



Government high-ups and recipients of “Swadhinata Purashkar-2022”, the highest civilian award of the country, pose for a photograph with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Shapla Hall of the Prime Minister’s Office yesterday. Nine distinguished individuals and two organisations got this prestigious award in recognition of their outstanding contributions.

PHOTO : PTD

## Country made good progress Says PM, hands over Swadhinata Purashkar

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the country’s development continued despite the Covid-19 pandemic affecting the global economy and creating food shortages even in many developed countries.

“We’ve been able to continue the country’s development trend despite facing Coronavirus,” she said at the Swadhinata Purashkar-2022 handover ceremony at the Shapla

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## Star HEALTHLINE Long daytime naps early signs of ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

STAR HEALTH DESK

A new study by researchers from University of California has concluded that excessive napping during the day could be an early warning sign of Alzheimer’s disease.

Earlier it was thought that too much nap time might be the cause of mental decline, according to The Guardian.

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## TYPE-2 DIABETES Decrease in intestinal enzyme main cause

Finds study; early detection can now help those vulnerable to the disease

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

People aged between 30 and 60 with the deficiency of an enzyme – Intestinal Alkaline Phosphatase – are at least 14 times at higher risk of developing diabetes than those without deficiency, finds a study.

A total of 14 researchers, 13 of them Bangladeshi and 1 American, from multiple local and foreign universities conducted the research by a prospective cohort study on 574 non-diabetic people between 2015 and 2020.

In the study, considered a major breakthrough in battling diabetes, the researchers said this deficiency in people, whether they are obese or not, is the main reason behind type 2 diabetes.

By testing IAP levels, even non-diabetic people can now find out whether they will get diabetes in the future and take early preventative measures, including taking IAP supplement accordingly.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Dr Madhu S Malo, lead investigator in the study, said, “We have confirmed that the deficiency of this enzyme causes type-2 diabetes. A mass campaign can now be launched to identify those vulnerable to the disease.”

The study, funded by Bangladesh Medical and Research Council, the Ministry of Education, National Institute of Health in USA and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, was published in the “BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care” journal recently.

“Eradication of the worldwide type-2 diabetes pandemic is possible through early diagnosis of IAP deficiency followed by pre-emptive preventive measures,” the report stated.

Based on the revelation, the researchers have already devised a home kit to test IAP levels in stools.

IAP levels lower than 65 units per gram of stool would mean there is a deficiency and higher than 115 units would mean there are chances of protection from developing diabetes.

Based on a “successful trial” on mice, the research team has identified some affordable supplementations that can increase IAP.

They are now planning a clinical trial on humans to find proper supplementations, said Madhu S Malo, also a former faculty member at USA’s Harvard Medical School and an adviser to the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, which coordinated the study.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr AK Azad, president of the association, said, “We think this study is a breakthrough, which can greatly contribute to the prevention of diabetes worldwide.”

In Bangladesh, there are around 1.5 crore diabetic patients and around Tk 45,000 crore are spent on diabetic treatment every year.

“If some of this money can be used in nationwide prevention campaigns, we can help identify potential patients faster and stop them from getting the disease in the first place,” the researchers said, urging the government to take

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## IRRIGATION WATER Back against wall, Santal farmer dies by suicide

ANWAR ALI

A farmer in Rajshahi’s Godagari upazila died on Wednesday after he and his cousin drank pesticide, police said.

In primary probe police found that the two had drunk the pesticide for not getting water for their farmland, said Additional SP Ittekhayer Alam of Rajshahi, adding that the matter was still under investigation and that police have recorded an unnatural death case.

Both men belong to the Santal community.

Abhinath Mardi, 36, died at his home the day after he took the pesticide, said Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Godagari Police Station.

The deceased’s cousin, Robi Mardi, 27, is undergoing treatment at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, the OC added.

Police recovered Abhinath’s body from his home yesterday morning and sent it to RMCH for autopsy.

According to police, eye-witnesses and

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## Woman, AL man shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A local Awami League leader and a woman were shot dead by an unidentified man in the capital’s Shahjahanpur last night.

Jahidul Islam Tipu, 54, who officers think was the target of the attack, was the former general secretary of Motijheel Awami League.

Police said Samia Afran Prity, a student of Begum Badrunnesa College, was shot dead as she happened to be at the scene near Amtola Masjid.

The driver of Jahidul’s car, Munna, got shot as well. He said Jahid was returning to his Shahjahanpur home after a meeting at Motijheel AGB Colony around 10:20pm and the car was stationary in traffic when a masked man wearing a helmet opened fire.

The man fired several bullets before fleeing the scene, he said.

The three of them were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors pronounced Jahid and Prity dead, said Abdul Khan, assistant sub-inspector of DMCH Police outpost.

Prity was in a rickshaw with her friend Sumaiya. The latter said Prity and she were going to her house in Khilgaon. “We do not know who fired the bullets,” she said.

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## UNGA demands Russia end Ukraine war Bangladesh among 140 countries to vote in favor

AFP, United Nations

The UN General Assembly yesterday adopted by an overwhelming majority a new non-binding resolution that demands an “immediate” halt to Russia’s war in Ukraine.

At UN headquarters in New York, 140 countries, including Bangladesh, voted in favor, The Daily Star has learned.

38 countries abstained from voting, including India, China, Pakistan. Five voted against the measure. The same five countries voted against the resolution Thursday and March 2 – Russia, Syria, North Korea, Belarus and Eritrea.

The vote came after the adoption of a similar non-binding resolution on March 2 that demanded Russia immediately cease its use of force – a vote that was approved by 141 countries.

On Wednesday Ukraine put forward the new resolution, originally prepared by France and Mexico, at an emergency session of the UNGA.

A competing text by South Africa, which never mentioned Russia by name, received only 50 votes for, 67 against and 36 abstentions, and was therefore not adopted.

The approved resolution specifically implicates Moscow and “demands an immediate cessation of the hostilities by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, in particular of any attacks against civilians and civilian objects.”

The US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, welcomed the “strong majority” of member states that approved the resolution.

The countries made clear that “Russia bears sole responsibility for the grave humanitarian crisis and violence in Ukraine,” she said.

## Won’t resign Says Imran Khan ahead of no-confidence vote

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said he will not resign, rejecting opposition calls for him to step down ahead of a no-confidence move against him in his toughest challenge since coming to power in 2018.

Pakistan’s parliament will convene today to start proceedings into a no-confidence motion. It could take seven days before an actual vote to decide if Khan will be removed.

The bid for a vote of no confidence has raised the risk of constitutional, administrative and economic crises amid a pending International Monetary Fund review on the next tranche of a \$6 billion rescue package.

Opposition parties filed their motion this month, saying the former cricket star had lost his parliamentary majority after some 20 of his party lawmakers defected, calling on him to step down.

“I will not resign come what may,” Khan said in a statement late on Wednesday.

Khan said he would not surrender without a fight and questioned why he should quit under pressure from “crooks”.

Along with the defection of nearly 20 of his party lawmakers, some of his coalition partners have also suggested



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A Citrine Wagtail, fairly common over much of Asia, resting its wings at a paddy field at the Choral Beel in Chapainawabganj’s Gomastapur upazila. Interestingly, wagtails get their name due to their habit of constantly “wagging” their tails. These small, non-threatening insectivores are usually found in marshlands and near riverbanks.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

