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Kazi Awal at the EC helm



“After taking the oath, I will exchange views with my colleagues. We will see what is in the book. The national election is only about two years away. We have to be prepared.”

New CEC Kazi Habibur Awal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former senior secretary Kazi Habibur Awal is the chief election commissioner for the next five years. The Election Commission will hold the 12th parliamentary election and polls to all the other tiers of the government with him at its helm.

President Abdul Hamid yesterday appointed him as the CEC.

The four other commissioners are: former district and sessions judge Rashida Sultana, Brig Gen (ret'd) Ahsan Habib Khan, former EC secretary Md Alamgir, and former energy and mineral resources division senior secretary Anisur Rahman.

The Cabinet Division yesterday issued two gazettes about the appointments. The commissioners are likely to be sworn in today, officials said.

In his immediate reaction, the new CEC said the general election slated for 2023 would be the commission's main focus.

“After taking the oath, I will exchange views with my colleagues. We will see what is in the book. The national election is only about two years away.

We have to be prepared,” Awal told The Daily Star. “If I can hold elections acceptable [to all], maybe I will have the joy of success, or else, I will have regret.”

The 66-year-old former bureaucrat is the son of the late Kazi Abdul Awal, the deputy inspector general of prisons who filed the case for the assassinations of the four national leaders in jail in 1975.

New CEC Awal retired as senior secretary to the defence ministry in 2015 and got two subsequent contractual appointments.

In 2009, the Supreme Court found his appointment as an acting secretary to the law ministry illegal. The appointment was challenged in a writ petition filed by a district judge.

Awal is the sixth bureaucrat to become the CEC. This is the first time an EC is formed under a law.

The BNP and some other political parties boycotted the process of EC formation, saying that forming the EC would be pointless because a fair election would be impossible without an impartial polls-time government.

REACTIONS OF COMMISSIONERS

Rashida Sultana said, “I will work

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Tariqat delivers, again!

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Leave it to luck or wisdom or anything open to interpretations, the Bangladesh Tariqat Federation has seen its nominated candidate picked to lead the Election Commission for the second time in a row.

The president yesterday appointed former senior secretary Kazi Habibur Awal as the new chief election commissioner (CEC).

It is seen as an achievement for the political party.

Under the selection process, political parties recommend names, to be shortlisted by the search committee for EC posts. The president then cherry-picks from the shortlist.

Habibur topped Tariqat's list this year. Five years ago, the party recommended KM Nurul Huda for CEC and ultimately, he was handed the post.

A partner of the ruling Awami League-led electoral alliance, Tariqat also proposed the name of Brig Gen (ret'd) Ahsan Habib Khan. He has been made an election commissioner.

The name of Ahsan, a former vice chairman of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Ukrainian service members look for unexploded shells after a fighting with a Russian raiding group in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Kyiv repulses Russia attack

Fighting continues across Ukraine; France warns of long conflict as West sends weapons; 198 civilians killed; thousands flee country

AGENCIES

Ukrainian forces yesterday repulsed an attack on Kyiv, officials said yesterday, as Russian forces kept pounding Ukrainian cities with artillery and cruise missiles for a third day running.

A defiant Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky vowed his pro-Western country would never give in to the Kremlin even as Russia said it had fired cruise missiles at military targets.

With explosions echoing around Kyiv on the third day of Russia's

assault, Zelensky spoke in a video message, wearing olive green military-style clothing and looking tired but determined.

“I am here. We will not lay down any weapons. We will defend our state,” he said.

Ignoring warnings from the West, Russian President Vladimir Putin unleashed a full-scale invasion that the UN refugee agency said has forced almost 116,000 people to flee to neighbouring countries.

The Kremlin, meanwhile, yesterday

accused Ukraine of prolonging the military conflict by refusing to negotiate.

On Friday, as Moscow's forces approached Kyiv, the Kremlin said Putin was ready to send a delegation for talks to Belarus, where Russia has stationed thousands of troops. It is one of the places from where Ukraine says it is being attacked.

A few hours later, Putin called on the Ukrainian army to overthrow the country's leadership whom he

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



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‘Disaster if world views it as TV show’

PORIMOL PALMA

Iurii Melnyk, an associate professor of journalism at the Ivan Franko National University of Ukraine's Lviv, is keeping the world posted after Russia began its invasion on February 24. The Daily Star's Diplomatic Correspondent Porimol Palma caught up with him on Friday for on-the-ground information.

DS: Is Lviv – the largest city in western Ukraine – now relatively safe?

Melnyk: Currently there is no safe place in Ukraine. On Friday morning, we had an air alarm advising the people of our city to get to the safe shelters in the basements. Luckily, the attack did not happen. Eastern Ukraine is a priority for Russians because they consider Russian-speaking Ukraine to be theirs. That is their interest, not Ukrainian-speaking Ukraine.

DS: Are Ukrainians leaving the country?

Melnyk: Yes, many people are trying to leave but it is getting more and more difficult. We have general mobilisation in Ukraine – people aged between 18 and 60 are supposed to go to the army and not leave the country. You come with a passport and get a weapon and you are ready to fight the Russian force.

DS: You are in that age group – what is your plan?

Melnyk: I can volunteer but I don't have any military training. So, I am trying to be useful by spreading information, helping people and journalists.

DS: What is the mood of the general Ukrainians?

Melnyk: I met a friend who was in front of the military recruiting office. He said he will join the army, stop the Russians where they are and not allow them inside our house. At the same time, I saw some soldiers and their families who were saying goodbye and crying.

DS: The Ukrainian president said the Western countries are not helping much. What is your understanding of the statement?

Melnyk: Much of the responsibility for what is happening in Ukraine also lies with the Western countries. The day before the attack, US President Joe Biden was asked if he would support Ukraine if Russia attacked. Biden said he would impose sweeping sanctions but not send troops on the ground. This was a blunder. He could have said that all options were open. By doing so, he could have stopped the Russian aggression. He was saying

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Local shopkeepers hold a fire hose as they try to extinguish a fire at a kitchen market in Paschim Rupsha area of Khulna city. At least 30 grocery stores and several nearby houses were gutted by the flames yesterday morning. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

165 Bangladeshis reach safety

Hundreds in queues at Polish border

PORIMOL PALMA

About 150 Bangladeshis have entered Poland from Ukraine over the last two days, fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24.

Two officials of the Bangladesh embassy in Warsaw told The Daily Star yesterday evening that several hundred Bangladeshis were waiting in the cold in long queues on the other side of the border to get into Poland.

"It is expected that Poland will be prioritising their own citizens and Ukrainians at the border. There is a long queue as thousands of people are fleeing Ukraine," said an official of the embassy, which also oversees diplomatic relations with Ukraine.

A team from the embassy is working at the Ukraine-Poland border to provide consular services to Bangladeshis. Two other teams – one from Italy and the other from Germany – were on the way to the border.

The Bangladesh embassy and

the Polish government are jointly arranging accommodation for those arriving in Poland, the officials said.

Meanwhile, at least 15 Bangladeshi students from Uzhhorod, a western Ukrainian city close to the Hungarian and Slovakian border, were being processed for entry into Hungary, said Deputy Chief of Mission Rahat Bin Zaman at the Bangladesh embassy in Vienna, Austria.

He said after the foreign ministry published contact numbers for the Bangladeshis in Ukraine, the students contacted him. He then drove to the Hungary-Ukraine border to facilitate their immigration.

"We have arranged train tickets for the students to Budapest where the authorities of a university have agreed to provide accommodation," Rahat said.

Since the Russian attack began last Thursday, many of some 2,000 to 2,500 Bangladeshis, mostly students, began to move to the western borders.

There were troubles on the way caused by shortages of fuel and long queues as thousands of foreigners

and Ukrainians were fleeing the country to take refuge in Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, and Moldova.

The Bangladesh foreign ministry has said it was planning to charter flights to bring the Bangladeshis home.

While most of the Bangladeshis were leaving Ukraine, some chose to stay.

Khaled Mosharrar has been living in Ukraine for more than three decades and is now a Ukrainian citizen. He said he did not leave Kyiv because he had thought that there would not be street fighting.

"Sure, there are missiles targeting the military infrastructures. However, missile targets are also failing and striking the civilians," Khaled told The Daily Star yesterday from Kyiv.

He said he lives 20km away and heard explosions only a few kilometres away.

"We take cover in the basement when the sirens go off. But, if missiles hit our building, we will face what is in store for us," he said.

Man found dead in Patuakhali hotel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police recovered the hanging body of a youth from a residential hotel in Patuakhali town early yesterday.

The dead is Shamim Akon, 30, of Itbaria union in Sadar upazila, said police, adding that he was an office assistant at the local clinic.

Mohammad Nurul Islam Majumder, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Patuakhali Sadar Police Station, said the body was sent to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police detained the hotel manager and a woman for interrogation in connection with the incident.

One shot dead in Bandarban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An indigenous man was shot dead in remote Rowangchhari upazilla of Bandarban yesterday noon.

The dead is Mong Shing Shwe, 40, of Naton Para in the upazila, said police.

Abdul Mannan, officer-in-charge of Rowangchhari Police Station, said a group of five unidentified criminals shot Mong at a local shop around 12:00pm.

"We are working to know the political identity of Mong and the reason behind his murder," the OC said.

Covid-19 cases drop below 1,000 after 7 weeks

STAR REPORT

At least 759 new infections were recorded and eight people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, read a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The current positivity rate is 4.15 percent while the total positivity rate stands at 14.54 percent.

The total number of Covid-19 deaths in the country now stands at 29,024 and the mortality rate stands at 1.49 percent.

Meanwhile, the total number of cases rose to 1,941,816, added the release.

A total of 18,375 samples were tested across the country in 24 hours.

At least 7,343 patients have recovered from Covid-19 during the period. The total number of recoveries now stands at 1,800,425 and the recovery rate at 92.72 percent, added the release.

22 Mro villagers arrested in Bandarban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested 22 villagers over the murders of a Karbari and his four sons in remote Mro Para of Bandarban's Ruma upazila Thursday night.

Abul Kashem, officer-in-charge of Ruma Police Station, said, "The 22 villagers primarily confessed that they killed the Karbari and his four sons over a land dispute."

Locals said some residents of remote Abui Para suddenly attacked Lakrui Mro, the Karbari and his sons with sharp weapons around 10:00pm on Thursday.



KAZI HABIBUL AWAL

Born in 1956, Awal did his LLB and LLM from Dhaka University. He retired as a senior secretary to the defence ministry in January 2015. During the army-backed caretaker government, Awal was appointed as the acting law ministry secretary, but the High Court, following a writ petition, in 2008 declared his appointment illegal. The Supreme Court upheld the HC's verdict next year.



RASHIDA SULTANA

Born in 1961, Rashida obtained her secondary and higher secondary certificates from Sirajganj. She completed her graduation and post-graduation from Rajshahi University's law department in 1982 and 1984. Rashida, who joined the judiciary in 1985, retired as a district judge in 2020. After her retirement, she did not engage in any other services.



AHSAN HABIB KHAN

Brig Gen (ret'd) Ahsan Habib Khan was the vice-chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) from August 2014 to August 2017. He was also a director general (spectrum) of BTRC prior to becoming the vice-chairman of the regulatory body. He also worked as a top official of a World Bank project at BTRC. Brig Gen Ahsan retired from the army in 2013.



MD ALAMGIR

Alamgir was a former senior secretary at the Election Commission. He also worked as secretary to the Technical and Madrasah Education Division. Besides, he served as secretary to the education ministry and as director general of the Directorate of Primary Education. He was also the director general of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, and additional secretary at the expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry.



ANISUR RAHMAN

Born on December 31, 1962, in Shariatpur, Anisur obtained his honours and masters' degrees from Dhaka University's geography and environment department. Before his retirement as senior secretary of Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Anisur, who was a civil servant of the BCS 1985 batch, served in various capacities in the civil service. He was also the secretary to the religious affairs ministry.

Kazi Awal at the EC helm

FROM PAGE 1

with everyone for the welfare of the country. I will sit with all commissioners and then I will be able to give more details."

Former senior secretary Alamgir said, "I had the chance to closely observe the inner workings of the Election Commission while I was at its secretariat. We will try to take lessons from the mistakes of the past."

He hoped that the new commission would work to win the confidence of all political parties.

Former senior secretary Anisur Rahman said, "We will sit and then decide our next course of action." He added that he will carry out his responsibilities with honesty.

Meanwhile, BNP

Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said as long as the Awami League remains in power, the EC cannot hold a free and fair election.

"It has been proven that the Awami League picked its own people in the new Election Commission. This Election Commission won't be able to hold any polls independently," he said.

Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said the five individuals forming the commission had in the past performed their duties with integrity and efficiency.

"The new EC will meet the people's expectations," he said.

FORMATION PROCESS On February 5, the

president formed a search panel, headed by Justice Obaidul Hassan, after holding talks with 25 political parties.

The committee asked political parties, professional bodies and individuals to make recommendations for the EC. It also held meetings with eminent citizens, media personalities, university teachers, and election experts.

After receiving the recommendations, the committee published the names of over 300 nominees. On February 24, it submitted to the president a list of 10 names for the five-member EC. The president picked the CEC and the four commissioners.

Kyiv repulses Russia attack

FROM PAGE 1

described as "terrorists" and "a gang of drug addicts and neo-Nazis."

In Kyiv, residents took shelter in the subway system and in cellars and basements.

"We thought something like this might happen but we were hoping until the end that it wouldn't," Irina Butyak told AFP in one shelter.

Ukrainian Health Minister Viktor Lyashko said 198 civilians, including three children, had been killed in the conflict and 1,115 wounded.

In Paris, French President Emmanuel Macron warned that the world must brace

for a long war.

"This crisis will last, this war will last and all the crises that come with it will have lasting consequences," Macron said. "We must be prepared."

After speaking to Macron, Zelensky tweeted to thank "partners" for sending weapons and equipment.

Several Nato members have sent weapons and ammunition to Ukraine in recent weeks, including Britain, the United States and ex-communist countries in Eastern Europe.

In another video address, the 44-year-old leader also said that his country had "derailed" the Russian plan

of overthrowing him and establishing a puppet state in Ukraine.

In the early hours of yesterday, AFP reporters in Kyiv heard occasional blasts of what soldiers said were artillery and Grad missiles being fired in an area northwest of the city centre. There were also loud explosions in the centre.

Emergency services said a high-rise apartment block was hit by shelling overnight, posting a picture that showed a hole covering at least five floors blasted into the side of the building.

"The night was difficult, but there are no Russian troops in the capital," Kyiv's mayor, Vitali Klitschko,

said. However, he said, sabotage groups might have infiltrated the capital.

Hours later, AFP saw a destroyed Ukrainian military truck in the city centre. The city said it was toughening a curfew in place and anyone on the streets after 5:00 pm would be considered "members of the enemy's sabotage and reconnaissance groups".

Canada, the United States, Britain and the European Union on Friday said they could act to exclude Russia from the SWIFT global interbank payments system in a further round of sanctions aimed at halting Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Russia has brushed off international condemnation and increasingly stringent sanctions adopted by the West, including against Putin himself and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Russia said sanctioning the pair was "a demonstration of the complete impotence of the foreign policy" of the West.

"We have reached the line after which the point of no return begins," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

On Friday, Nato said it was deploying its rapid response forces for the first time to bolster defences on its eastern flank.

Tariqat delivers, again!

FROM PAGE 1

was at the eighth position on Tariqat's list of 10.

This means two out of the five members of the new EC are from the party's list.

Tariqat, which has two lawmakers in parliament, in 2017 recommended five names and three of those were picked for EC posts.

The three are: former CEC Huda, and election commissioners Rafiqueul Islam and Brig Gen (ret'd) Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury.

Tariqat Chairman Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari yesterday said he along with his party

was very happy to see their recommendations valued.

Asked about the secret of his party's successful choices, Maizbhandari told The Daily Star, "It is a very difficult to find appropriate persons for appropriate positions and we did it."

He hoped the new EC would conduct elections, including the 12th parliamentary polls, in a credible manner during its five-year tenure.

Habibul's name was also proposed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, but the name was at the bottom of his

eight-name list.

Those with FROM PAGE 12

yesterday. Travellers who have received a booster dose after two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine will no longer need a 72-hour RT-PCR Covid-19 test certificate to travel to India, Benapole Immigration authorities said.

However, when they return to the country at the end of their travel, they would have to present a 72-hour Covid-19 test certificate from India, said Dr Zahidur Rahman, in-charge of Benapole Immigration Health Department.

Not possible to explore deep-sea anymore

Tawfiq-e-Elahi tells energy security webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deep-sea gas or oil exploration in the country will not be possible anymore, as investors are looking away and the world tries to move away from fossil fuels, Prime Minister's Energy Advisor Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury claimed at a webinar yesterday.

He said this addressing experts who expressed their concern over the ongoing gas crisis, saying that the government is more interested in importing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) instead of exploration.

Bangladesh Energy Society (BES) organised the webinar, titled "Appropriate Fuel Mix for Sustainable Energy Security – Bangladesh Perspective".

Deep-sea exploration is done to find and tap into deposits of oil or gas beneath the sea-bed.

Joining as chief guest, Tawfiq said the country needs investment from foreign oil companies to undertake oil or gas exploration in deep sea.

"But there's a rising concern against fossil fuel around the world, which is why these companies will not want to make such long-term investments," he said, citing that such an exploration will need at a least 20 years to see fruit.

"I have contacted them privately, asking whether they'd want to do it if we provided all kinds of incentives, but I didn't get any good response," he added.

Replying to an allegation that gas exploration in the country is stuck in limbo, he said Bangladesh Petroleum



The country needs investment from foreign oil companies to undertake oil or gas exploration in deep sea. But there's a rising concern against fossil fuel around the world, which is why these companies will not want to make such long-term investments.

Exploration and Production Company Limited has explored 34 wells in the last five years, and it is also conducting onshore studies down the northern parts of the country.

Speaking at the session, Md Mahbub Hossain, secretary of energy and mineral resources division, said the country has a lack of infrastructure and needs big investments in the energy sector.

Dr Mohammad Tamim, dean of Buet's Faculty of Engineering, said there should be an integrated energy and power sector master-plan.

He mentioned that the country has to pay a penalty of Tk 130 crore per month for failing to take power from Payra power plant, all because its infrastructure is not ready yet.

The cost will further escalate when Rampal power plant will come into operation, he opined.

During his keynote presentation, Khondkar Abdus Saleque (Sufi) said, "The country should keep all fuel options open, including coal, nuclear, green, hydro and solar."

He added that an appropriate mix of them to get affordable and reliable energy has been the biggest challenge for the country.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) Chairperson Mahbubur Rahman said liquid fuel-based power plants are the costliest power producers, and they comprise 34 percent of the total power generation.

Despite huge efforts, it was not possible for BPDB to stop these power plants, he added.

He also noted that renewable energy, especially solar power, has good potential in the country.

But unless there is an affordable storage system available, it cannot be competitive in the market, he added.

BES president and special envoy of Climate Vulnerable Forum Abul Kalam Azad chaired the event, while former power secretary Monowar Islam conducted it.

'Ploy to plunder public money'

Fakhrul on pension scheme

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that the government has taken a move to introduce the universal pension scheme for all citizens as part of its new ploy to plunder public money.

Speaking at a rally, party secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir also alleged that the government has hired lobbyists with taxpayers' money to legalise its repressive acts, including enforced disappearance.

As part of BNP's 11-day countrywide programme, its Dhaka north and south city units arranged the rally in front of Jatiya Press Club protesting the growing price hike of daily essentials and utility services.

"I've seen a media report about whether the government will introduce a universal general pension. They're not saying anything clearly about it. But we can realise that they are going to resort to another trick to loot public money," Fakhrul said.

He said the government will take Tk 1,000 from each person per month for up to 60 years. "If any one dies before the age of 60, their money won't be given back... which means this is nothing but a way to loot the people's money."

The BNP leader said the government is unable to take any step to resolve people's problems. "Rather, they're putting people in danger."



A vehicle of Dhaka North City Corporation sprays water on Manik Mia Avenue to keep dust pollution in check. Authorities took this measure as the city's air is showing no signs of improving, due to constant construction work and increasing number of vehicles on roads among other factors. This photo was taken yesterday.

Are they above the law?

Drivers often get nabbed while owners go scot-free after road crashes

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Eighteen days have passed since a "faulty" pickup killed six brothers in Chakaria of Cox's Bazar, completely devastating the entire family. And yet, police have not been able to arrest its owner till yesterday, delaying the investigation process.

A case filed over the February 8 road crash on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway had been transferred to Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) from Highway Police.

But, the owner of the pickup, which has no updated papers for the last three years, could not be arrested. And so, police's efforts are being questioned.

This is nothing new, however. Arrests or other punitive actions against vehicle owners are rare, even if the vehicles are found without valid papers, including fitness clearance.

In many cases, police only arrest the drivers, following protests or huge media outcry, and keep them in jail to face trial proceedings, road safety activists said. For example, an Anabil Paribahan bus killed SSC examinee Mainuddin Islam in the capital's Rampura on November 29 last year.

Locals nabbed the bus driver and beat him up. While the driver was receiving treatment at a hospital, police showed him arrested. He is still in jail. Later, it was found that the bus had no route permit and updated tax token, a clear violation of traffic rules. No action has been taken against the owner so far, Rampura police confirmed.

"Transport owners are powerful, as many of them are involved with the ruling party. So, the government is reluctant to take action against them," Road Safety Foundation Executive Director Saidur Rahman said yesterday.

In the case of the Chakaria incident, Rab arrested the pickup driver, who did not even have a valid licence, three days after the crash. He is currently in jail.

OWNER IDENTIFIED, NOT ARRESTED YET
Validity of all three important documents -- fitness

CHAKARIA ROAD CRASH

- Owner of pickup still not arrested
- Rab, however, nabbed driver
- Vehicle's papers expired 3yrs ago

THE SCENARIO

- Arrests, other punitive actions against vehicle owners rare
- In many cases, police only arrest drivers, after protests, media outcry
- Drivers kept in jail to face trial proceedings

clearance, route permit and tax token -- expired around three years ago, but the pickup was still in operation.

The vehicle was registered with Chattogram BRTA office in 2016 against a private bank. The tax identification number of a prominent company, which sells such vehicles, was used.

As per the documents, validity of the fitness clearance and tax token expired in May 2018, and the route permit expired in May 2019.

OC Safayet Hossain of Chakaria's Malumghat Highway Police Station, which seized the vehicle, yesterday said they have identified the owner: Mahmudul Karim of the upazila. Asked why they could not arrest him even after 18 days, he said the case was transferred to PBI some days after the incident, so they are not looking into it.

Contacted, Cox's Bazar PBI Inspector Enamul Haque Chowdhury, investigation officer of the case, said the owner fled the area after the incident, and they are trying their best to arrest him. Asked when they will submit the probe report, he said it is not possible to say that before arresting the owner. Police will seek remand for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Poetry books most-published, novels sell best

DIPAN NANDY

The first 12 days of the fair have seen the publication of 1,361 new books till yesterday. As always, poetry books are at the forefront. As of yesterday, 394 poetry books have been published in the fair.

Novels come in second -- 216. However, despite losing out to poetry in terms of publications, this category has left everyone behind in terms of sales. Publishers told The Daily Star that the readers are always more attracted to novels, and this year has seen no exception.

They said novels by Humayun Ahmed, Imdadul Haque Milon, Anisul Haque, Harishankar Jaldas, Shahaduzzaman and Sadat Hossain top the list. Apart from them, readers are also interested in works by Showkat Ali, Hasan Azizul Huq, Selina Hossain, Syed Manjurul Islam, Moinul Ahsan Saber, Prashant Mridha, Hamim Kamrul Haque, Swakrito Noman, Hamim Kamal and more.

Mazharul Islam, chief executive of Anya



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Prakash, particularly marked Sadat Hossain's new novel "Priyotomo Osukh She" as a top-seller.

While this year's Boi Mela is in full swing, there's some uncertainty regarding whether the 14-day fair will go on for longer.

Until now, the fair is slated to continue till February 28. However, after the prime minister expressed her interest in running it for a month, publishers have been looking forward to a decision. That decision is set to arrive today, according to sources.

No place for rogue cops

Says DMP chief marking its 47th anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner Md Shafiqul Islam yesterday said a war is being waged against cops who engage in corruption.

He made the remark while speaking on the occasion of the 47th founding anniversary of DMP at Rajarbagh Police Lines.

Shafiqul also said that they're taking action against police personnel who engage in misconduct while dealing with people.

The DMP boss also claimed that no money is being transacted over promotion and posting of police members. "I can challenge and say that no one can say that any money has been transacted over the promotion and posting of police recruits," he said.

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As part of BNP's 11-day countrywide programme, its Dhaka north and south city units arranged a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, protesting the growing price hike of daily essentials and utility services.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

PRAYER
TIMING
FEB 27



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30
Jamaat	5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Two puppies playing with a trained caregiver of Furryghor. Located at Mirpur's Zoo Road, Furryghor takes care of pets for a fee anytime one has to head out and needs a place for them to stay.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

A pit stop for your pets

HASSAN MUNHAMANNA

It came together after just one meeting in December.

