfect, let us remember that we now have 155 LEED-certified green factories—the highest number of green garment factories in the world. What more can we do to show our credentials and efforts in this area?

Other areas where the report says Bangladesh scores less than Vietnam include production quality, ability to create value-added products, innovation, efficiency, lead time, flexibility of order quantity, and financial/political stability. While it is a concern that those surveyed ranked Vietnam higher than Bangladesh in all these areas, I am confident we are making sufficient progress in each one that we will soon completely close the gap, and may even have done so already.

I am inclined to think that in some sense, old perceptions die hard where Bangladesh RMG is concerned. The

message of us being low-cost and not much else has been repeated so often that perhaps people are now incapable of looking beyond this idea.

To go through the above criteria one by one, I would firstly dispute the issue of production quality. Quality is very high from Bangladesh, and I struggle to believe how we are behind Vietnam in this area. The only issue one might raise is that we are producing different garment types in many cases, so perhaps we are comparing apples with oranges.

In terms of the ability to produce value-added products, yes, that is an area where we trail Vietnam (and some other textile sourcing hubs), although we are making progress. We have invested heavily in areas such as outerwear and are looking more into technical textiles presently. Watch this space.

Two other areas mentioned—innovation and efficiency—are very general and hard to quantify. The only thing to say on these is that our productivity levels are historically lower than those of Vietnam and this serves to reinforce the need to invest in skills, training and leadership. On lead time, there is always room for improvement. The BGMEA is constantly lobbying on this issue to improve our logistics, roads, rail to port and so on. We must move urgently on this area.

I would question the report's finding around flexibility of order quantity. Our industry is very flexible in this area and has successfully pivoted towards shorter runs during the pandemic.

Finally, to the issues of political and financial stability. The latter of these will always be a challenge for Bangladesh until we shift towards more specialised, high-value-added products, a process which is thankfully underway. As for the former, well, Vietnam may be more stable politically than Bangladesh but it is a communist country—this, some might argue, brings its own challenges.

How does Myanmar military keep functioning so boldly?



AN OPEN
DIALOGUE

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and serves as Senior Research Fellow at the US-based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

MYANMAR authorities appear to be getting away with their crimes as global attention is focused on the pandemic and, more recently, the Ukraine crisis. February 1, 2022 marked the first anniversary of the brazen coup in which the ruthless military junta seized power and deposed the democratically elected government headed by the National League for Democracy (NLD). Citizens observed the day with a “silent strike” in Yangon, and demonstrated across the country to register their resentment over the junta’s hostilities and the global community’s inaction.

Since the coup, the Tatmadaw has unleashed a reign of terror on Myanmar’s

resources to tighten its grip on the country, and slaughter freedom-loving citizens in the Kachin, Karin, Shan, and Rakhine states. The army, local businesses controlled by the dominant ethnic group, and foreign investors have teamed up to provide a lifeline to the various operations of the regime. This unholy alliance is using the oil and gas, gemstones, and timber industries to support the economy and provide foreign exchange to the military for equipment and supplies, and to defray the cost of maintaining the supply chain feeding the military-industrial-mining complex.

Most of the extractive industry revenue in Myanmar comes from four big offshore projects producing natural gas. It is estimated that gas extraction is the source of about 50 percent of Myanmar’s foreign exchange. Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) is a state-owned company that operates with international partners such as Chevron and Total to channel billions of dollars into the pocket of the military. MOGE’s purse is totally

Most of the extractive industry revenue in Myanmar comes from four big offshore projects producing natural gas. It is estimated that gas extraction is the source of about 50 percent of Myanmar’s foreign exchange.

Corporation (MEC) and Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL)—have increasingly become key sources of wealth for the Tatmadaw, with stakes in everything from banking and mining to tobacco and tourism.

An Amnesty International (AI) report showed how MEHL and Myanmar’s military units are linked. This information has implications for MEHL’s many foreign and local business partners. “By doing business with the conglomerate, they too are linked to these crimes and violations,” according to AI. “Because MEHL has shown no willingness to engage transparently with its business partners or reform its structure,” AI urged these companies to disengage “responsibly” from MEHL.

The junta recently organised a “Global Mini Gems Emporium” in Naypyidaw to showcase the country’s pearl and precious stones industry. Coloured stones from Myanmar have been prized in the West despite repeated sanctions by the US and other countries. Besides rubies,

other precious stones include sapphire, jade, and spinel. Thailand, China, and Cambodia—which are all authoritarian regimes—have gone out of their way to provide moral and economic support to the junta ensconced in Naypyidaw.

The financial flows to the business entities in Myanmar have continued unhindered and unabated, and calls for asset-freezing, expulsion from SWIFT, and other economic sanctions have gone unheeded.

Heidi Hautala, vice-president of the European Parliament, recently called on all EU members to extend sanctions to MOGE. There have been repeated appeals to other companies in the sector to take immediate steps to stop all payments to the junta by whatever means possible. For the US, UK, EU and the UN, it is now high time to step up their game and contain the bad actors in Naypyidaw using broader diplomatic pressure, tighter sanctions, intensified efforts to block arms shipment, and deployment of effective countermeasures.



Demonstrators protesting against the military coup in Yangon, Myanmar, February 17, 2021.

PHOTO: REUTERS

people, killing 1,400 and jailing 11,000, according to the nonprofit Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. The security forces have been indiscriminate in their behaviour, targeting elected members of parliament, journalists, workers and ordinary people protesting against the coup.

All along, the world’s attention seesawed between a soft approach through ASEAN leaders to get some sense into the rulers, and relatively harsher measures like imposing economic sanctions and blacklisting individual members of the ruling elite.

