

The worst affected, as always

Climate change is harsher on women in coastal areas



PINAKI ROY AND DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

In May last year, 40-year-old Sunita Das, from Gatrigheri village of Khulna's Koyra, lost her home to cyclone Yaas. More than 50 villages in Koyra were submerged, and around 45 metres of the flood control dam of Shakbaria river in Gatrigheri were washed away at the time.

Sunita's entire village was inundated by the salinated river water. Ninety-two families, including hers, had to take shelter on the road and live in thatched houses made out of polythene and golpata (nipa leaves).

Sunita said that they had to live

A large number of the country's population has been impacted by the phenomenon, and women, like Sunita, have been the most affected.

For the first time, a survey was conducted on the financial impact of climate change on Bangladesh's people, conducted on 3,095 households in 10 districts. The report of a UNDP survey, titled 'Bangladesh Climate Change Household Expenditure Survey', revealed that women are worse affected than men when it comes to the impact of such disasters. More than 42 percent of households were affected by floods and more than 40 percent by storms or tidal surges.

On the other hand, salinity has become another major cause of concern leading to a scarcity of drinking water in the coastal area.

Mitu Sana, a resident of Gunari village in Khulna's Dakop, moved here from Koyra after her marriage eight years ago.

"I have to go to the other end of the village with a pitcher to fetch drinking water. It takes one and a half hours to fetch water from the pond. I need to make the trip twice a day," said Mitu.

Mitu's husband and her brother-in-law are both day labourers, and her father-in-law is too old to carry the pitcher and make the trip twice a day to collect water.

"So I have to do this job every day. It is a huge crisis," said Mitu.

Under UNDP's Gender-responsive Coastal Adaptation (GCA) project,

As a country that is constantly prone to natural disasters, Bangladesh has become particularly vulnerable with the onset of climate change. Human-made crises – like the withdrawal of river water and shrimp cultivation in enclosures – make matters even worse.

a survey revealed that in 74 percent of 66,234 households in Khulna and Satkhira, women are solely responsible for fetching drinking water in the coastal districts, Khulna and Satkhira. In 16 percent of the households, men also fetch water besides women, while men have taken the sole responsibility of this chore in only 10 percent of the households.

It is not just the crisis of drinking water that the people must deal with. They must face multiple disasters: frequent cyclones, salinity intrusion and waterlogging due to the collapse of

the river embankments.

And the situation gets worse every day as predicted by climate scientists.

A new report published by Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), released on February 28, 2022, reveals that Bangladesh could lose more than a tenth of its lands to the rise in sea level within two decades, potentially forcing 15 million of its 165 million population to find new homes.

The report also predicted that agricultural production would reduce between 31 and 40 percent by this century as the sea level rises.

Rawshan Ara Begum, one of the lead authors of the IPCC report, said the rise of sea level could cause a loss between 2 and 9



"We have an acre of cultivable land. But we cannot cultivate anything due to severe salinity. We do not have a livelihood other than fishing in the river"

Sunita Das, Koyra, Khulna



percent of the annual GDP by the middle and end of the century.

Earlier, another report by the American Geophysical Union published in 2018, predicted that Bangladesh's southern regions along the Bay of Bengal will be the first to be impacted by sea-level rise, causing displacement that would eventually affect all of the nation's 64 districts. And as usual, women are the most vulnerable when it comes to this crisis as well.

Firoza Sana (43) used to live in Mandarbari village, a few kilometres away from Sunita's village. Losing her home due to river erosion, Firoza, along with her parents and children, moved to Khulna city three years ago. She currently lives in Dakkhin Palli near Khulna town.

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Mitu Sana, Dakop, Khulna

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

under the open sky till January.

"We have an acre of cultivable land. But we cannot cultivate anything due to severe salinity. We do not have a livelihood other than fishing in the river," said Sunita, when asked about the current situation.

"We would leave if we could just sell this piece of land. But no one wants to buy it," she added.

And this is not a one-off tale of misfortune. The dam got washed away during cyclone Aila in 2009 as well, as a result of which the area was underwater for about two years. According to Sunita, her village was inundated at least five times in the last 25 years, mostly due to floods and cyclones. It has been a constant battle of losing everything and building it back again from scratch.

As a country that is constantly prone to natural disasters, Bangladesh has become particularly vulnerable with the onset of climate change. Human-made crises – like the withdrawal of river water and shrimp cultivation in enclosures – make matters even worse.

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Women will lead the way to a SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

The farmers' groups, mostly led by small-scale and family farmers' organisations, raised concerns about the attempts of the corporate and industrial food chains with digital and biotechnologies to take control of the global food systems, despite the lack of sustainability of these processes and harm caused to nature by technological fixes in the past.

FARIDA AKHTER

International Women's Day (IWD) is now celebrated as a global day of women's achievements across the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. It is also a day for taking action against discrimination, inequality, and injustice that women face all around the world.

It is worth remembering that International Women's Day did not start from the UN declaration in 1975. It originated from the women's movement in the United States and other countries on issues of unequal pay, working hours, and voting rights in the early 1900s. March 8 was declared as a special day for women by Clara Zetkin, the German socialist leader, in 1910. In the beginning, IWD was mostly observed by socialist groups and was popular in the erstwhile Soviet Union and other socialist countries. For the women in the United States, where anti-socialism was rampant at the time, such ideological association was problematic. For them, the declaration by the United Nations in 1975 in the context of women's rights and world peace was more agreeable.

Every year, the UN comes up with a theme to mark the day. However, for decades, women's role in agriculture was ignored, until the climate crisis started appearing more as a reality than a prediction by the scientists. Accordingly, the theme of IWD 2022 is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow".

After the failure of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to bring about worthwhile agreements on climate change, the role of women for a sustainable tomorrow surfaced more clearly to the policymakers. They were forced to recognise women's invaluable contributions towards building a sustainable future for all.

The UN scientific report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in August 2021 boldly said, "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, oceans, and land".

The Paris climate agreement in

2015 aimed to keep the rise in global temperatures well below 2°C this century and to pursue efforts to keep it under 1.5°C. Accordingly, the IPCC report argued that both targets will be important to achieve within this century unless huge cuts in carbon emission take place. Unfortunately, the patriarchal global system led by the rich countries and the fossil fuel industries did not commit to reducing their share of carbon emissions by 2040.

Earlier, the UN Food Systems Summit, held on 23 September 2021, had a strong consensus to secure the healthy life of people and the planet. The farmers' groups, mostly led by small-scale and family farmers' organisations, raised concerns about the attempts of the corporate and industrial food chains with digital and biotechnologies to take control of the global food systems, despite the lack of sustainability of these processes and harm caused to nature by technological fixes in the past. But this was another concern that the world leaders ignored, and the demands for food sovereignty by millions of farmers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America remained unaddressed.

According to a study titled 'Which farms feed the world and have farmland become more concentrated?', family farms produce roughly 80 percent of the world's food in terms of value. It further states, "Five of every six farms in the world consist of less than two hectares, operate only around 12 percent of all agricultural land, and over the years, these small-scale farms have been injected with modern conventional chemical-based agriculture with the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides (not to mention machines that require the use of fossil fuels). As a result,

they have suffered the loss of seeds and biodiversity.

It often leads to women becoming redundant family members and facing violence in their families, with many being forced to migrate to cities for factory jobs. Biodiversity-based farming requires women to have control over seeds and more command over the agrarian production cycles. Command over the production cycle also ensures her power within the household as well as in the community. So the shift to sustainable agriculture was always needed and is now finally being encouraged as a rational policy to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.

Sustainable agriculture increases the participation of women more directly in agriculture, both in decision-making as well as in the use and generation of valuable knowledge. Women are empowered not only theoretically, but also in concrete agrarian practices and relations that are necessary to run a biodiverse agro-ecological production system.

In Bangladesh, women mostly rely on small-scale farming, cattle, and poultry rearing. The distress caused by our changing climate in the last few years has hit small farmers, particularly women, the most with loss of crops. Farmers depending on HYV and hybrid seeds along with the use of chemicals have faced harsh consequences as these unsustainable practices could not cope with the climate vulnerabilities.

Meanwhile, the monocultural and industrial cash crop-based production has contributed to the worsening of the climate conditions. The biodiversity-based agricultural practice known as Nayakrishi Andolon, an initiative of farmers since

1992, has shown that local variety seeds (rice and other crops) are more resistant and capable of withstanding climate vulnerabilities than the laboratory-based modern seeds. Many of these flood-resistant, drought-resistant, and salinity-resistant varieties are preserved by women, which can survive in climate-stressed conditions. Farmers therefore ought to follow mixed and diverse cropping for enhancing biodiversity for both cultivated and uncultivated plants and other food sources.

The women of Bangladesh have demonstrated that they can lead a livelihood movement that is not dependent on fossil fuel energy or destructive masculine technologies. They strongly nurture a deep sense of ethical responsibility to nature and the planet. Their practice in the maintenance and regeneration of diversity in seeds, crops, livestock, and poultry as part of

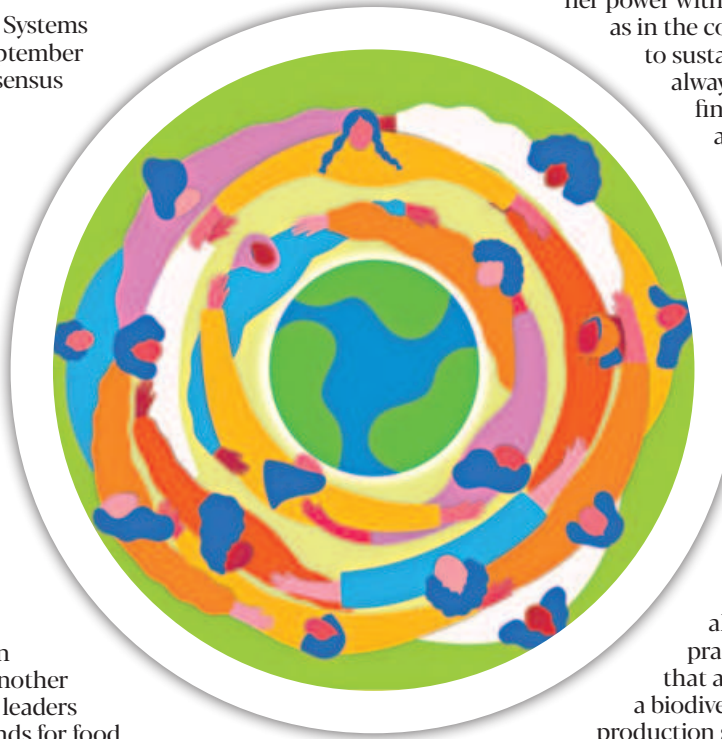
For decades, women's role in agriculture was ignored, until the climate crisis started appearing more as a reality than a prediction by the scientists.

constituting an ecological lifestyle is the key to building a sustainable future. A major threat here comes from the masculine notion of technology and the patriarchal desire to control, consume and destroy nature.

Adaptation and mitigation of climate change disaster is not a policy, governance, or technological issue to women, but an ethical and political issue that demands a collective wake up call for nature: are we going to destroy the planet and our dwelling place on earth? Or must we reclaim our feminine ethics of caring and regenerating life and livelihood in the face of industrial assault of fossil fuel-based civilisation?

This is the life-affirming question that we must respond to today.

Farida Akhter is the Executive Director of UBINIG.



▲ An imagery illustrating the 2022 theme "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" developed by Burcu Köleli.



Firoza (M) with her family members

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

The worst affected, as always

The government does not have any specific strategy to stop climate-induced migration, which is urgently needed.

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"I miss my village. But our house was eroded by the Shakbaria river. We still wanted to live there. But there is no work, so we had to move," she said.

Asked, Aser Ali Moral, chair of Koyra's Dakshin Bedkashi Union, told The Daily Star that about 3,000 people from his Dakshin Bedkashi Union have moved to other places following the recent cyclone. "After the cyclones, many people moved from their village. A few of them return, while the majority don't," said Aser Ali. According to Upazila Statistics Office, the population of Koyra Upazila in 2009 was 1,93,656. In 2021, the upazila's population was only 95,292. The population in Koyra increased only by 1,636 people in 12 years, with a rate much lower than the national average population growth rate.

The cases are the same in the adjacent three upazilas of Shymnagar, Kaliganj, Ashashuni of Sathkhira district.

"During a post-Aila survey on internal migration in 2009, we found that around 1,20,000 people were displaced from Dacope, Koyra and Paikgacha of Khulna and Shymnagar and Ashashuni upazila of Sathkhira district," said Hasan Mehedi, Chief executive of Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN).

"After Amphan, we surveyed Koyra and Shymnagar again, and found that around 18,000 to 21,000 people were forced to migrate from the area," said Hasan Mehedi.

"The government does not have any specific strategy to stop climate-induced migration, which is urgently needed," he added.

Khushi Kabir, coordinator of the non-government organisation Nijera Kori, said the southern part of Bangladesh has become the most vulnerable area in the country.

"It's true the salinity problem has increased due to climate change. But most of the problems are human-induced. The salinity increased due to cultivation of shrimps," she said.

Since 1980, an upwards trend of shrimp cultivation has been noticed in many areas of the region. This has contributed to the reduction of soil fertility. Non-saline sources of drinking water are on the shrink as well, she added.

"And women are the worst sufferers due to all these. They have to maintain their household chores, fetch drinking water and also work outside, mostly in these shrimp farms, to feed their families," she said.

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Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender-Sensitive



system has no firm control. Thirdly, the pandemic also urges for managing risk and improving social safety net supports for the vulnerable people during frequent disaster in a pandemic situation. Finally, the experience of managing the Covid-19 pandemic has inaugurated rooms for redressing the multi-hazard, multi-risk and emergency management activities through strengthening risk governance (Revet, 2020; Montano & Savitt, 2020; Nasreen, 2020).

Due to disasters, women face multiple challenges, which have become more visible during the first and second waves of the pandemic and are combined with i) increased burden of unpaid work, ii) increased domestic violence, and, iii) increased rate of unemployment.

Accompanying current health crisis, pre-existing health conditions, healthy practice, social behaviour, norms, and gender inequalities embedded in various sectors, compel to scrutinise pandemic impacts through a gender lens. Gender-inclusive pandemic study is the demand of time as reinforced gender roles often make gendered division of labour critical, where violation of one party (especially women, considering Bangladesh's context) is more vulnerable and victim to domestic violence and economic stress (Nasreen, 2008). Policy response mechanisms do not always necessarily incorporate gender-analytical data or gender-responsive plans for Covid-19 (Dutta, 2020). To understand the broad picture of the relational analysis between Covid-19 and gender-based resilience and intersectionality, more in-depth research needs to be conducted.

This year, the theme to observe International Women's Day (IWD) is "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow". Aligning with the theme, GRRIPP South Asia will observe this year's IWD a day before the National Disaster Preparedness Day (NDPD) on "Intersectionality in Redressing Gender & DRR: #BreakingTheBias".

Mahbuba Nasreen is the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic), Bangladesh Open University & former Director and Professor, Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies, University of Dhaka. Email: mnasreen@du.ac.bd

Women in South Asia face greater challenges compared to men during a disaster or crisis. Despite challenges, South Asian women have proven to be of incredible potential in response to disasters effectively, which often go largely unrecognised.

MAHIBUBA NASREEN

South Asian countries are highly susceptible to natural and human induced disasters due to its geophysical location, land characteristics and other factors. Over the last three decades, the region has developed disaster risk reduction (DRR) and mitigation mechanisms to address the adversities that the people frequently experience. However, there are inclusion challenges of risk management in the region as, in most cases, exclusion cuts across intersectional groups and contexts.

Physical, economic, and social factors of vulnerability are closely linked with people's age, gender, (dis)abilities and other identities. "Intersectionality" refers to the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as ethnicity, caste, aging, disability, mental health, sexuality, class, religion, indigeneity, membership to certain groups, etc. as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Women in South Asia face greater challenges compared to men during a disaster or crisis. Despite challenges, South Asian women have proven to be of incredible potential in response to disasters effectively, which often go largely unrecognised. To build gender-sensitive resilient strategies in the disaster risk reduction process, it is necessary to address gender needs of women and men using an intersectional lens.