In the one and a half months since that fruitful conversation between Rakibul Haq Emil, Nuzhat Nabila and Khalid Farhan, the three put together a plan and followed it through. By the time February arrived, Furryghor was almost good to go.

They finally launched the day-care/boarding house for pets on February 22. With three rooms for dogs and 14 glass-walled cat cabins, the 1,800 square feet space in Mirpur's Zoo Road is already attracting interest from pet parents all over the city.

"We got featured on a private channel's news broadcast a couple of days ago. And just like that, the demand spiked, even before we've completed furnishing the space," said Nuzhat Nabila.

She said their dog-rooms, which already have a designated potty-place and hand-showers installed, are going to have their own TVs and sound systems. There are CCTVs installed everywhere that Nabila and the other partners check up on through their smartphones.

In addition, a cafe -- for humans -- is being set up in the lobby, which is also set to feature a shelf dedicated to craft entrepreneurs, right beside the sitting space. The big wall on the lobby was painted by Nabila and artist Suhas Nahian. Over a backdrop of light yellow, a bunch of cats and dogs can be seen uttering your favourite pet meme



buzzwords: purr, henlo, and of course, bork.

Nabila said she's a pet-mother herself, an architect, and a lecturer at Southeast University.

She has been in touch with Paw Foundation's Emil for some time, even working together a couple of times. During her masters in Sydney, she worked with some pet centres and got to learn of the international standards of taking care of pets this way, which no doubt came in handy while setting up Furryghor. Emil is an architect too, and it was these two who designed and executed the whole space.

When this correspondent visited, PAW Foundation founder Emil was there

with Thumri, his nine-year-old dog. Besides her, the animal rights activist has two more dogs.

"I haven't been out on a trip for five years," Emil said while explaining how Furryghor came together. "This is a big headache for pet-parents everywhere." Nabila echoed this. "I can always leave my pets with a house help or a friend, but I'll never risk keeping them with anyone who's not trained to take care of pets."

They said Furryghor's idea came together from these concerns.

"When I contacted our other partner Khalid Farhan, a digital marketer and YouTuber currently living in Ireland, for donations for PAW Foundation," Emil recounted, "He told me he's not going to give us any donations, but that he's willing to invest in a for-profit venture, a portion of whose profits can go to the foundation."

"Seventy percent of the foundation's funds come from PAW Life Care [a medical facility for pets], but it's registered as a non-profit. Furryghor is our first for-profit venture."

"Some of our well-wishers give us money due to personal liaison with me or my team members. But we'll not always be there. But a for-profit venture can keep the foundation going in our absence," he said.

"We also want to introduce some philosophies with Furryghor. That our pets deserve the highest standards of care and that we should treat them like we would treat our children," Emil said.

To get a booking at Furryghor, one needs to show vaccine cards of their pets. For day's stay, cat-cabins can be booked for Tk 500, while a dog's stay is priced at Tk 1,500 for the same duration. The facility currently has two caregivers and a dedicated manager.

From hope to horror, in a matter of hours

Over 30 shops, houses burned as fire engulfs Khulna kitchen market

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Parimal Roy, a middle aged small trader, was sobbing beside Khulna city's Rupsha Kitchen market. His complexion had turned pale, while some people were trying to console him. He simply kept repeating how all of his dreams had turned to ashes.

Like Parimal, many more traders of the market were seen reeling from their losses, after a fire gutted over 30 shops and houses.

The blaze broke out around 11:00pm yesterday. A total of four firefighting units, three from Tutpara and one unit from Boyra, brought the blaze under control around noon.

Parimal runs a wedding decoration business. "This was supposed to be a good season for weddings. I have just invested over Tk five lakh and have nothing to run my family."

Shammi Akhter lived in a rented room at a house adjacent to the market. After the tragedy, she has lost all her belongings. "Where will we live, all my belongings have burnt to ashes."

Rupsha Wholesale Business Association joint secretary Ramzan Ali Hawladar said the fire spread to 26 shops and five adjacent houses owned by one Sultan Sikder. He claimed that the



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

fire broke out from a carelessly thrown cigarette around a cork-sheet warehouse.

Visiting the spot during the fire, this correspondent saw locals working with fire fighters to put out the fire. Upon receiving the news, KCC Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque rushed to the spot.

Locals said upon sensing the fire, they started trying to put it out by throwing water at it. Fire service officials came in around 10 minutes later but found it difficult to enter the market through the cloud of smoke.

Nazrul Islam, senior station officer of Tutpara Fire Station, said they doused the blaze after one-and-a-half hours. "We are looking into the matter," the official said. However, he could not ascertain the extent of the damage.

DHAKA BAR ASSOCIATION Pro-AL panel sweeps polls

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League lawyers' group "White Panel" has won a landslide victory in Dhaka Bar Association elections for 2022-2023, bagging 17 posts, including president and general secretary, out of 23.

Mahbubur Rahman and Firojur Rahman Monto were elected president and general secretary respectively under the banner of Sammilita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad.

The BNP-backed lawyers' group "Blue Panel" under the banner of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikkyo got six posts, including library secretary and social welfare secretary, in the elections. The elections were held on February 23 and 24 where 11,285 voters, out of 19,847, cast their votes.

New home, old problems

Revamped M'singh Museum draws in visitors, but doesn't have resources to display all exhibits

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

After shifting Mymensingh Museum to Shashi Lodge over two years ago, the number of daily visitors has significantly increased. While this is good news, the establishment is yet to show visitors all it can offer.

The lodge has more than adequate space to display all museum exhibits, but due to lack of showcases and necessary support staff, many items have been stored away in several rooms of the lodge, depriving visitors.

Shashi Lodge, the historically renowned building, makes most passers-by take a pause to get a glimpse of its architecture. Maharaja Suryakanta Acharya Chowdhury built the two-storied palace in 1877 for his adopted

son Maharaja Shashikanta Acharya Chowdhury.

Once the premises of Teachers Training College (Female), the lodge was handed over to the cultural affairs ministry, following an inter-ministerial meeting with the education ministry in 2015.

The lodge started housing the museum in 2019. And now, around 300 visitors throng there daily, as opposed to just around 20 at the previous location.

Presently, the museum has enough rooms to display some 200 relics,



While Mymensingh Museum has been shifted to a new home, the historically renowned Shashi Lodge, old problems still remain. Even now, the establishment does not have enough showcases and staffers to display all its exhibits. And so, many of them are stored away or displayed without the glass protection.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM SANJIDA PREETI'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Girl from theatre set to CONQUER SHOWBIZ

I feel 'Mridha Bonam Mridha' was under-promoted, and being one of the first productions to release theatrically after the pandemic's initial restrictions, it could not reach the audience that we had hoped for. - Sanjida Preeti

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Starting her journey with theatre, Sanjida Preeti moved from one medium to another, earning praises for her realistic screen presence and down-to-earth role choices. After the success of her recent releases, including critically acclaimed OTT productions like "Tagdeer", Preeti is looking forward to exploring the digital platforms while trying out in films.

We caught up with the actress in a candid chat to know more about her journey and upcoming releases.

You have recently garnered acclaim for your OTT ventures. From the theatre to the small screen and then to the online streaming platforms, do you find the transition jarring?

The acting process is not very different when we change screens. When I stepped into television, things were pretty similar to what we come across in OTT projects these days. A lot of experimental projects would be produced and the same exposure is now available on OTT and other online platforms now.

Nevertheless, the stage is very different, especially when we talk about preparing for roles. For theatrical productions, we would have to rehearse for months before we set foot on the stage for a presentation. We also have to work on our voice range and do a lot of research as it's a single take opportunity.

You decided to pursue music academically, but later switched to acting. What enticed you to make this decision?

As common in the 90's, my parents had sent me to learn music, since I expressed that I was interested in learning some sort of art. With time, I started getting programmes from BTV which featured singing, dance and acting.

As soon as I passed my HSC exams, I joined Prachyanat, and loved the experience. It is then that I realised how much I enjoyed this art form, and pursued it while maintaining my formal education.

Despite being a business graduate, I never pursued corporate jobs. Rather, I explored

my chances in acting, trying to earn from something I love.

You recently debuted on the silver screen with "Mridha Bonam Mridha". How was your experience with the project?

I was obviously excited about it, since it was my first film. The character was challenging, and I was very nervous too.

I feel the film was under-promoted, and being one of the first productions to release theatrically after the pandemic's initial restrictions, it could not reach the audience that we had hoped for.

However, I did get positive feedback for my performance in the film, and that strengthened my urge to take up more realistic and practical characters for my future endeavours.

What other projects are you looking forward to?

I will be seen in Hridi Haq's directorial, "1971 Shei Shob Din". I have also been busy with Eid productions, and am in talks for a few OTT projects.

Speaking of projects that I want to do, the Champa, Diti and Shabnaz starrer action film "Ajker Hungama" was to be my favourite film when I was little, and I really crave to star in a similar project in the future!

Situation in Ukraine 'devastating', says Priyanka

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Taking a stand against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas called Russia's actions "terrifying".

Priyanka took to her Instagram handle, and shared a video with a long post.

"The situation unfolding in Ukraine is terrifying. Innocent people living in fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, while trying to navigate the uncertainty of the immediate future," she wrote.

"It's difficult to comprehend how in the modern world this could escalate to such a catastrophic point, but this is a consequential moment that will reverberate around the world. There are innocent lives living in this war zone. They are just like you and me. Here is more info at the link in my bio about how to assist the people of Ukraine."

Partha and Bappa Mazumder to appear together in "HOYE JAO TUMI"

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Noted musicians and brothers Partha Majumder and Bappa Mazumder will appear in a music video together for the first time. They have collaborated for the song "Hoye Jao Tumi", composed by Partha, and voiced by Bappa.

Partha Majumder wrote on social media about this collaboration, posting the pictures of the production.

Under the banner of Dhooli music, the lyrics for the track is written by Atiur Rahman, while Yamin Elan directed the music video of the romantic song.

COUNTRYWIDE

BURIMARI LAND PORT

Workers at high risk of coronavirus infection

They demand Covid-19 booster dose immediately

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Around 2600 workers engaged in loading and unloading goods are at a considerable risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus at Burimari Land Port in Patgram upazila of Lalmonirhat as they are to work along with foreign workers amidst the latest Covid-19 spike.

The workers demanded that the booster dose of the Covid vaccine be administered to them on a priority basis.

The local department said they will administer the vaccine among the workers after getting a go-ahead from the higher authorities.

Safar Uddin, president of Burimari Land Port Load-Unload Labourers' Union, said labourers at the Burimari land port have to unload goods from trucks coming from India and Bhutan. Transport workers who come with foreign vehicles often come in contact with local workers.

Due to this, the local labourers working at the port are at risk of contracting Covid-19 virus.

"Every labourer has been administered two doses of the covid vaccine. No labourers have received booster doses yet," he said, adding that "I appeal to the authority to administer booster dose to the labourers on a priority basis. The health department has not taken any action so far".

Anarul Islam, a labourer at the port, said in order to unload goods from foreign vehicles on the land port, they often have to work along with foreign transport workers. They have to work taking risk of Covid-19 infection.

"We would feel safe if we received the booster dose of covid vaccine," he said.

Moniruzzaman Monir, general secretary of Lalmonirhat District Unit of Sangjukta Sramik Federation,

said the health department has been urged to administer booster doses of covid vaccine to labourers in Burimari Land Port on a priority basis but no steps have been taken in this regard.

He demanded that the health department take immediate steps to administer booster dose to local labourers.

Bangladesh Land Port Authority's Assistant Director at Burimari land port Ruhul Amin said it is urgent to administer booster doses of covid vaccine to loading and unloading labourers working at the port on a priority basis. He has informed the health department about this, he said.

Dr Maqbul Hossain of the special medical team at Burimari Land Port said he has already informed the higher authorities about the matter.

If they get direction, booster doses of covid vaccine will be administered to the labourers working in the port soon, he added.

Schoolgirl gang-raped at knifepoint

FROM PAGE 12

the hospital with the help of local representatives."

Local Union Parishad member Ibrahim Mollah said all of the accused live in Kalmibunia village, where the victim also lives.

"We all brought the girl to the hospital. We demand severe punishment to the rapists."

Manjurul Islam, emergency doctor of the hospital, said initial tests showed signs of rape.

Tulsi Rani Biswas, a senior nurse of the gynaecology department, said the victim had bite marks on her body and had fallen seriously ill due to the torture. "We are giving her the necessary

treatment."