Meanwhile, the solution to the Rohingya crisis, which has been festering since 2017, has not moved an inch. The internal situation in Myanmar—economic, political and humanitarian—has gotten worse, as the ruling clique finds itself almost unscathed while managing to flout all international and democratic norms. And it seems to be succeeding in its diabolical scheme to stay in power, while keeping its guns trained on unarmed civilians. Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the country’s democracy movement, was tried behind closed doors.

So how does the military keep on functioning so boldly?

According to sources, Myanmar has been economically almost unharmed by foreign sanctions and diplomatic pressures. Businesses controlled by the army are using their rich natural

controlled by the military junta. The Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry has forecasted that MOGE will earn USD 1.5 billion in 2021-2022 from offshore and pipeline projects.

Under international pressure, America’s Chevron and France’s Total repeatedly promised to wind down their operations in Myanmar. TotalEnergies is the largest shareholder and operator of Myanmar’s biggest natural gas project, an offshore field called Yadana, providing energy for domestic use and export. Following the Yadana project, the USD-700-million Yetagun (“flag of victory”) project was the second largest natural gas offshore project in Myanmar. Along with MOGE, the gas fields are jointly owned by Thai, Malaysian, and Japanese companies.

It is clear that enforcement of existing sanctions imposed on Myanmar is very weak. There is also no mechanism to take action against those who continue to do business with Myanmar in defiance of sanctions. Though TotalEnergies and Chevron, on January 21, finally announced plans to withdraw from Myanmar, it needs to be seen who steps in next to keep these gas fields operational.

According to the UN, the Tatmadaw had been able to “insulate itself from accountability and oversight” through a network of conglomerate-owned businesses and affiliates. Two organisations—Myanmar Economic

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

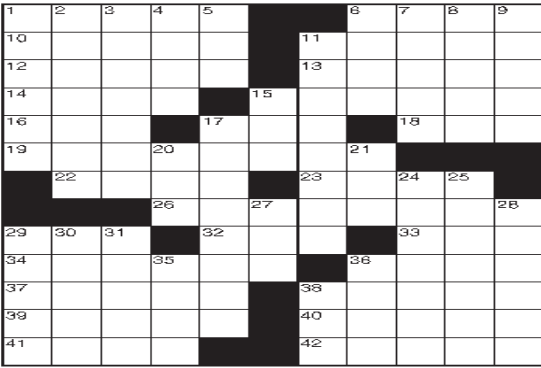
1 Muffler’s kin
6 Set eyes on
10 Camp craft
11 Grab
12 Stomach
13 Hawk’s grabber
14 Los Angeles team
15 Fashionable rooms
16 History stretch
17 Decline
18 Kicker’s aid
19 Made out
22 Writer Morrison
23 Shower need
26 Blue

DOWN

1 In a panic
2 Berlin-based musical
3 Lively, in music
4 Reactor parts
29 Pussy foot
32 D.C. player
33 Black goo
34 Inane behavior
36 Prudent
37 Tuba part
38 Eastern monks
39 Eyes
40 Makes smooth
41 Sign of sorrow
42 Irritable

5 Clinic cost

6 Barking beast
7 Cockpit worker
8 UV stopper
9 High-strung
11 Play site
15 Plunked down
17 Academic studies
20 Finish
21 Clinic VIP
24 Occasionally
25 Lowly farmer
27 Crested bird
28 Formal
29 Swivel
30 Wise words
31 Writer Cather
35 Finished
36 Surfer’s ride
38 Rent out



YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS





Invitation for Tenders

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh																															
1	Ministry/Division	Prime Minister’s Office.																													
2	Agency	Bangladesh Navy.																													
3	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Navy/Ashrayan-3 Project.																													
4	Procuring entity code	4111317																													
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.																													
6	Invitation for	Supply of Fire Fighting Equipment’s at Bhasan Char.																													
7	Invitation Ref. No.	PD Ashrayan-3 Project/2019-2020-2021/GD-7(Ka).																													
8	Date	07 February 2022																													
KEY INFORMATION																															
9	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).																													
FUNDING INFORMATION																															
10	Budget and source of funds	GOB.																													
11	Development partners (if applicable)	Forward Base, Bhasan Char.																													
PARTICULAR INFORMATION																															
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	NA.																													
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Ashrayan-3 (Development of Shelter House for Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals and Necessary Island Security Infrastructure at Bhasan Char in Char Isshor Union, Hatia, Noakhali) (1st Revision).																													
14	Tender Package No.	GD-7(Ka)																													
15	Tender package name	Fire Fighting Equipment’s																													
16	Tender publication date	By IFT (07.02.2022)																													
17	Tender last selling date	13 February 2022																													
18	Tender closing date and time	14 February 2022	12.30 pm																												
19	Tender opening date and time	14 February 2022	13.30 pm																												
20	Name & address of the office(s)	Project Director’s Office, Ashrayan-3 Project Office, NHQ, Banani, Dhaka.																													
	Selling tender document (principal)	Ashrayan-3 Project Office, NHQ, Banani, Dhaka.																													
	Selling tender document (others)	Nil.																													
No conditions apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents																															
	Receiving tender document	Ashrayan-3 Project Office, NHQ, Banani, Dhaka.																													
	Opening tender document	Ashrayan-3 Project Office, NHQ, Banani, Dhaka.																													
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER																															
21	Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer	Previous experience at Bhasan Char is preferred. However, BIN, TIN, Income Tax & Type of contractor from NBR is to be updated. Bank solvency of more than BDT 40 lac is required from a reputed bank.																													
22	Brief description of works	Supply of Fire Fighting Equipment’s at Bhasan Char: <table><thead><tr><th>Ser.</th><th>Description</th><th>Deno</th><th>Qty</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1.</td><td>ABC Dry Powder Fire Extinguisher (5 Kg)</td><td>No</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td>Carbon Di-Oxide (CO₂) Fire Extinguisher</td><td>No</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td>AFF Foam with Gun (150 Ltr)</td><td>No</td><td>03</td></tr><tr><td>4.</td><td>Fire Pickup Ladder (Height: 30 Feet, Fiber Material)</td><td>No</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>5.</td><td>Fire Detection & Monitoring System (Each set should have 10 Smoke Sensor and 02 Heat Sensor with Control & Monitoring Panel) with related service for installation.</td><td>Set</td><td>03</td></tr><tr><td>6.</td><td>3 Inch Connection Dia Portable Diesel Pump with Suction & Discharge Hose</td><td>Pcs</td><td>10</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>During your proposal you should clarify the following issues: a. Details on BoQ. b. Particular of each Items. c. Details Specification. d. Scope of supply and services. e. Delivery timeline. f. Warranty certificate.</p>		Ser.	Description	Deno	Qty	1.	ABC Dry Powder Fire Extinguisher (5 Kg)	No	100	2.	Carbon Di-Oxide (CO ₂) Fire Extinguisher	No	35	3.	AFF Foam with Gun (150 Ltr)	No	03	4.	Fire Pickup Ladder (Height: 30 Feet, Fiber Material)	No	10	5.	Fire Detection & Monitoring System (Each set should have 10 Smoke Sensor and 02 Heat Sensor with Control & Monitoring Panel) with related service for installation.	Set	03	6.	3 Inch Connection Dia Portable Diesel Pump with Suction & Discharge Hose	Pcs	10
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23	Maintenance of items (goods)	01 (one) year free maintenance after satisfactory test-trial of items.																													
24	Price of tender document (Tk)	1,500.00																													
25	Identification of items	Location	Tender security amount (BDT)	Completion time in weeks/months																											
	Fire Fighting Equipment’s	Bhasan Char	50,000.00 (Fifty thousand only)	To be mentioned (maximum 30 days are preferred for delivery & installation)																											
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS																															
26	Signature and name of official inviting tender																														
27	Designation of official inviting tender																														
28	Address of official inviting tender	Project Director Ashrayan-3 Project Prime Minister’s Office Naval Headquarters Banani, Dhaka-1213																													
29	Contact details of official inviting tender	9836141-9 Ext 2565 Mob: 01769-705095	ashrayan3bn@gmail.com																												
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings.																														
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Principal Abul Kashem during the Language Movement.

Principal Abul Kashem is an unforgettable entity of the history of the Language Movement. On September 1, 1947, under his leadership, Pakistan Tamaddun Majlish, the initiating organisation of the Language Movement, was established. On September 15, 1947, he published 'Rashtro Bhasha Bangla Na Urdu?' the first booklet containing the demand for Bangla as a state language. He was also the founder of the Language Movement mouthpiece, Weekly Sainik. Here we publish translated excerpts of an interview with this rare historical figure. The full version of the interview was published in 'Bhasha Andolon Shatchallish Thake Baana' that was compiled by Mostafa Kamal.

The origin of the Language Movement

How was the Language Movement initiated?

The Language Movement was initiated by the Tamaddun Majlish (TM). On September 1, 1947, it was established in 19, Azimpur. I was the professor of Physics Department (Dhaka University) and used to live in 19, Azimpur. I would think deeply about Bangla as a state language and a medium of instruction. I shared my ideas with my friends. Syed Nazrul Islam and Shamsul Alam were directly involved in the establishment of TM on September 1, 1947.

What were the primary actions that TM took to create awareness about Bangla as the state language?

Organising literary meetings and seminars in different places, including the university campus, was among the many primary initiatives of TM. These meetings used to take place at the lawn, which, back then, was adjacent to the south-west of the University of Dhaka, and at the Muslim Hall auditorium. Moreover, to create public opinion, we used to publish statements and handbills. The first book that demanded Bangla as State language, *Pakistaneer Rashtrabhasha Bangla Na Urdu?*, was published, by me as its editor. The main point of the book was that the language which ensures that the strength of the nation is not wasted, and the language which its citizens can easily learn, speak and write, should be the State language of the country.

What kind of attention did the booklet receive from university students?

To be honest, we didn't find even five people from the campus to buy this book. The attainment of Pakistan had captivated the whole nation. At that time, everyone used to try to make us understand how "dangerous" it would be to raise the issue of more than one state language, and how "unrealistic" a proposal it would be for Pakistan, in particular, to have two state languages.

Did you carry out any activity outside the campus back then?

Yes. We discussed this issue with certain government officials and litterateurs, and attained some success there. At that time, we collected the signatures of several eminent personalities of the country, and prepared a memorandum. The memorandum was presented to the government and published in some newspapers. The local newspapers of that time did not give this issue much

on a regular basis. In October 1947, we organised a large gathering at Fazlul Haq Hall. The then Minister Habibullah Bahar presided over the meeting. Eminent persons like poet Jasimuddin, Qazi Motahar Hossain and some ministers also spoke at the programme. This initiative stirred a lively discussion among the students of the campus.

When was the Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad formed? Why did you feel the necessity to establish such a platform?

After the meeting at Fazlul Haq Hall, we, the members of TM, decided to form the Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad. There were various discriminatory practices against Bangla, such as using only Urdu and English in postcards, money order forms, rail tickets and currency and omission of Bangla from the syllabus of Pakistan Central Public Service Commission.