Among the international drivers of DRR, the Hugo Framework of Action (HFA, 2005-2015) is the first to address strategic DRR mechanisms with guidelines on mainstreaming gender. For example, HFA recommended including

and addressing gender issues in all actions as a cross-cutting agenda for reducing vulnerability. However, at the implementation stage of HFA, women were primarily identified and classified in the "vulnerable" category rather than resilient.

Following critical analysis, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR, 2016-2030) was developed with a broader scope for addressing and integrating the gender approach in a comprehensive manner. The pioneering researcher's efforts in identifying women as major contributors in disasters have been acknowledged, and women were focused as crucial role players in "designing, resourcing and implementing gender-sensitive DRR policies, plans and programmes."

Countries started providing specific emphasis on gender and social inclusion, participation, and leadership of women in DRR and resilience building, adopting a whole of society approach. Although "intersectionality" was not prominent as a concept in the SFDRR, the realities of intersectional categories, for example, elderly, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, people living under difficult circumstances or locations, and other marginalised categories were addressed with special attention.

Bangladesh played crucial role in strengthening women and men's indigenous knowledge-based disaster response and provided support to build resilience of the different categories. Government, non-government and development sector, academia, and other actors unitedly contributed to make the country a resilient one. Bangladesh has been identified as "role model" in facing the challenges of disasters.

However, despite overcoming many

▲
PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic – an unexpected disaster – calls for a new preparedness for Bangladesh as one of the affected countries around the world.

Now, the question arises: can the pandemic be termed as a "disaster"? Several reasons have been identified for linking Covid-19 pandemic with a disaster. Firstly, from the perspective of the concept of disaster ("a relatively sudden event which causes threats for lives, properties, and go beyond the capacity of a community or society to manage such crises"). Secondly, the pandemic is triggering risks and shocks for existing social structure, on which the

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‘Rural women should take up the protection of environment as a political agenda’

In conversation with Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Chief Executive, BELA

If you look at the number of women involved in decision making in the government, the picture is different. While the 50 reserved seats for women is one side of the coin, we also have to see the number of women nominated by political parties to contest elections. There is a clear disparity here.

The Daily Star (TDS): This year's theme is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow". What's the connection between gender equality and sustainability?
Syeda Rizwana Hasan: It is both an issue of equality and equity. It is an equity issue because women in almost every society remain backward. There needs to be positive discrimination to bring them forward in leadership, decision making, management and resource ownership.

The connection between gender equality and sustainability stems from the same factors that lead to both gender injustice and environmental injustice.

TDS: Women are said to be worse affected than men during a disaster. Why is it so?
Syeda Rizwana Hasan: When there are disasters in the coastal area, families are forced to take shelter away from the embankments where they live. However, after a few months, when the support and relief from the government or NGOs stop, men have to go and look for jobs in other areas, as their own area remain inundated. This makes the women even more vulnerable, lacking the safety a male-dominated household provides them in rural areas.

Simultaneously, women in coastal areas are also responsible for collecting water for their families. They have to walk 2-3 kilometres every day for

this purpose. On top of this, salinity intrusion forces them to drink saline water. As a consequence, pregnant women in coastal areas often suffer from eclampsia. Such natural disasters also ruin the livelihoods of women relying on agriculture and livestock.

TDS: What is the current state of the policies in terms of gender equality and what needs to be changed?
Syeda Rizwana Hasan: We do have laws and policies that try to address gender disparity and promote gender equality. The government's education policy is very supportive of female education. Activities in the health sector have helped decrease the maternity-related death of women.

However, if you look at the number of women involved in decision making in the government, the picture is different. While the 50 reserved seats for women is one side of the coin, we also have to see the number of women nominated by political parties to contest elections. There is a clear disparity here.

Simultaneously, gender-based violence (GBV) is also on the rise. Despite having clear laws against GBV, it is not being



addressed. We have also seen new forms of harassment against women, like cyber-bullying. I have been subjected to cyber-bullying myself. GBV, cyber-bullying and lack of representation in decision making are areas where we have not made notable improvements.

Even today, we use religion against women. We need to fight the fundamentalist idea that women cannot get an equal share of wealth and property as a man. Even other Islamic countries have amended their laws to give women access to equal inheritance, why can't we?

The evidence act must also be changed to ensure that the judicial process for rape victims is not intimidating. The British-era evidence law must be changed as it allows the police investigation process to be insensitive towards victims.

TDS: How can young women, who join fields such as environmental conservation and disaster risk management, be empowered?
Syeda Rizwana Hasan: When we started our activism, we did not have many figures to follow. So, we fought the battles.

This generation will have many idols from different sectors from whom they will be able to learn. However, each generation has its set of challenges. That is why women need to be focused and persistent. If you want to fight a battle without a solid knowledge base and practical experience, you will be defeated very soon.

TDS: How can we encourage women in rural areas and those working at the grassroots to contribute to climate protection and ensure sustainability in the process?
Syeda Rizwana Hasan: In a rural setting, nature brings you your livelihood. If nature is impacted, then you notice it almost immediately. Women in the rural areas should be recording all the negative changes that are happening around them and take up the protection of the environment as a political agenda. It is crucial to take it as a political agenda, as they have to challenge the activities that are negatively impacting their surroundings.

They must articulate their grievances and link them to their right to life and livelihood, and start negotiating to prevent these negative changes from continuing to take place. If that requires questioning a particular development project, then they have no other option than to be brave enough to unite against it.

The interview was taken by Aaqib Hasib

Karuna, a pioneer in SEED PRESERVATION



DIPANKAR ROY AND PINAKI ROY

Sitting in her narrow yard, Karuna Mandal was sorting watermelon seeds. Nearly a hundred plastic and earthen pots, wrapped in polythene and full of different kinds of seeds, lay in front of her.

"Today, it is a sunny day, so I am drying seeds and checking them out," she said. "Here, I have a total of 97 varieties of seeds, mostly those of fruits and vegetables."

This is the local *khudejaam*, meaning small berries, and that is custard apple and then pumpkin, bottle gourd, lady finger, brinjal, radish, spinach, she goes on.

Also, there are seeds of paddy like Balam, Rani Salut, Banashful and other grains, she said showing different pots.

Karuna is from the coastal village of Sukdara, a partially saline area by the Khulna-Naliyanroad, three and a half kilometres away from Katianangla bus stand, under Batiaghata Upazila in Khulna.

By preserving local varieties of seeds and doing organic farming, Karuna, a 52-year-old farmer, has become a role model to other women in the area. She grows vegetables without using chemical fertilisers and insecticides. Seeing Karuna, other women in the area also started organic farming.

Asked how she started, Karuna said, she has been preserving seeds for nearly 25 years. Since her marriage with Provash Mandal, Karuna began the practice as part of the tradition of farmers' families.

But later, she started in a more organised way in 2010, when she got an exposure tour to Rameharpur Union Parishad of Netrokona district by LoCOS, a non-government organisation, about the use of natural fertiliser and participation of women in cultivation.

Upon returning to her native village, she shared her knowledge with her husband and neighbours and actively participated in cultivation using local varieties.

Karuna Mandal
PHOTO:
DIPANKAR ROY

It [local variety of seed] is cheaper and more adaptable to the climate, while also producing higher yields than the hybrid seeds available in the market.

"It is very important to preserve local varieties of seeds as, in our saline-prone area other seeds do not grow well. I use these seeds for my cultivation and also distribute it to other farmers who need it," she said.

Asked why she takes the hassle of preserving seeds as she could buy them from the market, Karuna replies, "It is cheaper and more adaptable to the climate, while also producing higher yields than the hybrid seeds available in the market."

"Sometimes farmers are cheated by buying substandard seeds available in the market that is why I do not need to buy seeds from the market," she added.

There are at least 20 women in her village who have been preserving seeds and practicing organic farming, Karuna said. A local NGO organises a seed fair every year. Women from different villages participate in this fair.

"In the fair, we get to know who has which variety, and we exchange our seeds.

We also exchange our views on how to grow certain varieties of crops," said Karuna.

Other women, like Chanda Sarkar and Shamoli Sarker from the same village, were inspired by Karuna. They are also cultivating local varieties of vegetables and preserving seeds.

"Many local people come to my house daily to buy fresh vegetables," said Shamoli Sarker, 43.

Preserving 78 types of local-borne seeds and sowing it in her crop land, Shamoli became self-reliant by selling seeds and vegetables. She is also making vermicompost at her house and selling it.

"I received an order for 300 kilogram vermicompost from a local shopkeeper, at 22 taka per kilogram," she said.

Robiul Islam, upazila DAE officer of Batiaghata, told The Daily Star that preserving seeds helps people to do organic farming and to have a sound livelihood.

"Preserving seeds is a tradition of the people of this locality. Besides, it has an economical value," he said, adding that they are preserving over 100 varieties of vegetables and paddy seeds that are dying out.

It is proven that the local variety of seeds needs less fertilisers and insecticides, said Robiul Islam.

"I will patronise the seed preservation if they need my help," said the DAE officer.

By preserving local varieties of seeds and doing organic farming, Karuna, a 52-year-old farmer, has become a role model to other women in the area. She grows vegetables without using chemical fertilisers and insecticides.

Delowar Jahan, a practitioner and organiser of "natural agriculture"—which avoids using any chemical fertiliser and pesticide—has been promoting local seeds for over a decade.

He said, the adaptation capacity of local seeds is much more than other seeds.

"When a local variety grows in a particular area for a few years, genetically it becomes tolerant to local climatic conditions. So, preserving seeds of local varieties should be the best practice for the saline-prone coastal areas," added Delowar.

Some farmers' families have been preserving seeds for generations.

"Seeds of local varieties, preserved in a family for generations, have the most adaptive capability for the particular climatic conditions of that area," Delowar said. He suggested that the agricultural department should research more on local varieties to fight climate change in the agricultural sector.



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3 members of theft gang held in Dhaka



P7 War Coverage
Russia blocks more news outlets



P11 Shajib's stance on SA series
BCB boss Nazmul Hassan irked

PRICE HIKE OF ESSENTIALS

Is war the real cause?

DWAIPAYAN BARUA and MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

A section of traders is cashing in on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war to hike prices of essentials that were already becoming costlier, market insiders said.

The prices of wheat, peas, lentil, chickpeas and other essentials have been going up at the country's major trade hub of Khatunganj in Chattogram for over a week following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

This has set off a ripple effect on retail markets in the port city and elsewhere in the country.

Experts argued that the Russian invasion that started on February 24 was not supposed to have an immediate impact as there is around a three-week lag for such events to affect import.

Furthermore, some commodities like lentil and chickpea have not been imported at all from these two countries in the last eight months, but there was a noticeable price hike of these during the period, they said.

Traders, however, said commodity prices, which were



A man takes a pause as he evacuates from Irpin town, near Kyiv. This is the only escape route used by locals after days of heavy shelling as Russian troops advance towards the capital of Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

“The prices of essentials have marked a rise not only in Bangladesh but also elsewhere in the world due to the Covid-induced global economic recession.”

Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina**

STORY ON PAGE 12

already rising, saw another round of hikes following the conflict that hampered the supply chain.

Trade with Russia and Ukraine has been cut off, resulting in an increase in purchase orders from alternative markets, they claimed.

They also said several shipments to the country were stuck at ports of Russia and Ukraine.

According to data from Chattogram Custom House, in the last eight months of the current fiscal 2021-22 till end of February, the country's total import from Russia stood at 7.83 lakh tonnes worth Tk 3,496 crore.

A total of 179 types of goods are imported from Russia. The major import goods from the country are wheat, peas, mustard seed, fertiliser, chemicals and others.

In the same period, total import from Ukraine stood at 7.96 lakh tonnes worth Tk 3,973 crore till February.

The major imported goods from Ukraine are wheat, peas, powdered milk, sunflower oil and seed, rapeseed, etc. which are among a total of 44 types of goods.

World food prices hit a record high in February, a 20.7 percent increase year-on-year, led by a surge in price of vegetable oils and daily products, said the UN food agency FAO on Friday.

SM Nazar Hossain, Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) Chattogram chapter president, said traders have thousands of excuses for price hikes.

“They are now capitalising on the war illogically to make extra money.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

EDITORS' COUNCIL

Mahfuz, Hanif elected president, secretary



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, has been re-elected as the president of the executive committee of Shampadak Parishad (Editors' Council).

He will lead the new committee for the next two years.

Bonik Barta Editor and Publisher Dewan Hanif Mahmud -- who has been serving as the acting general secretary after Naem Nizam, editor of Bangla daily Bangladesh Pratidin, stepped down in August last year -- has been elected the new general secretary.

The new executive committee was announced

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

‘Completely immoral’

Kyiv rejects Moscow-proposed humanitarian corridors to Belarus, Russia after failed ceasefires; assault on Ukraine intensifies

AGENCIES

Moscow said yesterday it would provide corridors for residents of Ukraine's two main cities to flee to Russia and Belarus, a move Ukraine called an “immoral” stunt to exploit the suffering of civilians under Russian bombardment.

Russian and Ukrainian delegations assembled for a third round of talks in Belarus, both sides said. Two previous rounds yielded little beyond pledges to open routes for humanitarian access that have yet to be successfully implemented.

Russia's announcement of “humanitarian corridors” came after two days of failed ceasefires to allow civilians to escape the besieged city of Mariupol, where hundreds of thousands are

trapped without food and water, under relentless bombardment.

A corridor from Kyiv would lead to Russia's ally Belarus, while civilians from Kharkiv, Ukraine's second biggest city, would be directed to Russia, according to maps published by the RIA news agency.

A spokesperson for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy called the move “completely immoral” saying Russia was trying to “use people's suffering to create a television picture”.

The general staff of Ukraine's armed forces yesterday said Russian forces were “beginning to accumulate resources for the storming of Kyiv”, a city of more than 3 million, after days of slow progress in their main advance south from Belarus.

In a speech to the nation

late on Sunday, Zelenskiy said Russians responsible for such atrocities would never be forgiven: “For you there will be no peaceful place on this earth, except for the grave.”

Ukraine said yesterday its forces had retaken control of the town of Chuhuiv in the northeast, site of heavy fighting for days, and of the strategic Mykolayiv airport in the south, which the regional governor said was under tank fire, reports Reuters.

More than 1.7 million Ukrainians fleeing Russia's invasion have so far crossed into Central Europe, the UN's refugee agency said.

Global share prices plunged yesterday after Washington said it was considering extending sanctions to Russia's energy exports.

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY

Defying odds

TANIA MARCHES ON

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

In 2015, 15-year-old Tania Yeasmin of Pabna was waiting for her SSC results, brimming with hope for her future.

But a dark cloud appeared when she was married off to a neighbour even before her results were published.



Married off at 15 and divorced last year, Tania now works at a Bank Asia outlet in Pabna's Bera municipality area. Her son is seated next to her.

The resolute girl from Haturia village in Bera upazila wanted to pursue education, but her in-laws disagreed and abused her verbally and physically.

Despite every criticism and constraint, she persisted. This time, her parents supported her.

“My family forced me to get married, but when I got admitted to college, they helped me so that I can pursue my dream of becoming somebody,” she told this correspondent.

But her dream came at a cost -- she was being physically and mentally tortured at her in-laws' even though she was pregnant at the time.

Amid such a harsh reality, she passed her HSC exams.

“I was struggling to survive with my new-born baby as my husband had lost his job. At one stage, I started sewing to earn money while also continuing my studies,” said Tania.

By 2018, Tania had enrolled herself at a computer training centre in Bera and got an opportunity to work at Haturia Nakalia Union Parishad's information centre.

But her struggles were yet to be over. Her husband started forcing her to leave the job.

He even went to great lengths to make her quit, including defaming her through a false allegation on Facebook of her being involved in an extra-marital affair, she said.

They eventually divorced in October last year.

Following the divorce, she faced social backlash. She was being shamed and bullied constantly at her locality, and so she left her village home and started living with her three-year-old son in a rented apartment in Bera town.

