

GLOBAL BLACK CARBON MENACE

SOURCES

Black carbon is one of many particles and gases that are emitted when diesel, coal and other biomass fuels are burned

- Household energy **51%**
- Fossil fuel operations **3%**
- Industrial production **5%**
- Large-scale combustion **2%**
- Agriculture **8%**



IMPACTS

HEALTH

- Deaths from Heart disease **29%**
- Stroke **24%**
- Lung disease **25%**
- Lung cancer **43%**

CLIMATE

- Absorbs sunlight and converts it to heat
- Prevent clouds from being formed
- Alters regional weather patterns and rainfall

SNOW & ICE

- Accelerates the melting of snow and ice
- Reduces sunlight
- Affects plant health and productivity

PHOTO: STAR
DATA: CCAOALITION.ORG

Tk 5,132 crore projects as per MPs' demand

Places of worship to be renovated, bridges built

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The government is going to repair religious establishments and build new bridges across the country following longstanding demands from lawmakers.

Under two separate projects worth over Tk 5,132 crore, 17,321 mosques, temples and pagodas will be renovated, while bridges will be constructed in 35 districts of eight divisions.

The move comes with the next parliamentary elections barely a year and half away.

Similar projects were taken up by the ruling Awami League ahead of the 11th parliamentary election in 2017, shows the planning ministry data.

The religious buildings will be revamped under a Tk 1,082 crore project titled "General Social Infrastructure Development Project (GSIDP-2)", and the bridges built under Tk 4,050 crore project titled "Construction of Important Bridges on Rural Roads-Second Phase".

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved 12 projects worth about Tk 15,744.56 crore yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

She joined the meeting virtually from the Gono Bhaban, while ministers, state ministers, planning commission members and secretaries concerned were present at the NEC conference room in the capital.

The Ecne also approved a Tk 2,555.25 crore project to enhance the capacity of local government bodies in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside strengthening their preparedness in facing future shocks.

The World Bank's International

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Bangladesh air worst in the world, again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The air quality of Bangladesh remained the worst in the world for four years in a row, said a global report.

Dhaka was the second most polluted capital in the world following New Delhi, according to The 2021 World Air Quality Report published yesterday by IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company that specialises in protection against airborne pollutants and developing air quality monitoring.

It found that particulate matter in Bangladesh was 15 times the limit set by the World Health Organization.

The report summarises the main causes of pollution

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Deadly yet taken lightly

No monitoring of key air pollutant called black carbon despite its disastrous impacts on human health and environment

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

People in Bangladesh every day inhale an alarming amount of black carbon, a particle not only harmful for human health but also responsible for global warming.

But it is hardly monitored in the country though there is a national action plan in place since 2018.

Result of incomplete combustion of fossil fuel and biomass, black carbon has the unique property of being able to absorb solar radiation and release it as heat.

It has many damaging

consequences upon inhalation, including increased rates of cancer, scarring of the lung tissue and heart damage as it can enter the blood stream via the lungs.

There is no permissible level for black carbon in the air. In Dhaka, its amount is 10 to 15 microgram per cubic metre, compared to 0.1 to 0.5 microgram per cubic metre in cities of developed countries, Dhaka University Professor Abdus Salam, an air pollution researcher, told The Daily Star recently.

"We find black carbon 8-12 microgram per cubic metre in the

country's air round the year. In winter, it reaches up to 20-25 microgram per cubic metre. It is very alarming for both human health and the environment," he added.

"If we can control the black carbon emission, we can reduce the air pollution and also at the same time global warming."

Prof Salam said they found burning of biomass – wood, dried leaves, garbage and agricultural wastes – responsible for 40-42 percent of black carbon emission in Bangladesh. Transportation is responsible for 45

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An old man falls to the ground amid a mad dash of people out to buy daily essentials at lower prices from a TCB truck in the capital's Rampura. With prices of commodities rising sharply, the crowds behind these trucks have kept swelling over the past month or so. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

TCB COMMODITIES Rab detains dealer for hoarding

STAFF CORRESPONDENTS, Chattogram

The Rapid Action Battalion yesterday detained a dealer for hoarding commodities of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh when many had to return empty-handed from TCB sales points in Chattogram.

The dealer, named Md Rashed, was among three detained from a warehouse with 2,000 litres of soybean oil, 500kg of lentil and 500kg of sugar at the port city's Cement Crossing. The warehouse belonged to Rashed.

On a tip-off, a team of Rab conducted a raid at the warehouse in the early hours of the morning, said MA Yusuf, commander of Rab-7.

The commodities were meant for open market sales but they were being hoarded to sell at a higher price during Ramadan, he said.

Meanwhile, many people with family cards had to return empty-handed from

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Don't go for EVM without consensus

Eminent citizens urge EC at talks

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission should refrain from using electronic voting machines in polls unless there is consensus regarding the use of the technology, eminent citizens said yesterday.

While attending a dialogue with the Election Commission at the EC conference room, invitees also said the last two national elections have shown that it is tough for an election held under a political government to be acceptable to all.

The EC's initiative to hold dialogues with various groups including politicians for recommendations on how to hold free and fair elections got an underwhelming response on the second round of talks yesterday as 19 out of 39 invitees joined the dialogue.

"The use of EVMs is contentious now and it is better to keep a distance from that unless there is national consensus on it," said Debapriya Bhattacharya, distinguished fellow at Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

He said the experience of the 2014 and 2018 national elections shows that proper implementation of power given to the EC in line with constitution and laws depends on the election-time government.

"It will limit your scope to work properly if this structural obstacle is not addressed."

"If you cannot work properly or feel that you are facing obstacles, you should have the courage to resign," he said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

2nd HSBC Business Excellence Awards
Celebrating 25 years of progress Bangladesh

এ অর্জনে আমরা গর্বিত

দেশের আর্থ-সামাজিক প্রবৃদ্ধিতে উদ্ভাবন ও কর্মসংস্থান সৃষ্টির অবদানে সিটি গ্রুপ 'এইচ এস বি সি বিজনেস এক্সিলেন্স এওয়ার্ড' এ সম্মানিত হয়েছে, যা আমাদের যাত্রায় যোগ করেছে অর্জনের এক নতুন মাইলফলক। এ অর্জনে আমাদের সকল ভোক্তা ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের জানাই আন্তরিক কৃতজ্ঞতা।

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PRICES OF
ESSENTIALS

Govt doing
its best to
arrest hike

Two ministers
claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two ministers yesterday said the government has been doing its best to control the high prices of essentials, which is the result of global market instability.

Following a meeting of the National Economic Council's Executive Committee, Planning Minister MA Mannan said the market situation will gradually improve due to the government interventions and Value Added Tax (VAT) cuts.

"Any disruption in the world has an impact on our country. The government is trying its best to handle this. Around 800 [mobile shops] of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh are moving across the country, providing essentials to one crore families at lower prices," he said.

Echoing him, state minister for planning Prof Shamsul Alam also said the problem was global.

"We have no room to be depressed. This inflation is not for domestic reasons. Our... vegetable production decreases in the month of Chaitra, but plenty of vegetables are available in the market this season," he added.

The government is tackling the inflation well, he said.

"Many people talk about the long queues behind the TCB trucks, but if TCB products are available at lower prices, people would run after the trucks.

"I have doubts about some newspapers. A leading Bangla daily and an English daily published a photo of someone lying on the road. But she wears a nice sari.

"I want to say that an effort is being continued politically, especially those who are rival political forces or their supporters are out to... take [political] benefits," he said.



Laden with logs, an illegal three-wheeler, locally known as "Nasiman", plying a road in Khulna city's Daulatpur area. Operation of such illegal slow-moving vehicles often leads to accidents. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

US ANNOUNCEMENT ON ROHINGYA GENOCIDE

Dhaka sees hope of repatriation

Myanmar's junta rejects declaration of Washington DC

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has welcomed the US announcement acknowledging Rohingya genocide, noting that it might expedite efforts on accountability and repatriation fronts.

"Though late, it's a good news. We welcome it," Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told reporters at his office yesterday while responding to a question.

He said if genocide takes place anywhere it should be acknowledged and the perpetrators should not go unpunished. "That's why we say never again. We don't want to see any genocide. Unfortunately, genocide is taking place."

Terming the US a good friend of Bangladesh, Momen hoped that it will put more pressure on Myanmar so that they take back Rohingyas to their homeland in Rakhine state.

"If the repatriation efforts are expedited through this US announcement, we will be very happy," he said, adding that they are focusing on two goals – welfare of Rohingyas through repatriation and preventing repetition of genocide.

The minister said the victims of genocide must get justice. He hoped the genocide case against Myanmar filed by The Gambia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) will gain momentum.

On Monday, Matthew Smith, chief executive officer at Fortify Rights, termed US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's announcement "historic" for the Rohingya and all people of Myanmar and also for wider efforts to prevent and remedy genocide.

"To prevent genocide, governments must at least acknowledge it when it happens, which is precisely what the US government did today [Monday]."

"United Nations member states should publicly acknowledge the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar and ensure that the UN Security Council refers the situation to the International Criminal Court," said Fortify Rights.

The US announced that the Myanmar military is responsible for committing genocide against the Rohingya people.

However, Myanmar's junta yesterday said it "categorically rejects" the US declaration that the military committed genocide against the mostly Muslim Rohingya minority, reports AFP.

"Myanmar has never engaged in any genocidal actions and does not have any

genocidal intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, racial or religious group or any other group," the junta's foreign affairs ministry said in a statement.

Zaw Win, human rights specialist at Fortify Rights, said: "It is a signalling and remarkable milestone for Rohingya victims and survivors that the US has

formally determined that the violence committed against Rohingya by the Myanmar military amounts to genocide and crimes against humanity.

"It has been a long-term expectation for the Rohingya community. Declaring that what happened to the Rohingya is in fact genocide should spur international accountability efforts and make it more difficult for the Myanmar military to continue its atrocity crimes."

The UN Security Council members should immediately put forward a resolution to refer the situation in Myanmar to the ICC, said Fortify Rights.

"Secretary Blinken's announcement is historic for the Rohingya and all people of Myanmar and also for wider efforts to prevent and remedy genocide," said Matthew Smith.



Deadly yet taken lightly

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percent and coal burning for the rest.

Black carbon, which does not last long in the atmosphere, is a key component of fine particles, or particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5) – tiny particles or droplets in the air that are two and a half microns or less in width.

Prof Salam said if the PM 2.5 is higher in the air, the amount of black carbon will be higher and the air

will be unhealthier. "In Bangladesh, we found that 25-40 percent of PM 2.5 is black carbon."

Tanvir Ahmed, civil engineering professor at Buet, said black carbon is not routinely monitored in Bangladesh, therefore its concentrations from direct measurements are not available.

But it can be assumed that if PM 2.5 rises, black carbon too goes up proportionately, he added.

Black carbon has a number of disastrous consequences on the environment and climate, as well as affecting the temperature within a city, having knock-on effects on the quality of people's lives, according to IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company.

"And with large accumulations of this taking place due to its heavy release from factories, brick kilns and automobiles, it

would be found in high amounts permeating both the atmosphere and roads across Bangladesh," it said in its 2021 World Air Quality Report.

The report puts Bangladesh on top among the most polluted countries in terms of air quality while Dhaka on the position of second most polluted capital in the world following New Delhi.

Researchers say the poorer the quality of air

is, the more black carbon exists in the environment.

Prof Salam said though black carbon is a major air pollutant, the government has done little to tackle its emission despite embarking on a national action plan.

If it is controlled, the temperature of the country could be reduced by at least one degree Celsius, he also said, recommending immediate measures.

With the support of

Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change conducted baseline assessments of short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon, in Bangladesh in 2013.

Following this, the national action plan was adopted in 2018, aiming to reduce black carbon emission by 40 percent by 2030.

But officials at

the Department of Environment (DoE) say they have no mechanism to monitor black carbon – they only can monitor particulate matters PM10 and PM 2.5.

"We had identified the sources and formulated an action plan but due to fund crunch we could not implement it," said Mirza Shawkat Ali, director (Climate change & International Convention) of DoE.

He, however, said they were trying to implement some of the provisions of the action plan like reducing the traditional brick kilns.