The Education Minister Fazlur Rahman even plead that Urdu should be the only state language. Unfortunately, students, teachers and the intellectual community were quite lenient about the degrading status of their mother tongue. We feared that the government would try to impose Urdu as the only state language, exploiting this state of leniency. So we took the initiative to mobilise people against this one-sided decision.

How did the Parishad start working?

We went to meet the Education Minister Fazlur Rahman at Nazira Bazar. We had a heated debate over the question of Bangla as a state language. He treated us badly and that infuriated us. We took an initiative to present a memorandum on the demand of Bangla as a state language. We collected thousands of signatures in favour of this demand and submitted the memorandum to the East Pakistan government. We appealed to the government to immediately declare Bangla as the state language and the medium of instruction in East Pakistan.

Can you remember the statement issued against the decision of Pakistan Central Public Service Commission to omit Bangla from the syllabus of Civil Service Exam?

In November 1947, the Secretary of the Pakistan Central Public Service Commission issued a circular to the public universities on the syllabus of civil service exam. There were 31 courses, of which nine were on languages such as Urdu, Hindi,

against the proposal of the Karachi Education Conference?

The news enraged students and intellectuals. We organised a protest against the proposal at Dhaka University. I presided over the meeting. It was probably the first open gathering at Dhaka University on the issue of state language.

Did the Rashtrabhasha Shangram Parishad take a lead role in launching the programmes of March 11, 1948 demanding Bangla as the state language?

Yes, a meeting was held by the Shangram Parishad on March 7 at the Fazlul Haque Hall where it was decided that a strike would be observed on March 11 in Dhaka as well as across the state. The programme was highly successful. The police charged the crowd with baton and tear gas. Many students were injured and many others arrested. As a result of the movement of March 11, the demand of Bangla as the state language gained new momentum.

On the other hand, a movement promoting Urdu started to gain force. Several meetings were organised by noted Moulana Din Muhammad in several localities across the province. They submitted a petition signed by hundreds of thousands of people to the central government. The then Morning News of Dhaka and Jughheri of Sylhet started a malicious campaign against the language

out by "enemies of the state".

7. Mr Nazimuddin must apologise for the actions taken by his government for resisting the movement

After a lengthy negotiation process, Mr Nazimuddin accepted all conditions except no 2, 4, 5 and 7. We said that the movement would not be suspended unless and until all conditions were met and we started preparing with renewed energy. Eventually Mr Nazimuddin agreed to meet all our demands and we signed an agreement with the government.

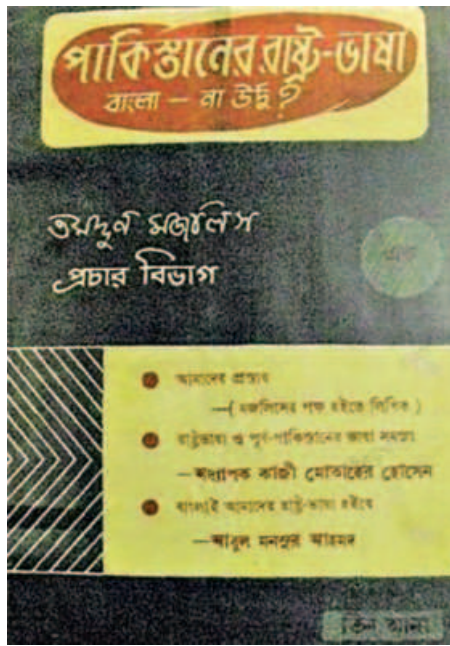
What was the situation after the arrival of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his declaration in favour of Urdu?

Quaid-e-Azam came to Dhaka on March 19. On March 21, while addressing hundreds of thousands of people at the Race Course Ground, he said that the people of East Bengal would decide what was going to be the official language of East Bengal. But, he also strongly said that Urdu shall be the official language of the central government. At that meeting, we distributed a manifesto on behalf of Majlish demanding that Bangla be made the state language. We, on behalf of Sangram Parishad, met with Quaid-e-Azam. We engaged in a prolonged debate, and in the end, the discussion bore no fruits. Then, when Quaid-e-Azam made a declaration to the effect that Urdu shall be the state language in the convocation at Curzon Hall, many protested then and there.

After that, in a session of the Assembly, Khawaja Nazimuddin placed a proposal as per one of the demands of the agreement, on behalf of the government, which stated that Bangla be made the official language of East Pakistan and it was adopted unanimously.

But Nazimuddin did not raise the proposal to the Central Government. When we asked Nazimuddin about it he replied -- Quaid-e-Azam, who is our Father of the Nation, told us that Urdu would be the only state language of Pakistan. Thus, if he raised the proposal, it would be tantamount to showing disrespect to the Quaid-e-Azam.

From '48 to '52, there was no major movement regarding language. After the Assembly recognised Bangla as the official language and medium of instruction in educational institutions in 1948, activists became somewhat inactive. At this time, I formed 'Dhaka Majlish' in an attempt to raise awareness amongst the Urdu supporters in Dhaka.



Tamaddun Majlish's booklet

Nazimuddin did not raise the proposal to the Central Government. When we asked Nazimuddin about it he replied -- Quaid-e-Azam, who is our Father of the Nation, told us that Urdu would be the only state language of Pakistan. Thus, if he raised the proposal, it would be tantamount to showing disrespect to the Quaid-e-Azam.

Now we would like to know about the bloody chapter of '52.

The bloody chapter of '52 began with the declaration of Khawaja Nazimuddin at Paltan in support of Urdu as the state language.

This time representatives of TM, Purba Pak Chhatra League, Awami League, Youth League, Islamic Brotherhood and other organizations formed the State Language Action Committee. This committee initiated the programme to observe February 21 as "Protest Day". There was massive response from the mulassils.