Tania had to start her life again from scratch and she

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



LEAP OF JOY... Two boys somersault into the Kirtankhola from a cargo vessel in Barishal city's Band Road area. They were having fun while trying to get some relief from the heat yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Lithuania won't donate Covid vaccines to Bangladesh

Cites Dhaka's failure to condemn Russian invasion as reason

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Lithuania has changed its decision to donate Covid-19 vaccines to Bangladesh as the latter abstained from voting in favour of the UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russia for invading Ukraine. Lithuanian National Radio and Television reported this on March 3, quoting Rasa Jakilaitienė, a spokeswoman for Lithuanian prime minister. Lithuania earlier announced a decision to send 444,600 doses of the Pfizer vaccine to Bangladesh. The UN General Assembly on Wednesday adopted a resolution that demands Russia to immediately withdraw

SEE PAGE 6 COL 8



Senior government and armed forces officials see off Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the VIP terminal of the capital's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday as she leaves for the UAE on a five-day official visit.

PHOTO: PTD

Sumis suffer in silence

Poverty and pandemic continue to spell curse of child marriage on girls in Jamuna char areas of Tangail

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

In a chilly winter morning, a teenage girl was busy serving customers with tea at a roadside stall in Tangail Sadar upazila's Khudirampur area. Suddenly, a baby was heard crying out inside the shop. As it got louder, the girl rushed there and returned within a few seconds cuddling a baby in her lap. The little one is her daughter though she herself is only 16. When the country's law prohibits marrying off a girl before 18, she has already become mother. "My father is poor. He is struggling to manage our family. So, he decided to marry me off at my early age," said the teenager, Sumi. She is the youngest among three sisters and two brothers of her parents. Her father, a resident of a char (shoal) of the Jamuna, also runs a tea stall. She was married with a transport worker at 13 when she was a fifth grader. "I miss my school days, playground, friends and swimming in the river. Everything has gone from my life after the marriage," she lamented. "My two elder sisters also got married at their early ages." Alongside taking care of her family, Sumi now helps her father-in-law run the tea stall. "I go through many difficulties because

my baby is too little. She needs special care. How can I manage?" she asked. Sumi is not alone. Like her, hundreds of girls in the char areas are the victims of child marriage, thanks to never-ending poverty and then pandemic. In Kakua Char, adjacent to Sumi's village, a 55-year-old man married a 13-year-old girl last week, said locals.

"I miss my school days, playground, friends and swimming in the river. Everything has gone from my life after the marriage."

According to media reports, at least 60 girls of a school at Hugra, another char area of Jamuna, were got married in the last one year. Maharunesa Moni, recently transferred district women and children officer, said the child marriage increased during the pandemic as schools remained closed for a

long time. "To prevent child marriage is a huge task. Awareness of guardians and the coordinated efforts of all concerned can stop it," she added. Illiteracy is another reason for marrying off the girls in char areas at early ages, said MA Jinnah, chairman of Kakua Union Parishad. "In many cases, parents marry off their child daughters secretly. They take their daughters to relatives' houses elsewhere and arrange the marriages," said Rafiqul Islam, former chairman of Baghil Union Parishad. Another child marriage victim Munni, of Deulee char in Delduar upazila, is campaigning against this social cure. She runs a football academy for girls in the district headquarters. She alleged that some dishonest kazis (Muslim marriage registrars) for administering child marriages by using fake birth certificates. Seeking anonymity, a kazi admitted it and said they sometimes are compelled to do it under pressure from influential quarters. Abul Fazal Mohammad Shahabuddin, Tangail's civil surgeon, said most of the victims suffer from post-marital health and mental complications. Locals alleged that no effective efforts

SEE PAGE 6 COL 8

2 kids hurt as abandoned bomb goes off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two primary school students were injured while playing with an abandoned crude bomb in Natiabari area of Bera, Pabna, yesterday. Twelve-year-old Ovi and his 10-year-old sister Mondira were returning home from school when they found a round object wrapped in tape by the road in the Natiabari area and thought it was a ball, said their grieving father Dilip Sutrodhor. The object exploded, critically injuring the boy when he kicked it, said Dilip, who is a carpenter. The siblings, who are students of Natiabari Government Primary School, were admitted to Pabna General Hospital in critical condition, said Rawshon Alom, officer-in-charge of Aminpur Police Station. He added that the incident happened in front of the house of former

SEE PAGE 6 COL 8

3 of bike-stealing gang arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police in Natore arrested three members of a gang of thieves and recovered 13 stolen motorcycles from their possession. The arrests and the recoveries were made as teams of detectives and police raided different places in Natore and Pabna over seven days, Liton Kumar Saha, superintendent of police in Natore, told reporters yesterday. The arrestees are Al Amin Hira, Sakhawat Hossain Palash and Nirmal Sarkar.

Contractor sued for assaulting engineers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A contractor was sued over the assault on two engineers of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Dumki, Patuakhali, on Sunday. Nazim Uddin, one of the two engineers, wrote in the complaint that Golam Sarwar Badal, owner of a construction firm, assaulted him after he refused to release the payment for the construction of a bridge unless the site is visited by LGED officials. Contacted, Badal, the contractor, said as the officials demanded Tk 10 lakh in bribes to release the payment of Tk 1.40 crore, there was a heated argument. "But I did not assault anyone."

Man hacks two nieces to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A 20-year-old man was arrested for killing his two nieces, aged six and four, and seriously injuring another child on the street in the Kazir Bolsa area in Ishwarganj, Mymensingh, yesterday. Sayma Akter and Tripti Akter were daughters of two sisters of accused Mahbub Mia, police said. Mahbub is accused of stabbing them to death at his house where they came to visit him with their mothers, said Abdul Kadir Miah, officer-in-charge of Ishwarganj Police Station. Mahbub's education at a Qawmi madrasa stopped about a year ago when he started to act strangely, locals said. Before killing the children, Mahbub attacked a 12-year-old boy with a spade near his house and seriously injured him, the officer said.

Nine-year-old raped in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police arrested a 58-year-old man for raping a nine-year-old girl in Durgapur, Netrakona. Samsul Mia, 58, was arrested after the girl's father filed a case yesterday. Police said Samsul is a father of four. Officer-in-charge of Durgapur Police Station Mir Mahbubur Rahman said Samsul took the girl to a farm on Sunday evening and raped her.

Defying odds

FROM PAGE 1
landed on her feet once more. Just four months ago, she started working as an agent at a Bank Asia outlet in Fakir Plaza of Bera municipality. "With the support of the government's a2i [aspire to innovate] project, I am working in agent banking. I've already bagged 2,018 customers, cash deals of over Tk 4 lakh and opened

40 DPS accounts," said Tania. Presently, she is trying to complete her honours in business management from a local college. "I want to work for improving the lives of underprivileged women in my area. I also want to work to end child marriage," she said. "I embraced so much torture, negligence and widespread criticism in my life. I wish nobody has to suffer the same fate." Tania has also received recognition as the "best entrepreneur under the a2i project" and was recognised by the Joyeeta Foundation, under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, at the district level, said Kaniz.

Colossal failure, misuse

FROM PAGE 12
board but it is not at all a healthy situation and simply not acceptable. How can we possibly insist on citizens abiding by the law when certain government bodies show a brazen disregard for it as in this instance?" Saber said. He said robust oversight of actions of the executive branch and ensuring accountability is a fundamental task of the committee and it will continue to vigorously implement its mandate to ensure the rule of law and that it is never compromised. Enquired whether it would be possible for the authorities to shut the tannery estate to save the Dhaleshwari, the standing committee chief said he was happy to confirm that the DoE already shut down seven tanning factories there and also snapped their water and power connections. "Also, I believe that a fine of over Tk 4 crore has been levied on the BSCIC for the pollution caused in recent years and this is perhaps

the first time that we will be realising such huge fines. "We will progressively continue to take actions against all non-compliant units and this initial action and our policy of 'zero tolerance' should be clear to all." The DoE earlier severed a notice on the joint committee that runs the tannery estate, with around 110 tanning units, asking it to explain why the estate will not be closed. Asked why the Jatiya Sangsad body was not satisfied with the committee's reply to the show cause notice, Saber said the estate even did not bother about applying for a no-objection certificate in over 10 years. "They mentioned about what they hope to do in the future, but they did not explain why they showed a complete disregard for rules and provisions of the law," he said. Regarding the concern of the stakeholders that the closure of the tannery estate would severely affect their businesses, the lawmaker said they know about the legal requirements very well and they should have set up their tanning units accordingly. "We as a committee are only working to ensure compliance with the law and all the related rules and provisions." He said the tanners should focus on meeting the standards and requirements of the law. The JS body chief said it's supremely ironic that the government relocated tanneries from the capital's Hazaribagh to Savar to save the Buriganga, but the relocation only fueled the pollution of another river in Savar and the environment continues to lose. "We are absolutely in favour of development and under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has indeed witnessed a remarkable growth." Protecting and promoting the environment, health, and wellbeing of the country's citizens must also be regarded as a growth imperative, Saber said.

Is war the real cause?

FROM PAGE 1
"The district administration is yet to start any drives to monitor the market. Without regular market monitoring throughout the year, it is not possible to control product prices in any way." Bangladesh imported 14.66 lakh tonnes of wheat, 3.95 lakh tonnes of peas and 3.37 lakh tonnes of mustard seed and canola seed and 4,428 tonnes of sunflower oil in the first eight months of the current 2021-22 fiscal year, till February. During that time, around 40 percent imported wheat, 47 percent of peas, 40 percent of mustard and canola seed and 20 percent sunflower oil were imported from Russia and Ukraine. Apart from these two countries, these commodity items are usually imported from countries like Canada, India, Cyprus, Italy, Argentina, Belgium, the US, Australia, etc. In January and February,

3.37 lakh tonnes of wheat, 90,000 tonnes of peas, and 13,000 tonnes of mustard seed arrived in the country through the Chattogram port. Visiting Khatunganj trade hub yesterday, it was found that prices of different varieties of wheat had risen considerably in the last two weeks. Price of wheat imported from Russia, India or Ukraine was found to have increased by Tk 150 per maund (around 37kg) in the last two weeks and was being sold at Tk 1,250 a maund in Khatunganj. The price of Canadian wheat rose to Tk 1,710 per maund yesterday, against Tk 1,500 a maund two weeks ago. Traders at the wholesale hub were selling peas at Tk 49 a kg, up from Tk 45 around 10 days ago. Wholesale traders were found selling mustard seeds at Tk 90-95 per kg, compared to Tk 70-75 per kg a week ago. Although no lentil was imported from the war-

torn region in the last eight months, there was a sharp upward trend in prices of all varieties of lentil in the last 10 days. The price of good quality locally grown lentil rose to Tk 122 per kg in Khatunganj, against Tk 116 two weeks ago. Medium category Indian lentil was selling for Tk 91 per kg yesterday, up from Tk 88 a kg 10 days ago. Biswajit Saha, director for corporate and regulatory affairs of leading commodity importer City Group, said commodity prices in the global market were on an upward trend for quite some time now due to huge increase in freight rates. The conflict in Ukraine made the market a bit more volatile, he opined. Canadian wheat price, which was \$450 per tonne in the first week of February, rose to \$520 at the end of the month, he said. Sources said wheat price in India has recently increased by \$60 per tonne to reach \$360 per tonne in the span of a month. Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Mahbubul Alam had the same thoughts. He, however, said any type of artificial crisis or price hike by unscrupulous traders need to be checked. The price hike in the wholesale hub already has an impact on the retail market. Mohammad Aziz, a retailer at Karnaphuli CDA market, was found charging Tk 125 for a kg of good quality lentil, against Tk 120 two days back. He said on February 23 they bought lentil for Tk 116 a kg from Khatunganj, but the price has already risen by Tk 6 per kg at the hub, which prompted them to raise prices too. In the capital's Karwan Bazar wholesale market, the price of 5-litre bottled sunflower oil was found to have risen to Tk 1,680 yesterday from Tk 1,420 two weeks ago. Peas now cost Tk 55 a kg as opposed to Tk

50 a week ago. Meanwhile, mustard seeds were being sold for Tk 110 per kg, up from Tk 100 a week ago. Chattogram Additional Deputy Magistrate Sumani Akther said last week they had a meeting with businessmen, who promised not to increase the prices of essentials. Mentioning that they do not have information about traders charging higher prices, she said, "If it is the case, we will conduct drives." The Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection (DNCRP) conducted a drive in Khatunganj on Sunday. DNCRP Assistant Director Anisur Rahman said they fined two traders Tk 2 lakh for charging customers high prices. "Sensing our presence, most traders closed their shops and fled," said Anisur, who vowed to continue the drives. Our Staff Correspondent Shaheen Mollah contributed to this report

Mahfuz, Hanif elected

FROM PAGE 1
editor of Ajker Potrika; Saiful Alam, editor of Jugantor; Mozammel Haque, editor of Korotoa; and MA Malek, editor of Dainik Azadi. At Sunday's meeting, Rahman was accepted as the new member of the council and Mustafiz Shafi, the former acting editor of the Bangla daily Samakal, as the new associate member. A minute's silence

was observed at the beginning of the meeting in remembrance of the council's founding member and senior journalist Reazuddin Ahmed, who breathed his last on December 25 last year at the age of 77. Sunday's meeting was originally scheduled for December 14 last year but was postponed for Ahmed's illness. Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matur Rahman served as the chief election commissioner for the new executive committee. Samakal Acting Editor Mozammel Hossain and Inqilab Editor AMM Bahauddin also attended the meeting. Established in 2013, the association campaigns for freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina places a floral wreath at the memorial of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the capital's Dhanmondi yesterday, marking the historic March 7.

PHOTO: PID

PHOTO: **PID**

Another injured, Yousuf (49) is receiving treatment at the burn hospital.

3 members of theft gang arrested in Dhaka

Analysing around a dozen of CCTV



This correspondent managed to talk with ringleader Mishu, as he was being taken to court after the arrest. "I was a tailor by profession even three-four years back. One of my friends, Mamun, offered me a job in Dhaka. After meeting him, I

Before this, Mishu was arrested on December 21 last year, but managed to secure bail. Within 15 to 20 days, he got involved in the crime again.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Spotted around Shahbagh yesterday, this biker was carrying four children without helmets, while wearing one for his own safety. The child at the back was clasping the rider's shirt to avoid falling off, with his foot resting on the bike's silencer. This poses an extremely concerning situation, since a second's lack of concentration can lead to fatality.

Combined efforts are required to ensure their protection and safe migration, he added.

Female constable withdrawn in Gazipur

PRAYER TIMING MAR 8



	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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Gone in four

FROM PAGE 3
Seeking anonymity, a high-ranking DB official said, “We have obtained some names of Mamun’s syndicate members – Leo and Kiron, along with Hasan, who mainly control sales.”

Investigators said they have stumbled upon

another gang based in Shariatpur, which sells almost 80 percent of its stolen bikes in Shariatpur and Madaripur, as they’re close to the capital. The gang is also involved in making fake documents for the vehicles.

Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner

(Gulshan) of DB police, told The Daily Star, “We ask the city dwellers to use additional locks and keep the bikes parked in places where there are CCTV cameras installed. So far, we have found trace of three syndicates. We are conducting drives to arrest them.”

Role of family vital

Speakers on fighting addiction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The role of family members in refraining girls and women from addiction is vital, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

They also said the family members need to take care of each other as it is the first defense against drug abuse.

The event was held at Ahsania Mission in Shyamoli marking International Women’s Day.

Rakhi Ganguly, senior psychologist, Dhaka Ahsania Mission Health Sector, spoke at the event among others.

CTTC, Analyzen launch campaign

CITY DESK

The Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit (CTTC) of police and Analyzen Bangladesh Limited have recently launched a special social media campaign to prevent violent extremism.

The event was held at CTTC building of DMP on March 3, said a press release.

In this 3 hours long workshop, Asaduzzaman, additional commissioner of police (CTTC) and Muhammad Risalat Siddique, chairman of Analyzen, were present among others.