Following a High Court order last year, a detailed guideline was prepared on containing air pollution. "The Department of Environment alone cannot improve the air quality but it requires a comprehensive and coordinated efforts," he added.

Tk 5,132 crore projects as per MPs' demand

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Development Association (IDA) will finance about Tk 2,544 crore in the four-year-long "Local Government Covid-19 Response and Recovery (LGCR) project."

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Planning Minister MA Mannan said lawmakers have been demanding the renovation of religious establishments and construction of bridges in their respective areas.

"Hundreds of applications were filed... The Ecneec has taken those into consideration," he said, adding that one bridge will be built in his area in Sunamganj.

"A representative has to comply with the locals' demands. The list of the bridges [to be built] is prepared based on the needs of the local constituents."

About the religious houses, Mannan said, "There are sentiments linked to this issue. That's why it has been taken into consideration."

The project to renovate religious structures is the second phase of the GSIDP project taken up in 2017, following the lawmakers' demand.

The first phase is still going on, with 96 percent of the work completed. The tenure of this phase ends in June 2022.

The second phase will commence in July and end in June 2025. Only religious buildings in villages will only be renovated under this phase.

"The project will play an important role in strengthening social bonding," said the planning commission in its observation.

Meanwhile, bridges with an accumulated length of 17,687 meters would be built under the bridge-construction project. Besides, 38,800m-long approach roads would be constructed.

There will also be river administration work under the project with a deadline is set for December 2026,

according to the project document.

The project will improve the rural communications system, ease transportation of agriculture and non-agricultural goods and generate employments.

The Local Government Engineering Department will implement both projects.

On January 10, 2017, the Ecneec approved "Construction of Important Bridges on Rural Roads" at the cost of Tk 3,926.76 crore.

Meanwhile, Tofail Ahmed, local government expert, asked, "Why does the government need to spend money on religious institutions? Devotees are there to look after those. From a religious point of view, spending money for political purpose is not good either... Water management is more essential than bridge and road construction. The government needs to fix its priorities first."

LGCR PROJECT

Mannan said the LGCR project will be implemented in some 10 city corporations and 329 municipalities, with a deadline set for December 2025.

The project aims to strengthen urban local government institutions to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and improve preparedness for future shocks, benefiting around 40 million urban residents, according to the WB.

It will support labour intensive public works to restore the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable people, mostly working in the informal sector, who were most affected by restrictions and lockdowns.

Eligible urban local bodies will install community hand-washing stations and toilets; and improve sanitation in municipality-owned or -operated markets, burial grounds, and public offices.

It will create 1.5 million days of temporary work as well as employment for

10,000 women under the public work scheme.

The project will also help local government institutions improve preparedness for climate impacts, disaster, and future disease outbreaks, said the WB.

Other projects approved include procurement of 200 broad gauge passenger carriages for Bangladesh Railway; supplying water through rainwater harvest in coastal districts; establishing an Air Force Training Institute at Zohurul Haque Base in Chattogram; improving governance and management research and training facilities; upgrading three regional highways and three district highways under Naogaon Road Department; establishing an external telecommunication network for Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant; and establishing a seed multiplication farm at south-eastern region of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh air worst

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in Bangladesh as vehicular emissions, fumes from factories, brick kilns, and dust accumulations from different sources, especially in the cities, said the report.

After Bangladesh, the four countries with the most polluted air were Chad, Pakistan, Tajikistan and India.

The average annual airborne particles, referred to in the report as PM2.5, in Bangladesh was 76.9 microgrammes per cubic metre (µg/m3) of air. WHO's recommended limit is 5 µg/m3.

IQAir collected the data from five places in Bangladesh. With an annual average PM2.5 concentration of 78.1 µg/m3, Dhaka ranked the second most polluted capital in the world, only surpassed by Delhi's 85.0 µg/m3.

PM2.5 refers to particulate matter which measures up to 2.5 microns in size, and has a range of chemical makeup and

sources.

PM2.5 concentration was 66.8 µg/m3 in Pakistan and 58.1 µg/m3 in India.

"Central and South Asia had some of the world's worst air quality and were home to 46 of the world's 50 most polluted cities," the report said, analysing data of 6,475 cities in 117 countries, regions and territories collected in 2021.

Not a single country managed to meet the WHO's standard in 2021.

Air pollution in Bangladesh increased the risks for bouts of chest infections that can lead to susceptibility to respiratory conditions such as influenza and pneumonia, lung cancer and can wreak havoc on the human body, with all organs being susceptible to damage, particularly the liver and kidneys, the report said. Children who are exposed to high levels of pollution can end up with developmental problems.

Air pollution is now considered to be the world's largest environmental health threat, accounting for seven million deaths around the world every year. It is estimated that in 2021, the deaths of 40,000 children under the age of five were directly linked to PM2.5 air pollution.

Biman puts Boeing
737s under watch

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has placed its fleet of Boeing 737 planes under surveillance after a jet crashed in China.

The national flag carrier yesterday said they are monitoring flight procedures, air worthiness and operations of the aircraft line.

On Monday, a China Eastern Airlines Boeing 737-800, travelling from Kunming to Guangzhou, with 132 people onboard, plunged to the ground and caught fire.

India's aviation regulator has also placed its fleet of Boeing 737 planes under "enhanced surveillance" after the deadly crash.

Dr Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal, Biman's Managing Director and CEO, said, "Like other countries, we have also placed our fleet under surveillance... Flight safety is a serious issue and we are closely monitoring the situation."

Another bridge
over the Payra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bridge Authority hired a South Korean-Bangladesh joint venture (JV) firm to build a major bridge over the Payra in Patuakhali.

Officials of the BBA and the firm signed a contract yesterday in this regard at capital's Setu Bhaban in presence of Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader.

The partners of the JV are Korean company Samwhan Corporation and Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd of Bangladesh.

The firm will prepare the design of the 1.7km bridge and is to build it in three years at the cost of around Tk 641 crores.

Project Director Tofazzel Hossain said they hope the contractors will start designing the bridge within the next two weeks.

Last year, the government inaugurated the Lebukhali over the Payra on the Barishal-Patuakhali highway.

Body of jute worker
found in vehicle

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police yesterday recovered the body a jute mills employee from a jeep bearing stickers of the Secretariat in Bonpara Bypass area of Natore's Baraigram upazila.

The dead was identified as Hazrat Ali, 36, employee of Taz Enterprise Jute Mills in Gazipur.

Abu Siddique, OC of Baraigram Police Station, said they recovered the body and arrested the driver of the vehicle after conducting a raid in the area at 9:30am based on a tip-off.

He added that the owner of the Taz Enterprise Jute Mill, Mizanur Rahman, was picked up for questioning.

During interrogation, Mizanur claimed that Hazrat had taken a loan of Tk 4 lakhs from him. Unable to pay it back, Hazrat allegedly entered Mizanur's room and died by suicide on Monday night. Mizanur then claimed he put the body in a car out of fear.

Liton Kumar Saha, superintendent of Natore police, said a police team from Kashimpur is traveling to Natore to investigate the case.



Ever since educational institutes reopened, the roads of Dhaka have been filled to the brim with vehicles of all kinds. Commutes are now eating up even more time, giving city dwellers yet another problem to deal with every day. This photo was taken in Asad Gate area. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Better use of roads, fewer dev projects

Say urban planners on reducing traffic congestion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Instead of focusing on infrastructure development projects, authorities should optimise the use of roads and public transport to reduce traffic congestion in the capital, said urban planners yesterday.

They also urged the government to spread employment, education and medical-care facilities outside the capital to stop migration to Dhaka.

They came up with the recommendations while speaking at a virtual urban dialogue on traffic congestion in Dhaka, organised by Institute for Planning and Development (IPD).

IPD Executive Director Adil Mohammed Khan, who presented the keynote speech, said since the reopening of educational institutions, city dwellers are suffering seriously due to traffic congestion.

Many are hoping that the metro rail will solve the problem. But in reality, it will not be a solution, as it will cater to only 10 percent of passengers. Instead, the government should

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225 new buses on 3 routes

Taposh on route rationalisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After inaugurating the Ghatarchar-Kanchpur bus route — with 50 buses operating under one company — on December 26 last year, the bus route rationalisation committee yesterday decided to run 225 new buses on three routes.

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh disclosed this. However, he did not mention an exact date for starting operation, and instead, gave a timeline for finishing all preparations by the next 90 days.

After holding the committee's 22th meeting at Nagar Bhaban, the mayor, also chairperson of the committee, said among the routes, 50 buses will run on route 22 — Ghatarchar to Sultana Kamal Bridge.

A total of 100 buses will run on route 23 — Bosila to Kanchpur via Mohammadpur Shia Mosque; 75 buses will operate on route 26 — Ghatarchar to Kadamtali.

Taposh said they will add 20 more buses on Ghatarchar-Kanchpur route within next month and have given a proposal to a private company to run 50 more buses.



BUS FRANCHISING SYSTEM

New law on cards

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is going to formulate a new law to regulate bus service using the franchise system, which is expected to bring discipline in Dhaka's public transport sector.

Under the system, buses of all companies in a particular zone or line will have to run under a single company, and the revenue is shared among all companies.

Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA), under Road Transport and Highways Division, has taken the initiative to enact the law. A pilot project for the franchise system already kicked off in the city last year.

DTCA has already prepared a draft of the act and forwarded it to the division, which has convened a meeting on March 27 over the issue.

Representatives of different agencies under the division were asked to participate in the meeting over the draft of "Bus Transport Service Operation and Special Rights (Route Franchise) Act", officials said.

Neelima Akhter, executive director of DTCA, said several meetings will have to be held to finalise the draft.

The franchise system will ensure that bus drivers do not engage in unhealthy competition for more passengers, which is a major reason behind accidents and traffic congestion.

Although the issue of bus route rationalisation and introduction of franchise system has long been in

discussions, it got momentum when late Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Anisul Huq took an initiative in this regard.

But, the initiative lost momentum after his death in November 2017.

In the meantime, the High Court in June 2019 had directed authorities concerned to bring bus services in all metropolitan cities under the franchise system.

The court gave the directives while dealing with a case over compensation for the family of road accident

are being operated under the system.

A committee led by Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, which oversees the pilot project, yesterday announced its plan to run 225 new buses on three routes in Dhaka.

Currently, some 6,000 buses operate in Dhaka and adjacent cities under several hundred companies and individuals.

In many cases, bus owners lease out their vehicles to drivers or conductors on a daily contract basis,



victim Rajib Hossain, a student of Government Titumir College.

He died in April 2018, after a bus of BRTC and another of Sajan Paribahan were trying to overtake each other in the capital's Bangla Motor.

But, the franchise system was not introduced until last year, when a pilot project was launched on Ghatarchar-Kanchpur route from December 26.

Currently, 50 buses under "Dhaka Nagar Paribahan"

and drivers get involved in unhealthy competition for picking up more passengers to maximise profit.

Transport experts said if all buses come under a couple of companies, share their income, and in return, get profit as per their investment, then this problem will end.

Under the existing law, a bus operator, upon receiving route permit, cannot legally be prevented from running their bus on a particular route.

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Govt working to ensure labour rights, payment

Law minister tells ILO event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is working to ensure rights and accurate payments of workers and also for their better work environment, said Law Minister Anisul Huq.

The government is pledge-bound to do so, the law minister said while addressing the 344th conference of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) governing body in Geneva of Switzerland on Monday night, a law ministry press release said yesterday.

He said Bangladesh has already ratified the Protocol 2014 of ILO Convention, 1930 which is an effective step for ensuring the rights of labours. "Besides, Bangladesh last month has ratified the ILO Convention 138, regarding the minimum age for joining the work. The Bangladesh government will officially hand over the relevant documents over the ratification to the ILO," he said, adding that Bangladesh is going to join the club of the countries who have ratified ILO's eight fundamental conventions.



AL did not keep its word

Alleges Oikya Parishad on ensuring rights of minorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There has not been any visible measures taken by the ruling party to protect the country's religious minorities, alleged Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad yesterday.

"Attacks on houses of minorities, their places of worship, shops, grabbing of their land, abduction and rape of minor girls... have become regular events," said Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of the Parishad, at a press conference.