The government abruptly imposed Section 144 on February 20, which only amplified the discontent of the people. In an emergency meeting presided over by Mr. Abul Hashim at Nawabpur, it was decided that the movement would proceed without violating Section 144.

On February 21, Students gathered at the premises of the Medical College Hostel and began to protest against Sec 144. At one point, the police open fired on the students. The bullets took many young lives, making a martyr of Barkat, Jabbar and others.

In protest of the shootings, hartal was observed all over the country on Feb 22. There was more shooting that day at a demonstration near the High Court, and more protesters killed and injured. Many more were arrested.

Military was deployed in different parts of the city. In the mulassils, too, the protests took a strong shape. The extent and spirit of protests surpassed those of movements against the British.

There were arrest warrants for all of us, including the convener of the Sangram Parishad. Me and the Sainik editor, Abdul Gafur had to stay in hiding for a month.



Weekly Sainik, 23 February, 1952.

importance. Ittehad, based in Kolkata and headed by Abul Mansur Ahmad as its editor, and the Weekly Insaaf, gave tremendous support to this cause.

How did Sainik start its historic journey?
Sainik, a weekly publication, was first published on November 14, 1948. A few sincere employees helped me to publish this revolutionary newspaper as the mouthpiece of TM. It played a historic role in the Language Movement.

Please tell us about the initiatives taken by TM at the campus to popularise the demand of Bangla as a state language.
TM held discussions and literary gatherings at the halls of Dhaka University

English, German, French and even dead languages like Latin and Sanskrit. But Bangla, the language of the majority of Pakistan, was omitted from the syllabus. This was a proof of sheer disregard and negligence to the Bangla language. I sent a statement of protest to Ittehad, severely criticising this evil intent of the government. It was published around the end of December, along with an editorial by Abul Mansur Ahmad, who also vehemently opposed the government's decision. Later the concerned ministry regretted their mistake as an inadvertent one. This casual response infuriated us more.

Can you share with us the story of the protest meeting held at the Beltala

movement. On the other hand, the Ittehad of Kolkata and the Weekly Sainik and Insaaf of Dhaka extended their full support to the language movement.

I contacted the railway workers and central employees' organisation and requested them to join the movement. On March 22, a meeting was organised at the university followed by a rally. Proceeding peacefully, the rally reached the High Court but a group of sycophants and saboteurs engaged in some unpleasant activities. The following day, once again, a protest rally was organised which was stopped by the police near the Secretariat. A commotion between the mob and the police broke out. The police charged baton and tear gas and arrested hundreds of activists. Many others were taken to Tejgaon and Narayanganj to be released later.

How did the dialogue with the Nazimuddin government start and how was the language treaty signed with the government?

We got the news that Muhammad Ali Jinnah was coming to Dhaka. We also heard that he instructed Prime Minister Nazimuddin to reach an agreement. Mr. Nazimuddin wrote me several letters saying that the government was ready to meet the demands of the language activists and wanted to discuss the matter. I forwarded the letters to the Shangram Parishad.

The Shangram Parishad held two meetings with Mr. Nazimuddin, laying out the following conditions:

1. Bangla should immediately be declared the official language of East Bengal at the government, judiciary and education level.
2. A proposal should be passed in the state legislature of East Bengal and sent to the central government so that the latter recognises Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan.
3. Those arrested during the language movement should be freed without any condition.
4. The ban imposed on Ittehad, Amritabazar, Anandabazar, Jugantor and other newspapers should be lifted.
5. No government employee should be penalised for participating in the language movement.
6. The government should issue a press release saying that the language movement was not launched and carried

Hockey squad named for AHF Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday declared a 28-member preliminary squad for the AHF Cup in March with the inclusion of three new faces – goalkeeper Nuruzzaman Nayan, midfielders Raju Ahmed Tapu and Abed Uddin. Coach Iman Gobinathan Krishnamurthy pinned his hopes on all 20 members from the Asian Champions Trophy and recalled five players – Khaled Mahmud Rakin, Milon Hossain, Mahabub Hossain, Razib Das and Ashim Gope, who were dropped from the final squad. Nayan, Tapu and Abed have been called for the squad for the first time.

The players have been asked to report to the coach on February 12 at BKSP with double-dose Covid-19 vaccine certificates and training will get underway the following day.



Mahmudullah Riyad plays with Soumya Sarkar's topknot as Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and others – all former or current national team players playing for different BPL franchises – share a laugh during time off from training at the Sylhet Divisional Cricket Stadium yesterday. (Bottom) All the fun will be set aside and a lot of focus will be on the pitches when the Sylhet three-day leg of the competition starts today.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Covid hits shooting team

SPORTS REPORTER

Nilufar Yeasmin has been ruled out of the Indonesia-bound shooting team after returning positive for Covid-19.

The Bangladesh squad was scheduled to leave last night for Indonesia to take part in the ISSF Grand Prix, to be held from February 8 to 18 in Jakarta.

Apart from Nilufar, pistol shooter Shakil Ahmed and rifle shooter Yousuf Ali are not flying with the squad as well as Shakil is yet to complete the second dose of Covid-19 vaccination while Yousuf has a passport related issue. However, both of them are expected to fly by February 8.

Excluding Nilufar, a total of 11 shooters are scheduled to take part in men's and women's 10m, 50m rifle events and men's and women's 10m pistol events.

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

The curvy roads through the Lakkatura tea estate suddenly detaches itself from the main road and makes way to the picturesque Sylhet International Stadium, set to welcome back the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) on Monday to its green gardens. The hills and the



bring an air of tranquility, a specialty of the stadium in Sylhet. The surrounding beauty is not diminished when one enters the ground, the green gallery holding sway.