At the event, speakers stressed on cooperation, awareness and parents’ participation in preventing extremism. They also sought cooperation from social media influencers in this regard.

Health hazards

FROM PAGE 5

how do I get all that with my meagre income?”

Gita Rani Kanu lives in Kurma Tea Garden in Kamalganj upazila of the district. She is also the convener of Bangladesh Tea Workers Women’s Forum. She said, “The reproductive health of mothers in tea gardens is very fragile, due to a lack of family planning and hygiene. The garden dispensaries have people who provides paracetamol and iron pills to the workers, but that’s it.”

“If a tea worker needs to go to hospitals outside the gardens, they have to sell their assets or take loans from NGOs. This often compels them to avoid hospitals outside the garden considering the cost.”

Pankaj Kanda, vice president of Bangladesh Tea Workers Union’s central committee, said the medical system at the tea gardens is weak. “They don’t conduct regular check-ups after pregnancy. Meanwhile, there’s a lot of superstitions prevalent too, for example some mothers don’t want to go to hospitals during delivery.”

However, Golam Mohammad Shibli, chairperson of owners’ platform Bangladesh Cha Sangsad, Sylhet chapter, denied this and said, “The

female workers get what they’re supposed to as per labour law. The tea gardens have hospitals, doctors, nurses, midwives as well as delivery services. But stigma and lack of awareness remain, which is why many don’t avail these services, leading to unfortunate situations. However, the scenario has gotten better over the years.”

Dr Mohammad Noore Alam Shamim, assistant director (disease control) of department of Health in Sylhet, said, “Due to the high prevalence of maternal death, infant mortality, neonatal death, abortion and miscarriage in the tea gardens, the average figures throughout the division has increased.”

If relevant SDGs are to be achieved, focused work at the tea gardens must be increased, he added.

According to the Statistical Handbook on Bangladesh Tea Industry 2020, there are 166 gardens in the country, employing a total of 1,40,164 tea workers.

In three districts of Sylhet division, there are 135 tea gardens where 46,450 registered female workers and 15,153 casual female workers work, while another 500,000 people are dependents of these workers.

Nation observes

FROM PAGE 3

Earlier in the morning, Hasina paid her homage by placing wreaths at the portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi.

Awami League General

Secretary Obaidul Quader, after paying his tribute there along with top party leaders, urged citizens to stand firm against anti-liberation forces as they are still engaged in conspiring against the country.

Ingenious

FROM PAGE 5

invite people over too,” Kabuljan said. Such is her dedication to the cause that whenever she goes to a village to make an oven, she also trains women there, all to spread the oven’s use.

Her family members are also happy for the role she plays for society.

“The oven is so simple that I can use it while she is away,” Kabuljan’s husband Mobarak Hossain said. The family’s neighbour Bani Rani Sutradhar was the first to have an oven made by Kabuljan. “We’re really happy that we found a way to get rid of smoke inside the house,” she said.

Land for Sale in Ashulia

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Open Tender in Single packet bid system are invited for “Supply of HYSD (Grade Fe-500) Steel reinforcement bars of various dia conforming to IS 1786-1985 for Khulna-Mongla Port Rail line Project” (Quantity – 520 MT).

Estimated Cost of work :	USD 4,50,583.10
Earnest Money Deposit :	Not Applicable
Completion Period :	02 (Two) Months
Cost of Tender Document :	Tk. 5,000/-
Last Date & Time for Bid Submission :	Dr.16.03.2022 upto 15.00 Hrs. Opening at 15.30 Hrs.

For further details and updates, Bidders may visit IRCON office, House No. 411, Road No. 4, Sonadanga R/A, Phase-2, Khulna-9100.

Project Manager/KMRLP
Ircon International Ltd.

Contact No. 01783965380, email at kmprlbd9043@ircon.org

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Center of Excellence in Higher Education

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Tender No. NSU/21-22-12

North South University is inviting sealed offer from bona fide/ reputed organization/ distributors/ business partners/ agents for supplying various lab equipment for School of Health & Life Sciences as described in the tender schedule.

The details of the lot are mentioned below:

Lot-01	Various lab equipment	For Core Research Facility (CRF) NSU
Lot-02	Various lab equipment	For Pharmaceutical Sciences Department

Interested bidders may collect a schedule of tender from Southeast Bank Ltd. Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on all working days till **March 20, 2022** by paying non-refundable amount of Taka 1,000.00 (One Thousand) in cash for each schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the quoted price in the form of Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favor of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **March 21, 2022** by 2.15 p.m. at the office of the undersigned. The offers will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on the same day. Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

Director, Internal Affairs
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229
Phone : +88-02-55668200, Ext. 1204, Fax: +88-02-55668202
E-mail to: procurement@northsouth.edu, www.northsouth.edu

**NATIONAL POLYMER INDUSTRIES LTD.**
NATIONAL POLYMER
ISO 9001:2015 Certified

NPOLY HOUSE, GA-99/3 Pragati Shoroni, Middle Badda, Dhaka-1212.

**PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION
MEMORANDUM IN THE WEBSITES OF
ISSUER, ARRANGER & TRUSTEE**


This is for kind information of all concerned that Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has accorded its consent through its Letter No. BSEC/CI/DS-181/2021/758 dated March 03, 2022 for issuance of Transferable, Redeemable, Non-convertible, Unsecured Zero Coupon Bond of BDT 3,000.00 Million of National Polymer Industries Ltd. The face value of the Zero Coupon Bond is up to BDT 4,089.5 Million at a discount rate of up to 8% per annum. The tenure of the said bond is 05 (five) years and the minimum investment (subscription amount) in the said bond is 01 (one) lot of BDT 3,000.00 (Taka three thousand) only and the size of each lot is 3 (three) units.


As per condition no. 7 of the BSEC's consent letter, the **Information Memorandum (IM)** in relation to the said Bond has been published in the Issuer Company's website at www.nationalpolymer.net, the Advisor & Arranger's website at <https://www.riverstone.com.bd> and the Trustee's website at www.bd.finance

By order of the Company

Sd/-
(Md. Abdul Maleque)
Company Secretary

Dated: Dhaka
March 08, 2022

**ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন**
নগর ভবন, ঢাকা
www.dscc.gov.bd

**শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি**
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

মৌখিক পরীক্ষার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী এবং রেজিস্ট্রেশন সহকারী (জন্ম মৃত্যু নিবন্ধীকরণ) পদে নিম্নোক্ত রোল নম্বরধারী প্রার্থীগণ ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়ে মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন। নিম্নোক্ত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী মৌখিক পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ করা হবেঃ

ক্র.	পদ নাম	মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্বাচিত প্রার্থীদের রোল নম্বরসমূহ	মৌখিক পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও বার	স্থান
১.	ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী	১৮০০০৭৫ ১৮০০১৪৬ ১৮০০২৭৬ ১৮০০৪৩৬ ১৮০০৫৮৯ ১৮০০৭২৭ ১৮০০৭৯২ ১৮০১১৮০ ১৮০১১৯৫ ১৮০১২১০ ১৮০১২৪৯ ১৮০১৩৪৫ ১৮০১৪৫২ ১৮০১৪৫৬ ১৮০১৫২১ ১৮০১৫৫৭ ১৮০১৭৫৪ ১৮০২২৯১ ১৮০২৩৫৩ ১৮০২৫০২	১৩.০৩.২০২২ রবিবার বিকেলঃ ০৩:০০ টায়	ভূরাগ হল (কক্ষ নং- ২১২), নগর ভবন, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন।
২.	রেজিস্ট্রেশন সহকারী (জন্ম মৃত্যু নিবন্ধীকরণ)	১৪০০০৭২ ১৪০০০৭৬ ১৪০০০৯৬ ১৪০০১১৭ ১৪০০৭২০ ১৪০০৮৬১ ১৪০০৯৫৫ ১৪০০৯৯৬ ১৪০১০৭৮ ১৪০১১৫৪ ১৪০১১৮১ ১৪০১২১৮	২১.০৩.২০২২ সোমবার বিকেলঃ ০৩:০০ টায়	ভূরাগ হল (কক্ষ নং- ২১২), নগর ভবন, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন।

২। নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাবলী মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে আবশ্যিকভাবে অনুসরণ করতে হবেঃ

- সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদপত্র, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/জন্মনিবন্ধ সনদ ও নাগরিকত্ব সনদ এর মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত সকল সনদপত্রের একসেট ফটোকপি এবং Online-এ পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্রের একটি প্রিন্ট কপি দাখিল করতে হবে;
- সরকারি/স্বাধীন-সরকারি/খায়তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদেরকে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত অনাপত্তি ছাড়পত্রের মূলকপি মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় জমা দিতে হবে;
- পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্ধারিত সময়ের ৩০ মিনিট পূর্বে যথাস্থানে উপস্থিত থাকতে হবে;
- পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোন প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।

বিঃদ্রঃ রেজিস্ট্রেশন সহকারী (জন্ম মৃত্যু নিবন্ধীকরণ) পদে মৌখিক পরীক্ষা ১৪.০৩.২০২২ তারিখে গ্রহণ করার বিষয়ে নির্বাচিত প্রার্থীদেরকে ইভংপূর্বে এসএমএস নোটিফিকেশন মাধ্যমে অবহিত করা হলেও এ পদে মৌখিক পরীক্ষা এখন উপরোক্ত ছকে বর্ণিত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী গ্রহণ করা হবে।

আকরামুজ্জামান
সচিব
ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসি/সি/পারিড/২০১/২০২১-২০২২
জিডি-৪৫৩

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

**e-Zone**
Servicing Change Managers

E-Zone HRM Limited is a management consulting group providing one-stop HR solutions. We have a formal agreement with one of the United Nations agency to provide outsourcing services under a third party contract.

We are now seeking applications for a UN Organization from Bangladeshi Nationals for the following vacancies under third party outsourcing contract modality. For detailed Job Description, please visit the following website link to apply for the post.

Title: IPC officer
Duty Station: Dhaka, Contract Duration: 4 Months.
Number of Vacancies: 1 (one), Contract Type: Contract with E-Zone.
Last Date of Application: 14th March, 2022

<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un86.html>



Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council (BEPRC)
Power Division
Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources
IEB Bhaban (11th Floor), Ramna, Dhaka-1000
www.eprc.gov.bd

Special Call for Proposals on Energy and Power Related Applied Research Projects (12th Program Solicitation)

The Program Solicitations mainly focus to fund applied research based projects that would unfold technologies, tools, and strategies for upgrading, repowering and revolutionizing the over all energy and power sector of Bangladesh.

Research Focus Areas

Proposers willing to submit applied research proposals should address one of the following key research areas:



- Responsible Energy Conservation
- Energy Efficiency and Demand Management
- Renewable Energy
- Conventional Energy
- Transmission and Distribution Integration and Infrastructure
- Energy Storage

For details of the abovementioned research areas and online submission as well as necessary guidelines, please go to the following link:
<http://researchgrant.eprc.gov.bd/>

For any queries, Please contact:
Farhan Hussain, Director (Innovation), BEPRC
Email: farhusengg@gmail.com

Solicitation Release Date: 9.3.2022
Last Date of Proposal Submission: 6.4.2022

G-446



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়
নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল প্রতিবন্ধী সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট
পদ্মা লাইফ টাওয়ার (১৪ তলা)
১১৫, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, বাংলামোটার, ঢাকা

স্মারক নংঃ ৪১.০৫.০০০০.০০০.০৪.০০২.১৭-৬৭৪
তারিখঃ ২১ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৮
০৭ মার্চ ২০২২

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়ঃ প্রতিবন্ধী ব্যক্তিদের জন্য বঙ্গবন্ধু সুরক্ষা বীমা বাস্তবায়নের সুবিধার্থে ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তকরণ।

সাধারণ বীমা কর্পোরেশন এবং নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল প্রতিবন্ধী সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট-এর যৌথ উদ্যোগে অটিজম, ডাউন সিনড্রোম, সেরি়াল পালসি এবং বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধী এই ০৪ (চার) ধরনের প্রতিবন্ধী ব্যক্তিদের জন্য বঙ্গবন্ধু সুরক্ষা বীমা নামক একটি বিশেষ ধরনের স্বাস্থ্য বীমা পরীক্ষামূলকভাবে এক বছরের জন্য পাইলট প্রকল্প হিসেবে ঢাকা শহর ও ঢাকা জেলার উপজেলাসমূহ এবং সিলেট জেলায় বাস্তবায়ন করা হবে।

নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল প্রতিবন্ধী (এনডিডি) সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট আইন, ২০১৩' এর অধীনে ট্রাস্ট কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত/রেজিস্টার্ড ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে যে কোন এনডিডি বৈশিষ্ট্যসম্পন্ন শিশু/ব্যক্তি এ পলিসি ক্রয় করতে পারবে। এজন্য এনডিডি সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট হতে বীমা করণের জন্য ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগ দেয়া হবে। প্রত্যেক বীমাকৃতকে তালিকাভুক্তি/রেজিস্ট্রি করার জন্য অনুমোদিত ব্যক্তি/রেজিস্টার্ড প্রতিষ্ঠানকে এনডিডি সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট কর্তৃক ২৫/- (পঁচিশ) টাকা করে দেয়া হবে এবং প্রতিটি প্রিমিয়াম সংগ্রহ/আদায়ের জন্য অনুমোদিত ব্যক্তি/রেজিস্টার্ড প্রতিষ্ঠানকে প্রতিটি প্রিমিয়ামের আয় হতে সাধারণ বীমা কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক ৪০/- (চল্লিশ) টাকা করে সম্মানী প্রদান করা হবে। এ বিষয়ে প্রার্থী বীমা পরিকল্পের শর্তানুযায়ী অনুমোদিত/রেজিস্টার্ড ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নিম্নোক্ত শর্তের আলোকে তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন করার আহ্বান জানানো হলোঃ

ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নিবন্ধনের শর্তাবলী

ক. আবেদনকারী বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক এবং বয়সসীমা ২৫ (পঁচিশ) থেকে ৬০ (ষাট) বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে;

খ. কমপক্ষে স্নাতক পাস হতে হবে;

গ. জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র থাকতে হবে;

ঘ. আগ্রহী প্রার্থীকে ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের চেয়ারম্যান/মেয়র কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে;

ঙ. ব্যাংক হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৩ (তিন) লক্ষ টাকা থাকতে হবে-মর্মে ব্যাংক স্বচ্ছলতার প্রত্যয়নপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে;

চ. সরকার অনুমোদিত বীমা কোম্পানীতে কমপক্ষে ০২ (দুই) বছরের কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে;

ছ. প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যাদিসহ নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন করতে হবে;

জ. এ বিষয়ে বিস্তারিত তথ্য এবং আবেদন ফরম এনডিডি সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্টের ওয়েবসাইট (www.nddtrust.gov.bd) পাওয়া যাবে;

ঝ. আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ১৬ মার্চ ২০২২। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে জমাকৃত আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে;

ঞ. আবেদনপত্র বাছাই করার পরে নির্বাচিত যোগ্য প্রার্থী/প্রতিষ্ঠানের সঙ্গে ট্রাস্ট হতে যোগাযোগ করা হবে;

ট. এনডিডি শিশুর পিতা/মাতাকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে;

ঠ. নির্বাচিত ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রতিনিধিকে বীমা স্বস্বস্বত্ব সংক্ষিপ্ত প্রশিক্ষণ অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে;

ড. ঢাকা উত্তর ও দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন, ঢাকা জেলার উপজেলা এবং সিলেট সিটি কর্পোরেশন ও সিলেট জেলার উপজেলাসমূহের জন্য ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে;

ঢ. যে কোন আবেদনপত্র বাতিল করার এখতিয়ার নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

উপর্যুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমে এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারি করা হলো।

মোঃ আব্দুল মান্নান
উপপরিচালক
নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল প্রতিবন্ধী সুরক্ষা ট্রাস্ট
সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়
ফোনঃ +৮৮-০২-৪৮৩২২৬৭৭
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জিডি-৪৪৯



Since 2017, Kabuljan begum has developed eight types of ovens and visited 85 villages to make over 5,000 of them. Her ovens filter carbon by using a chimney made with earth or cement and an earth-made perforated cap.