They organised the press briefing at Jatiya Press Club as part of their latest initiative to press home their demand to materialise the manifesto of the ruling Awami League on protecting minorities.

In the briefing, Rana Dasgupta said, "If the Awami League had implemented their electoral manifesto on protecting minorities, there would have been no need for us to wage movement for ensuring our protection."

He also said in the existing reality of politics, the religious and ethnic minorities of Bangladesh are feeling "hopeless".

"The constitution of 1972 could not be free from communalism even after 50 years of the country's independence," he added.

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If the Awami League had implemented their electoral manifesto on protecting minorities, there would have been no need for us to wage movement for ensuring our protection.

RANA DASGUPTA

JASHORE, KHULNA, RAJSHAHI

BERC for 20pc gas price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The technical evaluation committee (TEC) of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has recommended increasing the average gas price at the consumer level by 20 percent in the southwest and north-western districts of the country, including Jashore, Khulna and Rajshahi.

They recommended a per cubic meter price at Tk 11.64 from the existing Tk 9.70.

On the second day of the public hearing yesterday, organised by BERC, the committee made the recommendation after getting the proposals from Sundarban Gas Company Limited (SGCL) and Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited (PGCL), two distributors of the regions.

Both of the companies wanted to increase the price by 110-117 percent while placing their proposal.

According to the TEC recommendation, the new prices for a double burner is Tk 1,080 from the existing Tk 975 and Tk 990 from the existing Tk 925 for a single burner at the household consumer level.

However, both of the companies sought to increase the gas price to Tk 2,100 for a double burner and Tk 2,000 for a single burner.

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A rickshaw-puller covers his head with a towel to get some respite from the scorching heat at Kakrail signal. Lately, commuters in Dhaka have been facing much hardship, travelling through the city amidst the gridlock and heat. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

5 held for making fake NID, driving licence: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have arrested five members, including the mastermind of a gang which had been preparing fake driving licence and NID cards for about 10 years.

The arrestees are: Golam Mostafa (60) the mastermind; Jalal Bashar (54), Muslim Uddin (65), Minarul Islam (22) and Tarek Mridha (22).

A team of Rab-3 arrested the five along with 26 fake NIDs, 18 fake driving licences and materials used for producing the fake items in Dhaka on Monday, Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, told a press conference yesterday.

The Rab official said the gang used to target people who would go to the Election Commission and BRTA offices for relevant documents. They assured them of obtaining a driving license and NID card in the quickest possible time. They used to provide fake money receipts using fake seals and signatures of the officials concerned.

The fraudsters charged Tk 3,000 to Tk 10,000 for providing one fake NID card or driving licence, Moin said.

The gang members also swindled people through advertising on social media, he said, adding that Mostafa started the fraudulent activities in 2010.

PRAYER
TIMING
MAR 23



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4:55	12:45	4:45	6:16	7:45
Jamaat	5:30	1:15	5:00	6:20	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

World Health Organization Bangladesh VACANCY NOTICE. WHO invites applications for Assistant (ICT) / TGS and Executive Assistant (Protocol & Travel) / TGS.

Dhaka South City Corporation Re-Tender Notice. Construction of Boundary Wall at Sayedabad Bus Terminal under Dhaka South City Corporation.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার. ১১ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন উত্তরা, ঢাকা. উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM).

Better use of roads

FROM PAGE 3 implement the bus route rationalisation service, which will cater to 40 percent, he said. Mentioning the condition of existing road networks, Adil said although 20 to 25 percent areas of a city are required for road networks, it is presently less than 10 percent in Dhaka.

Streams run dry

FROM PAGE 5 forest. It is currently being monitored by only five guards and one officer," said Mazharul. The park includes rare breeds of animals, such as red jungle fowl, red-headed trogon, oriental pied hornbill and Japanese pygmy woodpecker, critically endangered hoolock gibbon, Phayre's leaf monkey and Asian black bears.

AL leader 'assaults' LGED engineer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat A local Awami League leader has allegedly beaten up an upazila assistant engineer of LGED at Hatibandha in Lalmonirhat.

AL did not keep

FROM PAGE 3 Although "secularism and religious freedom" has been restored as a state principle, those were not reflected in the practice of politics, said Rana Dasgupta in a written statement.

programmes to realise their demands. As part of the programmes, a memorandum with the signatures of about two lakh citizens will be handed over to the prime minister through organising a mass rally on March 24 at Shahbagh.

BNP in chaos over

FROM PAGE 5 meeting. Advocate Abdul Gaffar, chair of the council committee, said, "I received Ariful's withdrawal letter. I thank him for his wise decision."

meeting. Advocate Abdul Gaffar, chair of the council committee, said, "I received Ariful's withdrawal letter. I thank him for his wise decision."

BERC proposes 20pc

FROM PAGE 3 At the beginning of the hearing, BERC Chair Abdul Jalil said the social impact of the price hike should have been included in the proposals.

recommendation is not acceptable. "If we reduce loss in our system -- which is around 8 percent -- and gas theft, we won't need to import spot LNG," he said.

New law on the cards

FROM PAGE 3 So, the new act would ensure rules for buses to be operated under a particular company, a DTCA official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The guideline will be incorporated into rules that will be formulated to implement the law. After the law is enacted, a franchise company will have to take permission and licence from DTCA for operation.

ERRATUM. In the report titled, "Sultana Sarawatara Zaman's death anniversary", published on this page yesterday, we wrongly mentioned 1984 as the year of achieving her post-doctoral degree from Emory University.

WANTED SALES REPRESENTATIVES (Salary Basis) OR ORDER BOOKING AGENTS (Commission Basis). For Sales in BANGLADESH. Contact: J P Jain, +91 981 040 0831

ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিমিটেড. পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি. সার্ভিস নং: ০২-০২-০২০২-০২০২-০২০২-০২০২-০২০২.

Abul Khair Carrier Limited. Tender Notice. Application of tender are invited from the bona-fide Local/International Salvaging firms for the salvage and removal of wreck of M.V.TITU-14 with the following terms and conditions:

Streams run dry in Satchhari

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

Once upon a time, there were ever-flowing streams running through the Satchhari National Park.

Locals from the Tripura community caught different species of fish, including, rui, katla, puti and shrimp, from the stream.

Ranjan Devbarma, a 47-year-old forest guard from Satchhari, reminisced the days when a ceaseless stream flowed from Satchhari hill to Madhabpur river.

"I've caught boal, bain, rui, katla in the water of this stream. But those days are gone. The forest stream is now filled with the hill sand."

This correspondent recently visited Satchhari National Park and confirmed Ranjan's claims.

The stream has turned into nothing but a pile of sand. There's not a drop of water in the vicinity.

According to Muntasir Akash, lecturer of zoology at Dhaka University, there are three ponds in the forest -- two on the side of the road -- where there's a lot of

tourist activity.

"This hinders wild animals from drinking water from those ponds and they only drink from the one pond inside the forest."

On top of that the canals and hill streams are drying up, which escalates the crisis even further, added Akash.

Local journalist Abul Kalam Azad said, due to water shortage in the forest during dry seasons, animals move to the locality, where they're subjected to torture from hunters and locals.

"This needs a permanent solution. Arranging artificial and sustainable sources of water can solve it to some extent," said Azad.

According to Mazharul Islam, an officer at Satchhari, said the total area of Satchhari National Park is 600 acres, and the forest was declared a national park on October 10, 2005.

"However, there's a huge crisis of human resources for maintaining the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Once there ran an ever-flowing stream of hill spring through the Satchhari National Park, from which wild animals of the forest used to quench their thirst. Due to sand extraction, the stream has turned into nothing but a pile of red sand. There's not a drop of water in the vicinity. Wild animals often have to come to the locality in search of water, where they are subjected to tortures by hunters and locals in general.

PHOTO: STAR

Bus set on fire after RMG worker hurt in road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

An angry mob blocked Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and set fire to a bus after a garment worker was injured in a road accident in Gazipur yesterday.

Monir Hossain Altaf (27), an electrician of a garment factory, was injured after he was hit by a bus while crossing the road in Gazipur Board Bazar area around 2:00pm.

Soon after the accident, locals rescued Monir and rushed him to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital, said OC Malek Khasru of Bason Police Station.

The angry workers set the bus on fire, said the OC.

They also blocked the highway and vandalised a number of buses, trucks and private cars, he added.

Police later brought the situation under control around 4:30pm.

'His satires depicted social realities'

Speakers tell seminar on Abul Mansur Ahmad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The writings of Abul Mansur Ahmad are a must-read to understand our own identity as a nation, said speakers yesterday.

They said this at a seminar on "The Satires of Abul Mansur Ahmad and Social Reality" held at Chittagong Independent University (CIU).

Through his satirical writings, Abul Mansur Ahmad presented the crude reality of society, said Prof Mohit Ul Alam, former vice chancellor of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University.

"At first we laugh reading his satirical writings, but the very next moment, they ignite our thoughts and compel us to look at the reality of society," he said.

He was a creative writer, law expert and politician, said Dr Mohit, adding that in politics, his thoughts were prophetic.

Kazi Saiful Asfia, assistant professor at CIU, said the writings of Abul Mansur Ahmad depict tyranny and how common people are deprived in society.

"We usually laugh reading satire, but by Abul Mansur Ahmad's satire, in addition to making us laugh, compel



Prof Mohit Ul Alam, former VC of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, speaking at the seminar.

PHOTO: STAR

us to think about the tyrannical system of the society," Kazi said. Prof Kazi Mostain Billah, chairperson of the English department at CIU, presided over the seminar.

Abul Mansur Ahmad is recognised as one of the greatest satirists of Bangla literature. He was also a pioneer of progressive journalism.

His publications include great satires like "Aina", "Asmani Purdah", "Gulliver-e-Safar Nama" and "Food Conference". He also penned insightful works on the social and political history of Bengal such as "Bangladesher Culture".

BNP in chaos over council Sylhet city mayor withdraws nomination for president post

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

BNP's Sylhet district unit council was scheduled on March 21. However, the council got postponed on the central unit's order just the day before.

Chaos ensued among partisans after the decision. The situation was further fueled when Sylhet City mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, an aspirant for the unit's president post, withdrew his nomination yesterday.

The council was organised six years after the previous committee was formed in February 2016. A convening committee replaced them in October 2019.

Talking to several leaders of the unit, this correspondent confirmed that BNP leaders in Sylhet are divided into two factions -- one led by BNP chairperson's adviser Khandakar Abdul Mukhtar and another by Ariful.

Muktadir's follower Abul Kaheer Chowdhury Shamim, former president of the unit, was also an aspirant for the president post.

As Ariful gained more popularity over the years, the high command interfered in favour of Mukhtar, according to sources.

After the council was postponed, the committee leaders said the high command was not happy with the list of councillors published

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

His licence expired long ago: Rab

Driver of truck that killed five youths held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested the driver of the truck that killed five youths on Chattogram Cox's Bazar highway.

The driver, Md Ripon (31), was arrested from his residence in the port city's Kadamtali area.

According to Rab, Ripon was guarding the truck near the accident spot, as per owner Amzad Hossain Sagor's instructions, while police, fire service and the public were busy rescuing the victims.

Lt Col Md Younis, commanding officer (CO) of Rab-7, during a press briefing yesterday said Ripon had a non-professional motor driving licence that expired several years ago.

"Despite knowing that Ripon has physical disabilities, the truck owner let him drive and sent him to Pekua with a truck full of stones. The truck was going at full speed when he tried to press the brakes and failed," said Younis.