Sylhet historically, also used to bring in big runs in the BPL. But unlike the previous editions, expectations this time

around are tinged with fear that the wickets could once again come into focus for the wrong reasons due to batters' inability to play to T20 tempo. If the recent Independence Cup and the one-day format of the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) is anything to go by, run-making will not be easy.

The Sylhet phase will begin with the clash of table toppers – Comilla Victorians and Fortune Barishal – on Monday.

The wickets at Mirpur had always been troublesome for the T20 format but after a Chattogram phase full of big runs, expectations from Sylhet would be to keep the T20-like stroke-play going. In the last Sylhet phase of the BPL, average first innings score was 159 with five teams surpassing 160-run mark. With Bangladesh overall struggling in T20Is, better wickets are of paramount importance. However, in the fifty-over matches of the BCL, average first innings total was 188. A score of 200 was reached only once in a match as spinners continued to gnaw at batters due to the low bounce. Even part-time spinners were difficult to score off. It is also likely that upcoming Afghanistan series matches will not be hosted at Sylhet due to this reversal of wickets' nature.

Hometown boy Rezaur Rahman Raza of Chattogram Challengers was hoping for

better performance from the wickets two days before. "The last few tournaments we had here, we didn't find wickets to be that good. Hoping it will be better in the BPL. That's our belief," he had said.

It was learned that for the BPL, work had been done on getting better surfaces but the execution was not quite there due to shortage of staff and gap in collaboration between main curator and ground staff. Since outer ground wickets also had to be maintained in the past year, resources could not be wholly pooled to focus on the main ground wickets.

"I am expecting tight games because of the wickets and the spin. The teams that bat well as a unit, look like they will win with partnerships and things like that. [Expecting] some high-scoring games but mainly middling scores; not too low, not too high," English all-rounder Moeen Ali stated after his side Comilla's practice yesterday.

Barishal batting consultant Nazmul Abedeen Fahim was hoping that the wickets can help induce excitement and hopefully spread the charm of T20 cricket.

"We have not seen the wicket yet but what we have heard is that a lot of work has been done on the wicket. Everyone is trying so that there is some bounce in this wicket to produce some runs," Faheem said.

'It's all love' between Chinese, US curlers

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese curling duo's unexpected gift to their victorious USA opponents at the Beijing Winter Olympics brought a temporary thaw to the chilly atmosphere between the two world powers.

Curlers Ling Zhi and Fan Suyuan presented a set of commemorative pins to Christopher Plys and Vicky Persinger after the Americans prevailed 7-5 in their mixed doubles round-robin encounter on Saturday.

"These will be on my desk for a very, very long time," Plys said of the pins, which he called "just beautiful, something super unique".

"I don't know what it is with the Chinese curlers. We can't really communicate that well, but we always seem to give each other a smile and a fist bump."

Ling, who hails from the wintry northeastern China city of Harbin, said the bonhomie was a "tradition of curling – athletes are friendly to each other".

Ling invited Plys to visit his hometown.

The Beijing Olympics opened on Friday under the shadow of the pandemic and a diplomatic boycott of the Games by the United States and several of its allies over China's record on human rights.

Plys said he doesn't "let our countries' politics get in the way of what's going on".

"At the end of the day we all bleed the same blood and play the same game. It's fun to experience each other's cultures a bit and show them it's all love."

Big bucks for India's U-19 WC winners

AGENCIES

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Sunday announced cash rewards for the U-19 World Cup-winning Indian team after they outclassed England in a hard-fought final at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Saturday.



Led by Delhi boy Yash Dhull, India chased down 190 with four wickets and 14 balls to spare to be crowned the U-19 World Cup champions for a record-extending fifth time.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah took to social media to announce cash rewards for the players and the members of the support staff. Each player will get Rs 40 lakh while the members of the support staff are set to get Rs 20 lakh.

"I'm pleased to announce the reward of 40 lacs per player and 25 lacs per support staff for the U19 #TeamIndia contingent for their exemplary performance in #U19WCFinal. You have made India proud," Shah said in a social media post.

The BCCI secretary also congratulated the efforts of the Indian team, which was badly hit by Covid-19 during the group stages.

India's comfortable win in landmark ODI

AFP, Ahmedabad

Spinners Yuzvendra Chahal and Washington Sundar set up India's comfortable six-wicket victory over the West Indies for the hosts' landmark 1,000th one-day international on Sunday.

Rohit Sharma took to the field as India's new full-time ODI captain and his decision to bowl was vindicated by the two spinners as the hosts bowled out the West Indies for 176 in Ahmedabad.

The skipper's top-scoring 60 then helped India romp home in just 28 overs on the day they became the first team to pass the 1,000 ODI milestone.

The West Indies had slipped to 79-7 before Jason Holder hit 57 to salvage some dignity for the visitors.

Leg-spinner Chahal returned figures of 4-49 – including the key wicket of skipper Kieron Pollard for nought – to rattle the West Indies batters.

Pace bowler Mohammed Siraj struck first in the third over to send back Shai Hope as an incoming delivery got the wicketkeeper-batsman's inside edge on to the stumps.

India introduced spin in the eighth over and off-spinner Sundar soon made it count, dispatching Brandon King for 13.



Chahal broke the West Indies' back with successive strikes but Holder avoided the hat-trick.

Holder put on 78 runs with Fabien Allen, who made 29, to offer some resistance against India's onslaught.