PHOTO: STAR

Ingenious indigenous innovation

Kabuljan Begum’s eco-friendly oven makes waves across Rajshahi

ANWAR ALLI, Rajshahi

Fourteen years ago, Kabuljan Begum developed an environment-friendly oven to keep herself and her family safe from air pollution caused by open fire ovens.

Her solution has now become the go-to choice for hundreds of others in the rural areas of Rajshahi region, covering three districts of Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapainawabganj.

From her remote village in Horidebpur in Rajshahi’s Tanore upazila, some 36 km off Rajshahi city, 55 year-old Kabuljan Begum visits village after village every week to make her ovens for others.

Officials of Bangladesh Resources Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK) said according to their records of her activities since 2017, she has developed eight types of ovens and visited 85 villages to make over 5,000 ovens.

“Her oven is simple, cheap and it ensures a healthy kitchen,” said Amreto Kumar Sarker, a programme officer of BARCIK.

Its specialty lies in filtering carbon by using a chimney made with earth or cement and an earth-made perforated cap. The chimney and cap requires frequent cleaning, the official said.

According to WHO, 260 crore people across the globe use ordinary open fire ovens, which produce harmful black smoke that can cause pneumonia among children, heart diseases, asthma, and lung diseases, leading to death of some 40 lakh people worldwide.

During a recent visit to Kabuljan Begum’s Horidebpur village, this correspondent saw her returning from a business trip to a neighbouring village.

“I’ve never imagined that an oven can fetch me this much popularity,” Kabuljan said. “The families bless me when they sense how easily they can get rid of black smoke and dirt from ordinary ovens by switching to mine.”

The idea started its journey in 2008, when development workers took the concept of “Bandhu Chula” (environment-friendly oven) to her village. But back then, Kabuljan could not afford one for her family.

One day, she asked her husband to collect some clay and concrete pipes to build an oven and its chimney.

“The first oven cost me Tk 500. It worked really well. Then I re-developed it for my convenience,” she said.

Her oven burns with all types of firewood, straws and fallen tree-leaves. It causes no harm to the cook or anyone else in the house and lasts long, she said.

Witnessing her using the oven, neighbours started asking her to make some for them, and this is how started production on a broader scale.

Soon enough, she had covered, by foot, 250 households in her neighbourhood and made her ovens for them.

After that, words started spreading beyond her village. Her stature kept growing as her role in alleviating household air pollution drew the attention of the local administration, which led to her attending several local innovation fairs.

In 2014, she received the Joyeeta award for her efforts.

Assisted by BARCIK, she started visiting distant villages and indigenous communities since 2017.

So far, she has travelled to Paba, Tanore, Godagari, Mohonpur, Niamatpur, Nachol, Manda upazilas and even the slums of Rajshahi city in Sreerampur, and Namo Bhadra areas. Since 2009, Kabuljan has built some 10,000 ovens.

“Whoever calls me, I visit them. Sometimes, I

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

WOMEN-FRIENDLY PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN DHAKA

Still a distant dream

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Jumping on running buses, groping, verbal abuse, men taking up their seats. For the women of Dhaka city, commuting by bus has always been an ordeal, as they often have to endure all these just to get to their destination.

This lack of security and proper access to such a basic service, as buses are the primary mode of transport, has been a long-standing issue. In an effort to improve the situation, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) launched a special bus service for women years ago, with 17 vehicles dedicated for them in the capital.

Although the service, which operates only in the morning and evening on 13 routes, has never been able to satisfy commuters, the initiative at least ensured a relatively safe and harassment-free ride.

But when the pandemic hit the country in March 2020, the state-run transport agency suspended the service.

“The entire transport system has to be gender responsive. Women using these services pay for them, and therefore, they are entitled to safety, security and dignity.”

FARAH KABIR
Country director of ActionAid

When the Covid restrictions were lifted, however, BRTC did not fully resume the operation, making women’s commutes as problematic as before.

Currently, only six such buses are operating across the city. A BRTC official said they are working on increasing the number gradually.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY



PERSISTING ISSUES

Women being harassed on buses

BRTC’s dedicated bus service for women still not fully operational

Only 6 operating in city at present

Buses don’t stop for boarding

Many conductors, helpers behave rudely with female passengers

Men take up handful of women’s seats

Meanwhile, for private buses, the situation is even worse. Though they have some dedicated seats for women, they remain mostly occupied by men.

As Bangladesh and the world at large celebrate International Women’s Day today, with the theme “Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow”, women-friendly public transport remains a distant dream in Dhaka.

Arwin Ahmad, a master’s student of Dhaka University, who often goes to classes from her residence in Chattogram Road by bus, told this newspaper that in many cases, buses are not willing to take female passengers.

“They [bus drivers], on many occasions don’t stop the bus, but rather force us to get on running buses, which is quite difficult for women,” she said.

Many conductors and helpers behave rudely with female passengers, she said,

adding that the handful of women’s seats seldom remain vacant, forcing many to stand throughout the journey.

Asked about the claims, Mahbubur Rahman, organising secretary of Dhaka Road Transport Owner Association, said although nine seats are dedicated for women and children in private buses, many men refuse to follow the rule.

In such cases, bus staffers, upon requests from female passengers, ask the men to vacate the seats, he said.

About rude behaviour of bus staffers, he said if anyone lodges a complaint, the association takes action against bus owners and workers in question.

Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Jatri Kalyan Samity, however, said bus services in Dhaka city are not even male-friendly. “Transport services are a nightmare for women, as they have to face many types of

harassment,” he told The Daily Star yesterday. “On the occasion of women’s day, we urge the government to enhance services for women and make their journey hassle-free.”

Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid, said policymakers have to keep in mind that women and girls have to go out for work and other activities, and so, public transport has to be woman-friendly.

“The entire transport system has to be gender responsive,” she told this newspaper. “Women using these services pay for them, and therefore, they are entitled to safety, security and dignity.”

“We need to make the regulatory system effective and consumer associations stronger to demand that women and girls do not face any discrimination on any form of public transport,” she added.

Health hazards stalk female tea workers

MINTU DESHWARA

Women tea workers not only play a vital role in their industry, they’re also the rocks of their family’s economic fortunes. But for all the work that they do, they are plagued by malnutrition, stigma, financial uncertainty, lack of awareness regarding gender issues and lack of hygiene.

To add to this is the persistent culture of early marriage and the pressure to have more children. As a result, both the workers and their children are left with various physical complications, including malnutrition and anaemia.

Kajol Roy works at a tea garden at Rajnagar upazila of Moulvibazar. “I have four daughters but no sons. My husband keeps rebuking me over this, as if it’s my fault,” she told this correspondent recently.

According to a survey conducted by Unicef and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) on tea gardens across Sylhet division, 46 percent of adolescents in the gardens are victims of child marriage, while motherhood before the age of 18 stands at 22.2 percent. The survey was published in late 2019.

Meanwhile, another survey, funded by UNFPA and conducted by the National Institute for Health Development and Research, Centre for Injury Prevention and Research (CIPRB) and Ministry of Health, revealed that 15 percent of female tea workers have been diagnosed with cervical cancer.

The survey was conducted among 3,000 female workers of 10 gardens in Moulvibazar, of whom 519 tested positive for incurable cervical cancer, said CIPRB District Coordinator Altafur Rahman.

Nighat Sadia, director of Usha, a volunteer organisation working with teenagers and children in the tea gardens in Sylhet, said, “Child marriage is the norm for most tea workers. They’re married off at an early age due to lack of security, poverty, prejudice and illiteracy. As a result, they become mothers at a young age, which throws both mother and child into malnutrition as there’s a lack of nutritious food due to their low incomes.”

Tea worker Mira Hazra (40) has three daughters and one son. “Every time during pregnancy, the midwife gave me two iron tablets and advised a diet consisting of vegetables, eggs, fish and meat. But

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



For all their significant contributions to the tea industry, female tea workers suffer from malnutrition and a host of other diseases, while child marriage and early childbirth refuse to leave them alone.

PHOTO: STAR

An ode to the superwomen of our RMG sector

‘Made in Bangladesh’ to release in theatres on March 11

As Shimu sits in front of the manager, she is faced with a tough choice- the manager has offered her money to stop the union – while on the other hand, the fate of thousands of workers relies on her petite shoulders. The money would have paid off her financial burden, but would have weighed on her conscience. Shimu, with courage, stood up to her manager and told ‘no’ to his face. She was determined to change her fate, whether it is for better or worse.

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

“Shimu – Made in Bangladesh” attempts to portray the struggles of working class women, who had to stand up against the authoritarian rules imposed by a corrupt garments factory. Created by filmmaker Rubaiyat Hossain, the film is a continuation of Shimu’s story from “Under Construction”, as she leaves her job as a houseworker to follow her dreams in the apparel industry.

“When I screened ‘Under Construction’ in São Paulo, a lot of people wanted to know what happened to Shimu’s character in the movie. Later, I decided to make a film on working class women, and so I did primary research by watching documentaries and reading books. There, I saw that most of the women were portrayed as victims,” says Rubaiyat Hossain.

“However, when I got to meet the actual workers, I realised that there was a totally different side to the narrative. Most of the



union members and activists in the RMG sector were women, and they are working hard to bring changes in society. I decided to pitch my story, not depicting them as victims, rather heroes in their field,” adds the director.

200 garment workers participated in the movie, as most of the scenes required using specialized machines, and the film crew had to record the sound live. Most of the leads of the film consists of female crewmembers – among which cinematographer Sabine Lancelin, sound designer Elisha Albert and art director Jonaki Bhattacharya put in some stellar work.

“Shimu- Made in Bangladesh” which was



Scenes from ‘Shimu-Made in Bangladesh’.

premiered at many prestigious film festivals, will premiere tomorrow at Mohakhali’s Star Cineplex, and will be released on March 11 in theatres.

The movie revolves around Shimu, played by Reekita Nondine Shimu. The 25-year-old actress garnered numerous praises worldwide for her portrayal of the character.

“I was scared of walking alone on the streets of Dhaka. One of the crew members actually had to take me to the shooting spot, as I was frightened of travelling alone. However, after walking with garments workers everyday, It ignited the free-spirited Shimu within me – someone who could stand up for herself,” adds the actress.

Another important character in the movie is Dalia, Shimu’s best friend and garments worker, played by Novera Rahman.

“I really had to transform a lot to get into the skin of this character. I had to gain weight and get more tanned, to play the naïve girl who feels completely out of place in the city,” says Novera.

“Shimu- Made in Bangladesh” is based on the real-life story of Dalia, who came to Dhaka at the age of 11, and is still struggling for her livelihood.

“I worked as a union leader for 3 years,

and within my first year, I put forward our 21-point demand, among which 14 were approved. We got maternity leaves, special bonuses and medical leaves,” says Dalia.

“However, after the Rana Plaza incident, everything changed for worse and we were left jobless. More than 2500 employees lost their jobs, and I had to move to Jordan to work as a garments’ worker. However, I came back in 2017 to help with the shooting, and by the time the film’s shooting was done, I was left with nothing. Currently, I am trying to apply for a work permit in Lebanon as I will have to take care of my ailing parents,” adds Dalia.

“I am truly grateful to Rubaiyat ma’am for taking me to Denmark, France and Japan for screening of the movie. During the screening of the movie in Denmark, I literally cried when Shimu finally got her union certificate. It brought tears to my eyes,” says Dalia.

“Shimu- Made in Bangladesh” is an inspiring tale of a woman overcoming her perils and standing strong against patriarchy. It is an ode to the superwomen, who despite all odds, make our RMG sector a powerhouse in our economy, sometimes even at the cost of their own well-being.

READ THE FULL FEATURE ONLINE

Bhumi Pednekar collaborates with UNDP for gender equality campaign

RTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar will be collaborating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to promote gender equality campaign.

The year-long campaign titled “Women at Work - Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Future Tomorrow” will help to raise awareness regarding the challenges women face in career paths and how a sustainable future can be created for women in governmental jobs and NGOs, and the importance of peer support.

WOMEN’S DAY exclusive ‘Scooty’ to park on Chorki today

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR



“Scooty”, a Chorki exclusive production to celebrate International Women’s Day, is set to release today on the platform.

Directed by Arifur Rahman, the film casts Nazifa Tushi, Siam Raihan, Shangeeta Chowdhury, Ashok Bepari, Hedayet Nannu, and Adnan Adib Khan, among others. Produced by Goopy Bagha Productions Limited, the project is a 45-minute short film that narrates the journey of a liberal, self-dependent and confident girl Onu, played by Nazifa Tushi.

“Onu challenges social norms and set gender roles that have been standardized by the society,” shares Nazifa, who learned to ride a scooter just for this role. “I feel until we women change our lenses to perceive each other, the way the society looks at us won’t bring about positive change.”

COUNTRYWIDE

Feeding the unfed

MD AMINUL ISLAM

Nree Foundation, a voluntary organisation based in Sherpur, has been serving daily lunch to the unfed people since August last year to alleviate the impact of coronavirus pandemic. The programme titled “Food for the Hungry” has come as a respite for the destitute.

The organisation caters to around 70 people, mainly homeless and needy who congregate at the district town’s eidgah ground at the lunch time.

“The time when many people lost their jobs due to the pandemic situation and fell in food crisis, we some friends belonging to the SSC-2002 batch started the programme to provide balanced diet among the hungry people. Every day we serve rice, eggs, pulses and vegetables at noon,” said Razib Ahmed, secretary of 21-member committee running the foundation.

After taking the initiative, some 60 volunteers have joined this programme, Razib, a high school teacher.

Now many generous people have been contributing to run the

programme, he added.

Marking different social programmes like wedding anniversary, birthday and death anniversary, many people belonging to rich families contribute to this programme and special meal is arranged for at least 10 to 12 days in a month, said a volunteer, Aurangazeb Akanda, also an assistant professor at Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology in Tangail.

“The foundation has been continuing this programme since August 15 last year without any break. When we are busy with ourselves to lead a better life ignoring the social crisis a group of people have been working for the distressed,” said Jahidul Khan Saurov, a local journalist.

The regular meal needs Tk 2000 while a special meal needs Tk 5000 to Tk 10000, said the volunteers.

A 75-year-old widow Jamila Begum of Kusumhati area in Sherpur Sadar, said her only daughter lives with her husband in Narayanganj. She is suffering from arthritis and experiences swollen eyes.

A feeble Jamila also said that she cannot work to manage every day’s food and she comes here every day to have meal.

Visually impaired Rahela who takes her regular food from Nree Foundation said the food served by the organisation is the only source of her food.

Meanwhile, Sherpur deputy commissioner (DC) has sanctioned four tonnes of rice while Sherpur municipality Mayor Golam Mohammad Kibria Liton has supported the programme extending a financial support of Tk 40,000, sources said.

DC Md Mominur Rashid said every day helpless and needy people come to the venue for having free food.

“We have so far arranged four tonnes of rice for the programme and will provide necessary rice as per the requirement for feeding the starving people,” he added.

The DC also said that if the affluent corners of the society stand by the helpless people in this way, the misery of many people living in the society would be lessened one day.

HC summons Covid, war

FROM PAGE 12

thus saving it from potential liquidation, PLFSL’s lawyer Mejbahur Rahman told The Daily Star.

In the order, the HC said the defaulters can reschedule their loans after depositing the down payment in 30 days.

But a large number of defaulters have not complied with the HC directive although the board of directors have contacted and issued notices to them.

Subsequently, PLFSL turned to the court, Rahman said.

PLFSL has more defaulters and the board of directors will submit a similar application before the HC for further directives.

Why

FROM PAGE 12

or damage. This kind of inflammation may be linked to autoimmune diseases. If the body sends out inflammatory cells without sickness or injury, it is likely a case of chronic inflammation.