Police said they have launched a drive to arrest the other accused and are investigating whether anyone else was involved in the incident.

Admission seekers worried over syllabus

FROM PAGE 12

were held under the curtailed syllabuses of the HSC exams.

Last year, a total of 13.07 lakh students passed the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent exams, according to results published on February 13. Of them 1,89,169 secured

GPA 5.

In Bangladesh, students usually prefer public universities and medical colleges to other higher education institutions. There are around 60,000 seats in 45 public universities and 4,350 in 47 public medical colleges.

The Dhaka University

authorities said they have not decided on which syllabus the entrance test will be held.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman said teachers involved in overseeing admission tests will decide on the syllabus and question patterns.

"They would give

consideration to the shortened HSC exam syllabus on which the exams were held [last year]," he hoped.

Professor Abdus Salam of Rajshahi University said the admission committee will make the decision regarding the entrance test syllabus.

First Ekushey Compilation

FROM PAGE 12

10 students.

At around 1:15 pm, Oli Ahad told me, "Students are throwing stones at the police near the gate in front of the medical college hostel. Go there and stop them from throwing stones." He added, "We have news, the police might even shoot today."

I went there at half past one. When I reached the gate, I saw the boys throwing stones and as far as I can remember, the shots were fired fifteen minutes after my arrival. Barkat might be at the first barrack. The bullet pierced

the bamboo fence and hit him.

Me, Amir Ali and another student returned to Madhur Canteen and, from there, went to the Capital Press opposite the jail. I wrote a leaflet sitting there. Its headline was 'Shot on the orders of Minister Mofizuddin'. The press helped us a lot that day.

About 4:30 pm, we returned to the university. We published around two or three thousand leaflets. The leaflets were distributed in Chawkbazar, Nazirabazar and other places. Students distributed those leaflets.

Of those who were martyred on February 21, I knew only Barkat personally. It was heard that some bodies were missing. Some people were identified, some could not be identified. We could identify Salam, Barkat and Rafiq. But there were rumours that 50-60 people had died. There were various student organisations at that time. No organisation disagreed on the question of Bangla language. Tensions were high.

The tide of language movement was very strong from 1952 to the 1954 elections. I published

a compilation on the language movement in March 1953. Twenty-one days later, the Muslim League government banned the compilation. [Abridged]

Hasan Hafizur Rahman actively took part in the language movement in 1952. In 1953, the first compilation work on the Language Movement, Ekushey February, was published under his editorship.

Source: Ekusher Potobhumi, Ekusher Sriti, Edited by Matiur Rahman Translated by Shamsuddoza Sajen

Local youths behind it: Rab

FROM PAGE 12

On Friday, a team of Rab-8, with the help of Rab Headquarters, raided different areas of Gopalganj and arrested them.

The arrestees -- Rakib Mia alias Emon, 22; Piash Fakir, 26; Pradip Biswas, 24; Nahid Rayhan, 24; Helal, 24; and Turjo Mohonto, 26 -- have no political affiliation, according to Rab.

"They admitted that they were involved in the heinous rape," Moin said.

Meanwhile, the students and teachers of BSMRSTU continued their demonstrations for the third day yesterday, demanding justice for their fellow student.

"We have learnt that Rab arrested six youths. One of our four demands has been partially fulfilled. We will continue the movement until the remaining demands are fulfilled," said Naeem Islam, a student of the university.

Their four-point demands include ensuring security to the students residing inside the campus and its adjacent areas.

"We want a campus where our teachers and students would be safe," said AQM Mahbub, vice-chancellor of BSMRSTU, demanding exemplary punishment for the heinous crime.

In another development, at least 43 female students have left their mess on security concerns from the

Chargata area under Sadar upazila and took shelter in the university hall around 10:30 pm on Friday.

The university, which opened in 2011, has about 4,000 female students.

Of them, only 1,200 get campus accommodation, with the rest putting up at different messes near the university area or in Gopalganj town.

[Our Correspondent in Gopalganj contributed to this report]

Govt extends special first-dose campaign

FROM PAGE 12

death was not caused by the vaccine.

In addition to the regular campaign, running at 1,005 centres, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) launched the special drive across the country to fulfil the target of bringing 70 percent of the country's population under vaccine coverage.

It could not be known how many jabs were administered till yesterday evening.

As of Friday, around 92 percent of the targeted population received their first jabs, according to DGHS data.

During yesterday's online briefing, the health minister said, "No county has been able to vaccinate one crore people in a day ... Bangladesh is the 10th among all the countries in terms of bringing the highest number of people

under vaccine coverage."

Visiting eight vaccine centres in Dhaka city's different areas, The Daily Star saw people, mostly rickshaw pullers, day labourers, and students, standing in long queues.

"I could not register earlier as I have no documents. I am standing in this line for two hours [for the vaccine] as I have heard no one will get the first dose after today," said

Abu Taher, 35, a rickshaw-puller, near the Dhaka Medical College vaccine centre, before the special drive was extended.

Our correspondents in different districts reported similar situations.

Meanwhile, at least 10 people were injured in a stampede after police tried to tackle a rush of vaccine recipients near the Health Management Vaccination centre in Savar on the outskirts of the capital.



A view of a high-rise apartment block which was hit by recent shelling in Kyiv, yesterday; women and children cross the border from Ukraine to Poland at the Korczowa-Krakovets border crossing ; and a demonstrator holds up placards during an anti-war protest in Munich, Germany. Russian forces pounded Ukrainian cities with artillery and cruise missiles yesterday for a third day running but a defiant President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said the capital Kyiv remained in Ukrainian hands. PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

“

It's time to padlock the embassies and continue contacts looking at each other through binoculars and gun sights. ... The sanctions are being imposed for one simple reason – political impotence arising from their inability to change Russia's course.

Ex-president of Russia
Dmitry Medvedev

Ukrainians flee as fighting flares

REUTERS

Refugees fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued to pour across its western borders yesterday, with around 100,000 reaching Poland in two days and some finding temporary sanctuary in sports halls and others in churches.

As Russian forces pounded Ukrainian cities including the capital Kyiv with artillery and cruise missiles, fearful families thronged European Union borders hoping to enter Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary.

Ukrainians already safely in the European Union waited anxiously at the borders for relatives to join them; many had walked for miles to try to reach safety.

"The most important thing is that people survive," said Katharina Asselborn, wiping away tears as she waited at the Polish border for her sister, aunt and her three children from their home in Odessa.

"I don't know what will happen next. They lost their own house. It's so terrible. The last 30 kilometres to the border they went on foot."

At the Hungarian border town of Beregsurany, 69-year-old Ilona Varga crossed into the European Union on foot, leaving behind her home, shop and hopes

she might soon return.

"My kids are telling me to move over to Hungary for good, and they are right," Varga said. "But it is so hard to leave everything behind, I was born here, I grew up here, I have my work here, everything ties me here."

At the same border post, 58-year-old Nataliya Ableyeva brought a stranger's two children to safety after border guards prevented their fighting-age Ukrainian father from crossing.

"Their father simply handed over the two kids to me, and trusted me, giving me their passports to bring them over," she said. On the Hungarian side, the two children were reunited with their mother.

In Poland, which has the region's largest Ukrainian community of about 1 million people, a further 9,000 people had crossed the border since 7 am yesterday, Deputy Interior Minister Pawel Szefernaker told a news conference.

At Medyka in the south, some 85 km (50 miles) from Lviv in western Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainians waited for officials to process them as refugees. A group of women dragging suitcases with small children sitting on them shouted "Glory to Ukraine" as they passed.

The Polish government has reserved 70,000 hospital beds for the war wounded and prepared a train to transport the injured from Ukraine. More train wagons been loaded with humanitarian supplies for the Lviv region.

Czech railways sent special trains that arrived early yesterday at the Polish border carrying Ukrainians living in the Czech Republic to meet family members who had escaped the war.

In the Slovak border town Ubla, officials put refugees in a local gymnasium where foldout beds and air mattresses filled a basketball court. Volunteers handed out sandwiches while young children giggled and played with donated stuffed animals.

The country's interior ministry said over the past 24 hours, authorities processed 10,526 people at the Slovak-Ukraine border. Before the conflict, they averaged 1,444 people daily.

In Romania, the Orthodox Church housed refugees at a 15th century monastery. In neighbouring Bulgaria, two buses, carrying ethnic Bulgarians from Odessa arrived early yesterday and a third one was on its way. Bulgaria has sent another four buses to Kyiv to evacuate people from its 250,000 minority in Ukraine.

INVASION OF UKRAINE Developments

AGENCIES

BATTLE FOR KYIV
Ukrainian soldiers beat back a Russian attack in the capital Kyiv only hours after President Volodymyr Zelensky warns Moscow would attempt to take the city before dawn. He has said at press briefing that his country will triumph over Russian forces. A day before, Russian President Vladimir Putin called on the Ukrainian army to overthrow the government.

WEST SENDING WEAPONS
Zelensky says "weapons and equipment from our partners are on the way to Ukraine" after talking to French President Emmanuel Macron, while Prague is sending automatic and sniper rifles, pistols and ammunition valued at 7.6 million euros (\$8.6 million). Us also to release \$350 million in military aid to Ukraine.

SWIFT DECISION SOON
A decision to cut Russia off from the global SWIFT payment system will be taken in a matter of days, the governor of a central bank within the euro zone told Reuters. The United States and the European Union add Russian leader Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to their sanctions list. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson also says he is planning "imminent" sanctions against them.

'3,500 RUSSIAN SOLDIERS KILLED'
According to a post on Ukrainian military's Facebook page, more than 3,500 Russian soldiers involved in the invasion have been killed and almost 200 taken prisoner. They



add that Russia has also lost 14 aircraft, eight helicopters, and 102 tanks so far. The BBC is unable to independently verify any of these claims. Russia has so far not acknowledged any casualties.

NO 'WAR' OR 'INVASION'
Russia orders its media to remove reports describing its attack on Ukraine as an "assault, invasion, or declaration of war" or face being blocked and fined.

COUPLE READIES FOR WAR HOURS AFTER MARRIAGE
Ukrainian citizens Yaryna Arieva and Sviatoslav Fursin got married just hours after Russia launched its invasion of their country. They spent their first day as a married couple collecting their rifles and getting ready to defend Ukraine. It was supposed to be a May wedding, but the couple were no longer sure of what their future holds. Arieva and Fursin have both signed up with the Territorial Defense Forces, a branch of Ukraine's armed forces that is comprised mostly of volunteers. Once armed, the couple headed to the office of their political party, the European Solidarity.

SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

The US and allies responded with a barrage of sanctions after President Vladimir Putin defied Western warnings to unleash a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24

Key measures announced so far by US, EU, UK, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand

INCLUDING:

FINANCE	KEY INDUSTRIES	INDIVIDUALS	OTHERS
Top 10 Russian financial institutions representing nearly 80 percent of Russias banking sector now under US restrictions	Oil and gas <ul style="list-style-type: none">Gazproms oil and natural gas units cut off from Western credit marketsEU export bans on equipment and tech for refinery upgrades	Defence and aerospace <ul style="list-style-type: none">Exports of key high-tech goods cut off, includes semiconductors, computers, telecoms, information security, lasers, and sensors	Football <ul style="list-style-type: none">UEFA Champions League final taken away from Saint Petersburg, moved to Paris
Sberbank banned from conducting transactions through the US CAPTA system	Aviation <ul style="list-style-type: none">EU ban on aircraft and aviation partsUK banned Aeroflot from using British airspace Feb 24, Russian private jets Feb 25	US and Canada also to sanction Putin and Lavrov	Formula 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Russian Grand Prix cancelled
VTB and 3 other banks hit with "full blocking sanctions" meaning all US-held assets to be frozen	Mixed <ul style="list-style-type: none">Canadian export permits for goods worth \$550 million in aerospace, IT and mining cancelled	Personal assets of dozens of officials frozen	Skiing <ul style="list-style-type: none">World Cup events in Russia cancelled
		Canada sanctioned 58 individuals and entities	Eurovision <ul style="list-style-type: none">Russia banned from the song contest
		Australia on Feb 26 added 8 oligarchs and 339 MPs to their list of sanctioned individuals	

AFP

TALIBAN RULE IN AFGHANISTAN Few women return as universities reopen

AFP, Afghanistan

Afghanistan's main universities yesterday reopened six months after the Taliban returned to power, but only a trickle of women returned to now-segregated classes.

Most secondary schools for girls and all public universities were shuttered following the Taliban's August 15 takeover, sparking fears women would be barred from education – as happened during the first rule of the hardline Islamists, from 1996-2001.

The Taliban insist they will allow girls and women to be educated this time around – but only in segregated classes and according to an Islamic curriculum.