He went past 2,000 ODI runs and then raised his 11th half-century in the 50-over format but finally fell to Krishna, who finished with figures of 2-29. Rohit came out attacking and dominated returning pace bowler Kemar Roach to smash two fours and one six in the 10th over.

He put on 84 runs with opening partner Ishan Kishan and made his half-century in 42 balls before Alzarri Joseph trapped him lbw, also sending back former captain Virat Kohli in the same over.

Kohli announced his arrival with two successive boundaries but got caught out at long leg two balls later.

Left-arm spinner Hosen got the wicket of Kishan for 28 and wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant was run out while backing up at the non-striker's end as India wobbled.

Suryakumar Yadav, who made 34, and debutant Deepak Hooda, who scored 26, saw the team home with their unbeaten stand of 62.



Theo Hernandez rides on the back of Olivier Giroud, who scored twice in three minutes as AC Milan stunned city rivals Inter 2-1 in a thrilling Serie A derby on Saturday, sending the Rossoneri one point off top as the champions' 14-match unbeaten league run came to an end. Ivan Perisic put Inter in front at a raucous San Siro late in the first half before Giroud nudged in an equaliser in the 75th minute and then found the bottom corner three minutes later.

PHOTO: TWITTER



7th phase UP polls today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Voters are fearful of the possibility of violence as 138 union parishads go to polls today in the seventh phase of UP elections.

According to media reports, at least 98 people have so far been killed and several hundred injured in violence centring the polls.

Many voters in eight unions of Noakhali's Companiganj upazila said they were worried about violence as local Awami League leaders were divided into two groups, each backing competing candidates.

Noakhali Superintendent of Police Shahidul Islam said they cannot rule out the possibility of violence. "We will take stern action if anyone tries to create any kind of disturbance inside or outside polling stations," he said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, EC Secretary Humayun Kabir Khandaker yesterday said authorities have beefed up security in election areas and that an adequate number of law enforcers have been deployed.

Around 24.51 lakh voters of 138 unions in 20 districts are expected to cast their votes today, Election Commission data shows.

Elections to chairman posts of 11 UPs will not be needed as the candidates already won unopposed. Forty-seven UP members and 13 candidates for women's reserved seats were also elected unopposed.

At least 576 candidates are running for chairman posts, 1,236 for reserved member seats for women and 4,062 for member posts.

The contest is expected to be between the ruling AL, its party rebels and Jatiya Party candidates. The BNP is not taking part.



Sitting on the central reservation, Apple Mahmud selling old car horns in Old Dhaka's Dholaikhal area yesterday. He first collects and repairs these and then sells them for Tk 200-400. The 25-year-old man has been involved in this work for six years.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Tumultuous history

GAZIUL HAQUE

Until 1948, the State Language Movement was a movement of the intelligentsia and the students; it did not find its place among the masses.

This was because of the common people's unjustified infatuation towards the rulers of the newborn state, the lack of understanding of the exploiters' evil designs and the absence of a strong political organisation to build up the movement.

Despite the inherent weakness, the 1948 state language movement contributed to the emergence of progressive forces in the political arena.

The exploitation that was masked in 1948 became apparent in 1952. The people of [East] Bengal became critical both against the exploiters and their exploitation.

In a public meeting held at Dhaka's Paltan Maidan on January 27, 1952, Khawaja Nazimuddin (then Prime Minister of Pakistan) announced in the same vein as Jinnah did that Urdu alone would be the state language of Pakistan.

The announcement did not go unchallenged. On January 30, a student meeting was held at Dhaka University Campus and a huge procession was brought out after the meeting.



SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Biz ID made mandatory for all online sellers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday rolled out the Digital Business Identification (DBID) as part of its efforts to restore discipline in the digital commerce sector and check irregularities.

More than 1,600 e-commerce companies and nearly 5 lakh Facebook-based companies are involved in Bangladesh's digital commerce sector.

DBID is a legal base for e-commerce entrepreneurs under which they can claim various government facilities, said Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi while inaugurating DBID's app during an inter-ministerial meeting yesterday.

Some 11 companies got the DBID certificates. Gradually, all e-commerce companies and online businesses will have to obtain the certificate to operate.

It was introduced as part of the government plan to curb frauds in the burgeoning e-commerce sector, whose reputation took a beating last year after reports emerged of sites taking advance payments from consumers without delivering goods.

At least 16 major e-commerce companies have embezzled thousands of crores from customers.

The government is trying to refund the money that has been stuck up in the payment gateway as soon as possible, Munshi said, adding that Tk 15 crore has been refunded to fraudulent e-commerce platform Qcoom's customers.

Gradually, all e-commerce companies and online businesses will have to obtain the certificate to operate.

However, making refunds to customers of companies that are facing court cases may take more time, he added.

To avert the largescale fraud witnessed in recent times, the government set up a payment gateway in the central bank on July 1 last year so that the e-commerce companies got their payments upon confirmation of receipt of goods by the end users.

Now, the DBID was

introduced.

About Tk 2,500 crore is transacted through e-commerce platforms every day, according to State Minister for ICT Zunaed Ahmed Palak.

The government is developing three more platforms -- Central Complaints Management System, Central Logistic Tracking System, and an Interoperability Digital Transfer System -- to control irregularities, he said.

The three platforms will become operational within the next six months, Palak said, adding that five lakh people will be employed in this growing sector by 2025.

Small and female entrepreneurs would benefit from the new business identification as they are entering the sector in a big way, said Salman F Rahman, the prime minister's adviser on private industry and investment.

Entrepreneurs will have to obtain DBID certificates from the office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms, said Shomi Kaiser, president of the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh, at the launch event.

PANDEMIC FALLOUT

Noab asks for tax reduction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newspaper owners yesterday urged the government to bring down the taxes in the next national budget as the sector looks to stage a comeback after being battered by the pandemic.