Chronic inflammation symptoms may be harder to spot than the acute inflammation symptoms. Signs of chronic inflammation can include abdominal pain, chest pain, fatigue, fever, joint pain or stiffness, mouth sores, skin rash, etc. This kind of inflammation may be connected to Alzheimer’s disease, asthma, cancer, heart disease, rheumatoid arthritis (RA), ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and type two diabetes.

In order to diagnose inflammation or conditions that cause it, your doctor may give you different tests based on your symptoms.

Covid, war

FROM PAGE 12

organised the discussion at its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital. The premier joined the event virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

The PM said an unwarranted situation arose when Russia attacked Ukraine. “The negative impact of that incident has struck the world and we are also suffering from that.”

Hasina said maybe the prices of some items are going up at the domestic market due to the impacts of the price hike on the international market.

Besides, there are some people who always try to make money taking advantage of such a situation, she said.

“They want to make quick bucks through hoarding of goods.”

The PM said the government has made arrangements for monitoring the market.

She urged all to utilise every inch of land for farming to avoid any food scarcity in the country.

Hasina said the government’s aim is to ensure all basic needs of the people. “And we are doing that successfully.”

She said the AL government has been able to bring a fundamental change in the society in just 13 years.

“We’ve been able to improve the living standard of the people of this country.”

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader delivered the welcome speech at the programme.

Sumis suffer

FROM PAGE 2

of the government have so far been seen to stop the child marriage in chars.

Besides, no government office in Tangail has any comprehensive statistics on child marriage of the district.

Contacted, Ataul Gani, Tangail’s deputy commissioner, said the administration along with some private organisations were working to prevent child marriage in chars.

He also stressed the need for raising awareness among parents against it.

Lithuania

FROM PAGE 2

from Ukraine.

After more than two days of debate, which saw the Ukrainian ambassador accuse Russia of genocide, 141 out of 193 UN member states voted in favour of the non-binding resolution.

Bangladesh was among the 35 countries that abstained, while Eritrea, North Korea, Syria, Belarus, and Russia voted against it.

The resolution “deplores” the invasion of Ukraine “in the strongest terms” and condemns Russian President Vladimir Putin’s decision to put his nuclear forces on alert.

Bangladesh said it always supported peace and called for resolving the crisis through dialogue. It also said it believes in the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

2 kids hurt

FROM PAGE 2

Awami League lawmaker Khandakar Azizul Haque Arzu.

Contacted, he said police were probing the matter.



As many as 70 people are fed by Nree Foundation, a voluntary organisation, every day at the Eidgah ground of Sherpur town during the lunch hour.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

WAR COVERAGE
Russia blocks
more news
outlets

AFP, Paris

Russian authorities have blocked several independent media outlets including news site Mediazona as the Kremlin seeks to control coverage of its war in Ukraine, a rights group said.

Authorities have blocked a number of digital media outlets, including Mediazona, Republic, Snob.ru and Agentstvo, said Roskomsvoboda, a digital rights group.

The group said the independent media had been targeted following a request from the General Prosecutor's Office dated February 24, the day President Vladimir Putin ordered troops to invade Ukraine.



Mediazona said it had been blocked "because we cover honestly what is happening in Ukraine and call the invasion an invasion, and the war a war".

The media outlet added that Russia has in recent days introduced "military censorship and there is almost no independent media left in the country".

Republic said the state communications watchdog had not informed it of the reason for the blockage but said readers would still be able to access it via a VPN.

"Thank you for staying with us. The night will pass," Republic said in a statement late on Sunday.



A mother comforts her daughter as they wait in freezing cold temperatures to get on bus, after crossing the Ukrainian border into Poland, at the Medyka border crossing in Poland, yesterday. More than 1.7 million people have fled Ukraine since Russia launched its full-scale invasion on February 24, according to the latest data from the UN yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Putin won't stop in Ukraine
Lithuanian president warns Blinken, urges tougher stance on Russia

AGENCIES

Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda yesterday warned Washington's top diplomat Antony Blinken that a failure to stop Russia's aggression in Ukraine would lead to a global conflict.

Addressing the US secretary of state as he began a tour of Baltic states, Nausėda said Russian leader Vladimir Putin "will not stop in Ukraine" and that the world had an obligation to help Ukrainians "by all means available."

"I mean indeed all means if we want to avoid the Third World War. The choice is in our hands," he said.

Nato member Lithuania has sent military aid to Ukraine and welcomed small numbers of Ukrainian refugees since

Russia's invasion began on February 24. Blinken was set to visit neighboring Latvia and Estonia yesterday and today.

Belarus, which borders Lithuania and Latvia, allowed Russia to launch the assault from its territory after it had its troops stationed there for weeks under the guise of joint military exercises.

Blinken met Nausėda before talks with Lithuania's foreign minister and prime minister.

The top US diplomat earlier told staff of the US embassy in Vilnius that Russia's invasion of Ukraine challenged basic principles designed to keep the peace between nations, reports Reuters.

"It's important that people understand what's actually at stake and it goes beyond even Ukraine, beyond even the Baltic

countries, beyond even Europe," Blinken said.

Meanwhile, China stressed yesterday that the friendship between Beijing and Moscow was still "rock solid", despite international condemnation of Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, as Beijing said it was open to helping mediate peace.

China has refused to condemn its close ally Moscow after only last month touting a "no limits" strategic partnership between the two countries, reports AFP.

"The friendship between the two peoples is rock solid, and both sides' future cooperation prospects are very vast," said Foreign Minister Wang Yi at a press briefing during the Chinese leadership's annual political congress in Beijing.

WAR IN UKRAINE
Developments

AGENCIES

EVACUATION OFFER REJECTED
A Kremlin offer to open escape routes for civilians trapped by the fighting is rejected by Kyiv because several lead to Russia or its ally Belarus.

'DELIBERATE MURDER'
Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky accuses Russian troops of "deliberate murder" of civilians after a family with two children is cut down by shelling in the street as they fled the town of Irpin outside of Kyiv.

ON THE ROAD TO ODESSA
Ukraine's military says it is fighting "fierce battles" with Russian forces on the edge of the southern city of Mykolayiv, which sits on the road to the country's biggest port Odessa.

RUSSIA SHUN'S WAR HEARING
Russia declined to attend a hearing at the UN's top court yesterday at which Ukraine is asking for an immediate order to halt the conflict, the head judge said.

MODI URGES PUTIN-ZELENSKY TALKS
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to hold direct talks with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky, in addition to ongoing negotiations.

TIKTOK AND NETFLIX EXIT
Netflix suspends services in Russia and social media giant TikTok blocks posting of video content from the country because of Kremlin censorship laws on the war.

KREMLIN ARRESTS MORE
Police detained more than 5,000 people protesting the war in some 60 Russian cities Sunday, bringing the numbers held to well over 11,000, since the invasion began.

ROCK-SOLID FRIENDSHIP
China's foreign minister says the friendship between Beijing and Moscow is "rock solid" despite the Russian invasion and offers to help mediate.

WESTERN JETS
The US gives a "green light" for Poland to supply Kyiv with fighter jets. Moscow warns that could drag Nato members into the war.

CONSULTANTS LEAVE
Consultancy firms KPMG and PwC pull out of Russia, leaving the future of 8,200 staff in doubt. Fellow "big four" consultancy Deloitte is reviewing its presence there.





International
Women's Day

"Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow"



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বিশ্ব নারী দিবস

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বিশ্ব নারী দিবসে
যাত্রা শুরু করেছে
পূবালী **মনন্যা** ডেবিট কার্ড



পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
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Why is ACC failing to nab money launderers?

It betrays an inherent weakness in the system

MONEY laundering is one of the biggest scourges that Bangladesh is currently facing. In fact, the country has been ranked by the Global Financial Unit among the top 30 countries in the world in terms of illicit financial flows, with around 20 percent of its international trade value being siphoned out of the country every year. We, therefore, find the comments the High Court made on March 6, 2022, upbraiding the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for its consistent failure to haul up the money launderers and bring them to book, extremely pertinent. The ACC must reckon seriously with the problem and play its part in plugging the holes that allow billions of dollars' worth of money to leave our country.

It bears repeating that money laundering has assumed a serious proportion and has become a most potent non-military threat to the country's national security. It thus begs the question as to why we continue to witness unbridled and exponential growth of this menace. It is awe-inspiring to read reports in the media of how individual X or Y managed to transfer billions of dollars to a third country; how an order barring a launderer's departure from the country reached the authorities 15 minutes after the individual's plane had already taken off; how banks have been sapped, not by the public, but by the owners, and money transferred abroad without the authorities doing anything about it. Such events only raise questions about the role of the relevant agencies in dealing with the issue.

The Panama Papers and Paradise Papers have revealed names of the rich and the sly, who managed to circumvent the rules and manipulated the system to launder money. One cannot rule out the exploitation of political links by these elements to fulfil their heinous plans. We, therefore, ask: What happened to the court's directive to investigate the reports of the said two papers? What measures have been taken against those named? In fact, the investigative authorities are obligated under the Anti-Money Laundering Act to constantly provide the authorities with intelligence and actionable information, as well as with suspicious activity reports, in order to help curb money laundering.

There are a raft of guidelines and bevy of agencies to address the menace. What is the point of these guidelines and agencies if the menace cannot be managed? The High Court rightly observed once that the money launderers are the enemy of the people. We would like to add that those that help them in the process are enemies of the country, too.

Let Women's Day not be a formality

Women's issues must be heard and resolved

ON March 8 every year, the International Women's Day is celebrated, without fail, by governments, organisations, and individuals around the world. The events and declarations, however emphatic, may give off an impression of monotony and a false sense of progress, even though there is vast evidence pointing to the contrary. Of course, it is appreciable that one day is dedicated to celebrating women and their myriad contributions. But this recognition must also accompany an honest appraisal of their struggles, along with a renewed push for change.

We know for a fact how women face harassment—verbal, physical, and psychological—in every part of Bangladesh, from people they know intimately as well as complete strangers. This is an issue that should be at the top of the agenda for policymakers and institutions. It would require targeted and sensible interventions in every district, city, and town in order to be eradicated. However, there are other, equally dangerous issues concerning women's well-being, which often fall under the radar.

The impact of climate change on women and girls is one such area. Climate change, as it is becoming increasingly clear, has been affecting women disproportionately. Women in the coastal areas of Bangladesh, for instance, are bearing the brunt of saltwater intrusion more acutely. Due to salinity engulfing their area, the men have to go far away in search of work, while the women become more vulnerable to harassment. Reportedly, in areas where people have lost their homes to cyclones, families tend to marry off their young daughters due to "security concerns."

In the picturesque tea gardens of Sylhet, more than half the labour force consists of women who reportedly work till sunset, while their male counterparts are done fulfilling their quota by midday. Women have to walk tens of kilometres each day to get to their designated leaf-picking sections and back, with most gardens not having any toilet or washing facilities for female workers. This is another example of how women suffer disproportionately beyond the physical-psychological abuse they traditionally endure at home.

The theme of this year's Women's Day is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow," which aims to recognise the contribution of women and girls around the world for climate adaptation and mitigation. Equally important is the acknowledgement that much remains to be done. We applaud the organisations conducting advocacy and valuable research on the lives of women who are most vulnerable to climate change and its impacts. Changing their lives will be a Herculean task without policy support and, equally importantly, the support of the affected communities. We urge the authorities to pursue a zero tolerance approach to violence against women, and to incorporate women-friendly policies in all their development and climate change schemes.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022

High time to #breakthebias



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

FAHMIDA KHATUN

GENDER equality is still an elusive term not just in Bangladesh, but all across the world, despite so much economic progress and so many measures taken by policymakers. Stereotyped political, social, and cultural values continue to act as barriers for women's advancement. That's why, despite the world's unstoppable progress on various fronts, women in positions of power are still few and far between.

In Bangladesh, female participation in the labour force has increased to 38.5 percent at present from only four percent in 1974. Women are working in not only agriculture or the export-oriented RMG sector, but also in many non-traditional and emerging sectors at an increasing rate. Higher participation in education has created scopes for securing high-valued jobs for Bangladeshi women. Yet, the number of female participants in these sectors is still low and not many women can reach senior positions in these organisations. Gender gap in managerial positions in Bangladesh is as high as 88 percent, as per the 2021 Global Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

We also frequently talk about wage gaps between male and female workers in many sectors, including apparels, construction and agriculture. Over 90 percent of working women have informal jobs. Because of such high informality of their jobs, their income and job security are also low—especially compared to men. According to the WEF, in 2021, women earned only 40.3 percent of the estimated earned income of men in Bangladesh. And the wage gap is true for highly educated executives and managers, too. Women often feel hesitant to bargain for their salary; many also do not know how to bargain. And men feel that women are not the breadwinners of their families, and their income is just "extra." Such



▲
Stock illustration

Highly educated or less educated, rich or poor, men or women—we all carry similar values when it comes to women's issues.

thinking also exists among some women, unfortunately. That's why the struggle to establish gender equality is not fighting against certain sections of people, but against the system within which such biased values originate and are nurtured. The strong bias against women works against gender equality in many ways. The Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) of the

According to the WEF, in 2021, women earned only 40.3 percent of the estimated earned income of men in Bangladesh.

take 135.6 years to close the gender gap worldwide. The Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) considers four key dimensions of gender gap: economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment. GGGI also tracks progress towards closing these gaps over time. The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the length of this period from 99.5 years, as estimated in the 2020 WEF report.

So, the journey towards gender equality is a long and difficult one. Many young university graduates enter the job market with a lot of enthusiasm. It starts declining within a few years as they expand their families. Many women end up having to choose between motherhood and their careers. This mid-way departure of female executives reduces the number of capable women in senior positions. When their children grow up and they want to return to the job market, their knowledge becomes obsolete. Employers do not want to hire them with such gaps. Our job market is small where the fresh graduates struggle to secure a job. However, women must stay the course and should not give in. They should acquire new skills and reskill themselves. Many have become small entrepreneurs, even though it is not easy to access finance from financial institutions. Bias also works against women when they go to commercial banks for loans.

Bias against women is ingrained within most of us. Highly educated or less educated, rich or poor, men or women—we all carry similar values when it comes to women's issues. Therefore, the achievement of gender equality is going to be a long and tedious journey. As we celebrate International Women's Day this year, we must commit ourselves to treading that arduous and rocky path together.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2020 indicates that globally, 90 percent of men and women are biased against women. The report reveals that social beliefs and norms obstruct gender equality at work, education, and politics. The GSNI also shows that more than 40 percent of people think men can be better business executives, and in case of job scarcity, men have more rights to a job. More strikingly, 28 percent think it is justified for a husband to beat his wife. Though Bangladesh is not among the 75 countries that the UNDP studied, the scenario would not be much different here.

With such biases and barriers in place, it is not easy to achieve gender equality. In 2021, the WEF suggested that it would

Where can domestic violence survivors actually go?



Taqbir Huda
is the advocacy lead for the Gender Justice and Diversity Programme at Brac.

TAQBIR HUDA

ON this year's International Women's Day, which is being celebrated across Bangladesh and with much grandiosity in Dhaka, I want us all to think of Yasmin Ara, a young woman from Satkhira, who has been thrown out of her home by her mother-in-law a few months after losing her husband.

Yasmin's mother-in-law evicted her saying she had no reason to stay. She moved back to her father's home along with her daughter. Her family is much poorer compared to her more well-off in-laws, and are barely able to feed themselves.

I came to know of Yasmin's case through a pilot project I oversee named "Ar Na," being implemented by Brac in Satkhira and Rangpur. As a part of this project, over 800 frontline staff in 50 branches are being trained to use a web app to report incidents of violence against women and girls in their working areas. Yasmin's case was reported by Tania, a frontline staff member of Brac's microfinance programme, who came to know of Yasmin's ordeal when engaged in her daily loan collection in her neighbourhood.