Kabul University, the country's oldest, re-opened yesterday without fanfare – and few students in attendance. Taliban guards refused journalists access to the sprawling campus and chased away media teams lingering near the entrance.

AFP, however, spoke to some students away from the gates, who expressed mixed feelings after their first day back.

"I am happy that the university resumed...we want to continue our studies," said an English major who asked to be identified only as Basira.

But she said there were "some difficulties" – including students being scolded by Taliban guards for bringing their mobile phones to class.

Another student, Maryam, said only seven women attended her class. A similar picture emerged from campuses across the country, although no students returned to class at Panjshir University, in the heartland of a nascent resistance to the Taliban's rule.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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Assistant General Manager/ Senior Principal Officer (Unit Head) for Recovery Unit. No. of Post: 01

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Don't let corrupt traders exploit Ukraine crisis

Effective oversight, subsidies needed to control prices

IT'S alarming to know that prices of local consumer goods have already started to take a hit from the fallout of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and fears of consequent price hikes on the international market. Since Thursday morning, according to a report, the wholesale prices of major consumer goods have gone up from around Tk 100 to Tk 600 per maund. Any increase in the global prices of essential commodities—especially oil and gas—would, understandably, impact the local market too. The commerce minister has said as much while commenting on the Ukraine situation, assuring that the government would control prices with subsidies if it happens. But as the report suggests, this is already happening, with a combination of greed, fears and speculations driving up the prices.

Apart from edible oil, wholesale prices of rice, wheat and sugar in Khatunganj, Chattogram—the country's largest wholesale market for consumer goods—have reportedly gone up, as have that of other food and non-food items. To justify the early price hikes, traders talk of fears of global fuel prices rising in the wake of the Ukraine crisis. There are also fears of disruptions in the global supply chain, leading to an increased demand for advance purchases. The rising demand for products ahead of Ramadan is also causing a hoarding spree. It may not be long before the debilitating effects of all this hits the retail market too.

We are deeply concerned by what this means for ordinary consumers. They are already overwhelmed by skyrocketing prices of almost all essential items amid talks of another round of tariff hikes of gas, water and electricity. The cost of living has significantly gone up. According to a report, a typical middle-class resident of Dhaka needs more than Tk 50,000 a month to meet the basic needs of a family of four. The truth is, the majority of Dhaka's 20 million residents don't even earn that amount. A grotesque testament to their actual buying ability of late has been a growing pile of videos showing people running after the Open Market Sale (OMS) trucks. These trucks, meant for selling products at controlled prices to the poor and low-income groups, are now being frequented by people from middle-income groups too.

So when the commerce minister says that the government will control prices with subsidies if the Ukraine crisis increases prices on the international market—and that various products are being sold through TCB trucks to "10 million low-income people across the country" to help meet their needs—one cannot help but wonder if he is underselling the risks. If the heart-rending scenes unfolding on Dhaka's streets are anything to go by, large numbers of people are clearly falling through the cracks. Apart from a routine pledge of "strict punishment" for unscrupulous traders manipulating market prices, we've yet to hear of any concrete action. We urge the government to initiate the kind of intervention that actually helps control the prices, with effective oversight, greater transparency and subsidies, otherwise ordinary consumers will continue to suffer.

Climate change brings disturbing new reality

Bangladesh faces huge labour loss from global warming

GLOBAL warming is having multidimensional impacts on countries and communities—and not just in terms of erratic climate events. A new study conducted by Duke University found that Bangladesh sustains losses of about seven billion working hours annually due to extreme heat exposure caused by global warming. Low- and middle-income tropical countries like Bangladesh are most vulnerable to global warming as a majority of their populations relies on manual work to earn their livelihoods. Researchers say if global temperature increases by only one degree Celsius, Bangladesh may lose approximately 21 billion working hours, and it would lose 31 to 57 billion working hours if the temperature rises by 2 or 4 degrees Celsius.

This means, as heat and humidity levels rise because of climate change, options for moving outdoor labour to cooler hours will become increasingly less possible, as one of the researchers said. This would ultimately result in further labour losses. The research also shows that on a hot summer day in Dhaka, temperature remains between 27 and 28 degrees Celsius, and in a 12-hour workday, an average worker loses 10 minutes of working hours due to exposure to extreme heat.

These are alarming figures as they show the multidimensional crisis we face as one of the worst affected countries in terms of climate change. For once, we are the victims of a condition that we haven't helped create or sustain, nor do we have the means to resolve it on our own. However, findings of the research, published in a peer-reviewed paper, provide important pointers for our own researchers to delve deeper and find out what these mean for affected communities, individuals and sectors, and if we can try and minimise the damage from the fallout.

One thing is certain: going forward, we will have to live with increasing losses of working hours and even capabilities, which is particularly disturbing as our production sectors—from agriculture to industry—are vastly labour-intensive. Therefore, the cumulative impact of this on our economy will be significant. There is no option left but to design and implement policies to cushion the adverse impacts of global warming. The government will be wise to heed the warnings.

How many revisions does a development project need?



Dr Nawshad Ahmed, an ex-UN official, is an economist and urban planner. He is the author of the book "The Children of Bangladesh".

NAWSHAD AHMED

DESPITE the higher authorities' public expression of dissatisfaction with frequent revisions of government projects, the practice of taking projects to ECNEC meetings to be granted deadline extensions, design changes, expansion of scope and budget enhancements has continued unabated. In most cases, the underlying factors that warrant project revisions are slow implementation and cost escalation. While sometimes there are genuine reasons for such revisions—such as the rise in market prices of construction materials and, recently, impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on project implementation—the reasons given to justify deadline extension and cost escalation are often difficulties in procurement, challenge of land acquisition, delay in release of imported goods from the ports and late recruitment of project staff and consultants. In essence, there are design-level weaknesses, unrealistic budget estimations, followed by delays in floating of tenders and completing procurement formalities.

The total amount of ADP proposed in the current fiscal year's (2021-22) budget is Tk 225,324 crore, which is 6.5 percent of the GDP. As many as 1,426 projects are included in this year's ADP. About 25 percent of these projects have been revised one to three times already. Frequent revisions of development projects are discouraged in the government's guidelines, which do not allow revision of a project more than twice. A third revision is possible but only with prior approval of the planning minister.

The ADP guidelines allow project revisions only in cases where a) planned objectives of a project are not achievable and have to be changed, b) costs have increased due to currency fluctuations, c) CD/VAT charges have increased, d) national pay scale and other allowances



▲ **The government needs to undertake more projects but, at the same time, exercise more scrutiny and caution in its selection process and only fund projects that are essential.**

ILLUSTRATION: STAR

have increased, e) costs of physical items have changed, f) the project design needs changes, and g) the project needs additional resources. The implementing ministry of a project has the approval authority of a revision costing up to 10 percent of the total budget. If the project costs require a 25 percent increase or decrease, the planning minister has the

authority to approve the change within a limit of Tk 50 crore. Revisions of high-value projects are placed before the ECNEC for approval.

Making requests for extension of a project's tenure and its costs is a regular practice in the country, however. The huge time and cost overruns of many projects are encouraging a culture of seeking revisions since there are a number of grounds given in the ADP guidelines for revisions. In January 2022, 10 projects were placed before the ECNEC for revision whose original costs were around Tk 3,099 crore. The estimated cost escalation requested for approval of these projects totalled about five times more at Tk 14,961

crore. During the first eight months of the current fiscal year, the additional project costs approved by the government, according to *The Daily Star*, amounted to a staggering Tk 59,919 crore, which can potentially fund two megaprojects like the Padma Bridge.

This is a huge amount of project budget escalation and, therefore, requires a closer look at the way project plans are drawn up, reasons for increase of project costs and the appropriate steps needed for timely completion of projects.

No doubt the government urgently needs to address the challenge of frequent project budget revisions. The first step here is to realistically plan and build sound implementation modalities into project proposals. Proper planning and projection of project activities and associated funding requirements should be carefully drawn up in project proposals.

The volume of public investment is rising every year in Bangladesh due to the increased demand for infrastructure and services. The government needs to undertake more projects but, at the same time, exercise more scrutiny and caution in its selection process and only fund projects that are essential. Ministries should be strict in their screening and appraisal of projects, and monitor their implementation so that so many undertakings do not require revisions every year. Improvement in the entire project cycle is necessary in order to minimise the phenomena of project revisions. From the feasibility study phase to the development of a project proposal, from the approval of a project to its implementation, supervision and monitoring, everything should be streamlined so that improvement is visible and tangible. Inadequate monitoring and supervision of field activities to ensure quality implementation is also lacking. The government needs to address all the bottlenecks faced and maximise projects' outputs. Boosting the capacity of public-sector projects will help raise employment opportunities, create effective demand in the short term and enhance social impact in the long run. Improvement of the quality of project performance is essential to enhance ADP implementation which contributes to increased rate of GDP growth.

Pandemics, pain and prosperity



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

DEBRA EFROYMSON

AFTER two years, it is no wonder that people are fed up with the changes the Covid-19 pandemic has inflicted on us. Time and again, we've seen children out of school, people out of work, and hospitals out of beds and oxygen. These crises seem to be the "new abnormal," one which is by no means easy to adjust to. People are tired and just want things to go back to normal.

A couple of things should be clear by now. First, we are not going to acquire a magical post-Covid life any time soon, if ever. The most likely scenario is that Covid-19 will eventually be restricted to smaller outbreaks or fewer locales, though new variants may continue to cause misery. But it is also inevitable that other infectious diseases will appear and wreak havoc, as they have done in increasing numbers since 1980 due in no small part to the climate crisis and deforestation. Since 1980, we have seen several new diseases: HIV/AIDS, SARS, H1N1 (swine flu), MERS, Ebola, Zika, and of course Covid-19. Meanwhile, cholera, malaria, dengue, polio, and other diseases continue to devastate populations.

Diseases are not the only threat we face. Our global economic system is not as sustainable as we have been led to believe. Since the 1990s, there have been major regional and global economic crashes at least every dozen years. While tens of millions of people have been lifted out of poverty, tens of millions more remain entrenched in it. Income inequality is on the rise. Meanwhile, our supposedly sustainable development has caused irreparable damage to our planet and its climate, causing rising temperatures, worsening storms, and devastating floods, droughts, and forest fires which threaten the existence not only of other species, but of humans, too. Inevitably, we are going to face ever-worsening shortages of food and fresh water, which will lead to violence and unrest. Relying on ever-increasing consumption to create



▲ **If global leaders could respond so strongly to a transmissible disease, then why not to the climate crisis?**

PHOTO: AFP

economic opportunities has proved an environmental disaster.

Unbelievably, policymakers continue to act as if times are normal and economic growth is a rising tide that will continue to lift boats—not just for billionaires, with their super luxurious yachts (now a booming business), but for everyone. Telling ourselves lies is not good preparation for facing these multifarious

still continue to spread disinformation and resist any sensible approach to curbing the disease. But many more have complied with the requirements and worked together to save people from illness. We have gained much ground in fighting new diseases, and we can do so with future ones as well—if we work together and remain alert to new dangers. Meanwhile, changes that were

and complex problems.

It may seem difficult to find a bright side in the midst of all these terrifying threats, but there is (at least) one. Covid-19 has brought about untold suffering, but it has also shown us the possibility of governments bringing about major changes to face major challenges. When the ozone layer's depletion and the threat that it entailed to humans became clear, governments worked together to ban products that harm the ozone layer. Covid-19 restrictions have been more complicated and political, but enormous changes did happen throughout the world. People started wearing masks. Unpopular and difficult as they were, shutdowns helped slow the spread of disease—and resulted in remarkably clean air in many polluted cities. Scientists rushed to develop not just one, but several effective vaccines. Massive vaccination programmes quickly brought millions of people protection. Through it all, many bickered and complained, and many

unimaginable before the pandemic have become global in scale. Who even used Zoom before Covid-19? How many people successfully worked or studied remotely? The hours a day gained from not being stuck in traffic has gone towards more productive purposes: time for one's self, studies, hobbies; time for family.

The benefits have not persisted but we did experience a few months of quiet, clean air, and respite from many of the ills of modern life. Perhaps most importantly, we broadened the definition of the possible. Many people are now questioning, if global leaders could respond so strongly to a transmissible disease, then why not to the climate crisis? Perhaps prosperity is less about having more stuff and more about the basics: clean air and water, decent housing, sufficient and safe food, time, and health.

We can't be assured of a return to life before Covid-19, but we could instead achieve something far better.

‘Political will is the missing catalyst for quality education’

Dr Manzoor Ahmed, professor emeritus at Brac University and vice-chair of the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) Council, talks to Eresh Omar Jamal of The Daily Star about a new book, of which he is a co-author, on the political economy of education in South Asia.

You and two other colleagues of yours recently published the book, “The Political Economy of Education in South Asia: Fighting Poverty, Inequality, and Exclusion.” What inspired you to write it?

My colleagues and I have been concerned about the persistent quality deficits in South Asia, the region with one-fourth of the world’s population and the largest concentration of poor people. John Richards is a public policy specialist at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Shahidul Islam is a former education adviser for USAID and my associate at Brac University. Together, we observed that since the 1990s, there has been a major expansion of educational services in South Asia, but the countries in the region still were far off the track for achieving the 2030 SDG goal of equitable, inclusive and quality primary and secondary education for all. We decided to explore the reasons, probe if there were common factors and differences among the countries, and examine what might break the logjam in progress. The title of the book suggests a new perspective about the problems and the solutions that have not received enough attention.

The foreword to the book was Sir Fazle Hasan Abed’s last written piece on education. In it, he wrote, “Public systems have not created the desired equal opportunities and learning outcomes—consequently, they are not preparing young people for the rapidly evolving employment, and social cohesion challenges.” According to your findings, what are the main reasons for this?

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed was exceptionally insightful about grasping the essence of the problems of education and development and initiating creative solutions. In his foreword, he spoke about critical deficiencies: Despite expansion that allows most children

There is resistance in the education establishment to ensure results in the basic foundational skills of language, maths and science. Experience has shown that building the foundational skills is the best preparation for the world of work and life.

You have dedicated nearly one-third of the book to diagnosing the quality deficits in South Asia’s basic education. Can you summarise the most important points in relation to the basic shortcomings of providing quality education?

Before the pandemic, South Asia was the world’s fastest growing region in terms of GDP and it is projected to perform creditably despite the pandemic-induced setbacks. This narrative, however, is only a partial story. The pandemic has demonstrated the vulnerability of those close to the poverty line, who comprise about half of the population of South Asia by the lower-middle-income countries’ threshold of USD 3.20 per capita earning per day. Professor Rehman Sobhan, drawing on cross-country experience in South Asia, has argued that structural injustice—due to the failure of governance structures—has led to serious inequity in human development services such as health and education.

Acquiring foundational skills, literacy and numeracy, known as the tools of learning, by age 10 or at least by the end of primary education is critical. These skills prepare children to become self-reliant learners. Not having these skill sets, children fall behind in their grades and the gap accumulates. Many then drop out. Large-scale sampling of reading levels and basic maths skills of the students shows a serious deficiency. A quarter to over 40 percent or more of primary-age children in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan do not acquire these skills expected of a grade three student (as measured by the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Survey, or similar tools). There is no single or simple explanation for this disappointing learning outcome.

One factor, as noted, is the low level of public funding for education, in part due to the low share of GDP for public revenue across South Asia, and particularly so in Bangladesh at about 10 percent of GDP. There are also skewed allocations and inefficiency in the use of available funds. Investments have been made in classrooms, learning materials and textbooks, teachers and their training and supervision, but these have been short of a threshold level that would be necessary to ensure acceptable quality. And there is an endemic of corruption and wastage, which diminish the investment returns.

There have been innovations and randomised control trials, such as teacher compensation that includes a performance bonus, increased frequency of inspection and linking teachers’ pay to days in class; remedial teaching for students with low test scores; and use of contract teachers (para-teachers) supplementing permanent teachers. As experiments, these have shown positive student outcomes. Institutionalising these at scale, however, became problematic. This next step requires that the goals of politicians, education establishments and teachers’ unions converge, and that the government is ready to challenge interest groups with divergent aims.

The analysis of the problems also points to the need for a realignment of the principal-agent relationship in education management—parents and the community being the “principal” and the school and teachers being the “agent.” The agents have to be accountable to the principal, with a decentralised management structure. But change in this area requires a political settlement by stakeholders. Moving from the centralised and top-down management tradition and habits faces great resistance.

Bangladesh has made some remarkable economic progress in recent times. Yet, you have highlighted how we have failed to ensure quality education for all. How do you reconcile the two?

A functional and self-sustaining level of literacy and numeracy is the proxy for empowered and motivated humans who can exercise choices for themselves and participate fully in the economy and society. The existing learning opportunities in formal and non-formal education do not quite create the empowerment and self-confidence desired. As mentioned, the narrative of economic progress is half the story. Persisting inequality and exclusion in education and economy deny a stake in progress to at least half of the population. The aim of higher middle-income, and eventually high-income, status for the country may be reached by the GDP criterion. But inequality, exclusion and the resulting social tension will increase unless human capabilities and the

capacity to exercise choices are expanded, in which a transformed education system has a central role.

As a society, have we been conscious enough of the important role of teachers? Why is it that we are still struggling to produce excellent teachers in Bangladesh?

It is necessary to reimagine the role, tasks, preparation, support, motivation, and social esteem of education workers. The objectives and structure of teacher preparation in South Asia, including Bangladesh, contrast sharply those in high performing countries in East Asia and Europe. The general pattern in South Asia is that graduates of tertiary level are first appointed as teachers and then sent for a short training, in contrast to the practice of recruiting young people at post-secondary level for a four-year degree that includes general subjects and pedagogy. The latter approach allows a sufficient time for professional and personal grooming of future teachers. The South Asian approach fails to attract intellectually capable people to school teaching and the post-recruitment teacher training cannot compensate for basic deficiencies in subject knowledge and general basic competencies.

We have recommended adopting a genuine pre-service teacher preparation model of four-year degree that integrates professional preparation for teaching. This measure can work if adequate remuneration, a career path and enhanced social status are ensured by creating a national education service corps for school education. This would be the way to have skilled professional teachers who can be the role model for

their students. Can you share with us some of the solutions you have suggested in the book to the problems that you and your colleagues have identified? Are the solutions influenced by political economy factors?

We have examined a plethora of operational problems and technical solutions in the education system commonly brought up in education discourse, such as improving access and participation, assessment of learning, pedagogy and teachers, financing, and management of education. The merits of the technical solutions of problems, we have found, are not the main determinants of educational decision-making. The dynamics of political power in a country, the bargaining and negotiations among interest groups, determine the policies adopted and pursued by the state.

We propose a framework of promoting structural changes in the education system. These include four key political commitments: a) a commitment to clarify key learning objectives, assess outcomes, and use the assessment as the basis for policy; b) a commitment to prepare the education workforce well and improve its performance as the pivot for change; c) a commitment to organise and govern the education system and institutions as instruments for learning, not to appease political clients and patrons; and finally d) a commitment to finance education adequately.

A strategic agenda we recommend is to promote the complementarity of public and private institutions and services within a regulatory framework aimed at optimising the “public good” aspects of education. Parents, teachers and young people themselves can be powerful champions of this agenda, if they can be helped to share a common vision and harness their energy to fulfil this vision.



The Political Economy of Education in South Asia

Fighting Poverty, Inequality, and Exclusion

JOHN RICHARDS, MANZOOR AHMED, and SHAHIDUL ISLAM

Foreword by SIR FAZLE HASAN ABED

to enrol in school, acceptable quality is not within reach “for the poor, those with special needs, ethnic and language minorities and those living in remote and ecologically disadvantaged locales” (p. XIII). He speaks about chronically low public investment and its inept use in education causing erratic learning outcomes. He mentions ineffective public education services and regulatory mechanisms that fail to produce efficient public-private collaboration; lackings in teachers’ skills and motivation; and governance tradition and practices that do not promote accountable, fair, and effective management.

Preparing young people for life and work, in the face of a rapidly changing economy and job market, and the challenges of building a cohesive society, is the foremost task of the education system. In fact, it is necessary to think of transforming pedagogy and learning in order to nurture the new generation to be equipped with essential competencies for the 21st century. These include communication skills, reasoning, critical thinking, creativity and the ability to adapt to change.

The school systems have a tendency to treat the whole spectrum of conventional subjects as having equal importance.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখঃ ২৪/২/২২খ্রিঃ

স্মারক নং ৮৩৯/ই
পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন, ২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন, ২০০৮ এবং তৎপরবর্তীতে সংশোধিত ও প্রণীত আইন/বিধিমালা মোতাবেক চলতি ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থবছরে চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ জেলার নিম্নবর্ণিত মেরামত/সংস্কার কাজ বাস্তবায়নের জন্য প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশের ঠিকাদার/নির্মাণ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সিলমোহরযুক্ত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	৳	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
২	সংস্থা	৳	পুলিশ বিভাগ।
৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	৳	পুলিশ সুপার, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।
৪	সংগ্রহ সস্তার জেলা	৳	চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।
৫	দরপত্রের সূচী নম্বর ও তারিখ	৳	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স স্মারক নং-৪৪.০১.০০০০.০৪৩.৪১-২০২১/মেরামত/রাজশাহীরেঞ্জ/৬৬৩(৪) তারিখঃ ০৯/০২/২০২২খ্রিঃ।
৬	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	৳	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
৭	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	৳	পুলিশ বাজেটের কোড নং-‘৩-১২২০-২০১০১০৫৯৫৪ সদর দপ্তর-৩২৫৮১০৮’ অন্যান্য ভবন ও স্থাপনা খাত।
৮	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	৳	২৭/০২/২০২২খ্রিঃ।
৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাক্তির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	৳	২০/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ ১৭.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৳	২২/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	৳	২২/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।
১২	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	৳	২৩/০৩/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ ১১.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও ঠিকানা	৳	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।
১৪	দরপত্র প্রাক্তির স্থান	৳	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ ও রাজশাহী।
১৫	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	৳	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।
১৬	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	৳	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।
১৭	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করতে হবে	৳	হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সার্টিফিকেট, ওয়ার্ক প্ল্যান, পুলিশ বিভাগে সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদপত্র, ভোটার আইডি কার্ড ও পিপি সাইজের ছবি ০১ কপি (সকল কাগজপত্র নামযুক্ত সিলসহ সত্যায়িত হতে হবে)।
১৮	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ও পদবি	৳	এ এইচ এম আবদুর রকিব বিপিএম পিপিএম (বার), পুলিশ সুপার।
১৯	কাজের বিবরণী/কাজের নামঃ		

ক্রম নং	কাজের বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র জামানত	কাজ সমাপ্তির সময়
(১)	সদর সার্কেল অফিস কাম-বাসভবন মেরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ	৫০০.০০	১০,০০০.০০	৪৫ (পঁয়তাল্লিশ) দিন
(২)	পুলিশ লাইসেন্সের উত্তর ও দক্ষিণ পাশের নিচু ১১০০ ফুট সীমানা প্রাক্তিরের উচ্চতা ২ ফুট উচ্চকরণ ও মেরামত কাজ (সংশোধিত)	৭৫০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
(৩)	পুলিশ লাইসেন্সের পানি নিষ্কাশনের জন্য ড্রেন মেরামত কাজ	৭৫০.০০	১৫,০০০.০০	
(৪)	পুলিশ লাইসেন্সের ৬ ইউনিট এসআই কোয়ার্টার এর অবশিষ্ট ওয়াশরুম ও রান্নাঘর টাইলস করণসহ সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ	৭৫০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
(৫)	সদর মডেল থানার তুল্লা ৬ ইউনিট বনস্টবল/এএসআই কোয়ার্টার অবশিষ্ট ওয়াশরুম ও রান্নাঘর টাইলস করণসহ সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ	৭৫০.০০	১৭,০০০.০০	
(৬)	সদর সার্কেল অফিসের সম্পূর্ণ সীমানা প্রাক্তিরের উচ্চতা ১.৫ ফুট বৃদ্ধিকরণ, সম্পূর্ণ ওয়ালে ১.৫ ফুট উচ্চ গ্রীল স্থাপনসহ মেরামত ও ওয়াদার কোট করণ কাজ (সংশোধিত)	৫০০.০০	১৫,০০০.০০	
(৭)	নাচোল থানার রান্নাঘর, ডাইনিং ও ওয়াশরুম টাইলস করণসহ সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ	৫০০.০০	১০,০০০.০০	
(৮)	নাচোল থানার সম্পূর্ণ বাউন্ডারী ওয়ালের উপর ১.৫ ফুট (নিচু অংশে ২ ফুট) এমএস গ্রিল স্থাপন কাজ (সংশোধিত)	৭৫০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
(৯)	ভোলাহাট থানার ওসি কোয়ার্টারের ছাদে প্যাটেন্ট স্টেইন ডালাইসহ সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ (সংশোধিত)	৫০০.০০	১০,০০০.০০	
(১০)	গোমস্তাপুর থানার ২ ইউনিট এসআই কোয়ার্টার মেরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ	৫০০.০০	৭,০০০.০০	
(১১)	নাচোল থানার ২ ইউনিট এসআই কোয়ার্টার এর জলাছাদসহ মেরামত, সকল ওয়াশরুম ও কিচেং টাইলসসহ সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ	৫০০.০০	৯,০০০.০০	
(১২)	শিবগঞ্জ থানার ওসি কোয়ার্টার সংস্কার কাজ	৫০০.০০	৭,০০০.০০	
(১৩)	নাচোল থানার ওসি কোয়ার্টারের সার্বিক মেরামত কাজ	৫০০.০০	৭,০০০.০০	
২০	বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ			

ক) দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলি দরপত্র সঙ্গ্রহকালে নিম্নলিখিতকারীর কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে।

খ) পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্সের অনুমোদন এবং অর্থ বরাদ্দ প্রাক্তি সাপেক্ষে কার্যদেখ দেয়া হবে। অন্যথায় এ দরপত্রের সকল কার্যক্রম বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। এ বিষয়ে কোন আপত্তি গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।

গ) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ দরপত্র কার্যক্রমের যেকোন পর্যায়ে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

Danir
24.02.22

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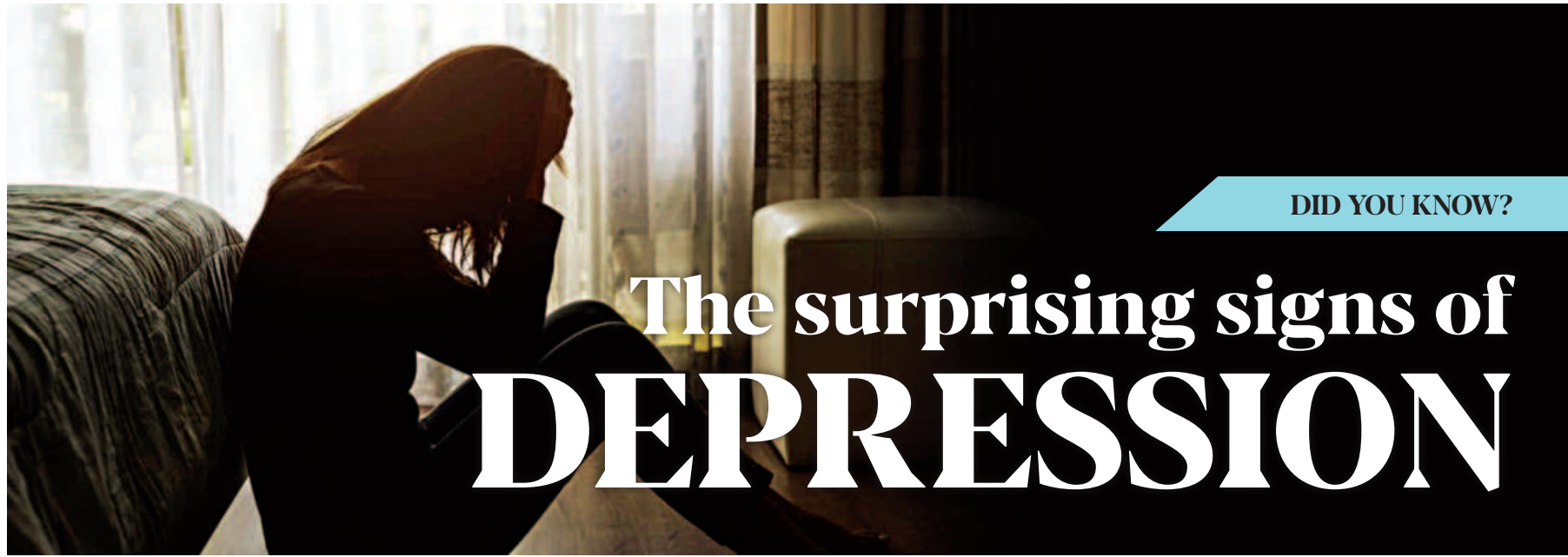
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পুলিশ সুপার

চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ

ফোনঃ ৯৩৩২৩, ফ্যাক্সঃ ৯৩৫৬১

GD-379



DID YOU KNOW?

The surprising signs of DEPRESSION

Depressed persons often display little emotion. However, they can also show too much. They might be impatient or eruptive. They may be overly gloomy, sad, worried, or fearful.

STAR HEALTH DESK

Depression is a prevalent mental illness. According to World Health Organisation, worldwide 5% people suffer from depression. Depression is the leading cause of disability globally and a significant contributor to the global illness burden. Find out some unusual signs of depression:

Shopping sprees: Do you shop too much? Do you hide your spending? For some depressed people, excessive shopping in stores or online may be a distraction or boost their self-esteem.

Drinking heavily: A third of persons with significant depression drink. If you drink to cope with worry or despair, you may be one of them.

Forgetfulness: Depression may cause forgetfulness. Prolonged depression or stress has been shown to boost cortisol levels impairing the memory and learning area of the brain.

Excessive internet use: Want to avoid real-life social interactions? Do you spend

too much time online? It may indicate depression. Over-using the Internet tends to lead to pornographic, social networking, and gaming sites.

Binge eating and obesity: Research revealed that depressed young individuals gained extra weight around their waist, increasing their risk of heart disease. Also, depression has been related to binge eating, especially in middle age.

Shoplifting: Depressed persons who shoplift value their sentiments over the object they stole. For some depressed people, theft gives them a sense of power and importance.

Back pain: Won't backache go away? Studies show that 42% of persons with persistent lower back pain are depressed.

Risky sexual behaviour: Depression is more commonly associated with lost libido than increased interest in sex. But some people use sex to cope with depression or stress. It can also be an indication of mania in bipolar disorder.

Exaggerated emotions: Depressed persons often display little emotion. However, they

can also show too much. They might be impatient or eruptive. They may be overly gloomy, sad, worried, or fearful. Some feel worthless or guilty excessively or inappropriately. That is the key. Depression may produce hyper emotion in someone who usually is non-emotional.

Problem gambling: Gambling may get you pumped up. Gambling more than recreationally might cause depression or gambling addiction.

Smoking: Need help quitting? Depressed people are more likely to smoke. Research shows depressed smokers often consume more than a pack a day and start smoking within 5 minutes of waking up. However, they can quit smoking if they are depressed.

Not taking care of yourself: The seatbelt has nothing to do with depression. Simple self-care becomes neglected due to sadness or poor self-esteem.

Depression is a frequent primary care illness that goes undetected and untreated. Untreated depression has a significant death risk. Most people with depression report vague inexplicable symptoms.

Human microbiome research excludes developing world

The bacteria in our bodies have been linked to colon cancer, ulcers, and cognitive diseases like Alzheimer's. However, a study published in PLOS Biology found that the human microbiome favours high-income countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. Over half of all publicly available microbiome samples come from Americans, despite making up only 4.3% of the world's population.

These findings raise questions about the field's applicability to developing nations and underrepresented groups. Microorganisms are known as the "human microbiome in the human body."

The microbiome comprises billions of bacteria that live everywhere, from the small



intestine to the eyeball. According to research, these microorganisms have wide-ranging effects on humans. For example, inflammatory bowel disease, stomach cancer, and diabetes have been linked to gut bacteria. Researchers have been exploring these links since the early 2000s. Their research included over 440,000 microbiome samples from worldwide archives like the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Genetics in Japan. These disparities exist due to economic and political influences on scientific research and logistical issues in developing countries.

The microbiome is influenced by genetics, geography, nutrition, and lifestyle. The authors argue that a lack of funding for microbiome research limits future microbiome-based medical therapies to specific nations or populations.

Source: PLOS Biology

Update on GERD management

The American College of Gastroenterology recommends Patients with heartburn and regurgitation but no other symptoms should take a proton pump inhibitor once daily for 8 weeks. Gastroesophageal reflux (GERD) is diagnosed by a favourable clinical response to proton pump inhibitors (PPIs).

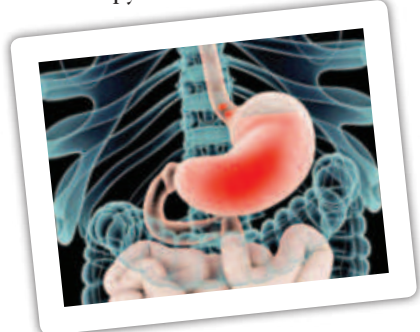
PPIs should be taken 30-60 minutes before a meal since they bind to proton pumps those meals stimulate. Relapsed PPI responders and PPI nonresponders should be examined for GERD. Endoscopy

2-4 weeks post-PPI (to maximise the chance to document esophagitis). The next phase is ambulatory pH monitoring (off therapy).

The authors advise individuals with no history of high-grade esophagitis or Barrett's oesophagus to use intermittent or "on-demand" PPI medication. Patients who need PPI medication should take the lowest effective dosage. While there are statistical links between long-term PPI medication and some "complications," the causality of most of these is questionable.

Although the evidence for beneficial diet and lifestyle changes for GERD is minimal, the authors advocate weight loss, quitting smoking, and avoiding eating before night. Elevating the bed's head or lying on a wedge and sleeping on the left side are also advised.

With no warning signs and satisfactory response to a PPI, primary care doctors generally restart PPI medication without additional review. Patients with erosive esophagitis or Barrett esophagitis should undergo endoscopy to rule out other causes of erosive esophagitis (e.g., eosinophilic esophagitis).



More than a quarter of women experience intimate partner violence in their lifetimes

STAR HEALTH DESK

According to a new study in The Lancet, one in every four women has suffered domestic abuse. Using data from the World Health Organisation's Global Database on the Prevalence of Violence Against Women, these new estimates show that before the COVID-19 pandemic, 27% of ever-partnered women aged 15-49 had experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner, with 13% experiencing recent violence (within the past 12 months of the survey). Because this study relies on women's self-reported experiences and domestic violence is a sensitive and stigmatised topic, the real frequency of domestic violence is likely to be greater.

This new study uses population-based surveys, improved data quality, and updated methods to offer current prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence worldwide, up to and including 2018. This research shows that governments are not able to eradicate violence against women. Despite 20 years of development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aim of eradicating violence against women by 2030 remains unmet.

Intimate partner violence affects the lives



of millions of women, children, families and societies worldwide. Though conducted before the COVID-19 epidemic, the results are disturbing, as research shows that the pandemic aggravated factors contributing to intimate partner violence such as isolation, depression, and alcoholism.

The report also highlights the high rates of intimate relationship violence among teenage girls and women. Intimate partner abuse affects about one-quarter of women aged 15-19.

In 2018, 16% of ever-partnered teenage girls and young women aged 15-19 and 20-24 years experienced intimate partner abuse (within the past 12 months of the survey). The assault these young women face has long-term effects on their health.

Global Burden of Disease classifications revealed that high-income nations showed lower lifetime and past-year intimate partner violence rates among ever-partnered women aged 15 to 49, with regional variations pronounced for past-year intimate partner violence.

Preventing intimate partner violence is crucial and urgent. Governments, organisations, and communities must move quickly to minimise violence against women, particularly post-COVID reconstruction efforts.



Pregnancy and COVID-19 are a worrisome combination

SARS-CoV-2 infection increases the incidence of obstetric problems in pregnant women. Pregnancy increases the likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 viral complications.

This study looked at 2352 pregnant women who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 during or within 6 weeks of pregnancy to see if SARS-CoV-2 infection increased the risk of obstetric problems. By comparison, 11,752 pregnant women with negative SARS-CoV-2 testing or no COVID-19 test or symptoms were found in a national maternal-fetal database.

Maturity-related hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, postpartum haemorrhage, or sepsis occurred in 13.4% of individuals with COVID-19 vs 9.2% of controls, yielding an adjusted relative risk of 1.41. The COVID-19 cohort had five fatalities, whereas the control group had none.

Patients with moderate or severe SARS-CoV-2 infections had the worst outcomes. COVID-19 also had a minor but significant correlation with preterm delivery and neonatal intensive care unit hospitalisation. This study would help physicians who are pregnant or planning to get pregnant.

The results suggest that COVID-19 immunisation should be encouraged before or throughout pregnancy.

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23 cricketers join pioneering residential camp

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) hotly-anticipated 'Bangladesh Tigers' programme, which promises to keep top cricketers engaged throughout the year, finally begun at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura yesterday.

A mixture of Test cricketers, national discards and up-and-comers made up the 23 cricketers that initially joined the residential camp, where they are set to undergo intense training until March 3.

The BCB prioritised local coaches for the programme. Mizanur Rahman Babul was named head coach and the likes of Altaf Ahmed and Talha Jubair feature in the coaching panel. Champaka Ramanayake was appointed fast-bowling coach and Umakant Patel has been appointed fielding coach.

"We needed a programme where players outside the national set-up could be alongside players in the national team. We will arrange specialist coaches for specific programs such as death-bowling, power-hitting and even to work with wrist spinners," Bangladesh Tigers chairman and BCB director Kazi Inam Ahmed said yesterday.

Spurs keep top-four hopes alive

AFP, LEEDS

Tottenham hammered Leeds 4-0 on Saturday to put a smile back on the face of Antonio Conte and plunge Marcelo Bielsa's team deeper into trouble towards the foot of the Premier League.

The visitors, who had lost four of their previous five league matches, were 3-0 up at half-time after goals from Matt Doherty, new recruit Dejan Kulusevski and Harry Kane. A late strike from Son Heung-min completed the rout at Elland Road.

The win lifts Tottenham to seventh in the Premier League.



Newly-appointed Bangladesh batting coach Jamie Siddons shadows a lofted drive as the national team head coach Russell Domingo, spin bowling coach Rangana Herath and Rajin Saleh -- the fielding coach for the ongoing Afghanistan series -- watch on during the Tigers' practice session in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'We have potential superstars here'

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CHATTOGRAM

The impact that Jamie Siddons made during his tenure as Bangladesh's head coach between 2007 to 2011 was always recalled by the likes of Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan even years after he left the job.

For those like Tamim and Shakib, the former Australian cricketer's appointment as Bangladesh's batting consultant in December last year -- a role that will see him work with upcoming talents as well as current national players -- was another chance for him to foster a generation.

Although the 57-year-old admitted that there were many jobs on the table, his love for Bangladesh coaxed him into coming back despite some trust issues during his previous tenure.

"I was up for coaching jobs around the world. But I have always stayed in touch with Bangladesh, whether it was through some board members or a lot of the players. The offer came up to become batting consultant and work with the High Performance Team. It encompassed all juniors and players in the national team. I was always going to be working with national team players," Siddons told the media after the Tigers' training session in

Chattogram yesterday.

"Whether that was going to be on a full-time basis or not, I wasn't sure. I didn't really care. I loved Bangladesh last time, but some people don't believe that. I loved my time here for three years. I was looking forward and hoping there would be an

We have some potential superstars here. We give them time, pick the right ones and nurture them. We should give them opportunities without putting too much pressure on them. I have no doubt that they will be the new Shakibs and Tamims.

JAMIE SIDDONS

opportunity to come back. Now I am here."

According to sources, it was ODI skipper Tamim who urged the board to appoint Siddons. After all, Tamim, Shakib and Mushfiqur Rahim benefited hugely under his tutelage in terms of their batting skills.

However, Siddons was not in favour of adding extra pressure on the youngsters. Instead, he is willing to provide ample opportunities as he aims to prepare the

next Shakib or Tamim.

"We have some potential superstars here. We give them time, pick the right ones and nurture them. We should give them opportunities without putting too much pressure on them. I have no doubt that they will be the new Shakibs and Tamims," he said.

Siddons already witnessed the potentials of the new generation in his first assignment as Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Afif Hossain and Liton Das showcased their abilities in the first two ODIs against Afghanistan. But there is still a long way to go, and the Australian said consistent performances overseas was the ultimate goal in his second tenure.

"My job is half done because some of our players have that class. But when we go against South Africa, Australia and India, they have four players of caliber. They also have three quality spinners, so there's no respite. There are no easy runs and that's where we will be challenged. That's where we have to improve and we have to be ready to do that in their conditions. We have a long way to go to get to that point, but we are a really good cricket team. The young players just need to take that extra step so that they perform overseas all the time," said Siddons.

Tigresses face England in first warm-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Nigar Sultana-led Bangladesh women's cricket team will face defending champions England in the first of two official warm-up matches at the Lincoln Green cricket ground today, ahead of their maiden appearance in the ODI World Cup, set to begin on March 4 in New Zealand.

The match is scheduled to be played at 2:00am tonight, the early hours of Monday.

Apart from this being Bangladesh's maiden appearance in the ODI World Cup, it is also the Tigresses' first tour to New Zealand -- a country where conditions have always been challenging for their male compatriots.

However, having reached the country earlier this month with time in hand to adapt to the conditions, the Tigresses' skipper Nigar was

confident of her troops' chances. "We have had a lot of quality practice sessions here; we are trying to assess the wicket and the conditions, I think our girls have done very well," Nigar told ICC in an interview.

Bangladesh will play their second

official warm-up fixture against Pakistan on March 2 before kicking off their campaign against South Africa on March 5.



Russia stripped of major events

REUTERS

As Russian forces moved deeper into Ukraine on Friday, sports bodies moved quickly to strip Russia of events, with St Petersburg losing the Champions League final while the Formula One Grand Prix will not be held in Sochi.

European soccer governing body UEFA decided to relocate the Champions League final -- club soccer's showpiece event -- to the Stade de France in Paris after receiving support from French President Emmanuel Macron.

Formula One, motorsport's governing body FIA and the teams discussed the situation and came to the conclusion that it was "impossible to hold the Russian Grand Prix in the current circumstances".

After Poland, Sweden and the Czech Republic refused to play World Cup qualifiers in Russia, UEFA said home games of Ukrainian and Russian club and national teams competing in UEFA competitions would be played at neutral venues.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) urged international sports federations to either move or cancel sports events currently planned in Russia or Belarus. Read full story

The International Judo Federation (IJF) said it had cancelled its May 20-22 Grand Slam event in Kazan, Russia but in a brief statement IJF President Marius Vizer did not make any reference to Russia or Ukraine.

Five World Cup skiing events that were scheduled to take place in Russia this weekend and next month have been cancelled or moved by the International Ski Federation (FIS) in the interest of safety and integrity of the competition.

Munim gets first taste

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CHATTOGRAM

The Bangladesh T20 squad underwent their first practice at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram ahead of the T20I series against Afghanistan, starting March 3, while most of the ODI squad -- barring Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mahmudul Hasan Joy and Ebadat Hossain -- opted to sit out what for them was optional practice. The focus of the session appeared to be on Munim Shahriar, who got a maiden T20 call-up, and Mohammad Naim.

Munim's star rose following his Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) performances with Fortune Barishal. His strike-rate of 152.13 in getting 178 runs across six matches did not go unnoticed by national team hierarchy.

Naim's BPL had been unforgiving, the opposite side of the coin. While Munim was allowed to flow, Naim came in further and further down the order, resulting in a loss of confidence.

The mood in the camp was towards greater aggression in the early overs in T20Is, as batting coach Jamie Siddons dictated before the practice session yesterday.

"I saw some of them play in the BPL. They looked pretty good although one of them didn't get much of an opportunity,

which is a bit disappointing. Hopefully he will star for us here," he said ahead of practice.

"We are looking to get better at our starts, our Powerplays in T20s, and definitely finishing a bit better than we do," Siddons said about the area of focus going forward.

"We know we have a lot of improvement to do from the World Cup, part of that is the first four overs, and sustaining that smart aggression," he said.

Munim's ability in Powerplays would obviously be a tool for anyone looking for that 'smart aggression'. Thus, Siddons watched Munim and Naim bat at the centre wickets against the likes of Ebadat Hossain and Aminul Islam Biplob.

As with any top coach, Siddons perhaps does not like overcoaching.

"It was a good session. He [Siddons] didn't say much, there were just very small talks," Munim informed The Daily Star yesterday. "He is just watching at the moment, there were no particular areas to focus on from my part."

It's still early days for Munim, but having showcased his run-making abilities on Bangladesh wickets, finding runs in the DPL T20s (355 runs in 14 matches) and scoring fast, Siddons will be keen on that hitting ability as the T20Is come along.



(Anticlockwise from R) Protests against Russia's invasion of Ukraine are taking place in sporting venues across the world. While Russian tennis player Andrey Rublev was unequivocal in writing 'No War Please' following a match against Hubert Hurkacz of Poland in Dubai on Friday, football fans in Italy and Germany brought banners to the grounds to expressing their dissent with the current situation.

PHOTO: TWITTER





Women surround a Red Crescent Society volunteer, who is giving out serial numbers on a card for first Covid shots, near a vaccination centre on the Barishal City Corporation office premises. People swarmed such centres across the country after a special mass vaccine campaign began yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

COVID-19 VACCINE

Govt extends special first-dose campaign

Decision made as people crowd vaccine centres

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After people swarmed vaccine centres for their first Covid-19 dose under a daylong special campaign yesterday, health authorities announced the programme would continue till tomorrow.

While the regular vaccination campaign is running, this special programme aims to administer one crore first doses to those who haven't gotten any dose yet. No documents or prior registration is need for the special first-dose campaign.

Health officials said the decision to continue till tomorrow was made because of a heavy rush of vaccine recipients at most of the 24,500 centres designated for the special campaign.

"I am assuring people that the first dose vaccination will continue for the two more days," Health Minister Zahid Maleque said in an emergency press briefing yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, a 30-year-old man named Osman Gani Rubel, fell sick and died after taking a shot at a centre in Chattogram city yesterday. Health officials claimed the

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GOPALGANJ GANG-RAPE

Local youths behind it: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab has arrested six perpetrators of the recent gang rape of a female student of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman University of Science and Technology (BSMRSTU).

The arrestees are members of a gang involved in various criminal activities in Gopalganj's Nabinbagh neighbourhood for the last 8-10 years, Khandaker Al Moin, director of the Rapid Action Battalion's legal and media wing, told a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.

Following the incident on Wednesday, the university's Proctor Raziur Rahman filed a case against seven to eight unidentified people with Kotwali Police Station.

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PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Admission seekers worried over syllabus

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Admission seekers are worried about their preparations for the coming public university entrance exams as most of the universities are yet to decide whether the exam syllabus would be shortened or not.

Students are concerned about it as they took last year's HSC exams only on three optional subjects and the syllabuses were

cut also amid the pandemic. No exams were held on compulsory subjects like Bangla and English.

Admission seekers say many public universities usually set admission test questions from Bangla and English.

"The decision regarding the syllabus should be taken as soon as possible to relieve worries of students and guardians. It would also help students' preparations for the exams," said Rizwan

Hossain, father of an admission seeker from the capital's Pallabi.

Sultana Razia, an admission seeker from the city's Mohammadpur, said the situation is different this year. "We hardly read Bangla and English ahead of HSC exams as we did not need to sit exams in those subjects."

She said it would be better for them if the entrance tests

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First Ekushey Compilation

HASAN HAFIZUR RAHMAN



A meeting was held at Amtala (in front of Madhur Canteen) of Dhaka University around 11:00am on February 21, 1952. Gaziul Haque presided over the meeting. There, under the pressure of students, it was decided that section 144 would be broken. The students had a militant attitude. They decided to come out in groups of

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

An elevated part of the Bus Rapid Transit route from Dhaka airport to Gazipur near Sena Kalyan Commercial Complex in Tongi. The authorities have announced that they would open the service by December this year.

THRU' BENAPOLE

Those with booster dose cleared to go

STAR REPORT

Those who intend to travel to India through Benapole land port will not need to present a negative Covid-19 test report if they have already taken the Covid-19 booster shot.

Mohammad Raju Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Benapole Immigration Police, confirmed the matter to The Daily Star

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Schoolgirl gang-raped at knife-point in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A man was arrested yesterday for his involvement in the gang rape of a 14-year-old schoolgirl at knife-point in Bagerhat's Kachua upazila on Thursday night.

Police arrested Ejazul Mollah, 22, from Shakhrikathi area of the upazila after a case was filed against him and three others by the victim's father yesterday, said KM Ariful Haque, superintendent of Bagerhat police.

The other accused are Sohail Sheikh, 22, Tipu Sheikh, 25, and Sajib

Mollah, 25.

According to the girl's family, the four men entered her house while she was alone. They tortured and raped her at knife-point and also threatened to kill her. She lost consciousness at one point.

The victim was admitted to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital in critical condition on Friday.

Her father said, "We were visiting her elder sister. We came to know about the incident after neighbours informed us. We immediately went back home and took her to

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দেশের প্রথম শরীয়াহ ভিত্তিক আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে
ইসলামিক ফাইন্যান্স এন্ড ইনভেস্টমেন্ট লিমিটেড (জাইএফআইএল)
অতিবাহিত করেছে সফলতার ২১টি বছর।

২২ বছরে পদার্পণের এই শুভক্ষণে
আমাদের সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের জানাই
আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ ও কৃতজ্ঞতা

ইসলামিক ফাইন্যান্স এন্ড ইনভেস্টমেন্ট লিমিটেড
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