"The pandemic has hit the newspaper sector badly. Our circulation dropped and earnings from advertisement plunged," said AK Azad, president of the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab), in a pre-budget meeting with the National Board of Revenue.

Even before the pandemic, the sector's advertisement market shrinking at 20 percent on an average every year.

But thanks to the pandemic, it has dropped at least 55 percent, said Azad, also the publisher of Bangla daily Samakal.

"It is difficult for the newspaper industry to survive the historic crisis without government support," he added.

Subsequently, the association called for cuts in the rates of corporate tax, tax-at-source on advertisements, exemption on value-added tax on newsprint import, relief from having to pay the income tax of employees and a tax cut on house rent.

The industry now pays 4 percent source tax on advertisement income and 5 percent advance income tax on raw materials.

However, most of the newspapers cannot even register 9 percent profit in a year, according to Azad.

Subsequently, Noab proposed reducing the source tax to 2 percent and doing away with the advance income tax.

The main raw material of the industry is newsprint and its price soared to \$890 a tonne from \$ 570 in one-and-a-half years, he said. The industry is named as a VAT-free service provider in the VAT and supplementary duty act. However, a 15 percent VAT has to be paid on newsprint import, Azad said.

He went on to call for VAT exemption on newsprint import. The import duty on newsprint was imposed to protect the local industry, said NBR member (VAT Policy) Zakia Sultana.

In response, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said if the quality of the local newsprint was good, the newspapers would use it.

The government announced incentive packages for many industries but the newspaper industry was not one of them, said Anam, also an executive member of Noab.

The newspaper industry is not like the other businesses as it works as a social service provider and for the betterment of the masses. "So, the government should provide tax support to the sector," he said.

According to the income tax ordinance, 50 percent of house rent is tax-free, but the newspaper wage board offers house rent of up to 70 percent of the basic salary.

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

স্থানীয় সরকার বিভাগ

জাতীয় স্থানীয় সরকার ইনস্টিটিউট (এনআইএলজি)

প্রকাশনা শাখা

২৯, আগারগাঁও, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা

স্মারক নং-৪৬.১৮.০০০০.০০৩.০২.০০৪-৯৪৮

তারিখঃ ০৬.০২.২০২২

বিষয়ঃ এনআইএলজি'র জার্নালে প্রকাশের জন্য প্রবন্ধ আহ্বান।

জাতীয় স্থানীয় সরকার ইনস্টিটিউট (এনআইএলজি) তে "দি জার্নাল অব লোকাল গভর্নমেন্ট" নামে একটি জার্নাল প্রতি ছয় মাস অন্তর অন্তর নিয়মিত প্রকাশিত হয়। জার্নালের ভলিউম ৪৫.২ (জানুয়ারি-জুন, ২০২২) প্রকাশের জন্য লেখা আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। রচিত প্রবন্ধ স্থানীয় সরকার, বাংলাদেশ ও অন্যান্য দেশের স্থানীয় সরকার বিষয়ক প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা, স্থানীয় সরকার পরিকল্পনা, প্রশাসনিক বিকেন্দ্রীকরণ এবং উন্নয়ন কর্মে জনগণের অংশগ্রহণ, স্থানীয় সরকার ম্যানুয়াল, স্থানীয় সরকার সংস্থার বিভিন্ন সমস্যা/হিস্ট্রি, গ্রামীণ উন্নয়ন, সাধারণ ও উন্নয়ন প্রশাসন ইত্যাদি বিষয়ে গবেষণামূলক মৌলিক কাজ হতে হবে। প্রবন্ধ বাংলা বা ইংরেজি যে কোন ভাষাতে লেখা যাবে। প্রকাশিত প্রবন্ধের লেখক এনআইএলজি কর্তৃক প্রদেয় সম্মানী প্রাপ্য হবেন। এ সংক্রান্ত তথ্য এনআইএলজি'র ওয়েবসাইট www.nilg.gov.bd এ দেখা যাবে। প্রবন্ধ/লেখা আগামী ১০ মার্চ, ২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর ই-মেইলে প্রেরণ করতে হবে। অগ্রাহ্য ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে আগামী ১৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২২খ্রিঃ এর মধ্যে অগ্রাহ্য ব্যক্ত করতে হবে।

মোঃ রাশেদুল হাসান
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জিডি-২১৯

Adopt resolution on '71 genocide

Genocide Watch asks UNGA

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Genocide Watch, a US-based organisation, has formally recognised the crimes committed by the Pakistani military forces against the people of Bangladesh in 1971 as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

It called upon the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution recognising the 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh, and the UN member states, especially the US, UK and Pakistan, to recognise it too.

Genocide Watch also urged the UN members to take necessary measures to charge surviving leaders of this genocide in national courts with universal jurisdiction. It also requested proper reparations for these crimes from Pakistan to Bangladesh.

Genocide Watch is the founder and coordinator of the Alliance Against Genocide, an international coalition of over 65

organisations from around the world focusing completely on preventing genocide.

In a statement signed by Genocide Watch Founder and President Gregory H Stanton last Thursday, it said between March 25, 1971, and December 16, 1971, the Pakistani military forces persecuted, tortured, and murdered representatives of Bangalee culture and identity, including poets, musicians, professors, journalists, physicians, scientists, writers and film makers.

Attacks by Pakistani military forces and their allies forced approximately 10 million people to flee to neighbouring India. Pakistan designed the policies and conducted "clearance operations" to change the demographic composition of East Pakistan. From 300,000 to 3 million people faced extermination by mass murder, the statement said.

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