After a case is reported, a small team of case managers work to connect the survivors with the required support services through referral. Yet, in order to refer survivors of gender-based violence to a local service provider, a mapping of existing support services at the upazila level is of utmost importance. Shongjog, a web app that shows the availability of six main types of support services for gender-based violence (GBV) survivors at the upazila level, based on a nationwide service-mapping conducted in 61 districts covering 435 upazilas, categorises service providers into six main categories: police stations, legal aid, social protection (i.e. livelihood opportunities), psychosocial support (e.g. trauma counselling), safe/

shelter homes, and medical aid/health services.

When the case manager visited Yasmin to ask her about the kind of referral support she needed, she expressed her desire to take legal action to secure her and her daughter's property rights. Yasmin also mentioned that she had no means to feed herself or her daughter, and that she was in urgent need of financial support or a livelihood opportunity. The case manager also noted that Yasmin needed psychosocial counselling to overcome the traumatic experience she had faced.

Yasmin's story encapsulates the experience of all too many Bangladeshi women today. The vast majority of cases we have received reports of through the Ar Na project all relate to young women (aged 27 years on average) facing domestic violence from their husbands or in-laws, or both. The type of support the survivors most commonly need are legal support, social protection (i.e. livelihood support) and psychosocial counselling. So how readily available are these support services at a national level?

The National Legal Aid and Services Organisation (NLASO), was set up to provide legal aid to those otherwise unable to afford legal services, and has established district legal aid committees in all 64 districts of Bangladesh. The legal aid committees have also reportedly been constituted at the upazila and union levels, though information about these are not available on the NLASO website.

For those unwilling or unable to take microcredit loans (like Yasmin), the Department of Social Services has a cash transfer programme called "Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women," which makes monthly payments to the tune of Tk 500. However, application for this assistance does not automatically guarantee transfer of cash for anyone who applies. It is subject to selection by a committee, which prioritises the most senior and the neediest.

The Department of Women Affairs has a programme named "Women's Skill Based Training for Livelihood," which provides training to women in order to develop skills on certain trades, so they can earn a livelihood. However, batches are taken only every quarter, and places

are limited to 25 or so people.

The situation is grimmest for psychosocial support services. Other than the One-Stop Crisis Centres (OCCs) in 12 medical college hospitals and certain public hospitals, it remains largely unavailable. The nearest OCC to a survivor in Satkhira, like Yasmin, would be in the neighbouring city of Khulna.

Yasmin's story teaches us two important lessons. Firstly, even where

The situation is grimmest for psychosocial support services. Other than the One-Stop Crisis Centres (OCCs) in 12 medical college hospitals and certain public hospitals, it remains largely unavailable.

services are available, and are provided free of cost, it costs money to travel to the service providers, which are typically located in far-off locations. The GBV survivors often do not have the means to afford the transportation cost needed to reach these service providers. For this reason, they need immediate financial assistance so they can, at the very least, bear the immediate and incidental costs associated with experiencing gender-based violence. Secondly, the two social protection programmes outlined above do not necessarily guarantee selection even if the applicants are proven to be GBV survivors, and are not designed to cater to their needs.

As we transition into a middle-income country, foreign funding for a social protection programme designed to address the unique needs of GBV survivors is the need of the hour. This programme should, at the very least, provide survivors with immediate cash transfers in the short term to meet pressing costs, while ensuring their economic empowerment in the long term.

Names of individuals have been anonymised to protect their confidentiality.

Stuck between two worldviews and two futures



Dr Vandana Shiva is an Indian scholar, author, environmental activist, ecofeminist and food sovereignty advocate based in New Delhi.

VANDANA SHIVA

THE Earth is living. She is *Gaia*, *Pachamama*, *Vasundhara*, *Terra Madre*. For indigenous cultures, she is Mother Earth. Even scientists like James Lovelock call her *Gaia*, because they have understood that she is living. The living Earth is a self-organised, self-regulated living system. She is autopoietic. She has evolved her biodiversity and her complex biosphere over billions of years. Through the biosphere, she creates and regulates her climate systems. The Earth's living system, the "Gaian system," self-regulates global temperature, atmospheric content and ocean salinity, thus maintaining the infrastructure for life to persist and evolve.

Without life, the CO2 in Earth's atmosphere was 98 percent, and the temperature was 290 degrees Celsius. Over 3.3 billion years, the Earth has been cooled down by her living systems. The same process that cooled the planet and allowed life to emerge in its diversity are living processes and living technologies that sustain, maintain, and regenerate life and create living economies.

Climate change is the disruption of Earth's self-regulatory processes by using junk fossil energy—coal, oil, gas—that the planet fossilised over 600 million years ago and put underground. The climate emergency and related emergencies are rooted in the colonisation of Earth, her ecosystem, resources, and diverse cultures. It is a worldview shift from the Living Earth to Terra Nullius, the dead and empty Earth. The same worldview shift that declared indigenous peoples as inferior and created apartheid, also declared the Earth as dead and created barriers between her and the humans through the illusion of eco-apartheid. The worldview that creates hierarchies between people and divides humanity on the basis of race, gender, religion and class also creates the false hierarchy of anthropocentrism, treating our Earth relatives as inferior—mere objects to be owned and manipulated. The false assumption that Earth is a dead, inert matter has made the vibrant, biodiverse, living planet disappear, reducing her to a mine for "raw materials" for an inefficient and wasteful corporate, industrial system, and a sink of industrial pollution.

The Dead Earth view leads to the artificial imposition of a fictitious "Creation Boundary"—that creation begins with extraction, exploitation and manipulation of Earth's resources. The Dead Earth worldview is connected to the technological paradigm that is blind to nature's superior and sophisticated living technologies. Genetic engineering, climate engineering or geoengineering, and carbon engineering are all based on a deep denial that the Earth is living, her technologies of organising, regenerating and renewing life are complex, and our instruments of engineering are crude and clumsy when compared to her sophistication, subtlety, and lightness.

The Dead Earth view is also connected to an extractive economic system that imposes a fictitious "production boundary" that makes nature's creative and productive processes disappear, appropriates what nature and people have co-produced, and are inefficient, use more resources and energy than they produce, and increase entropy. The dominant economic model is based on extractivism, dependence on external inputs, external control, allopeis, and externalisation of the high financial and entropic costs. It is based on the denialism of nature's

zero cost, zero external input, negative entropy, and high efficiency systems of living economies of creating abundance through multifunctionality and multiple outputs.

Real climate solutions lie in working non-violently with Earth, her biodiversity of plants and soil organisms, her ecological technologies, her living economies.

False solutions continue the path of separation and superiority, greed and control, profits and power, manipulation and mastery—causing an existential emergency for our species.

We are members of one Earth Family, and part of the web of life woven by biodiversity. We cannot and do not live outside the food web and the web of life. Every illusion of

separation and superiority, mastery and control ruptures the fragile web and ecological cycles that sustain life on Earth. The arrogant notion that nature has no creativity and only humans are intelligent is a flawed, obsolete, colonial worldview that has no place in a regenerative world.

In total denial of the power and potential of plants and living soil to recycle carbon and cool the planet, the moneymakers and profiteers are trying to set up a "carbon capture and storage" industry to continue to pollute while making more money from a new pollution industry. Just as all wasteful, socially and ecologically destructive industries—such as fossil industrialism, green revolution/industrial agriculture, factory farming—that are violent, non-sustainable, and financially unviable have been made artificially profitable for corporations at the cost of planet and people through subsidies, the industrial carbon capture and storage technologies can only exist through massive public subsidies and a continued denial of the more sophisticated technologies that nature offers.

Even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is falling for the industrial carbon capture trap.

"The IPCC report says that without capturing significant amounts of carbon over the next 30 years, it will be impossible to get humanity to net-zero emissions by 2050—and, consequently, to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius." The reason billionaires are investing in inefficient, nature-denying, costly and false solutions to climate change is because it lets the fossil fuel industry continue to pollute, while they collect our tax money to be invested in false solutions and create new markets in carbon trade and the fake economy of "net zero."

Public taxes and public investment need to protect the common public

Real climate solutions lie in working non-violently with Earth, her biodiversity of plants and soil organisms, her ecological technologies, her living economies.

good, regenerate the planet's plant and soil biodiversity, and through those cool the planet, while providing food and livelihood security via local living circular economies.

The world's biggest industrial carbon capture industry, named Orca, was set up by a Swiss Company named Climeworks in Iceland. It is highly inefficient. Over one year, it will capture just three seconds of global emissions. Christoph Gebald, co-founder of Climeworks, admitted that it was a costly and energy-intensive technology, costing at least USD 600 to capture one tonne of carbon dioxide.

Removing all of humanity's annual carbon emissions would cost more than USD 5 trillion per year, according to Bill Gates' book "How to Avoid a Climate Disaster." Gates admits, "It's probably the most expensive solution." It would require 50,000 Orca plants, and still

not perform the ecological functions of living carbon in plants and living soil.

While knowing the financial non-viability of industrial carbon capture, Gates is investing in the Canadian company Carbon Engineering, which has started designing a similar facility as Orca in northeastern Scotland and plans to start construction on a plant in Texas this year.

Elon Musk also announced that he was funding a USD 100 million carbon-capture contest.

Climeworks hopes that the price can be dropped to USD 100 by selling carbon commercially to beverage companies making fizzy drinks. This is a recipe for obesity, diabetes, and chronic diseases, and aggravating the health emergency. It will make more people sick without healing the planet.

The mechanical mindset of industrial carbon capture and the denial of Earth's capacity to absorb and recycle carbon dioxide to create and regenerate life is evident in the statement of Julio Friedmann, an energy policy researcher at Columbia University who describes industrial carbon capture as follows:

"Think of it like a vacuum cleaner for the atmosphere... Nothing else can do what this tech does."

He forgot the living Earth's technology of photosynthesis in the green leaves, which does a better, more sophisticated job. Nature recycles carbon for free, creates the food and fibre that sustains us, creates living soil that grows life and stores water to regenerate our springs, streams, wells and rivers.

Compare the waste, inefficiency, and high cost of the industrial carbon capture and storage to the living processes of carbon capture and storage by nature, by using the free energy of the Sun for photosynthesis to produce oxygen, fertile soils and food.

We are witnessing a clash of civilisations, of worldviews, of technology paradigms, and of economic systems.

On the one hand, we have the colonising industrial worldview that Earth is dead and imperfect. She can be engineered for profits and control. And the expensive engineering experiments and technological fixes will fix her. And for this, the billionaires need to divert our public resources to bad ideas so they can make more money while the planet burns.

On the other hand, we have the ecological worldview that the Earth is living, we are a part of her and not her masters, and working with her, we can regenerate her green mantle so she continues to cool herself as she has done over millennia.

On the one hand is hubris; on the other hand, humility. On the one hand is oneness with Earth; on the other hand, limitless greed of the one percent. On the one hand is the possibility of a human future as a member of the Earth family. On the other hand are destructive conditions for life on Earth, increasing the threat of extinction.

Each and every one of us has to decide which worldview, which technology paradigm, which economic system we will support and participate in—in our minds, our lives and our participation in citizen democracy and Earth democracy.

A longer version of this article was first published on the author's blog.

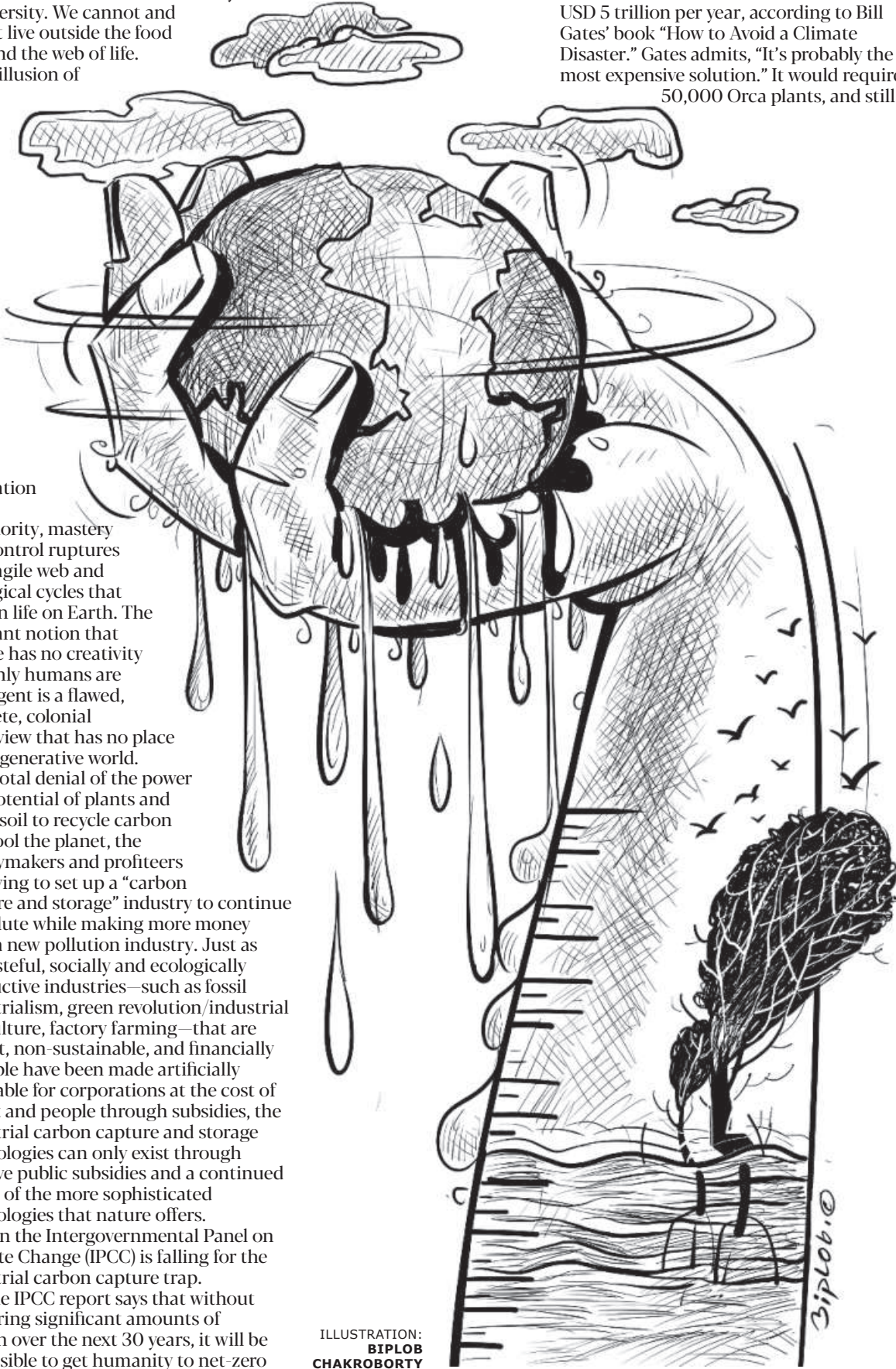


ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Much of a chess set

6 Laughs heartily

11 Merman of musicals

12 Improvised

13 "Keen!"