Truck owner Sagor went into hiding after Ripon's arrest, said Rab.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার				
সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর				
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ময়মনসিংহ				
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১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়		
২.	এজেন্সি	সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা		
৩.	সম্প্রদায়িক/সত্তার নাম	উপপরিচালক, জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
৪.	সম্প্রদায়িক/সত্তার জেলা	ময়মনসিংহ		
৫.	যে কাজের দরপত্র	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh'		
৬.	দরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	নং-৪১.০১.৬১০০.০০০.৯৯.০০১.১৮-১৪৮ তারিখ: ২২ মার্চ ২০২২		
৭.	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	২৩ মার্চ ২০২২		
৮.	সম্প্রদায়িক পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ও.টি.এম)		
৯.	ব্যাংক/এস এন্ড এফ/ইউএস	রাজস্ব ব্যাংক, জি.ও.বি		
১০.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নং	০৬টি		
১১.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নাম	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Package Shed 1-Shed 6)		
১২.	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১২ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালিন পর্যন্ত		
১৩.	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ সময় দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা		
১৪.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ সময় বেলা ১৩.০০ ঘটিকা		
১৫.	কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানা	উপপরিচালক, জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ এ দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রয় করা হবে		
ক.	মূল দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রয়			
খ.	দরপত্র দাখিল এহেব	(১) কক্ষ নং ৯, ২য় তলা, এলজি শাখা, জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ (২) জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
গ.	দরপত্র দাখিল খোলা	জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
১৬.	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	(১) বৈধ ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠান। (২) সিডিউল ক্রয়ের টেন্ডারী চালাই (মূল কপি), দরপত্র দাখিল অনুবাহে অতিজ্ঞতা সনদ, ব্যাংক সাহায্য সনদ, হালনাগাদ (ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, অয়রক সনদ, ভাট প্রদান সনদ) সহ প্রয়োজনীয় অন্যান্য দলিলসমূহ দাখিল করতে হবে।		
১৭.	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য টেন্ডারী চালাই-এর মাধ্যমে কোড ১-২৯৩১-০০০০-২৩৬৬-তে (অফেন্থমোগা) জমা দিতে হবে।		
লাই	সর্বশেষ বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ	মন্তব্য
শেড-০১	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-01)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০২	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-02)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৩	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-03)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৪	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-04)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৫	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-05)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৬	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-06)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	আবু আবদুল্লাহ মোঃ ওয়ালী উল্লাহ		
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	উপপরিচালক		
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
২১.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের নম্বর	০৯১ ৬৫৭৭৫		
২২.	শর্তাবলী:			
(ক)	পি.পি.এ, ২০০৬ এবং পি.পি.আর, ২০০৮ (সংশোধিতসহ) এ উল্লিখিত ক্রয় পদ্ধতি যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।			
(খ)	কর্তৃপক্ষ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত যেকোনো দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র ব্যতীতের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।			
(গ)	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা: বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্র সিডিউলে বর্ণিত আছে।			
(আবু আবদুল্লাহ মোঃ ওয়ালী উল্লাহ) উপপরিচালক জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ।				
জিডি-৫৫৭				

MANIKGANJ ACCIDENT

Helper was driving the truck: police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

The pickup truck that killed a student and teacher in Manikganj on Monday was being driven by the driver's helper at the time, said police yesterday.

However, a case is yet to be filed.

Officer in Charge of Shibabaya Police Station Md Shahin said since no written complaint has been filed, the investigation could not be started.

Mohammad Khalid Mansur, inspector (investigation) of the police station, said the pickup's driver Masum was on leave and his assistant Jewel Rana was driving the vehicle. He fled after the accident.

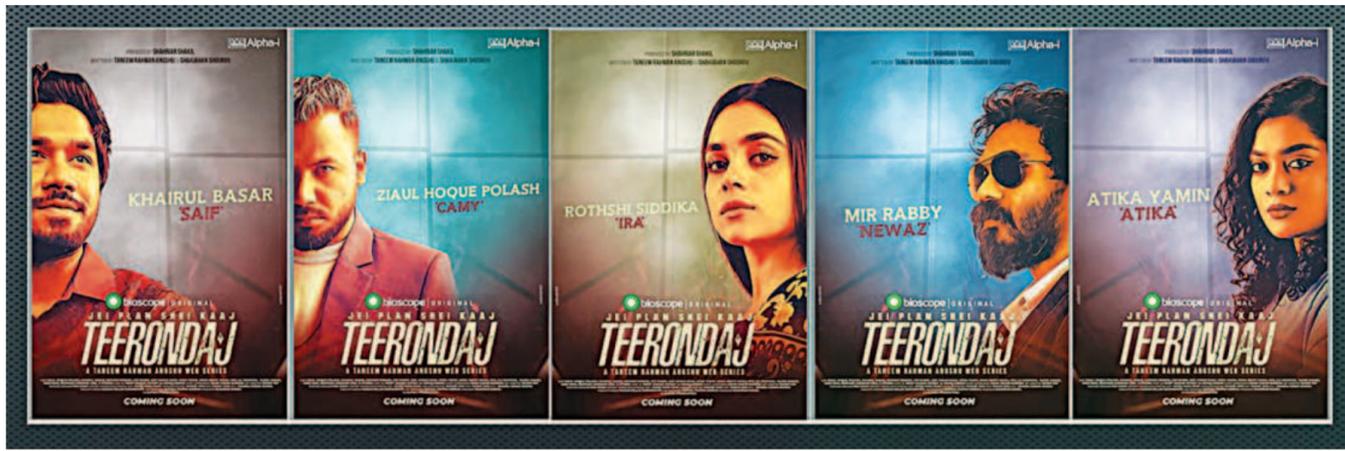
No vehicle registration or valid documents were found. "We couldn't confirm whether the assistant or driver was driving licence," he said.

The district administration formed a four-member committee to investigate the incident.

Shukla Sarker, additional deputy commissioner (education) and the probe committee chief, told this correspondent, "I was asked to submit the investigation

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার				
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ				
অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়				
১২ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন				
উত্তরা, ঢাকা।				
তারিখ: ২১/০৩/২০২২ খ্রি।				
স্মারক নং-এপিবি(১২)/প্রশা-২০২২/২১০৩				
উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)				
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার (সিডিউল নং-১২) এর অধীনে ২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থ বছরের বিক্রেতার বাজার টেন্ডারের নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বশেষ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-১২/প্রশা-২০২২/২১০৩ এবং ১২/প্রশা-২০২২/২১০৩ নং বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে ১২/প্রশা-২০২২/২১০৩ নং বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিক্রয়/সেবার বিজ্ঞপ্তি/বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ				
০১.	সম্প্রদায়িক/বিভাগ	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ		
০২.	সত্তা	অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ১২ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, সেক্টর-১২, উত্তরা, ঢাকা।		
০৩.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের প্রকার	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ও.টি.এম)		
০৪.	যে কাজের দরপত্র	ক্রমিক নং-১৬ মোবাইল		
০৫.	দরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	১২/প্রশা-২০২২/২১০৩		
০৬.	সম্প্রদায়িক পদ্ধতি	২২/০৩/২০২২ খ্রি।		
০৭.	ব্যাংক/এস এন্ড এফ/ইউএস	রাজস্ব ব্যাংক		
০৮.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নং	০৬টি		
০৯.	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নাম	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Package Shed 1-Shed 6)		
১০.	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১২ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালিন পর্যন্ত		
১১.	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ সময় দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা		
১২.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ সময় বেলা ১৩.০০ ঘটিকা		
১৩.	কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানা	উপপরিচালক, জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ এ দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রয় করা হবে		
ক.	মূল দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রয়			
খ.	দরপত্র দাখিল এহেব	(১) কক্ষ নং ৯, ২য় তলা, এলজি শাখা, জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ (২) জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
গ.	দরপত্র দাখিল খোলা	জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
১৬.	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	(১) বৈধ ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠান। (২) সিডিউল ক্রয়ের টেন্ডারী চালাই (মূল কপি), দরপত্র দাখিল অনুবাহে অতিজ্ঞতা সনদ, ব্যাংক সাহায্য সনদ, হালনাগাদ (ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, অয়রক সনদ, ভাট প্রদান সনদ) সহ প্রয়োজনীয় অন্যান্য দলিলসমূহ দাখিল করতে হবে।		
১৭.	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য টেন্ডারী চালাই-এর মাধ্যমে কোড ১-২৯৩১-০০০০-২৩৬৬-তে (অফেন্থমোগা) জমা দিতে হবে।		
লাই	সর্বশেষ বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ	মন্তব্য
শেড-০১	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-01)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০২	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-02)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৩	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-03)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৪	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-04)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৫	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-05)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
শেড-০৬	'Construction of Beggar Shelter House, Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh' (Shed-06)	২০০০/-	২.৫ লক্ষ টাকা	--
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	আবু আবদুল্লাহ মোঃ ওয়ালী উল্লাহ		
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	উপপরিচালক		
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ		
২১.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের নম্বর	০৯১ ৬৫৭৭৫		
২২.	শর্তাবলী:			
(ক)	পি.পি.এ, ২০০৬ এবং পি.পি.আর, ২০০৮ (সংশোধিতসহ) এ উল্লিখিত ক্রয় পদ্ধতি যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।			
(খ)	কর্তৃপক্ষ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত যেকোনো দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র ব্যতীতের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।			
(গ)	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা: বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্র সিডিউলে বর্ণিত আছে।			
(আবু আবদুল্লাহ মোঃ ওয়ালী উল্লাহ) উপপরিচালক জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ময়মনসিংহ।				
জিডি-৫৫৭				



Will 'Teerondaj' hit the mark?

“A ‘Teerondaj’ is someone who is adept at hitting his target,” shares the “No Dorai” director Angshu. “The suspense lies herein – you won’t know who that ace archer is, unless you watch till the end.”

SHARMIN JOYA

Taneem Rahman Angshu’s debut web series “Teerondaj” will release today at 6 pm, on OTT platform Bioscope.

The five-episode show features Ziaul Hoque Polash, Khairul Basar, Rothshi Siddika, Mir Rabby and Atika Yamin in the prime roles.

The story is an interesting one – shedding light on the professional conflicts and interests surrounded by people belonging to the showbiz industry, but in a way that the director will not fully disclose just yet.

“A ‘Teerondaj’ is someone who is adept at hitting his target,” shares the “No Dorai” director Angshu. “The suspense lies herein – you won’t know who that ace archer is, unless you watch till the end.”

Angshu shared that casting Polash as Camy was one of the greatest challenges he came across. “Camy is a mobster who thrives in the fashion industry, and the audience would love Polash in this role.” He also adds that Polash did a brilliant job with the character.

Polash, in turn, says that he is humbled



Khairul Basar as Saif.

and grateful to Angshu for all his support. “This is a role that I always wanted to portray,” says the actor. “Camy is mysterious, introverted, self-centered and ruthless.”

The actor has been experimenting with his roles in each of the projects, and shares that he had the freedom to experiment with the “I had transformed my look and changed my voice modulation, to completely internalise the character,” he shares. “I have learned a lot of things from Angshu bhai, including crucial dubbing techniques.”

Khairul Basar plays Saif, a crime reporter. The character, who has two layers to his character, goes through a transition

throughout the series. “I was fascinated with the story, each of the sequence in this project brought new challenge for me, and I tried to carry it well.”

Ira is one of the two emerging artistes who fall into professional trap, portrayed in the show. Rothshi shares that the character was not very easy to capture. “Ira is opposite to my own personality,” she says.

Singer and anchor Atika Yamin, who plays a crime reporter, also made her debut in this series. “I have been doing music for a long time, I appeared on screen when I was young, and however, working in this project was challenging and fun as well.”

Will “Teerondaj” hit its mark, or miss it completely? The only way to find out is to watch it on Bioscope as it releases.



Rothshi Siddika as Ira.



Ferdous and Purnima to host National Film Awards ceremony today

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The grand reception of the National Film Awards will be held today at Bangabandhu International Convention Centre (BICC).

Ferdous and Purnima will host the programme, where popular stars Emon, Dighi, Saimon, Tama Mirza, and Puja Chery among others, are set to perform. Veteran artistes Rozina, Anjana, and Aruna Biswas will be present at the ceremony.

The winners of National Film Awards 2020 were announced on February 15 this year, where two films, “Gor” and “Bishwo Shundori”, bagged the highest number of awards, with 11 and 8 wins respectively.

Shirin Shila starts shooting for thriller film ‘Girgiti’

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Promising actress Shirin Shila is busy with quite a few web-based projects and movies.

The actress recently started shooting for Chondon Chowdhury’s thriller film “Girgiti” in Netrokona. Shila will also star alongside Dipjol in Montazur Rahman Akbar’s web series “Jimmi”.

Her upcoming film, “Nodir Jole Shapla Bhashe” recently got a clearance certificate from the censor board. She is paired alongside Anisur Anisur Rahman Milton in the film.

She will also be seen in Rashid Polash’s much awaited film “Moyurakhi”.



NEWS

3 more

FROM PAGE 12
In the evening BM Qudrat E. Khuda, Bandar upazila parishad executive officer, announced an end to the rescue operations.

However, fire service official Abdullah Al Arefin earlier told journalists that a woman on Monday filed a missing person report in Char Syedpur area in Narayanganj Sadar upazila – the spot where passenger launch ML Afsar Uddin sank after it was hit by a large cargo vessel, MV Rupshi-9, the previous day.

As per the report, the missing person’s name is Zobayer.

“But the woman nor anyone else related to the person came to the spot today [yesterday]. So, we are not sure whether the person is really missing,” said Arefin.

Rab detains

FROM PAGE 1
The TCB sales point at Darkakilla area of the city.

One such person is Tahmina Khatun, a housemaid who took leave to stand in the queue to purchase the essentials at a subsidised rate. “I won’t get leave again tomorrow to stand here. What is the point of the card if we don’t get commodities even after waiting for hours?”

Out of 41 wards, at best 12 wards had the OMS service yesterday, The Daily Star learnt.

There was a shortage of lentils, due to which the commodities parcels could not be made for distribution in some areas, said Jamal Uddin, TCB regional head at Chattogram.

The OMS for those with family cards began on March 20.

When asked why stock of lentils exhausted in days, he could not answer.

Lentils will arrive from Dhaka soon and the truck sales will run normally from today, said Tauhidul Islam, senior assistant commissioner of Chattogram.

Tigers hoping

FROM PAGE 12
available for the series in South Africa. And he was on fire with the bat in the first ODI, hitting a 64-ball 77 that helped them attain their first win on South African soil in any format.

“We all know that Shakib bhai is very strong mentally. But family issues are [a] very big [thing]. But he has been playing well. It’s

Homes for all homeless soon

FROM PAGE 12
time in the country.

Later, the government implemented many power plant construction projects that made it possible to achieve cent per cent electricity coverage, she

Don’t go for EVM

FROM PAGE 1
On the use of EVMs, Prof Mustafizur Rahman, another CPD distinguished fellow, said, “No matter how honestly you work, when results come out there will be the doubt that something was done technologically, even after a fair election.”

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the EC has become an institution obedient to the government and is no longer a state organ.

“If we assume that the character and behaviour of the election-time government determines to what extent the election will be fair, there should be an assessment on whether there is a need to amend existing laws to change the behaviour.”

The EC should propose these changes to the government and stakeholders, he said.

“If you are convinced that holding free and fair elections is impossible without these changes, you should resign ... people will stand beside you,” Iftekharuzzaman said.

Ex-Bangladesh Bank

normal that if someone’s family is going through rough times, it impacts the person. But as a team, we’ve been supporting him,” Miraz said yesterday.

Bangladesh’s main focus will be on how the pitch fares in the third ODI after the pitch in the second ODI left them baffled, especially all the uneven bounce.

“The wickets at

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Centurion are good. We’re confident and we’ve scored more than 300 here. If batters can put up a good score, the bowlers can bowl with confidence,” Miraz said.

Liton Das added a word of caution. “There will be challenge. One wicket being easier to bat on [than the other] doesn’t mean it won’t be a challenge,” Liton said.

Homes for all homeless soon

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Ex-Bangladesh Bank

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh
Public Works Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Narail PWD Division, Narail.
ee_nrail@pwd.gov.bd
Date: 22.03.2022

Reference No-25.36.6500.103.07.05-20-529

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

SL No	Tender ID	Name of work	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
1	669956	Civil and sanitary repair work of Narail SP Office	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
2	669955	Civil, sanitary and electrical repair work including tiling work of bathroom, fitting and fixing of commode and basin at adjacent toilet of the hall room of Narail Circuit House.	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
3	669957	Installation of grill fitting Thai and ancillary repair work at Narail PWD Division Office	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
4	676240	Installation tiles and painting work on the stairs and ground floor of Narail District Judge Court	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
5	676241	Installation of new AC in the conference room of Narail District Judge Office	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
6	676243	Construction work of Evidence Preservation room (Alamkhan) at Narail District Judge Court.	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00
7	676244	Special repair including painting of Reserve Office, Barrack Building, Drill Shed, Armory Boundary Wall and Guard Shed at Narail District Police Lines.	7-04-2022 At 12.00	7-04-2022 At 12.00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. The fee for downloading the e-tender document for the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank’s branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and for e-GP help desk.

Muhammad Nahid Parvez
Executive Engineer
Narail PWD Division, Narail
Phone : 0247773533

GD-549

EDCL ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208

Corrigendum Notice

Corrigendum to our Tender for appointment of C&F Agents for Chittagong Seaport against Tender in the following manner :

1. In the tender now to be read :

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Tender Date	Previous Opening date	New Opening Date
01	EDCL/PURCHASE/C&F/LT/2022/99	20/03/2022	17/04/2020	17/04/2022

2.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Tender Date	Previous Name of the Item.	New Name of the Item
01	EDCL/PURCH ASE/C&F/LT/ 2022/99	20/03/2022	Appointment of C&F Agent (as per tender schedule) for Dhaka Airport with carrying of goods to EDCL’s Dhaka, Bogra, Gopalganj, Khulna & Madhopur Plant.	Appointment of C&F Agent (as per tender schedule) for Chittagong Seaport with carrying of goods to EDCL’s Dhaka, Bogra, Gopalganj, Khulna & Madhopur Plant.

3. Selling of Tender Schedule is going on.

The above Tender was published earlier in The Daily Star on 21/03/2022 and The Kalerkantho on 21/03/2022. All other terms & conditions against the above tender will be remain unchanged.

The above Tender was published earlier.

General Manager
Procurement
For : Managing Director.

5incx4 Clum

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

US finally gives recognition to Rohingya genocide Now it needs to be followed up with action

AS the eighth partnership dialogue between Bangladesh and the US was coming to an end, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken termed Myanmar's crackdown against the Rohingyas as genocide during his visit to the US Holocaust Museum in Washington. We heartily welcome the US recognition—although belated—that the Myanmar Army had committed crimes against humanity by carrying out mass killings of the Rohingya Muslim population. And we hope this will give rise to the renewed US and global action towards finding a permanent solution to the crisis. The Rohingya people have suffered greatly for many years, and it is high time they were returned to their homeland with their dignity and human rights fully restored.

Meanwhile, during the dialogue, Bangladesh, while expressing concern at the early stages, has said that recent US sanctions on the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will not cloud the bilateral ties between the two countries. And discussions on trade and securities are expected to cement Bangladesh-US partnership further. During the talks, the US expressed its wish for Bangladesh to take a stronger stance against Russia's action in Ukraine. While we strongly condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the loss of lives in war and, in many ways, share the same concerns as the US, we do believe there are other factors that form a big part of this crisis. Even though the US has expressed some valid points when it comes to Ukraine, and we fully support the notion that no country has the right to violate the sovereign territory of another—which Russia has done in Ukraine—we know this is not the whole story.

It is a matter of fact that, in order to maintain global stability and peace, the concerns of other global actors should also be taken into account—not just the concerns of Western powers. Unfortunately, the fact of Nato expansion has totally ignored Russia's position and its security concerns. Given the seriousness of the crisis, as well as the grave threat to the entire world considering where this confrontation could lead to, the West should have given more weight to Russia's concerns over Nato expanding right to its borders. Therefore, we again call on all parties to the conflict, who have it within their capacity to bring an end to it, to hold immediate dialogues in an attempt to find an urgent political settlement before more lives are lost.

We hope the eighth Bangladesh-US partnership dialogue has strengthened the relations between the two countries and will facilitate greater trade and cooperation between them. Moreover, following the US recognition of the genocide against the Rohingyas in Myanmar, the global community should now step up and aid Bangladesh in finding a lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis.

Where will depleting groundwater leave us?

The fallout spells disaster for the country

WE note with great concern that an estimated 32 cubic kilometres of groundwater is being extracted annually in Bangladesh, which is having a disastrous effect on the groundwater system of the country. As a result of overextraction, scientists warn of extreme arsenic and other heavy metal contamination, increased salinity, and groundwater depletion. The bad news is that the water level is not being recharged even after the monsoon seasons.

According to the Department of Public Health Engineering, Bangladesh requires about 2.75 million litres of water per day, 80 percent of which are extracted from the ground, and the rest is met by surface water. Bangladesh ranks seven out of 10 countries in the Asia-Pacific region that extract the most groundwater. Groundwater is being depleted not only in Dhaka and other cities, but all over the country. Researchers identified that, in 2006, the number of shallow water pumps that extract groundwater was a little over 1.18 million, but in 2019, the number went up to 1.6 million.

It is indeed alarming that because of the overextraction of groundwater, already 24 percent of land area in Bangladesh is exposed to high risks of elevated arsenic, salinity and groundwater depletion calamity. Furthermore, it is said that 4.5-17 percent of our total population are exposed to such extreme conditions, and among them nearly 8.6 million are from lower income backgrounds.

It is now common knowledge that continued depletion of groundwater poses serious threats to the water reservoirs, which increases the risk of top soil fertility loss in agricultural lands, and ultimately desertification of large areas.

The answer to solving the problem can be found in reducing the dependence on groundwater and its usage. As per the SDGs, 70 percent of our water consumption must come from surface water sources.

But, as we know, our surface water is horrendously polluted. Therefore, use of surface water will be possible only when the government's water recycling and purifying plants are ready for operation. We urge the government to make these plants operational without any further delay. We also need to devise mechanisms to harvest rainwater to reduce the dependence on groundwater.

In the end, there can be no better alternative than to actually preserve whatever surface water is available from further contamination. The use of ETPs should be made mandatory for all factories. If the laws are strictly enforced, the rivers will be pollution-free and the water can be used for industrial and agricultural purposes.

Riddled with U-turns

Development activities must be streamlined to stop wastage of public money



A CLOSER LOOK

Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for The Daily Star. Her Twitter handle is @tasneem_tayeb

TASNEEM TAYEB

RECENTLY, Dhaka North Mayor Atiqul Islam made some comments with regard to traffic management in the city, some of which are not without inherent logic. For instance, he questioned the efficacy of the existing traffic management system where, although the roads belong to the city corporations, they are being managed by traffic police belonging to another government agency. He suggested that since the roads fall under the purview of the city corporations, they should have a say on how Dhaka's traffic is managed. This particular argument appears to be sound and points to the problem of a lack of coordination between various government agencies and authorities that plague not only our traffic management mechanism, but the overall governance and development of the city.

Take, for instance, the two U-loops that were built on the Airport Road in 2019 at a cost of Tk 3 crore, only to be demolished two years later to facilitate the construction of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Apparently, the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) knew that the U-loops would be an impediment for the BRT work, they were still constructed, narrowing down footpaths and demolishing service roads.

The two U-loops were built as a part of a Tk 24.83 crore project to build 11 U-loops across Dhaka, aiming to ease traffic congestion. Later, the project cost was revised to Tk 31.81 crore. The project director, DNCC's Khandoker Mahub Alam, admitted that they had known the structures would have to be demolished to accommodate the BRT project, which was undertaken in 2012. He also suggested that new U-loops would be built through the pillar gaps after the construction of the BRT and flyover were finished.

This raises some specific questions: Did the public get the value of Tk 3 crore in the last two years? At the end of the day, was the project worth it?

The case of the Elevated Expressway in Chattogram is even more alarming. The Chattogram Development Authority (CDA) undertook the project in 2017, encompassing a wide area from Lalkhan Bazar to Patenga, aiming to alleviate the city's traffic congestion.

However, as almost 60 percent of the construction work has been done, significant flaws in the project planning have surfaced that would worsen the

traffic situation, rather than improve it. One of the major issues is the common meeting point of the Elevated Expressway, the Bangabandhu Tunnel, Outer Ring Road and the Airport Road, which, in the absence of U-loops, U-turns or service roads, would invariably result in traffic gridlocks.

Moreover, the expressway, spanning 16

sufferings, especially since they are carried out without any coordination among these agencies. A local English daily reported in 2020 how the same roads in Dhaka's Monipuripara had been excavated twice in five months—once by the DNCC and then by Dhaka Wasa, all due to the lack of coordination between the two agencies. Had the DNCC and



▲ **One of the U-loops on the Airport Road in Dhaka that were recently demolished to make way for the Bus Rapid Transit. Built at the cost of Tk 3 crore, these U-loops were in use for only two years.**

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

kilometres and involving a construction financial footprint of Tk 3,000 crore, was planned without engaging other relevant authorities. In fact, it has been suggested that the traffic department was not even consulted during the feasibility study.

These logistical challenges came to light after the Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) brought the issue up in September last year. Now, the CDA and the Bangladesh Bridge Authority are working on a new blueprint with a scope for incorporating U-loops and U-turns to address the faults in the initial design. Implementation of the new blueprint would add to the existing expense of the project, with the public having to bear it.

Another classic example of gross lack of coordination among various agencies involved in development work is the repeated road excavations in Dhaka and other cities across Bangladesh. Roads are dug up every now and then due to various reasons: "improving" sewage lines, water pipelines and gas pipelines, laying internet and electric cables, etc. In Dhaka, the two city corporations, Wasa, Rajuk, Desco and the BTCL are mainly involved in these excavation activities. While the work may be taken up with good intentions, they result in aggravating further public

Dhaka Wasa planned the various works in sync, and conducted their tasks in a structured way, the residents of the area wouldn't have to suffer so much, and public money would also be saved.

There are plenty of media reports on such wastage of public resources due to a sheer lack of shared strategic planning and coordination among various authorities responsible for city development. Experts have repeatedly urged the authorities to work in tandem to streamline the work and optimise logistics. But these calls seem to fall on deaf ears, perhaps because of a lack of accountability in the system. Our policymakers need to take a hard look at these issues and resolve them at the earliest. Accountability must be embedded in the system, and so should be coordination.

The authorities need to take greater ownership of their responsibilities. They must be made to realise their obligation to prioritise and ensure public well-being. They cannot just take arbitrary calls with complete disregard to the consequences of those calls that the common people and the national economy will face. After all, all these projects are undertaken for the welfare of the people.

The path to cultural redemption



Ashfaque Swapan is a writer and editor based in Atlanta, US.

ASHFAQUE SWAPAN

THE Nazrul Festival 2022, a two-day cultural extravaganza that was open to the public, has recently concluded.

The event was headlined by the who's who of artistes from Bangladesh and West Bengal, including Khairul Anam Shakil, Srikanta Acharya, Ferdous Ara, Yasmin Mushtari, Sreeradha Bandyopadhyay and Jayati Chakraborty. However, what provided the event genuine heft was an astonishing number of artistes culled from all over Bangladesh—all told, well over 50 more artistes performed.

Events like this add an indispensable fillip towards nurturing a broader awareness of our language and culture, particularly for our urban younger generations.

Five decades after independence, we face a crossroads. Our language and culture face new headwinds as English threatens to swallow the whole world in this brave, new globalised world.

In Bangladesh, for all our protestations of love of the mother tongue come each February, there is no gainsaying the fact that English has become the de facto lingua franca for the elite. It is beyond the scope of this article to dwell on the underlying causes, but I will mention a personal anecdotal experience that really brought this home to me.

Over the years during my annual travels to the old country, one of the charms was hanging out with my nephews. A few years ago, they were all schoolboys, and I noted with alarm that while they spoke Bangla well enough, they were increasingly detached from our cultural tradition.

At the Nazrul Festival, while top performers from Dhaka and Kolkata provided the ultimate imprimatur, what moved me deeply was the artistes from all over Bangladesh. Youthful, talented, dedicated to their craft, they were living proof of how deep and extensive the roots are of Nazrul's songs—and by extension, the Bengali culture.

The busybody *mama* that I am, I decided to sit them down with a reading from the delightful short stories of Satyajit Ray, a bedtime staple in my childhood that gave me countless hours of joy. What better way to kindle a love of language and culture, I thought, than introducing them to the wondrously rich treasury of Bangla literature?

Suffice it to say, for my nephews the experience was about as pleasurable as a root canal. I came to the ironic realisation that today, young Bengali kids in upper-crust homes in Dhaka (and, I daresay, Kolkata) are more likely to discover the charms of Ray's unforgettable sleuth Feluda in English translations, rather than in its original Bangla form. This telling vignette epitomises the formidable challenge of nurturing Bangla language and culture for the next generation in the metropolis.

I think wistfully about a different time. Half a century ago, we were still East Pakistan, and the ruling Pakistan government and its Bengali quislings looked askance at our love of Bengali culture. It considered the inclusive humane Bengali cultural tradition an existential threat.

In those days, organisations like Udichi and Chhayanaut stepped up to the plate. This is a unique cultural tradition—I am hard-pressed to think of any equivalent effort in South Asia—where activists, out of a passionate love of culture and language, launched and sustained extensive endeavours to ensure that our culture endured.

Over the decades, Udichi cultural activists nurtured the performing arts across the length and breadth of the country, while Chhayanaut, a school for Bangla music, has trained—and most importantly, instilled a passion in—generations of youngsters in the songs of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam, classical music and much more.

It's heartening to note that this tradition continues. In the recent past,

the Bengal Foundation created a track record of cultural philanthropy in an astonishingly diverse variety of fields, running the gamut from print, CD, art to performing arts. Thanks to the foundation, for instance, the exquisite kirtans of Nilufar Yasmin, instead of being lost forever, are saved for posterity in pristine, state-of-the-art recordings. The foundation's all-night classical music concerts, headlined by the leading lights of South Asia and thronged by tens of thousands of attendees, are a cultural landmark in Bangladesh.

As we brainstorm to develop ways to mitigate the apparent cultural apathy of the metropolitan elite, it is this rich cultural tradition, of which the Nazrul Festival 2022 is a distinguished addition, that can prove an effective corrective.

At the Nazrul Festival, while top performers from Dhaka and Kolkata provided the ultimate imprimatur, what moved me deeply was the artistes from all over Bangladesh. Youthful, talented, dedicated to their craft, they were living proof of how deep and extensive the roots are of Nazrul's songs—and by extension, the Bengali culture. I almost teared up when I saw them on stage— young, eager faces from places as far-flung as Cumilla, Chattogram, Bogura, Pabna, Jhenaidah, Cox's Bazar and Narail.

Then I looked at the names of the artistes—from Dhaka and Kolkata, Hindu and Muslim, all united by the love of Nazrul and his vision of a humane, inclusive, plural Bengali identity.

Over half a century ago, essayist and rhymester Annadasankar Ray lamented, "*Bhul hoye gechhe bilkul/Aar shob kichhu bhag hoye gechhe, bhag hoyeniko Nazrul* (It's all been a dreadful mistake/We've divided up everything else, only Nazrul remains undivided)."

Not only is Nazrul undivided, he still brings all lovers of Bengali culture together.

The author was the art director for Nazrul Festival 2022.

'Inflationary pressure higher than what official figure suggests'

Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), talks about inflation and the discrepancy between official and real data in a conversation with Eresh Omar Jamal of The Daily Star.

Bangladeshi consumers have been facing inflationary pressure for months now. Yet, some experts suggest that, in reality, inflation is even higher than the official figure. What is your take on it?

There are very plausible reasons why real inflation may be higher than the official figure. Prices have been rising faster in recent months, but if we look at the price of rice, for example, it has remained high throughout the Covid pandemic. So yes, the recent inflation is substantial, but the trend of rising prices has been there for some time. The official inflation figure is around five or six percent, whereas the inflation rate suggested by analysts such as Sanem after actual fieldwork is around 11-12 percent. The discrepancy exists not because the officials are looking at one reality and the experts are looking at another—there is only one reality. The issue here is the method of calculation.

The official approach to calculation has two major drawbacks. One is the use of outdated baseline. Despite the availability of the recent baseline of the 2015-16 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), the official calculation of inflation rate is still done using the baseline of 2005-06 HIES. The second issue is how accurately consumption baskets of the poor are being assessed, and how the corresponding weights in the calculation process are being set. Household expenditure on food is an important issue here. The official figure on the ratio of expenditure on food by the poor appears to be an underestimate. So, in a way, inflationary pressure, particularly on the poorer households, is more severe than what the official figure suggests. And this is clearly hurting the poor and even segments of the middle class, because incomes have not increased in line with such price hikes.

Why would the government use data from 2005-06 when more recent data is available?

At one level, this is a matter of bureaucratic inefficiency. But there is another angle, too. There is a tendency in the official circles—both the technical and the political components—to rely on data that presents a more benign picture for themselves. This problem of data hesitancy—not using the government's own data if it does not conform to a rosier picture than is actually the case—has become very pronounced in recent times. This results in the government not looking at the critical challenges that the data may be pointing to. It's not just the data on inflation. Data on other critical areas—educational performance, healthcare cost burdens, employment—are neither being collected nor being released.

What are the main reasons behind the current inflation?

No comprehensive studies have been done to find the answer to this, unfortunately. But by connecting the dots, we can identify some very immediate factors and some medium-term factors. Inflation can happen when



there is excess money supply. Though the policy stance of the central bank has been on the expansionary side, neither credit growth nor remittance flows, which are the two main drivers of realised money supply, have been on the upswing. The stimulus packages, too, were not in the main fiscal transfers—which would have added to the money supply—but were in the nature of concessional credit through the banking system. So, the current inflationary trend does not appear to be demand-driven.

Rather, what we appear to have is more in the nature of cost-push inflation. The prices of some essential products, like edible oil, have gone up because of external factors. But there is a puzzle in Bangladesh that even the experts have found hard to explain. The very persistent increase in the price of rice, despite bumper harvest, high imports and procurement throughout the Covid period has been difficult to explain. Is it because our population figures are incorrect? Are we underestimating demand, thereby failing to supply enough? The other possibility, of course, is market manipulation. But again, we don't have any major studies to definitively say that is the case. What can be said definitively is that the government has not made price monitoring and market forecasting a priority. So, the current inflation can be a combination of cost-push and market

imperfections and misgovernance. I will also add that while discussing inflation, we also have to focus on non-food inflation. A PPRC-BIGD survey conducted last year brought out starkly how both food and non-food inflation were hurting the poor, a trend which has become worse this year.

control the market. Rather, the issue is how effectively it is prioritising market monitoring and designing adequate safety net interventions to minimise the sufferings of the millions of poor and the new poor.

On the question of safety net intervention, there is an additional problem. The government does not appear interested in seeing this as a national issue, but sees it narrowly from a bureaucratic and ruling party lens. They are reluctant to engage social actors in meaningful ways, particularly in the challenging task of listing. Last year, the government announced that it would give Tk 2,500 to five million people. Eventually, they could only cover up to 3.4 million—that, too, with many allegations of corruption in the listing. Finding out who needs support most urgently is not an impossible task. But the government has been very reluctant to involve social, non-governmental actors in the process beyond some token approaches. The issue is national, and the government needs to use all capacities available within the nation.

When prices in Bangladesh rise, often the external factors are blamed. Yet, when the international prices decline, we hardly see our consumers benefit from it. How do you explain the double standard?

There is, of course, a double standard at play here. International factors do play a part in the rise of costs. For example, the price of consumable oil has risen recently because it is almost all imported. But you are right. Once prices go up, they never come down in our country. And the issue here, again, is market monitoring. By market monitoring, I do not mean a group of bureaucrats going to the market every once in a while, with a bunch of television cameras for PR purposes. What we need are specialised cells following and scrutinising local and international prices, and then deciding where to intervene as necessary.

There is also a bit of psychology involved in regards to prices never coming down. Sometimes, people become accustomed to these new prices which, in the absence of proper government interventions, allow influential market players to exploit the consumers. Lack of necessary information being available to the consumers further allows for this exploitation. Consumers don't know how much supply there really is, how much more the traders have stored in their warehouses, etc. But the government is supposed to monitor this on behalf of the consumers, share this information with the people, and use it to keep the prices down. That has not been happening, unfortunately.

▲
Hossain Zillur Rahman

PHOTO:
STAR

Once prices go up, they never come down in our country. And the issue here, again, is market monitoring. What we need are specialised cells following and scrutinising local and international prices, and then deciding where to intervene as necessary.

You mentioned the need for deeper investigation to find the reasons. Has the government done that?

No; as I said, there is a problem of data hesitancy within the government. It's almost as though they are afraid of finding the truth. If you find the truth, you have to act on it. That may mean you have to inconvenience some of your supporters who may be beneficiaries of market misgovernance. The other problem is systemic weaknesses. It is a bit sad when the commerce minister says that they cannot control the prices. We have to remember that ministerial statements also act as signals for market players. The commerce ministry has a very important function related to price monitoring and market forecasting. But the institutional capacity for this has not really been developed or made a priority. Of course, if the war in Ukraine has destabilised the global food market, Bangladesh alone cannot protect itself. But that's not the full picture. Yes, there are global factors outside of our control that are affecting the commodity prices. But there are also many other factors that are within our control. If we had proper market monitoring, we could have better identified what steps to take.

I must add that the government is taking measures. But they are always too little, too late, and often at below-par efficiency. The issue is not that the government can administratively

North-West Power Generation Company Ltd
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Certified
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Office of the Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2)
Soydabad, Sirajganj.

Ref: 27.28.8878.201.07.001.21.62 Date: 22/03/2022

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd):

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Brief Description of Tender	Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date
1	674639	Procurement of WTP Filters and Accessories and Related Service	20-Mar-2022	11-Apr-2022 15:00 PM	12-Apr-2022
2	675984	Supply of Cooling Tower Dosing Chemical for Water Treatment Plant under Framework Agreement.	22-Mar-2022	11-Apr-2022 15:00 PM	12-Apr-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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Shafiqul Islam
Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW CCPP (Unit-2)
NWPGL, Soydabad, Sirajganj.

GD-552

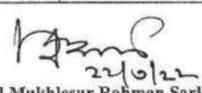
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
CENTRAL MEDICAL STORES DEPOT
TEJGAON DHAKA-1208.

Corrigendum

IFT No.CMSD/HSM-2113/ICT/2021-2022/Proc.-4/37 dated 13/02/2022
Procurement of Blood Irradiator

The relevant portion of the Tender documents under above mentioned IFT no. is hereby amended. Please read as under :-

Tender Reference	Existing Entries	Amended Entries.
Section 2. Tender Data Sheet (TDS): ITT 36.1, ITT 42.2 & Row no. of IFT 9, 10 & 11.		
Tender Last Selling Date :	30/03/2022 (During Office hours)	06/04/2022 (During Office hours)
Tender submission date & time :	11: 00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+ 6 hrs.) on 31/03/2022	11: 00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+ 6 hrs.) on 07/04/2022
Tender Opening date & time :	11: 50 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.) on 31/03/2022	11: 30 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.) on 07/04/2022


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GD-554

On days when the weather is favourable, when the sun shines bright and the clouds float along like marshmallows, the scene surrounding the Shah Amanat Bridge becomes a wondrous sight to behold.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



On a mission to save endangered trees

BJJOYA BHATTACHARJEE



Native medicinal trees were once abundant in the country. But with the passage of time, they have either vanished or are on the verge of extinction, mainly due to indiscriminate deforestation. For example, Kannari, Boilam, Civit, Rakto Chandan, Bon Sonalu, Olot Kambal and Udal aren't found anywhere in the country anymore. Meanwhile, medicinal trees like Haritaki, Raktan, Sundari, Arjun and trees bearing good timber like Dholi batna, Dholliya Garjan, Gamari, Sada Koroi, Malakanna Koroi are on the verge of extinction.

The Encyclopedia of Flora & Fauna of Bangladesh categorises 486 species as threatened, with the number increasing with time.

To address this, an initiative has been taken up on Chittagong University campus, which aims to revive these disappearing trees.

Dr Mohammad Kamal Hossain, a professor of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science at CU, took the initiative back in 2019. With three years, results have started to flow in.

Dr Kamal told The Daily Star that the idea came to him suddenly. As he took his

students to a nearby forest for a practical class in 2005, he found that most of the medicinal trees that stood proud during his student life in the 1970s were nowhere to be found.

"They were all cut down. I felt so guilty that I thought I should do something for the survival of these species," he said.

Since then, he started planting trees inside the campus, albeit in an unorganised way. "It went on like this for the next 14 years as I couldn't manage money needed to nurse

From here, seedlings are sent out to be planted in Protected Areas (PA) of the country. Around 8,200 seedlings were distributed from here to different organisations.

Dr Kamal spoke to this correspondent about the importance of these trees. "These trees are key structural components of forest ecosystems. They also support a number of algae, lichens, mosses, ferns, orchids, parasites, climbers, insects, birds and other wildlife."



the trees."

But 2019 proved to be a breakthrough year. "Between 2019 and 2021, I took up a bold initiative and planted 3,169 saplings of native trees with the assistance of BARC between 2019 and 2021."

"Of them, there's 90 saplings of endangered tree species, including Raktakambal, Chakua Koroi, Boilam, Khudijam, Boddhiraj, Agar, Barta, Deophal, Dewa and Latkon," Dr Kamal said, adding that the seeds were collected from different areas of the country.

In addition, to preserve the trees, Dr Kamal also set up a seed archive at the forestry department, which stores seeds of around 350 species.

"Afforestation is one of the key tools for forest landscape restoration. Planned afforestation is now the demand of the time," he said.

Samarshwar Sinha, an master's student of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science, said, "Dr Kamal loves the trees like his children. He inquires about the trees and provides several instructions to us regarding their nursing."

Jarin Akhter, director of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science, said, "Dr Kamal is a true blue nature lover. The Institute is greatly benefitted from the initiative. The welfare of the country also lies in this initiative."

'I walk 3km daily to fetch water'

SIFAYET ULLAH

Sagarika Tripura, a resident of Alutilla Rehabilitation Center area in Khagrachhari's Matiranga upazila, starts her day at 5:00am. With no source of water near her home, the 45-year-old has to make a 3-km trek through hilly terrains every day.

"I have to walk half an hour to collect water and need the same time to return home," said Sagarika.

Water used to be available in springs and streams near her home. However, the sources have dried up for the season.

The picture is similar in nine other upazilas of Khagrachhari. More than half of the population collect water from natural sources, and they face a severe water crisis during the dry season every year. During a recent visit to Alutilla, this correspondent found that women and girls were collecting water for both drinking and household use from wells.

Adinath Tripura, a resident of the rehabilitation centre area, said people now depend on surface water sources – such as waterfalls, springs and streams – which are unsafe for drinking.

"Many people often suffer from water-borne diseases due to lack of safe drinking water," said Adinath.

According to Khagrachhari's public health department, the number of deep tube-wells and pressed tube-wells in the district is more than 10,000. It is possible to supply water to 70 percent of the district's population.

The country's three hilly districts – Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari – have long been experiencing a drinking water crisis, particularly during the dry season. Groundwater cannot be lifted through tube-wells in many areas.

"We tried several times to set up a tube well near Alutilla Rehabilitation Center area. But we could not find water, even after digging 1,200 feet," said Ayub Ali Ansari, assistant engineer of the department. "We are trying to initiate a project for people in the hills soon," he added.



These trees are key structural components of forest ecosystems. They also support a number of algae, lichens, mosses, ferns, orchids, parasites, climbers, insects, birds and other wildlife.

Dr Mohammad Kamal Hossain, professor of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science at CU.



CVASU VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Treating animals with care

With a tensed face, Ghagra Bazar resident Babul Chakma stood with his puppy "Brownie" at the campus of Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Science (CVASU) on Sunday.

SIFAYET ULLAH

The Rangamati native's anxiety was growing as he could not understand what had happened to his beloved dog – it was howling nonstop.

A doctor soon came in, examined the puppy, and prescribed some medicines.

"I treated my puppy in Rangamati but she didn't recover. So I brought her here for better treatment," said Babul. "I have heard they have experienced veterinarians here. Hopefully, with their service, my puppy will get better," he added.

The Sahedul Alam Quadery Teaching Veterinary Hospital (SAQTVH) of CVASU is visited by many like Babul, from all over the country, for treatment of their pets suffering from complex diseases.

Located at Khulshi's Zakir Hossain Road the hospital sees around 100 to 150 patients every



day, according to authorities.

While visiting the hospital on Sunday morning, this correspondent saw pet parents gathering with their dogs, cats, rabbits and birds. Many also came in with cows, calves,



sheep and goats. Some had injuries, some suffered from loss of appetite, while others needed surgery and sterilisation.

The SAQTVH has eight different departments, including large animal, small

animal, poultry, gynaecology and surgery.

Besides serving animals, the mobile clinic is an important part of CVASU where students can gather practical knowledge.

Moreover, the hospital also provides its service in exchange for only a nominal registration fee, making it widely accessible.

The hospital usually remains open from 9:00am to 4:00pm during working days, with doctors serving in two shifts, said Dr Md Rayhan Faruque, director of SAQTVH. Three doctors serve in each shift, he added.

Besides, the hospital also has doctors who attend to emergency phone calls.

"We treat animals the same way we would treat people. Every day, we treat animals from all over the country," Faruque said.

According to hospital data, 4,606 animals were treated at the hospital in 2015, which increased to 7,022 animals in 2017.

Miraz eager to counter Proteas

SPORTS REPORTER

After a promising introduction to the international arena followed by some ups and downs, Mehedi Hasan Miraz seems to have matured as a cricketer in recent times and grown a deeper understanding of his role according to the demands of the situation.

The 24-year-old was struck for 38 runs in his first four overs in the first ODI, but his hunger and determination to contribute was heard when skipper Tamim Iqbal revealed that Miraz urged the skipper to bring him back into the attack.

Miraz lived up to his side of the bargain, ending with four wickets that proved instrumental to the Tigers' maiden win in South Africa in the first ODI.



Ahead of the decisive third encounter against the hosts, Bangladesh will be looking to take further strides and Miraz will hope to play a big role in the spin department.

"I always try to contain runs. Maybe the batters are taking chances against me because, if you notice, they [South Africa] are going after spinners. The wicket plays well [for batting] and they will be looking to score more against me." Miraz said yesterday, on the eve of the third and final ODI to be played at Centurion.

Bangladesh will also bank on Miraz's batting skills in the lower-middle order given that the right-hander has played crucial knocks recently. Miraz scored an unbeaten 81 against Afghanistan, stitching together a match-winning unbeaten 174-run partnership with Afif Hossain after Bangladesh were reeling on 45 for five in chase of 216. "I really enjoy batting with Afif. At times I tend to think a lot further ahead but he tries to keep things simple. We have good communication and his 30 runs and my 20 runs were crucial for the team," he said.



Despite being under tremendous mental pressure due to family health crisis, Shakib Al Hasan decided to stay back for the third ODI in South Africa. All eyes will be on the ace all-rounder as Bangladesh try to win a first-ever series against the Proteas in the decisive third match today. (Inset) The Bangladesh pacers, too, will have a big role to play if they are to win the encounter. PHOTO: STAR FILE/BCB

Can Tigers rediscover the winning formula?

SPORTS REPORTER

A first-ever series win on South African soil will surely be in the back of the minds of the Bangladesh team, but it will be vital for the Tigers' think-tank to ensure a relaxed atmosphere in the dressing room while ticking as many boxes as possible in the decisive third and final ODI at Centurion today.

Bangladesh have seen both sides of the coin in the first two games as Tamim Iqbal and his troops clinched a maiden win in South Africa courtesy of a collective approach in the first ODI before being ruthlessly outplayed by the hosts in the second game.

While a collective approach remains key if the Tigers are to re-write history, there is an individual named Shakib who can turn things around single-handedly with his charisma.

South Africa are expected to once again bank on their strengths and extract pace and bounce from the surface as they did at the Wanderers, when Kagiso Rabada led from the front with his second five-wicket haul to restrict Bangladesh on 194 for nine. The hosts went on to level the series by



chasing the target with seven wickets and 12.4 overs to spare, riding on a blistering fifty by Quinton de Kock.

The Proteas will be looking to replicate that performance from the second game by jolting the Tigers' batters early on. The ploy worked in the second ODI as Rabada knocked off Bangladesh's top-order, reducing the Tigers to 36 for 5 inside 13 overs. The likes of Rabada and Lungi Ngidi will look to hit the deck hard and attempt to get that extra bit of bounce to create doubt.

On the other hand, it will not be easy for Bangladesh to repeat their performance from the first game, when Tamim and Liton Das negotiated the initial pace and bounce by opting for an initially conservative approach.

Keeping wickets intact and seeing out the first 10 overs will be key for Bangladesh

and a stable start could again lay the foundation.

It may have initially looked like a defensive approach after Bangladesh added just 33 runs in the first 10 overs of the first ODI, but as the game progressed, the 95-run opening stand between Tamim and Liton proved to be pivotal.

The middle-order went on to cash in on that steady start as Shakib Al Hasan and Yasir Ali added 115 runs for the fifth wicket. Bangladesh would add another 91 runs in the last 10 overs to post a huge total of 314 for seven.

Posting ample runs on the board can also embolden the bowling unit, as evidenced by the first game, when the Bangladesh pace attack featuring the likes of Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam and Mustafizur Rahman showed what they were capable of.

While a collective approach remains key if the Tigers are to re-write history, there is an individual named Shakib who can turn things around single-handedly with his charisma.

The star all-rounder is going through a family health crisis and even considered returning home ahead of the third ODI to stay beside his family members, who are currently in hospital. But eventually deciding to stay back showed his determination and hunger to do well.

Joty blames it on batting

SPORTS REPORTER

As the hopes for a spot in the final four of the ICC Women's World Cup was over for the Bangladesh team with two games remaining, the Tigresses skipper Nigar Sultana Joty hinted at revamping their composure following a massive 110-run defeat against India at Seddon Park yesterday.

"Controlling the nerves and the situation of the game, that's where we need to improve," Joty said during the presentation ceremony.

Chasing a target of 230, Bangladesh batters collapsed and got bundled out for 119. Joty, in her assessment, focused on the lack of partnerships.

"We couldn't make partnerships in this or the last match, which has cost us," the captain stated as she appreciated her bowling unit.

"The bowlers did wonderfully today, as they have done in the last couple of matches. We put India under pressure and restricted them to a good total," the captain said.

Bangladesh will face Australia on March 25 before taking on holders England to round up their maiden ODI World Cup campaign.



Naseem, Shaheen halt Australia

AFP, LAHORE

Pace spearheads Naseem Shah and Shaheen Shah Afridi knocked over eight wickets and restricted Australia to 391 before Pakistan ended day two of the deciding Test at 90-1 in Lahore on Tuesday.

The duo led a late charge to close the second session as Australia lost their last five wickets for 71 runs after reaching a commanding 320-5 at lunch. Naseem finished with figures of 4-58 and Shaheen 4-79.

At stumps, the game was evenly poised and the series hanging in the balance as Abdullah Shafique, 45, and Azhar Ali, 30, returned to the pavilion five overs early due to bad light.



The series is tied at 0-0 after the first two Tests in Rawalpindi and Karachi ended in high-scoring draws.

Shafique and Azhar had to rebuild after Pakistan opener Imam-ul-Haq was trapped leg before by Australian skipper Pat Cummins on 11. But the pair looked untroubled, putting on 70 for the second wicket.

Ashrafal's first fifer in vain

SPORTS REPORTER

Brothers Union's Mohammad Ashrafal is known for his accomplishments with the bat but in the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) match against Mohammedan Sporting Club, it was his skills with the ball that was on view as he picked up his first five-wicket haul in List A cricket. However, his efforts with the ball were offset by Mohammedan skipper Shuvagata Hom, who notched career-best figures to give his side a handsome 54-run win in a low-scoring affair at BKSP's ground 3 yesterday.

Mohammedan recovered from a bad start through opener Rony Talukdar and overseas star Mohammad Hafeez after other opener Parvez Hossain Emon and number three Soumya Sarkar departed within five overs. Ashrafal broke the 72-run stand with Hafeez's scalp as one delivery turned and gripped the surface while keeping low and caught Hafeez in front of the stumps leg before. Ashrafal's celebrations were to become the highlight of the day as he danced to each wicket. Rony succumbed to Ashrafal in the next over to a ball that jagged back sharply and clipped the off stump. After Rony's team-high 60-ball 58, it looked like Mohammedan, without their key stars in the line-up as they are featuring for the Tigers in South Africa, crumbled. The middle-order of Ariful Haque, Sohrawardi Shuvo and Shuvagata departed in quick succession. Zahiduzzaman's unbeaten 41 late down the order held the innings together before they were bowled out for 206.

In reply, Mohammedan banked on their own off-spinner in Shuvagata, who gave early breakthroughs with the wickets of Sadikur

Rahman and Myshukur Rahman. Ashrafal could not capitalise on the confidence boost with the ball by carrying with the bat as he departed out leg before for one to a Nazmul Islam Apu delivery. Opener Imtiaz Hossain and Aminul Islam Biplob contributed in a 57-run stand before the former fell to a team-high 42. Biplob (36) and Dhiman Ghosh (32) kept ticking the runs but when the two departed to Ariful Islam and Shuvagata, respectively, Brothers innings folded at 152.



In another low-scoring affair at BKSP, Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club struggled early against Shinepukur Cricket Club's Hasan Murad, who picked up two key wickets of Saif Hassan and Imrul Kayes after the batters contributed in a 60-run stand. Regular fall of wickets saw Sheikh Jamal not getting enough partnerships in and Robiul Islam Robi's 55-ball 48 was their only positive with the bat as they were bowled out for 146. Rahatul Ferdous picked up a four-fer for Shinepukur. However, Shinepukur struggled immensely against left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam, who picked up four for 33 while Taibur Rahman bagged three for 43 to give Sheikh Jamal a 14-run win.



Italy midfielder Jorginho (R) tries to block striker Giacomo Raspadori during a training session at the Coverciano Training Facilities in Florence on Tuesday. The Azzurri, faced with the grim prospect of missing out on a second consecutive World Cup, will host North Macedonia in Palermo on Thursday night in a World Cup playoff semifinal. A win in that fixture will see the four-time world champions travel to either Portugal or Turkey for the final qualifying playoff next Tuesday. PHOTO: TWITTER

CAP 10 OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY

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Mediate in conflict

Ukraine leader calls on Pope; more bombs hit besieged Mariupol

AGENCIES

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday called on Pope Francis to mediate in his country's conflict with Russia to help alleviate human suffering, nearly one month into Moscow's invasion.

Zelensky said he had held a telephone call with the Pope and that he had "told His Holiness about the difficult humanitarian situation and the blocking of rescue corridors by Russian troops."

Negotiators from Moscow and Kyiv have held ongoing talks aimed at ending nearly four weeks of fierce fighting, but have failed to announce any progress so far.

In a video address to the Italian parliament yesterday, Zelensky said there was "nothing left" of the city of Mariupol after weeks of Russian bombardment.

Two "super powerful bombs" slammed into the city, Mariupol local authorities said yesterday, without giving an immediate toll.

US President Joe Biden warned that Putin was considering using chemical and biological weapons in Ukraine as he held talks with European leaders on Monday on what he called Moscow's increasingly "brutal tactics".

Ukraine's defence ministry, meanwhile, claimed that they retook Kyiv suburb of Makariv early yesterday after a fierce battle.

The regained territory allowed Ukrainian forces to retake control of a key highway and block Russian troops from surrounding Kyiv from the northwest, reports AFP.



Women from Kharkiv are reunited with their friend from Chernihiv in Ukraine after fleeing to Romania, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at the border crossing in Siret, Romania yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Homes for all homeless soon

PM promises to materialise Bangabandhu's dream

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed firm optimism that another dream of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would also be materialised soon by providing houses to all homeless people.

The PM was addressing the Ecnec (Executive Committee of the National Economic Council) meeting held at the NEC at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the

capital through a video conference from the Gono Bhaban.

She said reaching electricity to every house in the country has been a landmark achievement of her government.

She also said that by this achievement the government has been able to materialise a dream of the Father of the Nation.

She extended thanks to all concerned who worked hard

for reaching the target of full electrification of the country.

In this regard, Hasina pointed out the steps of her government to make the power sector open for the private initiative during its earlier 1996-2001 term.

She said that 450MW Meghna Ghat and 360MW Haripur Power plants were built with foreign investment under the private initiative for the first

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

7 die as dozen houses torched in West Bengal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

In a suspected case of an intra-party feud, miscreants set on fire about a dozen houses at a village in West Bengal's Birbhum district leaving at least seven people dead, police and fire brigade officials said yesterday.

The houses at Bogtui village were set on fire hours after Bhadu Sheikh, the deputy chief of ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) controlled-Barshal gram panchayat, was killed in a bomb attack on Monday, police said. Sheikh was a resident of Bogtui.

Four masked men on two separate motorcycles attacked Sheikh, 38, with crude bombs on Monday, police sources said quoting eyewitnesses. He was brought dead at a local hospital.

However, fire brigade officials said ten bodies were recovered from some houses and seven of them from a single house. The bodies were charred beyond recognition, they added.

Locals alleged the houses were set afire during attacks by members of a faction of TMC.

Anubrata Mondal, the local strongman and TMC's district unit president, denied allegations of infighting and retaliatory attacks.

"The houses caught fire because of a short circuit -- there was no violence last night," Mondal said.

Fire brigade personnel, who did not want to be identified, said they found at least 10 houses on fire.

Only a forensic examination can ascertain the cause of the fire, said Nagendra Nath Tripathi, the district police superintendent.

"Seven bodies were found from one house. These have been sent for post mortem. I cannot say anything more before the matter is investigated," he added.

The bodies were charred beyond recognition.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

With her mother busy hawking fruits around, a baby sleeps on the central reservation of a road in the capital's Science Laboratory intersection. She is on her own for long hours every day as her mother has to work to earn a living. The child could roll over in her sleep and fall on the fast lane of the street. The photo was taken recently.

LAUNCH CAPSIZE 3 more bodies recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Three more bodies, including that of a toddler, were recovered yesterday, taking the death toll of Sunday's launch accident on the Shitalakkhya to 10.

The authorities suspended rescue operations in the evening, saying no one else was missing.

The three deceased are Arohi Barman Rajbongshi, 3, Abdullah Al Jaber, 30, and Muslem Uddin Hatem, 55, said Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy assistant director of local Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Firefighters recovered the floating body of Jaber near the 3rd Shitalakkhya bridge in Koylaghat area of Narayanganj Sadar upazila around 8:05am. He was a resident of the capital's Demra area.

Locals recovered the body of three-year-old Arohi, daughter of Joy Barman of Ispahairchar area of Munshiganj, from the bank of the river in Narayanganj's Bandar area around 10:30am.

Around 4:00pm, fire service members recovered the floating body of Hatem, a resident of Munshiganj's Jugnighat area, from the Shitalakkhya in Muktapur area of the district.

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Tigers hoping for Centurion repeat

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will go into the third and final ODI against South Africa today at Centurion looking to make history by winning their first-ever ODI series in South African soil.

Bangladesh won the first ODI by 38 runs at the same ground before succumbing to a seven-wicket defeat in the second ODI at the Wanderers to leave the series poised at 1-1.

The Tigers will be bolstered by the fact that ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan decided to remain with the side and play the third ODI despite a number of his family members facing health complications back home.

Spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz talked to the media yesterday and said that the Tigers were looking to keep supporting Shakib through the turmoil. The premier all-rounder's availability for the series had been in focus before the series after he admitted to not feeling mentally or physically prepared for international cricket.

However, the all-rounder later informed that he was

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Powering a nation

Our heartfelt congratulations to Bangladesh-China Power Company (Pvt) Limited and all related stakeholders for achieving this momentous milestone – completing and commissioning the largest power project of the country, the 1,320 MW Payra ultra super critical power plant. Bangladesh has become the first South Asian nation to achieve 100% electrification, and this milestone was a key enabler in this incredible achievement. Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh is proud to be associated with this landmark project as Account Bank and Security Agent.

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