14 Mother of Harry and William

15 Contrived

16 Gardener, at times

18 Cigar bit

19 Was inactive

20 Parched

21 Book part

23 Lushes

25 Kilmer of "The Doors"

27 — chi

28 Ibis's cousin

30 Office head

33 Pronoun for Miss Piggy

34 Oolong or pekoe

36 Humorist

37 Uncertain

39 Depression, e.g.

40 Planet circlers

41 Cake unit

43 Bert's chum

44 Make amends

45 Particulars, in slang

46 Grinch-creating Dr.

DOWN

1 Long-distance writer

2 Not tense

3 Regretful cry

4 Hoop attachment

5 Feeds the pigs

6 Bickered

7 Valhalla bigwig

8 Buyer's question

9 Antisocial sorts

10 Like horror movies

17 Judge's concern

22 Remote

24 Catch

26 Water flowers

28 Writer Balzac

29 S. Dak. neighbor

31 Ambulance sounds

32 Icy looks

33 Acted out

35 One of the Titans

38 "Consider the matter handled"

42 Had a nosh

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

WEST

ALTO

SLAP

PATSDOWN

STAINS

LOINS

INN

PITSTOP

SAVEME

EXILES

TEALS

STALL

SHANIA

COUNTY

PETSTORE

NEO

RICAN

NINERS

STOP

POTSHOTS

AVOW

PITTA

EDEN

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Memo No. 46.02.3500.000.07.001.21.804

Date: 06.03.2022

e-Tender Notice

(Notice Number: 26/2021-22)

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

SL No.	ID, Reference No.	Procurement method	Name of works	Tender/proposal document last selling date and time
01	661947	OTM	Construction of 20.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Urli UPC-Ulpar Bazar (Sokiner More) via Khagail Rahulikhmar Road from Ch. 6500m (Road ID No: 335323015) under Sadar Upazila, District: Gopalganj. Package No. GDIRIP/Sadar/UINR-SR21-22W-162.	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
02	669499	LTM	Periodic Maintenance of Radhagiri UPC-Balurghona Bazar-Shikbar R&H via Gachapara Road (UZR#653) from Ch. 4000m-4910m [Kotwalipara] (Road ID No: 335512010). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-40	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
03	669500	LTM	Periodic Maintenance of Pinjui UP-Suagram UP Via Chowdhury Hat Road from Ch. 1956m-4735m [Kotwalipara] (Road ID No: 335513009). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-41	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
04	669501	LTM	Periodic Maintenance of Tarashree R&H-South Hiron Govt Primary School Road from Ch. 1800m-3000m [Kotwalipara] (Road ID No: 335512012). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-42	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
05	669502	LTM	Widening of Ratol UP-Kalna R&H Road from Ch. 00m-800m [Kasiani] (Road ID No: 335433002). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-43	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
06	669503	LTM	Emergency Maintenance of Dumuria UP Office near shop of Shadhon Kumar to Karfa Bazar UZR via Jamal Bazar UZR Road from Ch. 00m-950m [Tungipara] (Road ID No: 335913011). Package No. TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-44	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
07	669504	LTM	Emergency Maintenance of Kamlapur RHD-Chandhat GC Road from Ch. 00m-3800m [Mukaddapur] (Road ID No: 335582005). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-45	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
08	669505	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Hordashpur Panchipara RHD (Nimto) – RHD via H/O Rakib Hossain Road from Ch. 00-2080m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335324185). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-46	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
09	669506	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Bhenabati RHD-Kamanban GC Road from Ch. 00-1025m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335322009). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-47	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
10	669507	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Upazila H/O (Sonakur GPS) – Borashi RHD Road from Ch. 00-2028m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335322024). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-48	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
11	669508	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Kuadanga Bus Stand – Hordashpur RHD Road from Ch. 00-1125m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335324105). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-49	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
12	669509	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Golarabia-Nilokhi-Durgapur (R&H-UP Office) Road from Ch. 00-2050m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335323008). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-50	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
13	669510	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Urli UPC – Ulpar Bazar (Sokiner More) via Khagail Rahulikhmar Road from Ch. 1650-4550m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335323015). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-51	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
14	669511	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Boalia-Gopinathpur Road (Bazar-Uttara Para R&H) Road from Ch. 00-1674m [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335324093). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-52	04.00pm on 21/03/2022
15	669512	LTM	Emergency Maintenance (Road Safety) of Chandradighalia-Molla Para Road from Ch. 00-1885 [Gopalganj-S] (Road ID No: 335324002). Package No. e-TenderLGED/Gopa/GOBM21-22W-53	04.00pm on 21/03/2022

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.

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

Md. Ehsanul Hoque
Executive Engineer
Tel: 02-6685451
E-mail: xen.gopalganj@lged.gov.bd

GO-447

 **বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান** 
বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
গোপালগঞ্জ
স্মারক নং-বশেদুরবিজ্ঞবি/বি/নিয়োগ/২০২২/২৬-২৯/৪০২ তারিখঃ ০৭/০৩/২০২২

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, গোপালগঞ্জ-এর ইতিহাস, সিভিল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, আর্কিটেকচার বিভাগ ও বঙ্গবন্ধু ইনস্টিটিউট অব লিবারেশন ওয়ার এন্ড বাংলাদেশ স্টাডিজ (বিলগোবাস) এ সহযোগী অধ্যাপক, সহকারী অধ্যাপক ও প্রভাষক পদে এবং অটো মোবাইল ইঞ্জিনিয়ার পদে নিয়োগের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ও স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

আবেদন ফর্ম, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা এবং নিয়োগের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট www.bsmrstu.edu.bd-থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। আবেদনপত্র পাঠানোর শেষ তারিখ ৩১/০৩/২০২২ বিকাল ০৫.০০টায়।

জিডি-৪৫১ রেজিষ্টার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)

The Daily Star

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Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB)
IRESPPW-2nd PHASE
Palli Bhaban, 5 Kawranbazar, Dhaka-1215.

Memo No: 47.62.0000.966.00.096.21-151 **Date: 07/03/2022**

e-Tender Notice
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tenders are invited in the e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of below mentioned works.


SL No	Tender ID	Name of Work	Tender last selling and closing Date and Time
1	Tender ID : 668638	Procurement of Multimedia Projector with Screen	23/03/2022; 17:00 24/03/2022; 14:30
2	Tender ID : 670184	Procurement of Talktime and Internet Data (Mobile)	23/03/2022; 17:00 24/03/2022; 14:30

The interested persons/firms may visit the web site www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.


This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Mohammad Rezaul Alam
Project Director

GD-448



Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.
(A Company of Petrobangla)
(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)



পরিচালক
জনাব

গ্যাস ব্যবহারের সশ্রুতি হোনে এবং
সমন্বিত গ্যাস বিল পরিশোধ করুন

অফিসার চর্চা করি
স্বাক্ষর সেনার বাংলা পড়ি

বিনা কারসে গ্যাসের চুলা জ্বালিয়ে রাখা
আর বিপদকে ডাকা একই বিষয়

Ref. no.: 28.16.9100.045.38.001.22/EPC (Re-Tender)/ Date: 07-03-2022

Time Extension Notice

This is for information to all concerned that the IFT (Re-Tender) reference no. ICT No.28.16.9100.045.38.001.22/EPC (Re-Tender); dated: 08-02-2022 for “Design, Manufacture, Procurement & Supply, Installation, Construction, Testing and Commissioning of 50,000 Prepaid Gas Meter, Web System (Data Centre and Data Recovery Centre) including all associated Equipment and Related Services on Turn-Key basis in JGTDSL Franchise Area”; the **time extension** has been made as follows:

Sl. No. of IFT	Item No.	Date & Time as in IFT and Tender Document	Amended Date & Time
16.	Tender Last Selling Date	09-03-2022; During Office Hours	23-03-2022; During Office Hours
17.	Tender Closing Date & Time	10-03-2022, BST 12:30 PM	24-03-2022, BST 12:30 PM
18.	Tender Opening Date and Time	10-03-2022, BST 12:45 PM	24-03-2022, BST 12:45 PM


All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

GD- 455


Project Director

Installation of 50,000 Pre-paid Gas Meter in JGTDSL Franchise Area

[illegible]



বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
সংগ্রহ ও ভান্ডার শাখা
গাজীপুর।



কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি
Office Ph : 492/0140, 5350
E-mail : ds.procure@bari.gov.bd
younusali.bari@gmail.com
web site : www.bari.gov.bd

কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

Memo no: 12.21.0000.073.03.05.665.21.4745

Date : 03 March 2022

e-GP: Re-Tender Notice No.17(2021-2022)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below:

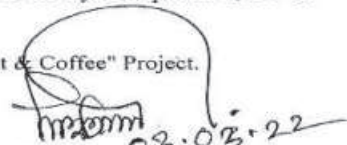
Sl No	Package no.	Tender ID & Ref No	Description of goods	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing date & Time	Tender Opening date & Time
1.	PN: GD-06	668885 & IRN : 665	Office Equipment 08 items	20.03.2022 17:00	21.03.2022 12:00	21.03.2022 12:00

The interested persons/firm may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.



This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP system portal is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Project Name : "Research, Development and Extension of Cashew nut & Coffee" Project.



(Md. Younus Ali)
Deputy Director (In-Charge)
On behalf of Director General

GD- 452

মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি

গুলফেঁশা প্রাজা (৭ম তলা), ৮, শহীদ সাংবাদিক সেলিনা পারভীন সড়ক
বড় মগবাজার, রমনা, ঢাকা-১২১৭
www.mra.gov.bd



মুজিববাহু
১০০

স্মারক নং-৫৩.০৪.০০০০.০০১.১১.০০৮.২২-৪৫৬

তারিখঃ ০৭/০৩/২০২২

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সংশোধনী

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, গত ০২/০৩/২০২২ তারিখে দৈনিক প্রথম আলো ও দি ডেইলি স্টার পত্রিকায় মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি (এমআরএ) কর্তৃক প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লেখিত শর্তাবলীর ২(৫) নং ক্রমিকের শর্ত নিম্নরূপে সংশোধন/প্রতিস্থাপন করা হলোঃ

“৫-৬ নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত পদসমূহে বরিশাল, চাঁদপুর, কুমিল্লা, ফরিদপুর, গাইবান্ধা, জামালপুর, খুলনা, লক্ষ্মীপুর, মাদারীপুর, মানিকগঞ্জ, পঞ্চগড়, রাজশাহী, সাতক্ষীরা, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বগুড়া, চট্টগ্রাম, গাজীপুর, কিশোরগঞ্জ, ময়মনসিংহ, নারায়ণগঞ্জ, নোয়াখালী, সিরাজগঞ্জ, যশোর ও টাঙ্গাইল জেলার প্রার্থীগণের আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই”।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-

এক্সিকিউটিভ ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান

মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি

জিডি-৪৫৪

[illegible]



Covid, war in Ukraine behind price hike: PM



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday blamed the pandemic fallout and the Russia-Ukraine war for the soaring prices of basic commodities. "The prices of essentials have marked a rise not only in Bangladesh but also elsewhere in the world due to the Covid-induced global economic recession. That's why the prices have gone up in every country of the world," she said. Hasina was addressing a discussion marking the Historic March 7 Speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Awami League

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

A baby carried by a woman wails out of fright as people jostle and rush to get their hands on essentials being sold on a TCB truck in the capital's Lalbagh. With the prices of daily necessities skyrocketing, the crowds near TCB trucks keep swelling every day.

'This is Shobha speaking'

Trans woman ignores discrimination; sells own book on foot

DIPAN NANDY

Born in Khulna's Khalishpur in 1988, Shobha, earlier known as Shubho, began feeling out of place during her adolescence.

She was born a boy and treated like one until then.

"I began to find my inner self. In my life, neglect and discriminations [faced as a transwoman] began with my own family when I spoke out for myself. One by one, my father and brothers became strangers to me. "My father would

not even talk to me. I don't know anything more painful than that. My

elder brother and brother-in-law

were almost always on the verge of beating me," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

Weathering many a storm and breaking her shackles one after another, Shobha is now one of the first published trans woman poets in Bangladesh.

Her first book of poetry "Sraban Sandhya" was published in 2018. However, only 50 copies were printed, which were sold as "courtesy copies". Her second "Ami Shobha Bolchhi" was published this year and is being sold at the ongoing Amar Ekushey Boi Mela.

However, even publishing her own poems was no walk in the park for Shobha as even here, due to social stigma and the financial burden that comes with discrimination against trans people, no publisher wanted to represent her.

Her poetry was not welcome in the most coveted book fair in the country.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

PEOPLE'S LEASING HC summons 64 loan defaulters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned 64 defaulters of People's Leasing and Financial Services (PLFSL) for their failure to reschedule their loans despite its directive.

If they don't appear before the court, the law enforcers will be directed to arrest them and produce before the court, said the HC bench of Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar in the order.

One defaulter has been asked to appear before the bench on April 11 and the remaining 63 on April 12 and 19.

The directive comes following an application filed by PLFSL seeking necessary directives.

The HC on July 12 last year constituted a 10-member board to run the troubled non-bank financial institution and issued several directives,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Star HEALTHLINE Why understanding inflammation is IMPORTANT FOR HEALTH

STAR HEALTH DESK

Inflammation happens to everyone whether they notice it or not. It is a normal immune response of the body to harmful stimuli, damage or infection.

Our bodies activate the immune system by sending out inflammatory cells. The cells then attack the bacteria or heal the damaged tissue.

Inflammation is classified into two types: acute inflammation and chronic inflammation.

Acute inflammation ordinarily happens for a brief time and usually settles in two weeks or less. The purpose of this type of inflammation is to restore the body to its state prior to injury or illness.

Heat, pain, redness, swelling, and loss of functions are some signs that you have inflammation.

On the other hand, chronic inflammation lasts longer and may occur even without any injury

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



CETP AT SAVAR TANNERY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE Colossal failure, misuse of public funds

Says Saber Chowdhury in an interview with Star

RASHIDUL HASAN

The central effluent treatment plant (CETP) at the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate with fundamental flaws and jaw-dropping inadequacies, reflects extremely negatively on how this project was planned, designed and implemented, said Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the environment, forest and climate change ministry.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Saber, also the ruling Awami League MP from Dhaka-9, expressed optimism that the ministries concerned would look into all aspects of the faults, identify those responsible and take actions in this regard.

"This is a must to ensure accountability and transparency and avoid similar colossal failures and misuse of public funds in future," he said.

As the CETP it is not fully functional, the tannery estate is causing massive

pollution to the area and the Dhaleshwari river.

Asked how it was possible to run the estate without having a fully functional CETP and a solid waste treatment facility, Saber said running a tannery estate without ensuring these basic facilities is illegal and the tanners are responsible for causing massive pollution over the last 10 years.

"Other than virtually killing rivers, huge damages have been done to the ecology and environment and there are of course some major public health issues to be taken into consideration."

The rivers around the capital are now polluted to such an extent that even bacteria do not survive in some areas of the water bodies, the MP said.

"As a part of the Balu river is in my electoral constituency, I have known first-hand how my constituents suffer from the pollution and the high incidence of

various diseases, including those of the skin."

About the long delay in implementing the recommendation made by the parliamentary watchdog to shut down the tannery estate, Saber said the recommendation should have been implemented much faster because the minister and the deputy minister of the environment ministry along with the ministry and the Department of Environment officials were also in agreement and fully aligned.

"A process has to be followed to implement the committee's recommendation. However, I admit that it is taking much longer than needed.

"For the ministry concerned, it is not a very comfortable situation to be in as it has to take actions against an agency of another ministry [industries]."

He said although the law must apply equally to all, including the organs of the government, action against them for violating law is perhaps not readily forthcoming.

"I think this is generally true across the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BJP predicted to win in UP

AFP, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party was set for a resounding victory but a reduced majority at elections in the country's most populous state Uttar Pradesh, exit polls forecast yesterday.

Exit polls are not always reliable in India, but an average of four indicated that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led in the state by firebrand monk Yogi Adityanath, would win 240 seats -- more than enough for a majority in the 403-seat assembly.

The official results for the bellwether state, which is home to more than 200 million people, will be announced on Thursday. Voting took place over several weeks in different rounds, the last of which was yesterday.

The BJP won by a landslide in the previous state election in 2017, sweeping 312 seats in the state, which sends more lawmakers to the national parliament than any other.

The BJP's main rival Samajwadi (Socialist) Party, which has been seeking to tap into discontent over job losses and rising prices, was predicted to finish second with 150 seats.

Experts say the result in Uttar Pradesh will be viewed as a referendum on Modi, who was re-elected in 2019 and could seek a third term in 2024.

Results are also due in four other states that have voted.

Yesterday's exit polls also projected a landmark win for the upstart Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab, on the border with Pakistan and home to the Sikh community.

The anti-corruption AAP was predicted to take the state from the Gandhi dynasty's Congress party, which it is looking to displace as the main opposition to the BJP.



Women day labourers have had their skins blackened from the hazardous work of breaking coal at a brick kiln in the capital's Amin Bazar. Without safety gear, such work can cause serious health damage, including to the skin and lungs. Despite the dangers, the women take on the risky job to provide for their families.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN