



P5 **Illegal extraction**
'Legalising' illegal sand mining



P7 **'This is apartheid'**
UN expert on Palestine slams Israel's occupation



P11 **'Time to raise the bar'**
Jayed urges pacers to level up



B1 **More US cotton**
Textile millers want direct shipping

Germs winning over drugs

Experts raise alarm; overdose, self-prescription are to blame

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Drugs that used to successfully fight diseases are gradually becoming ineffective due to decades of malpractice: intake of over-prescribed or self-prescribed medicines.

As if it's not enough of a grave news, germs that cause diseases are now becoming all the more powerful having been fed with wrong dosages of drugs, according to multiple research and studies in Bangladesh.

Most of the microorganisms -- viruses, bacteria, fungi and protozoa -- have been found to be resistant to a good number of drugs available in the market.

"Forget bacteria, even the fungi (like candida, mucor and the aspergillus), which cause common skin infections, have now turned difficult to treat with conventional drugs," laments Prof Ahmed Abu Saleh, of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology (DMI) at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU). A pioneer in the field of research

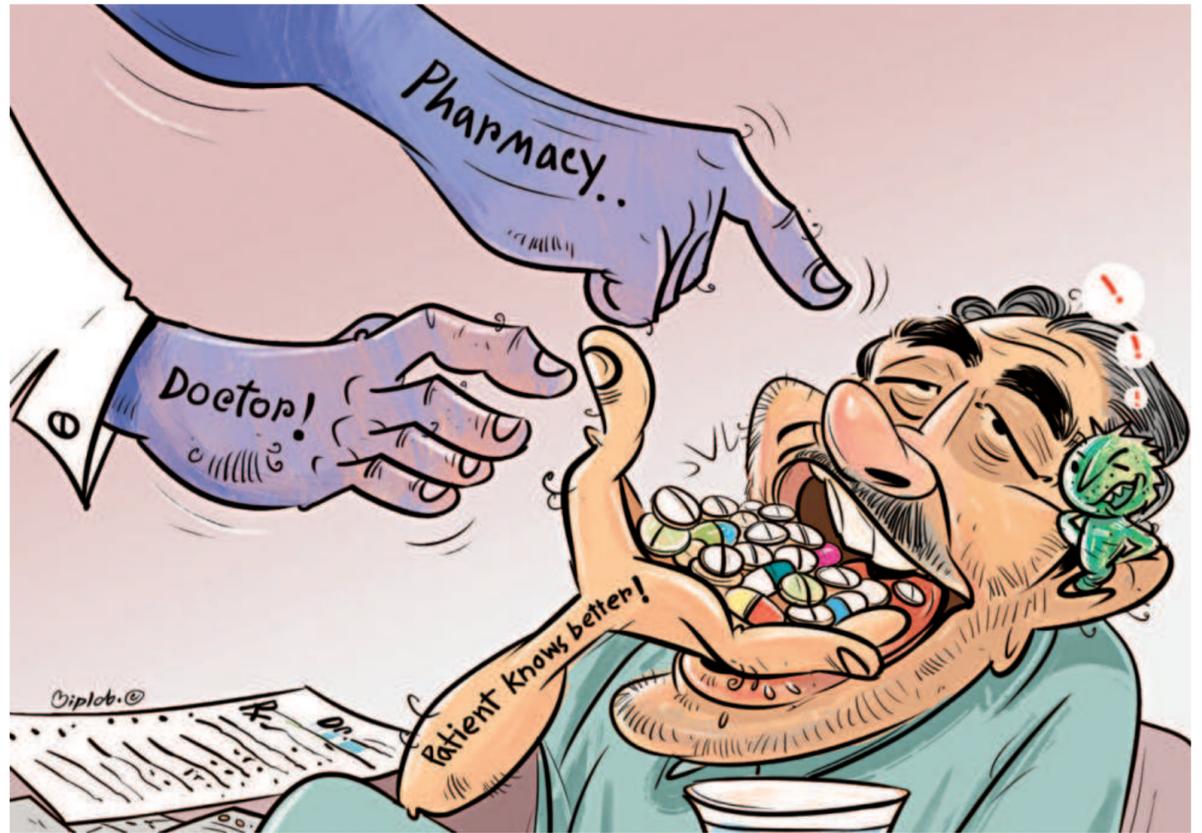
on "superbugs", the drug-resistant germs that kill some 3,500 people around the world every day, Prof Saleh explained to The Daily Star how the typhoid germ (Salmonella Typhi) is threatening to break loose again at community level.

Co-trimoxazole was the main antibiotic to cure typhoid 20 years ago and replaced by ciprofloxacin, as it became ineffective following indiscriminate uses. This replacement drug too turned almost ineffective against the water-borne disease. Then came the ceftriaxone, which is still working well. But there is no alternative to this drug in the pipeline as yet.

"If ceftriaxone loses efficacy, typhoid will break out in the community. The only way we can prevent this disaster is by refraining from prescribing high-end antibiotics outside hospitals," he said.

Out of over 100, over 85 antibiotics are available in the Bangladesh market for treating around 40 minor or life-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



IRRIGATION WATER CRISIS IN BARIND

Small farmers in A VICIOUS TRAP

ANWAR ALI

Amid lax monitoring by the authorities, many deep tube well operators have been depriving small farmers in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon of their fair share of water for irrigation.

Those operators delay releasing water from their pumps, which leads to frequent crop loss for the farmers. Thrown in a situation they simply cannot cope with, the farmers are then forced into selling their land or leasing out land to others.

Many of them leave farming for good and become day labourers to survive. In many cases, the tube-well operators, who have money and political connections, buy those land or take them on lease to grow their own crops. The Daily Star has learnt after talking to several such farmers as well as experts and development activists in the Barind region.

On the other hand, the well-off

farmers, who pay the operators extra money, are supplied with the irrigation water on time, they also said.

On Wednesday, two farmers drank pesticides standing beside a deep tube well in Issoripur village of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila. One of them, Abhinath Mardi, 36, died later that night while the other, Robi Mardi, 27, passed away on Friday. They were cousins, who belonged to the Santal community.

Abhinath's wife Rozina Hembrom filed a case with Godagari Police Station on Friday night, accusing the well operator, Sakhawat Hossain, of abetting the suicide of her husband.

In the case statement, she alleged that Sakhawat did not supply water to Abhinath's field for 12 straight days. The water came, but only after news spread that Abhinath had died.

Talking about the incident, Prof Chowdhury Sarwar Jahan of Rajshahi University's geology and mining

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

DHAKA-TORONTO FLIGHT

Commercial viability up in the air

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines' decision to operate direct flights between Dhaka and Toronto may not be commercially viable, feared multiple aviation experts.

The high ticket prices, load factor and other issues like not following proper flight operation procedures raised concerns among them.

The first experimental commercial flight on the route departed Dhaka last night with 110 passengers.

Of them, around 50 were government officials and their family members who travelled to Toronto at the cost of public money.

Talking to The Daily Star, several senior pilots and some Biman officials questioned the logic behind such experimental commercial flights.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Mother killed in front of kids

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was hacked to death in her home in the capital's Sabujbagh yesterday.

Police suspect the victim, Tania Akter alias Mukta, 26, was murdered in front of her infant son and toddler daughter.

Asgar Ali, inspector (operation) of Sabujbagh Police Station, said that on being informed by neighbours, they recovered the body from the first floor of a four-storey building in Battala area around 6:00pm.

He said the killer(s) tied the hands and shut the mouths of Mukta's three-year-old daughter and 10-month-old son with duct tapes. After the killer(s) left, the toddler, with her mouth and hands still tied with duct tapes, managed to walk next door and alert the neighbours, he said.

After police arrived at the scene, they saw the body lying face down in a pool of blood. There were hack wounds in the neck and back. The son was found next to the body, and the main door of the flat was open.

The body was taken to the Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Tania lived with her two children at the flat. Her husband, a technician at Faridpur Medical College Hospital, lives near his workplace and would visit his family once or twice every month.

Asked about the motive behind the murder, Monotosh Biswas, assistant commissioner of police (Sabujbagh zone), said, "The AC was found disassembled on the floor, and the almirah was open

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



No one can play with nation's fate: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday firmly said that no one would be able to play with the fate of the people of Bangladesh from now onwards.

She was addressing the opening ceremony of the four-day "Joy Banglar Joyotsob" at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital. She joined the event virtually from the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7

3 children killed as hill collapses on them



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Three children died as part of a hill collapsed on them in a rubber plantation at Bhatara union of Moulvibazar's Kalaura upazila yesterday afternoon.

The dead were identified as Sumon Mia, 15, Nahid Ahmed, 14, students of Saiful Tahmina Alim Madrasa, and Abdul Kabir, 9, a student of Kabir Hossain Badrul Nurul Ibtedai Madrasa.

Quoting locals, Binoy Bhushan Roy, officer-in-charge of Kalaura Police Station, said the three had spotted baby birds at the foot of the Ghagrachhara hill and went there to catch them when a big chunk of the hill collapsed on them. He added that the hill was already weak as an organised syndicate had been extracting and selling mud from its base.

The children died on the spot, he said. Safar Uddin, village council chief of West Islamnagar, said nearby locals rescued them and took them to Fenchuganj Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared them dead.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Girls from a college in Gazipur wearing red and green bandanas and face masks paying tributes to the martyrs on the Independence Day yesterday at the National Memorial.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

BUSINESS

Forex crisis deepens

Bangladesh Bank seems to be indecisive whether it would go for gradual depreciation of the local currency or execute a quick devaluation. The situation has been created by the dwindling flow of foreign exchange.

The BB injected a record \$3.78 billion between July 1 and March 23 this fiscal year to contain the freefall of the Taka, but the initiative has hardly resolved the crisis faced by dollar-strapped banks.

STORY ON B1

Recognise 1971 genocide

Dhaka calls upon int'l community

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The global community should recognise the genocide committed by the Pakistan occupation army in Bangladesh during the 1971 Liberation War, said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen.

Conclusive research by internationally-recognised genocide experts indicate that the nature, scale and organisation of Pakistani military operations demonstrate careful planning and intentionally designed strategies to destroy a substantial part of the Bangalee ethnic and national group, he said.

Momen's comment, which was made in a pre-recorded video message, came in a webinar titled "1952-1971 Bangladesh Genocide: A Tale of Gross Human Rights Violation", organised by the Conflict and Resilience Research Institute Canada on Friday to mark the National Genocide Day.

The genocide is yet to be recognised by the global community, he said, adding that Bangladesh has not received any formal apology from the perpetrators.

"This day comes with a mixed feeling for us," said Planning Minister MA Mannan.

"We remember the supreme sacrifice of our early martyrs who were brutally killed by the Pakistani army on this night in 1971. We are also proud of the fact that how Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman valiantly declared independence later in the early hours of March 26 and got arrested by the occupation army," he added.

Cindy Lamoureux, an MLA from Canada's Manitoba province, called for ways to educate people and properly recognise the history and genocide of Bangladesh.

One of the ways to do that is through exhibits in galleries like the human rights museum.

"Oftentimes an exhibit in the museum will create dialogue and a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Local residents Lyubov Ostranitsa, 76, and Svetlana Mechetnaya, 60, sit on a bench in a destroyed courtyard in the besieged southern port city of Mariupol, Ukraine. The photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Russia signals less ambitious goals

Says war focus may be on eastern Ukraine; Kremlin hints at nuclear 'readiness' as heavy fighting rages across the country

AGENCIES

US President Joe Biden met top Ukrainian ministers in an emphatic show of support yesterday, as Russia signalled it may scale down its war aims after failing to break Kyiv's resistance in a month of fighting and deadly attacks on civilians.

Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov made a rare trip out of Ukraine to meet with the US leader, in a possible sign of growing confidence in their fightback against Russian forces.

The talks discussed Washington's "unwavering commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity," State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters.

Biden, who later met Polish President Andrzej Duda, also stressed the "sacred commitment" to Nato's collective defence, in a clear reassurance to Ukraine's neighbours rattled by the conflict.

The US president has been leading efforts among Western allies to press Vladimir Putin to end his invasion of Ukraine, branding the Russian president a "war criminal" over the assaults on civilians.

Putin had sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, vowing to destroy the country's military and topple pro-Western President Volodymyr Zelensky.

But his army has made little progress on capturing key cities, and its attacks on civilians have become more deadly.

In a surprise statement, Sergei Rudskoi, a senior Russian general, suggested the time had come for a considerably reduced "main goal" of controlling Donbas, an eastern region already partly held by Russian proxies.

"I ask you to increase the output of energy to ensure that everyone in Russia understands that no one can use energy as a weapon to blackmail the world."

The apparent scaling down of ambitions came as a Western official reported that a seventh Russian general, Lieutenant General Yakov Rezanstev, had died in Ukraine and that a colonel had been "deliberately" killed by his own demoralised men.

Complicating Moscow's challenges, invading troops were facing a counteroffensive in Kherson, the only major Ukrainian city under Russian control.

In a video address on Friday night, the Ukrainian president said his country's forces had "dealt powerful blows" to

Russian troops, adding that their success in repelling attacks was leading the Russian leadership "to a simple and logical idea: talk is necessary." He reiterated Ukraine's terms, including sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Zelensky pressed on with his relentless diplomatic efforts to rally world leaders to his side, this time taking his message to the Doha Forum meeting in Qatar's capital.

He accused Russia of fuelling a dangerous arms race by "bragging" about its nuclear stocks, and urged Qatar to help by preventing Moscow from deploying energy as a weapon.

"I ask you to increase the output of energy to ensure that everyone in Russia understands that no one can use energy as a weapon to blackmail the world," Zelensky said.

Earlier, Dmitry Medvedev, a former Russian president who is deputy chairman of the country's security council, said Moscow could strike against an enemy that only used conventional weapons while Putin's defence minister claimed nuclear "readiness" was a priority.

Russia's far-bigger military continued to combat determined Ukrainian defenders who are using Western-supplied weapons — from near the capital Kyiv to Kharkiv, the Donbas region and the devastated southern port city of Mariupol.

Woman hacked to death in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police recovered the body of a woman from Belemath in Jhenidah's Gopalpur village yesterday morning.

The victim, Sonia Khatun, 21, was hacked to death by unidentified criminals sometime on Friday, said OC Sheikh Mohammad Sohel Rana of Jhenidah Sadar Police Station.

The body bore hacking marks. The victim was identified through finger prints, said police.

The body was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Three held over gang rape of woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three accused in a gang rape case were arrested in Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

A team of Rapid Action Battalion picked them up from Napitkhali area in Eidgaon upazila, said Lt Col Khairul Islam Sarkar, commander of Rab-15 in Cox's Bazar.

The arrestees are: Firoz Ahmed, the main accused in the case, Mohammad Sharif alias Sharif Company and Nurul Islam.

According to the case statement, the accused abducted a woman from the district court premises and raped her in a nearby house on March 14.

Jubo League man stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Jubo League activist died of stab wounds at a Jashore hospital early yesterday after being injured in an attack by unidentified criminals in the district town's Old Kasba area.

The dead, Rumman Hossain, 30, was a resident of Talikhola Madrasa area of the town.

Another Jubo League activist Arif Hossain Shakil, 30, was wounded in the attack.

Police said Rumman was accused in several cases. According to locals, he was involved in sand trade.

The Jubo League man passed away at Jashore General Hospital around 1:00am. Arif was undergoing treatment at the hospital, said physicians.

Police suspected that Rumman was killed by his fellow party men.

Youth arrested over murder of schoolboy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The Rab arrested a youth in Kalihati upazila's Elega area on Friday night over the murder of a seventh grader.

The arrestee is Biplob Miah, 18, a brick kiln worker from Aag Baniara village in the same upazila.

Speaking at a press briefing at the Tangail camp of the Rab yesterday, Ershadur Rahman, commander of the Crime Prevention Company-3 of Rab-12, said the arrestee admitted he killed his friend Rahat Talukdar by slitting his throat with a sharp blade following a quarrel over playing "Ludu" in a local market. He fled after dumping the body in a nearby pond.

The victim's body was recovered from a pond in Kagujipara village on March 23.

3 children

FROM PAGE 1

The victim families said, on top of hill-cutting, the soil was already soft due to rainfall yesterday morning.

ILLEGAL HILL CUTTING

Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolan, said as per the Environment Conservation (Amendment) Act 2010, hill cutting is a cognisable offence and no one, even the government, semi-government or autonomous organisations are allowed to cut or raze hills without prior permission from the authorities concerned.

"But unfortunately, 'influential' people have been defying the law and destroying most of the hills in the union to sell soil. These acts often result in such dire accidents."

Locals also alleged that some people, in cooperation with a section of government officials, are involved in hill cutting.

"Many are exposed to landslides as homes and commercial establishments were constructed after cutting hills in unplanned ways..." Kim said.

Though the district administration is conducting drives, stricter measures are needed to stop this menace, he added.

According to the environment law, cutting hills without approval is prohibited.

Mother killed

FROM PAGE 1

with a locker inside also open. It appears that someone came to repair the AC and then killed the woman."

Police are investigating whether there was any other motive, he said.

Germs winning over drugs

FROM PAGE 1

Shocking, no single threatening diseases. However, no credible study is done yet to bracket drugs that have turned ineffective.

Multiple studies, including the January-June 2021 surveillance study of the DMI, show there are at least a dozen of bacteria that pose the greatest threat to the human and animal health in the country.

The surveillance study of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control (IEDCR), which was published in November last year, on the 10 bacteria collected from nine medical colleges across the country between 2017 and 2021 also backs up the BSMMU findings.

In both studies, it was found that five of the most critical medicines listed by the WHO are progressively becoming ineffective. Sadly, a section of

doctors, pharmacies and patients are to blame for the failing of drugs.

Throughout the pandemic, doctors prescribed unnecessary antibiotics for Covid-19 patients in the hospitals in 83 percent of cases, according to a 2021 IEDCR study.

"The gross misuse was due to misconception by both the physicians and people. We will see its impact once the Covid-19 is over," Prof Zakir Hossain Habib, the lead investigator and head of microbiology at the IEDCR, told The Daily Star.

As many as 60 percent of the patients take medicines without consulting doctors or take medicines on advices from informal providers like drug sellers and quacks; 25 percent of the patients suffer due to costly non-listed drugs prescribed by doctors, according to a

November report last year by the Health Economics Unit of the health ministry.

Sale of drugs without prescription is prohibited but not punishable under the Drug Policy of 2016, and it is helping the malpractice to go on.

This must stop now, insists Prof Saleh, adding that no physicians, outside hospitals, should be allowed to prescribe high-end antibiotics.

"There should be a separate list of antibiotics for the registered doctors, consultants and the doctors at the hospitals. Most probably, this is the only way we can save the remaining few drugs in our hands, until a new drug is there," he said.

It takes years of painstaking research and billions of dollars in investment to invent an antibiotic, develop a drug and market it for people's

Commercial viability up in the air

FROM PAGE 1

and CEO Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal said the 298 seater flight will carry only 120 to 130 passengers to Toronto as it would also have to carry a huge amount of fuel, weight of luggage, and others.

The aircraft, however, will be able to carry around 210 passengers while returning to Dhaka, he added.

Mahbub Jahan Khan said Biman has set the two-way price of economy class base fare at Tk 120,647, premium economy class at Tk 183,530 and business class Tk 268,547 for the route.

The airfare will be further increased during operations of commercial flights.

Aviation expert ATM Nazrul Islam asked whether passengers concerned about prices, especially students and Bangladeshis living in Canada, would choose Biman on the route with an additional \$200 to \$300 payment in the premium class compared to other airlines.

"Has Biman conducted any market analysis or study before fixing its airfare?" he questioned.

He said many passengers might choose other foreign carriers because of less fare with a stopover of two to three hours in their hub airports.

Dhaka airport sources said Turkish Airlines, Qatar and Emirates were now operating flights to Canada

with a stopover in their respective countries.

Biman MD told The Daily Star that they were trying to get the fifth freedom facilities from Canadian authorities.

The fifth freedom facility guarantees the right to fly between two foreign countries when the flight is originating or terminating in its home country.

This means airlines can fly between two foreign countries as long as it's part of a larger route from or back to its home country.

"If we can avail this opportunity, this route will be economically viable," he said.

ATM Nazrul said Biman

should conduct study on who would be their target class and fix the fares accordingly.

Biman MD said in the experimental flight they would assess all those issues and launch regular commercial flights on the basis of the assessment from June.

Previously, Biman had operated flights to Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Yangon, Japan, Delhi and different other destinations, but those routes were suspended later as they were incurring losses.

Biman flights to New York have remained suspended since July 2006 for similar reasons.

No one can play

FROM PAGE 1

Gono Bhaban. The Cabinet Committee on Golden Jubilee of Independence organised the event as part of the closing ceremony of the celebrations to mark 50 years of independence.

Bangladesh is now advancing towards development and prosperity at an irresistible pace, Hasina said, while urging the new generation to keep up the pace.

She said the present government is forging ahead as per the constitution laid out by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman nine months after the independence.

The Awami League-led government has given plans for future generations such as the Delta Plan 2100 and the eighth five-year plan, the PM said.

"We have implemented the Vision 2021, we have entered the satellite era,

we are building a nuclear power plant, we are doing infrastructural development, we are creating employment opportunities, we are setting up hundred economic zones."

The country needs to be advanced in all sectors, particularly education, knowledge, technology and science, Hasina said.

AKM Mozammel Haque, chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Golden Jubilee of Independence and also the Liberation War affairs minister, chaired the event, while Khaja Miah, secretary of the ministry, delivered the welcome address.

Tapan Kanti Ghosh, member secretary of the committee and also a senior secretary to the commerce ministry, spoke at the event.

At the onset of the ceremony, the theme song of the 50-year celebration of independence was played, while an audio-visual was screened.

Thousands flee after Philippine volcano erupts

AFP, Laurel

Thousands of people fled their homes near a Philippine volcano Saturday after an eruption sent ash and steam hundreds of metres into the sky.

Taal volcano, which sits in a picturesque lake south of Manila, exploded with a "short-lived" burst at 7:22 am (2322 GMT), the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said in a statement.

It warned further eruptions were possible, which it said could trigger dangerous, fast-moving volcanic flows of gas, ash and debris, as well as a tsunami.

Residents in five fishing and farming settlements around the lake were ordered to leave their homes, in the third mass evacuation in as many years around one of the country's most active volcanoes.



President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pay tributes to the Liberation War martyrs at National Memorial in Savar yesterday morning.

PHOTO: PID

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

President, PM pay homage to martyrs

AGENCIES

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid rich tributes to the Liberation War martyrs at Savar's National Memorial yesterday morning.

The head of the state first placed a wreath at the altar of the memorial, followed by the prime minister, marking the 52nd Independence and National Day, reports BSS.

After placing wreaths, the president and the prime minister stood in solemn silence for a while, as a mark of profound respect to the memories of the martyrs of the Liberation War.

A smartly turned-out contingent drawn from the Bangladesh Army, Navy and the Air Force paid the state salute on the occasion, while the bugles played the last post.

HASINA PAYS HOMAGE TO BANGABANDHU

The country celebrated the 52nd Independence and National Day yesterday, with a fresh vow to take the nation towards prosperity, with the Liberation War's spirit.

On the occasion, the PM also paid tributes to the Father of the Nation by placing a wreath at his portrait in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi-32.

Flanked by party leaders, Hasina, also president of the Awami League, placed another wreath on behalf of the party.

Later, the prime minister entered Bangabandhu Memorial Museum and spent some time there.

Two agencies for similar work

Subway to come under BBA's jurisdiction; experts warn of 'conflict' with DMTCL, which is in charge of metro-rail projects

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) is going to get jurisdiction to carry out feasibility study and construction of the subway, a train-based mass transit system.

Moreover, if a person creates obstacles or hindrances to the construction, development, operation or maintenance of any BBA structure, they may face up to one-year in jail.

The government is set to amend the Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) Act-2016 to bring these changes within the scope of the act. The Bridge Division has already prepared a draft for the amendment and put it up on its website on Thursday

▶▶ Govt set to amend Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) Act

▶▶ BBA already started feasibility study to build subway network

▶▶ It is planning to form company to build infrastructure

▶▶ Giving jurisdiction to BBA will complicate matters, say experts

new decisions.

"Subway is a specialised transport for urban areas," transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque told The Daily Star yesterday. "Urban transport is not under the purview of BBA. So giving jurisdiction of subway to BBA will complicate the situation."

Although subway or metro rail related issues are dealt by the railways ministry in other countries, the government has already created DMTCL with around 1,900 staffers to build and operate metro rail, he said.

Given this, developing subway under BBA will create a "conflicting situation" and will not serve the original purpose of creating a comprehensive transport network, he added.

Contacted, Bridge Division Secretary Monjur Hossain said they have prepared the draft and shared it with agencies concerned. The draft will be finalised upon receiving their opinions.

Asked about the possibility of conflict between BBA and DMTCL, he told this correspondent yesterday, "The government will take decision in this regard, considering all aspects."

He, however, said subways are already under BBA's jurisdiction, after changes were made in the allocation of business of different ministries and divisions last year, after which the subway was incorporated in the draft.

It is worth noting that many sections of the metro rail projects would be underground. And the new draft mentions that sections of the subway, which is generally supposed to be underground, can be elevated as well. This means that both infrastructures have

similarities in regards to their physical design.

THE DRAFT

As per the existing BBA act, BBA will take initiative for carrying out survey, feasibility study, technical research for bridge (above 1.5km), tunnel, flyover, elevated expressway, causeway and ring road, along with their implementation.

If the proposed amendment is approved, subways will come under BBA's purview.

The draft said two more sub-sections (16-Ka and 16-Kha) will be added after sub-section 16 of section 2, where the definition of different elements are mentioned.

As per the definition mentioned in 16-ka, subways can be expanded on land or be elevated along the underground section.

A new section (28-Ka), as per the draft, will be added to the act after section 28, which sees it as a punishable offence for a person to create obstacle or hindrance to the construction, development, operation or maintenance of any structure of BBA.

For the offence, the offender may get one-year in jail or Tk 2 lakh fine or both, reads the draft.

Besides, eight more amendments were mentioned in the draft.

SUBWAY PLAN

Instructed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, BBA originally assigned a consortium to carry out the feasibility study and preliminary design of the 90-km subway. However, the project got revised later, after it carried out a feasibility study for a 238-km subway network project at the cost of Tk 321 crore.

In the draft feasibility study submitted on March 15, they proposed a 258-km subway network consisting of 11 routes.

At a programme on March 24 last year, BBA officials said the 130-km MRT network should be complemented with a subway system for better coverage and connectivity. They have already sent a proposal to Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority to incorporate the subway in the revised strategic transport plan (RSTP).

Though the construction of a subway network has long been discussed, the option was not included in the RSTP for Dhaka approved in 2015, reportedly because it is not feasible for an unplanned city like Dhaka.

Towards peace and prosperity World leaders greet Bangladesh on Independence Day

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

World leaders have greeted Bangladeshi people and its leadership on the country's Independence Day, pledging to boost their relationship with Bangladesh for prosperity and stability.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said his country is committed to expanding ties with Bangladesh so that both nations can thrive together.

"Both of our countries emerged after intense struggles for independence and we both strive to live up to our founding democratic ideals," he said in a message yesterday.

Over the last five decades, the two countries continued cooperation in ensuring a safer and more prosperous future and it will continue for the generations to come, Blinken said, while applauding Bangladesh's impressive economic and developmental achievements.

Lauding the country's commitment to keeping the world safe as the largest contributor to peacekeeping operations, the US Secretary of State said, "Our defence, developmental, commercial and people-to-people partnership is stronger than ever."

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin has congratulated President Md Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He emphasised that the relations between Russia and Bangladesh are based on the good traditions of friendship and mutual respect.

He expressed confidence that through joint efforts, governments of the two countries will ensure further development of constructive bilateral cooperation in political, trade, economic, humanitarian and other spheres.

"This cooperation undoubtedly meets the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

“ Although subway or metro rail related issues are dealt by the railways ministry in other countries, the government has already created DMTCL with around 1,900 staffers to build and operate metro rail. Given this, developing subway under BBA will create a “conflicting situation” and will not serve the original purpose of creating a comprehensive transport network.

PROF SHAMSUL HOQUE, Transport Expert

to get public opinion.

The development comes at a time when BBA has already started a feasibility study to build a subway network in Dhaka and adjacent areas. A seminar over the final draft of the study will be held on Tuesday, which was initiated in 2018.

Besides, BBA is also planning to form a company to implement its plan to build the network, though there is a separate government company – Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) – tasked with developing a 130-km underground and elevated metro rail network in Dhaka and adjacent areas.

Meanwhile, experts have raised questions over the

Two DU students beaten up at dorm

UNB, Dhaka

Two residential students of Dhaka University (DU) were allegedly beaten up by 10-12 people at Bijoy Ekattor Hall yesterday morning.

One of the injured, Akhlaquzzaman Anik told the news agency that the attackers were followers of the dormitory unit BCL president Sajibur Rahman Sajib.

"They entered my room around 8:30am and beat me up me badly," he added.

Anik was later taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital by other students and teachers.

On the possible reason for the attack, Anik said, "Three days ago, one of the attackers went to Suhrawardy Udyan with a female friend. He later claimed that I abused them there."

Sajib, however, said the hall administration would take actions against the perpetrators of the alleged attack. "We will co-operate with the authorities in their probe."

Contacted, Bijoy Ekattor Hall provost Prof Dr Abdul Bashir said, "I have heard about the attack but did not receive any written complaint yet."



No Covid deaths for 9 days since Mar 15: DGHS

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh has reported no Covid-19 deaths in nine out of the past 12 days.

The country also reported 102 Covid positive cases in the past 24 hours.

"The country logged zero virus-related fatality nine times between March 15 and 26... meaning deaths were only reported on March 18, March 20 and March 23," said sources at Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Bangladesh reported 0.89 percent Covid-19 positive cases, as 7,336 samples were tested in the past 24 hours.

The country also recorded zero coronavirus deaths for the first time on November 20, 2021 since

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



As summer approaches with an unsettling heat, some refreshment in the form of freshly made cold lemonades have been an attraction to many. These two high-schoolers were seen sharing a smile with their vendor while getting a glass of cold lemonade from him. The photo was taken in Dhaka University's TSC area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'A govt for people, by people'

BNP vows to restore democracy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the

party will restore democracy, free Khaleda Zia and bring its acting chairman Tarique Rahman back to the country.

He was talking to the media after paying homage to the martyrs at the National Memorial in Savar around 9:30am.

"We are paying homage to the martyrs after 50 years of independence.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

RU BCL: the food snatchers?

Students claim Chhatra League men took away their food for Independence Day celebrations

RU CORRESPONDENT

Chhatra League leaders and activists of Rajshahi University (RU) unit have been accused of snatching food allotted for residential students at Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, on occasion of the university's Independence Day celebrations.

According to the provost of the hall, Prof Ekramul Islam, the incident occurred yesterday afternoon under direction of Chirantan Chanda, president of RU BCL unit of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, and Momin Islam, general secretary of the unit.

The authorities had allotted special meals for residential students of 17 halls of the university. Every student had to collect a token for Tk 30.

However, approximately 20 to 22 BCL activists, led by Chirantan and Momin, forcibly snatched 100-120 packets of food while residential students were waiting outside, according to eyewitnesses. As a result, at least 100 of the hall's residents were left hungry, said students.

In this regard, Chirantan said, "We didn't take any extra packets." RU BCL president Golam Kibria said, "As far as I know, BCL leaders and workers did not take any extra food. If any such incident occurred, action will be taken against them, subject to finding evidence."

However, hall provost Prof Ekramul said, "When the distribution of food started in the hall, BCL leaders and activists came and demanded 200 packets of food."

They didn't have any token, but continued to demand extra food. At one point, about 20 to 22 of them came and took away many packets of food without tokens. "We have already informed the matter to the university administration. They will take further action," he added.



Crowds gather to cheer for their favourite team at a traditional game of ha-du-du on Aronghata Primary School field in Khulna yesterday. Marking Independence Day, a ha-du-du competition was held where eight teams participated from different districts.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Ismail Ferdous wins World Press Photo award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US-based Bangladeshi photographer Ismail Ferdous has been crowned as regional winner for the year 2022 among 4,066 photographers from 130 countries by World Press Photo Foundation.

The contest - "World Press Photo Contest" - drew 64,823 entries. Twenty-four regional winners from 23 countries were chosen.

Ferdous won the award in North and Central America category for his photo titled "The people who feed the United States" where a migrant sister was seen consoling her ailing brother who was on ventilator for five months due to Covid-19, which cost his job.

Later, his sister left her job to take care of him.



2 more turtles found dead on Kuakata beach

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Two more dead turtles were found floating on the waters of Kuakata beach in Patuakhali on Friday morning and afternoon.

In the last few days, four dead turtles of the same species were found on the beach. Earlier, on the morning of March 21, two of them were found in Gangamati area.

Sagarika Smriti, an associate researcher at World Fish Bangladesh project, confirmed that all four turtles are of the endangered olive ridley species.

"We have collected samples of the turtles, and they will be sent to the forensic lab of the forest department," she said.

She added that they had probably died in a trap. Piyush Kanti Hari, former associate professor of Patuakhali Government College's biology department, said the breeding season for such turtles is mainly in winter. They often get caught in fishers' nets and die.



Work together

Information minister calls upon all to eliminate anti-liberation forces

BSS, Dhaka

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the oath of Independence Day is to eliminate all anti-liberation forces.

He said this while talking to journalists after paying homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his portrait at Dhanmondi road -32 along with central leaders of AL marking Independence Day.

Hasan, also joint general secretary of Awami League, said urged all to work together for the betterment of the country.

CMCH intern doctor held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested an intern doctor of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) from the Intern Doctors' Hostel at CMC in a case filed with Khilkhet Police Station in Dhaka. A team of police from Khilkhet Police Station with the help of Panchlaish Police Station in Chattogram conducted a drive at the hostel and arrested Arnab Paul, 24, an intern doctor of the hospital, around 1:00am said Sadekur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Panchlaish Police Station.

Arnab was having an affair with a university student, he said, adding that as the relationship came to an end, the woman filed a case against him under the Pornography Control Act, 2012 in February.

The woman, in the case statement, alleged that Arnab used to blackmail her using the videos he recorded during their period of intimacy, said the police officer. He was taken to Dhaka after being arrested.

A govt for people

FROM PAGE 3

At the same time, we have taken an oath that we will liberate democracy again, in the same way we liberated the country 50 years ago through the Liberation War," said

Fakhru.

"We will bring Tarique Rahman back to the country and establish a neutral government through an election for the people of the country," he said.

President, PM

FROM PAGE 3
HASINA GREETS FREEDOM FIGHTERS

On the occasion, the prime minister also greeted all the freedom fighters.

As in the past, she sent flowers, fruits and sweets to the war-wounded freedom fighters and members of the martyred families at Martyred and War-wounded Freedom Fighters' Rehabilitation Centre (Muktijoddha Tower-1) on Gaznavi Road in the capital's Mohammadpur area.

The PM's assistant private secretary-2 Gazi

Hafizur Rahman Liku and assistant press secretary ABM Sarwer-e-Alom Sarkar handed over the items to them, reports UNB.

PM UNVEILS POSTAGE STAMP
Hasina also unveiled a commemorative postage stamp on Salimpur Wireless Station, the receiving and transmitting station of the declaration of independence by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

She released the stamp of Tk 10, along with an opening day cover of Tk 10 and a data card of Tk 5.

A fitting

FROM PAGE 5

Ex-Divisional Superintendent of the workshop Monjur Ul Alam Chowdhury, now additional director general at Dhaka's Rail Bhawan, initiated the project. He said the 19-foot tall structure was designed

by a panel of rail staffers. It features a red coloured rising sun, symbolising the vigorous creation of the nation. At its left is a rail engine, while at the right is a rail carriage, with a gear at the head, symbolising progress.

Towards peace

FROM PAGE 3

interests of their people, and goes in line with the promotion of regional stability and security," Putin said.

India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar extended greetings to his Bangladesh counterpart Dr AK Abdul Momen and the people of the country.

Taking to Twitter, Jaishankar said he looks forward to working together to add more pages to the golden chapter of India-Bangladesh Maitri.

Bangladesh and India are committed to further strengthening and consolidating the existing excellent relations that are founded on commonalities of values, culture and

legacies based on mutual trust, respect and understanding, he said.

Leaders of UAE, on separate messages, congratulated President and Prime Minister of Bangladesh. The UAE is also celebrating Bangladesh's Independence Day by illuminating the red and green flag on its tallest building.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE President; Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler of Dubai and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, have sent similar messages to both President and Prime Minister.

Never forget

FROM PAGE 5

inaugurated the museum chairperson of Batiaghata Sadar union, told this correspondent, "We should do our best to preserve evidence of the 1971 genocide and torture, identify and build a database on slaughterhouses and mass graves, and spread awareness of our genocide all over the world."

Rare memorabilia and images of genocide and torture are displayed at the museum, including 10,000 photographs and 30 oil paintings across eight galleries, as well as some 10,300 books on the war.

Over 300 audio-visual CDs enrich the collection, while a sales centre has been opened to sell books and souvenirs.

Renowned historian Prof Muntassir Mamoon

inaugurated the museum on May 17, 2014 at a temporary rented house at Moilapota in the city. It shifted to its own 21 decimal land, on a two-storey house allotted by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 27, 2015. The new premises opened to visitors on March 26, 2016.

Prof Mamoon, chairman of the trustee board that runs the institution, said, "The aim of the museum is to educate people, especially youths, about the genocide committed by the Pakistan army in association with their local collaborators."

The museum is open daily from 10:00am to 6:00pm, except Monday, while on Friday it is open from 3:00pm to 7:00pm. The entrance fee is Tk 5.



রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ

আর.ডি.এ ভবন
বনলতা বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, রাজশাহী
www.rda.rajshahidiv.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-২৫.৪০.০০০০.০০৬.৪৫.০০১.১৪-০১৯

আবাসিক প্রুট বরাদ্দের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা আহ্বায়ী বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের আওতাধীন রাজশাহী বাইপাস সংযোগ সড়ক সংলগ্ন পূর্ব দিকে বড়বনগ্রাম মৌজায় অবস্থিত "বারনই আবাসিক এলাকা উন্নয়ন" প্রকল্পের আবাসিক প্রুট বরাদ্দের জন্য নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

বারনই আবাসিক এলাকা উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পে ইতিপূর্বে শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরি ভিত্তিক ১৭০টি প্রুট বরাদ্দ প্রদান করা হয় এবং তার মধ্যে ৫টি প্রুট দুটি শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরিতে ফাঁকা হয়। উক্ত শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরি মধ্যে হতে সরকারি কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী (কর্মরত), শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরিতে (কর্মবেশী ৪.০০ কাঠার ১টি, ৩.০০ কাঠার ২টি) ও (তিন)টি প্রুট এবং ব্যবসায়ী শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরিতে (কর্মবেশী ৪.০০ কাঠার একটি, ২.৫০ কাঠার একটি) ২ (দুই)টি প্রুটসহ মোট ৫ (পাঁচ)টি প্রুট ফাঁকা/বাতিল হয়। ফাঁকা/বাতিল হওয়া ৫ (পাঁচ)টি প্রুট পুনরায় সরকারি কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী (কর্মরত) এবং ব্যবসায়ী শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরিতে প্রুট বরাদ্দ গ্রহণে আহ্বায়ী বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। সরকারি কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী (কর্মরত) ক্যাটাগরি থেকে প্রসপেক্টাসের ২নং ক্রমিকের সরকারি কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী (কর্মরত) ক্যাটাগরি ব্যতীত আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী আবেদন করতে পারবেন না। উক্ত প্রকল্পে প্রতি কাঠা জমির মূল্য =১০,৩৫,০০০/- (দশ লক্ষ পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) টাকা। আবেদনপত্র ও প্রসপেক্টাস অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, আরডিএ ভবন শাখা, রাজশাহী হতে নগদ =২,৫০০/- (দুই হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা দিয়ে আগামী ২৭/০৪/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত (ব্যাংক লেনদেন চলাকালীন সময়ে) সংগ্রহ ও ৫নং ক্রমিকের বর্ণিত স্থানে জমা প্রদান করা যাবে। এছাড়াও আবেদনপত্র ও প্রসপেক্টাস রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের ওয়েবসাইট (www.rdarajshahidiv.gov.bd) থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। তবে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে আবেদনপত্রের মূল্য বাবদ =২,৫০০/- (দুই হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা চেয়ারম্যান, রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ হিসাব নং-০২০০০০৫৬২৯০৮৩ অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, আরডিএ ভবন শাখা, রাজশাহী বরাবরে অনলাইন এ জমা প্রদান করে রশিদের কপি আবেদনপত্র ও প্রসপেক্টাসের সাথে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে। আবাসিক প্রুট বরাদ্দ সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য মৌলিক তথ্যাদি আবেদনপত্র ও প্রসপেক্টাসে উল্লেখ থাকবে।

২। কোনো আবেদনকারী তাহার নিজ নামে অথবা তাহার স্ত্রী/স্বামী বা নির্ভরশীল পুত্র বা কন্যা বা পোষ্যের নামে অথবা বোনামে সরকারি বা স্বায়ত্তশাসিত কোনো সংস্থা অথবা কর্তৃপক্ষের কোনো প্রকল্প হইতে রাজশাহী সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকায় কোনো প্রুট, অ্যাপার্টমেন্ট বা ফ্ল্যাট বরাদ্দ পাইয়া থাকিলে তিনি প্রুট বরাদ্দের জন্য আবেদন করিতে পারিবেন না।

৩। কোনো আবেদনকারী তাহার নিজ নামে অথবা তাহার স্ত্রী/স্বামী বা নির্ভরশীল পুত্র বা কন্যা বা পোষ্যের নামে রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের অধিক্ষেত্রে মধ্যে রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ বা অন্য কোন সরকারি বা আধা-সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানের কোন প্রুট বা ফ্ল্যাট বা জমি অতীতে উল্লিখিত উপায়ে অর্জন করার পর তা হস্তান্তর করলে তিনি এ প্রকল্পে প্রুটের জন্য আবেদন করতে পারিবেন না।

৪। আবেদনকারীর বয়স বিজ্ঞপ্তির তারিখে ন্যূনতম ২৫ (পঁচিশ) বৎসর হতে হবে।

৫। দরখাস্ত জমা দেওয়ার স্থান এবং প্রুটের কাঠা প্রতি জামানত নিম্নে উল্লেখ করা হলোঃ

দরখাস্ত জমা দেওয়ার স্থান	জামানতের পরিমাণ (প্রতি কাঠা)	বরাদ্দ বিষয়
এস্টেট শাখা, রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ, বনলতা বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, রাজশাহী	কাঠা প্রতি=১,০০,০০০/- (এক লক্ষ) টাকা	আবেদনপত্র প্রাপ্তির পর প্রসপেক্টাসে বর্ণিত শ্রেণি/ক্যাটাগরি বিপরীতে বৈধ আবেদনকারীগণকে নির্ধারিত পদ্ধতিতে প্রুট বরাদ্দ প্রদান করা হবে। বরাদ্দ তালিকা প্রকাশের পূর্বে যে কোন আবেদনকারী আবেদন প্রত্যাহারসহ জামানতের অর্থ ফেরত নিতে পারবেন। তবে কোন ক্ষেত্রেই সুদ প্রদান করা হবে না।

অসম্পূর্ণ ও ভুল তথ্য সম্বলিত আবেদন বাতিল হিসেবে গণ্য হবে।

৬। জামানতের টাকা চেয়ারম্যান, রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ হিসাব নং-০২০০০০৫৬২৯০৮৩ অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, আরডিএ ভবন শাখা, রাজশাহী এর অনুকূলে যে কোন তফসিলভূক্ত/বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক হতে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/ডিডি (কালেকশন চার্জ ব্যতীত) আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। অন্যান্য আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

৭। ডাকযোগে আবেদনপত্র ও প্রসপেক্টাস প্রেরণ করা যাবে এক্ষেত্রে আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখের মধ্যেই এস্টেট শাখা, রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের পৌছাতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণের নির্ধারিত তারিখের পর আর কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

৮। যাচাই-বাহাইকৃত আবেদনকারীগণের মধ্যে বরাদ্দযোগ্য প্রুট লটারির মাধ্যমে বরাদ্দ দেওয়া হবে। লটারির তারিখ এবং ফলাফল রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের ওয়েবসাইট ও নোটিশ বোর্ডে হতে জানা যাবে।

৯। রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন অথবা সকল আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

১০। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ আবেদন দাখিলের দিন সরকারি ছুটি ঘোষিত হলে বা ব্যাংক কার্যক্রম বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী প্রথম কার্যদিবসে যথাক্রমে বর্ণিত সময় ও স্থানে আবেদনপত্র ফরম গ্রহণ ও জমা প্রদান করা যাবে।


মোঃ আনওয়ার হোসেন
 চেয়ারম্যান
 রাজশাহী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ

জিডি-৫৮০

RMG FACTORY BUILDING FOR RENT

77,000 SFT FACTORY BUILDING SUITABLE FOR FACTORY AND WARE HOUSE WITH GAS & POWER, READY TO START PRODUCTION. LOCATED IN TONGI BSCIC, GAZIPUR

CONTACT: 01960-545454, +88-02-55110635



Mr. Mahbubur Rahman
5th January 1940 - 27th March 2021

Today, the 27th of March is the 1st death anniversary of National Leader, Former Minister, Illustrious legal practitioner, Social Reformer and Philanthropist, **Mr. Mahbubur Rahman**.

The owner of a charismatic political career and architect of Chatkhil Upazila, left us this day last year. On the death anniversary of the great actor of twist and turns of historical events, we express our love and gratitude. All members of his family seek your blessings for his place in heaven and eternal peace.



The area surrounding Dulahazara canal has been subjected to rampant sand extraction. Its lessee has denied doing it himself, saying he realises fees from the trucks that carry the sand out of there. This has not only devastated the canal, but the damage has stretched as far as the walls of the Dulahazara safari park. PHOTO: COLLECTED

'LEGALISING' illegal sand mining

Local influentials prey upon protected forests using 'lease' papers; rake in Tk 180cr in 5 years

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

In the last five years, local influential people have raked in Tk 180 crore by ripping apart Fasiakhali and Fulchhari forests using a lease document, which Forest Department has repeatedly been trying to get cancelled, but in vain.

Two canals – Dulahazara and Paglir Bil – that Cox's Bazar district administration had leased out to Jubo League leaders don't have any sand left anymore. Locals alleged that armed by the lease document, the lessees have been preying upon the protected forests.

Every day, hundreds of trucks make around 500 trips with sand from the two canals. Each trip brings Tk 2,000 for the lessees, with the amount totalling to Tk 10 lakh by the end of the day, Tk 36 crore a year, and Tk 180 crore in the last

Two canals – Dulahazara and Paglir Bil – that Cox's Bazar district administration had leased out to Jubo League leaders don't have any sand left anymore. Locals alleged that armed by the lease document, the lessees have been preying upon the protected forests.

five years, locals said.

Kaochar Uddin Kochir, general secretary of Chakaria upazila unit of Jubo League, was granted the lease of Dulahazara canal, while leaders Nurul Alam and Jafar Alam got the lease of Paglir Bil canal.

Contacted, Nurul admitted that they mine sand from a nearby orchard,



though they only got lease for a canal. Asked why, he said they pay money to the orchard owner for this. However, he refused to provide the owner's name.

Meanwhile, Kochir denied extracting sand himself, saying he only realises a Tk 100 fee from each truck.

Asked whether he is aware of the devastation caused by the sand extraction, he said authorities will take action if any environmental harm is being caused.

PLEAS TO CANCEL LEASE IGNORED

As per the documents obtained by The Daily Star, the Forest Department has repeatedly been writing letters to Cox's Bazar district and Chakaria upazila administrations since 2013 to cancel the lease and save the forest, its wildlife and Dulahazara safari park.

However, they have not paid any heed. In August 2021, forest staffers came under attack when they tried to stop

the sand mining, prompting the department to file cases with Chakaria Police Station, accusing 11 people.

Raiquul Islam Chowdhury, divisional forest officer of Chattogram Nature and Wildlife Conservation wing of Forest Department, told The Daily Star, "The damage is so severe that we may not be able to save the park, unless we can stop the sand extraction. The perpetrators keep showing the document to legalise their illegal sand mining."

"We've sought cooperation from the police and local lawmakers. All assured us of taking necessary action, but there

is no reflection of their assurance in reality," he said.

Contacted, Rahat Uz Zaman, assistant commissioner (land) of Chakaria upazila, said to the best of his knowledge, he did not receive any letter from the Forest Department.

"We have asked them to give us an assessment report of the damage being caused by the sand extraction. We can't cancel the lease all of a sudden. But we are thinking about cancelling it to save the environment," he said.

Cox's Bazar district administration leased out seven streams in Khutakhali and Dulahazara union of Chakaria, which earns the government Tk 99 lakh per year, Chakaria land office sources said.

The rampant sand extraction has even triggered landslides adjacent to Dulahazara Bangabandhu Safari Park, collapsing its 100-foot long boundary wall and creating a 20 to 25-foot deep gorge where wildlife could tread and die anytime.

Forest officials said another wall may fall down due to the mining.

The Quarries and Earth Management Law-2010 prohibits extraction of sand from forests and from spots where flora and fauna could be disrupted. Any violation of the law will strip the lessee off the lease agreement.



Never forget

Genocide museum in Khulna preserving memories of the Liberation War

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

A microphone used in Bangabandhu's March 7 speech, indigenous weapons used in the resistance war, clothes and telephone sets used by freedom fighters, transmitters used in refugee camps, letter from then Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed to his wife on the white part of an empty cigarette box, which says, "Johra, if you can, join the seven and a half crore Bangalees."

All this and more are on display at "1971: Genocide-Torture Archives and Museums" in Khulna.

Museum authorities say it is the first and sole genocide museum in South Asia.

Beyond the hopeful artefacts, there's also the tragic. Skulls and bones from mass graves, boiler of the platinum jute mill used to burn people alive, and even a blueprint copy of Nizami's genocide, the museum evokes intense emotions within its visitors.

Monoranjan Mondal, a freedom fighter and former

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



The museum is situated in the same area where the Chuknagar killing field is located. Beyond photographs and documents, it features numerous remnants of the war, including broken pieces from bunkers used during that time. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

A fitting memorial



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The "Adommya Swadhinata" was completed a few years ago. Located beside Saidpur Rail Workshop's main gate, it honours 178 martyrs of the workshop who laid down their lives during the Liberation War.

The memorial was built as a voluntary initiative by workers and officials of the workshop. Fittingly, they built it using remnants of old and damaged rail engines and carriages.

Some of the material was also taken from burnt coaches damaged during agitation programmes of political parties in recent years.

Like every year, the workshop staffers marked Independence Day by placing floral wreaths at the monument at dawn and holding a discussion afterwards.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Art camp held at Savar National Memorial

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

An art camp was held marking Independence Day at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday.

Shilpakala Academy organised the event in collaboration with Dhaka district administration and Dhaka district police. Around 20 students from various universities took part in the camp.

Mahbubur Rahman, guide lecturer at Department of Fine Arts of Shilpakala Academy, told The Daily Star that the academy hosts camps like this every year.

This year, the camp's theme was the Golden Jubilee of Independence. Due to its location, the camp attracted a huge number of visitors.

The paintings painted here will be kept at Shilpakala Academy's art gallery and will later be displayed in several exhibitions, Mahbubur said.

Afroza Nazneen, an art student of University of Development Alternative, said she drew a painting of her father's index finger, as he was a freedom fighter.

Cycle rally marks Independence Day in M'singh



OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

Marking Independence Day, more than 150 youths participated in a bicycle rally in Mymensingh city yesterday morning.

It was organised by Dhaka Round Table and Mymensingh City Cyclists, sponsored by Duranto Bicycle.

The inaugural ceremony was addressed by Harun-ur-Rashid, police superintendent, Mymensingh deputy inspector general (DIG) office.

কমার্শিয়াল পুট বিক্রয়

প্রগতি স্মরণী, মধ্য-বাজডা মেইন রোডে
কমার্শিয়াল ৮.৫০ কাঠার পুট জরুরী
ভিত্তিতে বিক্রি হবে। সরাসরি ক্রেতাগণ
যোগাযোগ করুন (নো-মিডিয়া)

০১৭৫৫-৫১৯ ৭৩৩



'Biye Ami Korbo Na', an Eid tele-fiction directed by Sohel Hasan, features Niloy Alamgir and Jannatul Sumaiya Himi, among others. PHOTO: COLLECTED



Salahuddin Lavlu has finished shooting for 'Haradhoner Ekti Bagan' with Chanchal Chowdhury and Shahnaz Khushi, among others. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Cameras roll for Eid productions

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Shooting for Eid-Ul-Fitr productions have begun in full swing. After two years of the coronavirus pandemic, cast and crew members are spending



Apurba and Sabila Nur on the sets of 'Aghoton'. PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

busy days at various shooting spots in the country, including Pubail and Gazipur. Makers are looking to explore different storylines and genres.

Shihab Shaheen just finished shooting for his Eid special tele-fiction "Aghoton" at Uttara. The single-episode production features Ziaul Faruq Apurba and Sabila Nur. "This production is a comedy, and I hope the audience enjoys watching it as much as we enjoyed making it," says Apurba, from the sets.

"I think Shihab Shaheen's work is amazing, and this production is no different," shares Sabila Nur.

Salahuddin Lavlu has finished shooting for "Haradhoner Ekti Bagan" with Chanchal Chowdhury and Shahnaz Khushi, among others. He will soon begin shooting for his other Eid projects.

"The pandemic interrupted a lot of our work," shares Chanchal Chowdhury. "I hope things turn out to be different this year."

Mehazabien Chowdhury usually makes notable appearances in one-hour television productions throughout the year. However, she is yet to be seen in any series on television. The actress has started shooting for Eid specials, and will be seen opposite Apurba in a Muhidul Islam directorial project, among many others.

"Biye Ami Korbo Na", an Eid tele-fiction directed by Sohel Hasan, features Niloy Alamgir and Jannatul Sumaiya Himi, among others.

Mosharraf Karim will be starring in multiple special productions this Eid, including "Passport", "Ohom", and "Gorom Shorkar". All of them are directed by Shamim Zaman.

"Actors are born to perform, and I am a fish in the same pond," he says. "However, I never compromise when it comes to choosing characters and scripts."

Zahid Hasan has never disappointed his fans when it comes to Eid television specials. Apart from playing charming roles, he also looks to direct various productions.

He has been preparing for his directorial ventures and plans to start shooting for them soon. "I will be seen on screen in one of my own directorial projects this time," says an excited Zahid Hasan.

Fazlur Rahman Babu has been reigning over the silver screen, television, theatre, and streaming platforms for a while. The noted actor has started shooting for his Eid productions from today. He will be busy with back-to-back shoots at different locations across and outside Dhaka, including Uttara, Pubail, and Sreemangal.

Mir Sabbir will star in two television serials this Eid, directed by Barna Nath and Saidur Rahman Russel. "I will also start shooting for one of my directorial ventures from next month," he adds.

Music world pays tribute to Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Fellow musicians paid tribute to Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins across social media. He passed away at the age of 50. The noted drummer's death was announced by the band in the midst of a festival tour of South America.

Miley Cyrus, who was part of the lineup alongside Foo Fighters at the Estereo Picnic festival in Bogota, Columbia, said she would dedicate her March 26 show to him.

Members of rock band Nickelback said they were in "utter disbelief" at the news.

Former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr also expressed his condolences and wished "peace and love" for those close to Hawkins.

"God bless Taylor," he wrote.



Daniel Craig as James Bond in 'No Time To Die'. PHOTO: COLLECTED

James Bond reality show in the works

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Amazon's Prime Video recently announced a James Bond-inspired reality competition series, "007's Road to a Million."

The international race will span eight episodes with contestants vying to win £1 million in cash. They will compete in two-person teams and be tasked with passing physical obstacles as well as answering questions hidden in different locations.

Production for the show is slated to begin later this year. Bond producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson are attached to it.

The series is set to be filmed at historic sites featured throughout the Bond franchise.

NEWS

Online sales

FROM PAGE 12
Currently, the BR is supposed to sell 50 percent tickets at the counters and the rest online.

Contacted, Sardar Shahadat Ali, additional director general (operations) of BR, admitted that people were not getting tickets through online.

"They [the vendor] said they were working on the issue, but could not tell when it would be fixed," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Contacted, Farhat Ahmed, manager (public relations) at Shohoz Limited, said the website received around 22 lakh traffic within a few minutes.

"This could be a result of a cyber-attack too," he said.

DB makes

FROM PAGE 12

Local ruling party men have alleged that law enforcers picked up some ward-level leaders of AL and its front organisations. However, law enforcers didn't claim any arrest over the incident as of yet.

Tipu was shot dead while he was returning home at Khilgaon Bagichha by his microbus from his restaurant in Motijheel AGB Colony area around 10:15pm on Thursday.

At that time, a rickshaw passenger Samia Afran Jamal Prity, 22, was also shot. She was later declared dead in hospital.

Tipu's wife Farhana Islam Doly, also the councillor of wards 1, 11, 12 (Motijheel area) of Dhaka South City Corporation, filed a case with Shahjahanpur Police Station in connection with the killing.

Party activists and family members said political feuds within the party could be a reason behind Tipu's murder.

Small farmers in a vicious trap

FROM PAGE 1
Department yesterday said, "We've noticed one sort of feudal system emerging in the Barind villages."

Farmers are losing crops and land to the system as they keep struggling to survive, he said, adding that many operators exploit farmers taking advantage of the water crisis in the region.

He said areas in Nachol and Gomostapur upazilas in Chapainawabganj; Tanore and Godagari in Rajshahi; and Porsha, Sapahar, and Niamatpur upazilas in Naogaon, have severe water shortages.

Bimol Hasda, a farmer in Issoripur village, said he had to wait for 15 days to get water to his Boro field. "I needed water for at least two hours, but was given only for one hour."

Bimol now fears he might have a poor yield, like he had last year. "If this continues, I will have nowhere to go. I don't know how I will feed my family."

The government's Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) appointed operators for its 16,000 deep tube-wells in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, earning around Tk 150 crore in revenues annually.

Humans infect animals more

FROM PAGE 12
might give the virus extra chances to evolve new variants.

In order to better understand the risk of human-to-wildlife pathogen transmission, scientists assessed published reports on such spillback events and described nearly 100 different cases where diseases have jumped from humans back into wild animals.

"To help guide conversations and policy surrounding spillback of our pathogens in the future, we went digging through the literature to see how the process has manifested in the past," study senior author Gregory Albery from Georgetown University said in a statement.

The findings, published on Tuesday in the Ecology Letters journal, revealed that nearly half the 97 incidents reported in the new study occurred in

More than half of those tube-wells are in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon districts where water for irrigation is scarce, said BMDA sources, adding that there are also around 56,000 private irrigation wells approved by upazila irrigation committees.

Experts and development activists working in the region said money and politics come into play in picking operators.

Several farmers said many became extremely rich within years after installing water pumps in their areas.

Mazed Ali of Godagari's Jogpur village said, "The well works like oil mines for many. Their owners are denying us water. They are making huge money within a short period of time after forcing us to sell our land."

In cases, the operators would help well-off farmers buy or take lease of such land, in exchange of money, he said.

They also illegally take crops from farmers for meeting costs of maintenance of equipment needed to supply water to the fields. Besides, they take money from them when the

tube-wells go out of order. The farmers also said they have to pay more for the water, which is supplied to their land through dug-up paths.

For example, a private pump owner charges them Tk 110 for one hour of water, whereas it should be around Tk 28.

BMDA provided smart cards to farmers for getting the water, but the operators don't let them use it. Rather, the operators somehow collect the cards themselves and take cash from those seeking water, they said.

Contacted, BMDA Executive Director Abdur Rashid said they receive complaints from farmers in this regard. "We terminated one or two operators, but complaints keep coming."

"We will look into the matter."

Speaking to The Daily Star in front of his two-storey home, the only concrete building in Godagari's Issoripur village, Sakhawat denied depriving farmers of irrigation water.

Asked about the delay in supplying water to Abhinath's field, he said, "We have to maintain serial numbers as the demand for water is always high."

The facts of the 1971 genocide are well documented and yet it has not been recognised in the UN discourses, said Rabab Fatima, permanent representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, said in a webinar.

"We believe UN's mandate to advance prevention will be incomplete if the past tragedies, such as ours, remain unrecognised."

The programme was organised to mark National Genocide Day.

In April 1971, Sir Peter Shore, MP, who was the chair of the UK's Foreign Affairs Committee, moved a motion in the UK parliament condemning atrocities committed in erstwhile East Pakistan, followed by another motion, supported by over 233 cross-party members, calling for the end of genocide in East Bengal and the recognition of Bangladesh, said Saida Muna Tasneem, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK, in another event commemorating the day.

Human-to-primate transmission events accounted for more than half of the 97 cases - an unsurprising result since pathogens find it easier to jump between closely-related hosts and because wild populations of endangered great apes are carefully monitored.

captivity settings like zoos, where veterinarians keep a close eye on animals' health and are more likely to notice when a virus makes the jump.

Human-to-primate transmission events accounted for more than half of the 97 cases - an unsurprising result since pathogens find it easier to jump between closely-related hosts and because wild populations of endangered great apes are carefully monitored.

stronger understanding of our collective heritage. And Bangladesh and its growing community is a part of our collective heritage," she added.

Adam Muller, director of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba; Jeremy Maron, curator at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights; and Imtiaz Ahmed, director at the Centre for Genocide Studies of Dhaka University, were also present.

Meanwhile, in two separate events on Friday, the Bangladesh high commissioner in the UK and Bangladesh's permanent representative to the UN urged the international community to recognise the 1971 genocide.

Recognise

FROM PAGE 2
stronger understanding of our collective heritage. And Bangladesh and its growing community is a part of our collective heritage," she added.

Adam Muller, director of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba; Jeremy Maron, curator at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights; and Imtiaz Ahmed, director at the Centre for Genocide Studies of Dhaka University, were also present.

Meanwhile, in two separate events on Friday, the Bangladesh high commissioner in the UK and Bangladesh's permanent representative to the UN urged the international community to recognise the 1971 genocide.

The facts of the 1971 genocide are well documented and yet it has not been recognised in the UN discourses, said Rabab Fatima, permanent representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, said in a webinar.

"We believe UN's mandate to advance prevention will be incomplete if the past tragedies, such as ours, remain unrecognised."

The programme was organised to mark National Genocide Day.

In April 1971, Sir Peter Shore, MP, who was the chair of the UK's Foreign Affairs Committee, moved a motion in the UK parliament condemning atrocities committed in erstwhile East Pakistan, followed by another motion, supported by over 233 cross-party members, calling for the end of genocide in East Bengal and the recognition of Bangladesh, said Saida Muna Tasneem, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK, in another event commemorating the day.

Human-to-primate transmission events accounted for more than half of the 97 cases - an unsurprising result since pathogens find it easier to jump between closely-related hosts and because wild populations of endangered great apes are carefully monitored.

Households with pre-paid

FROM PAGE 12
for per cubic meter gas to Tk 18 from the existing Tk 12.6 for the pre-paid households. Subsequently, 35-45 cubic metres of gas consumption will set the households back by Tk 630-810 a month.

The Daily Star spoke with a host of pre-paid households and all seemed frustrated with the recommendation.

"We welcomed the pre-paid meters as a good initiative as it reduced our cost on gas drastically. If it becomes a burden to us, nobody will cooperate with the government with such good initiatives later," said Tuhin Rahman, a pre-paid meter user at the capital's West Nakhla para.

Meanwhile, the BERC recommended hiking the tariff for double burners at non-metered households to Tk 1,080 from 950 and to Tk 990 from Tk 925 for a single burner.

Households with pre-paid

FROM PAGE 12
for per cubic meter gas to Tk 18 from the existing Tk 12.6 for the pre-paid households. Subsequently, 35-45 cubic metres of gas consumption will set the households back by Tk 630-810 a month.

The Daily Star spoke with a host of pre-paid households and all seemed frustrated with the recommendation.

"We welcomed the pre-paid meters as a good initiative as it reduced our cost on gas drastically. If it becomes a burden to us, nobody will cooperate with the government with such good initiatives later," said Tuhin Rahman, a pre-paid meter user at the capital's West Nakhla para.

Meanwhile, the BERC recommended hiking the tariff for double burners at non-metered households to Tk 1,080 from 950 and to Tk 990 from Tk 925 for a single burner.

Here, the committee recommended preparing the bill assuming gas consumption of 55 to 60 cubic metres per month.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, termed the recommendation as "discriminatory".

"First of all, at this moment, there is no logical ground to increase the gas price as people are already under the pressure of inflation."

The government should much rather deploy other methods like reducing the taxes, increasing subsidy allocation for liquefied natural gas imports, using the profits of previous years or taking short-term loans from abroad.

The logic behind the committee's recommendation for a gas price hike should be transparent.

"It will encourage

those who use gas more than they need. It should be considered," he said, adding that how could the households get the highest hike proposal instead of the industries or captive power plants.

For the power sector, the per cubic metre of gas will cost Tk 1.1 more at Tk 5.34 and for the captive power plants Tk 1.65 more at Tk 15.50.

For fertiliser factories, it will cost Tk 5.34 instead of Tk 4.45, for tea industries Tk 12.65 instead of Tk 10.70 for tea industries.

For commercial users like hotels and restaurants, a Tk 4.6 hike per cubic metre of the gas tariff has been recommended and for CNG feeds Tk 6.5.

The small and cottage industries will see their gas tariff come down by 32 percent, while the large and mid-sized industries will face an increase of about 18 percent.

"It will encourage

Of coercion

FROM PAGE 12
to set up a power plant here. We have already bought around 150 acres," he said.

He claimed the land they were buying was not suitable for cultivation.

Meanwhile, farmers have lodged complaints with the deputy commissioner (DC), the local lawmaker and other authorities concerned.

Following the complaint, lawmaker of Pabna-5 constituency Golam Faruk Prince visited the area on March 16. At that time, farmers staged an agitation in front of him.

Contacted, DC Bishwas Russel Hossain said he was aware of the allegation and asked the local administration to investigate it.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to fly in Israel as the Ukraine war rages, aiming to rally regional support for Kyiv and quell the Jewish state's worries about a looming nuclear deal with Iran.

On the first stop of a tour that will include the West Bank, Morocco and Algeria, Blinken will join a mini-summit of counterparts from Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco, the so-called "Abraham Accords" countries that have normalized relations with Israel.

AFP, Warsaw

Blinken heads to Israel, Morocco, Algeria

AFP, Warsaw

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to fly in Israel as the Ukraine war rages, aiming to rally regional support for Kyiv and quell the Jewish state's worries about a looming nuclear deal with Iran.

On the first stop of a tour that will include the West Bank, Morocco and Algeria, Blinken will join a mini-summit of counterparts from Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco, the so-called "Abraham Accords" countries that have normalized relations with Israel.



Smoke rises from a Saudi Aramco oil facility in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah, yesterday, a day after Yemeni rebels attacked it with "drones and missiles". The attack caused a fire in two storage tanks but no casualties. The coalition yesterday said its airstrikes targeted "sources of threat" in the Houthi-controlled capital Sanaa and the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah.

PHOTO: AFP

'This is apartheid'

Top UN expert slams Israel's 55-year-old occupation of Palestinian territories

AFP, Geneva

A top UN rights expert slammed the international community Friday for allowing Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territories to evolve into a system of "apartheid".

Michael Lynk, the UN special rapporteur on the rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, joined a growing number of voices describing Israel's separation policy as "apartheid".

Presenting his final report to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, the independent expert said that "the Israeli occupation, now in its 55th year with its end nowhere in sight, has become ever more entrenched and repressive."

"This is apartheid," he said, pointing to "relentless land confiscation, the ever-expanding Jewish-only settlements, the dual legal system, the vast gap in living conditions between Israeli settlers and the Palestinians living among them, the vast separation in political rights."

Israel has controlled the West Bank and east Jerusalem since 1967. Some 700,000 Jewish settlers now live in both areas, in settlements regarded as illegal under international law.

Lynk acknowledged that the Israeli system lacked some of the features of apartheid-era South Africa, like the ban on racial interaction.

But, he said, "there are pitiless features of Israel's 'apartness' rule... that were not practiced in southern Africa, such as segregated highways, high walls and extensive checkpoints."

"With the eyes of the international community wide open, Israel has imposed upon Palestine an apartheid reality in a post-apartheid world."

Lynk spoke after rights groups, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Israeli-based B'Tselem have begun using the "apartheid" label to refer to the Israeli occupation.

He decried "the remarkable unwillingness of the international community to impose any accountability measures on Israel for its forever occupation, which has been conducted both in absolute defiance of international law and with the eyes of the international community wide open."



HINDRANCE TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

US scraps Taliban talks

Girls protest in Kabul demanding reopening of schools



AFP, Washington

The United States cancelled planned talks in Doha with the Taliban after the hardline Islamist rulers of Afghanistan shut girls' secondary schools as about two dozen girls and women protested in the Afghan capital yesterday against the move.

"We have cancelled some of our engagements, including planned meetings in Doha around the Doha Forum, and have made clear that we see this decision as a potential turning point in our engagement," State Department deputy spokeswoman Jalina Porter said on Friday.

The Taliban, which seized power in August and is eager for international recognition, shut down girls' secondary schools this week just hours after reopening them.

The Taliban's decision to keep schools shuttered for girls came after a meeting late Tuesday by senior officials in the southern city of Kandahar, the movement's de facto power center and conservative spiritual heartland.

It followed months of work by the international community to address the issue of supporting teacher stipends, and came just as Afghan girls were eagerly heading back to school for the first time in seven months.

When the Taliban returned to power, they promised a softer rule compared with their first regime from 1996 to 2001, which became notorious for human rights abuses.

They claimed to respect women's rights, in line with their interpretation of Islamic sharia law, and said girls would be allowed to study through to university.

But the Taliban have imposed a slew of restrictions on women, effectively banning them from many government jobs, policing what they wear and preventing them from travelling outside of their cities alone.

In a joint statement Thursday the foreign ministers of Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Norway and the United States, plus the high representative of the European Union, said the Taliban's decision will harm the group's prospects for legitimacy.

"Open the schools! Justice, justice!" chanted protesters yesterday, some carrying school books as they gathered at a city square in Kabul.

They held banners that said: "Education is our fundamental right, not a political plan" as they marched for a short distance and later dispersed as Taliban fighters arrived at the scene. The protest was the first held by women in weeks.

UK Covid-19 cases nearing record highs

AFP, London

Coronavirus levels reached all-time highs in Scotland and Wales and are nearing record levels in England, with around 4.2 million people infected across the UK last week, official figures showed Friday.

The steep rise in infections is due to Omicron BA.2, a more transmissible variant of Omicron, said the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Around one in 16 people in England were likely to have had the disease in the week to March 19, the third consecutive weekly rise, said the country's official statistical body.

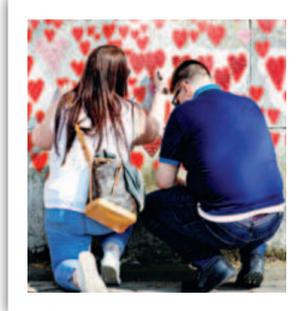
Around 4.26 million people were believed to have been infected across the whole UK last week, just shy of the 4.3 million record set in the first week of 2022.

Despite the number of infections, the New Year wave resulted in far fewer deaths than previous bouts due to Omicron's relatively mild symptoms.

The number of people admitted to hospital in England and Wales is also on the rise, although the number of people in high-dependency units is still low.

Scotland's hospitals are currently treating 2,326 patients, a new record.

Britain has been one of the countries hardest hit by the pandemic, recording 164,454 deaths.



Nuclear talks: EU envoy to visit Iran

AFP, Tehran

The European Union's coordinator for talks to restore the Iran nuclear deal, Enrique Mora, said he was hoping to close gaps in the negotiations ahead of his expected arrival in Tehran. The EU diplomat, who coordinates talks between Iran and the US, is due to arrive in Tehran later in the night, state news agency IRNA reported. He is scheduled to meet Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri today. Concerned parties have signalled for weeks that the negotiations are close to an agreement, but that "political decisions" are required from Tehran and Washington.

Russia's war kills 136 children so far: Ukraine

REUTERS, Lviv

The war in Ukraine has killed 136 children in the 31 days since the start of the Russian invasion, Ukraine's office of the prosecutor general said on Saturday in a message on the Telegram app.

Of the total, 64 children have been killed in the Kyiv region, the office said. A further 50 children have died in the Donetsk region, it said.

Additionally, 199 children have been wounded. Reuters has not been able to immediately verify the report. Putin had sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, vowing to destroy the country's military and topple pro-Western President Volodymyr Zelensky.



TEST OF NEW ICBM

N Korea has 'likely more in store': US

AFP, Seoul

North Korea likely has "more in store" after successfully test-firing its largest-ever intercontinental ballistic missile, a top US official said Friday, as Washington called for tougher international sanctions at the UN Security Council.

Thursday's launch was the first time Pyongyang has fired Kim Jong Un's most powerful missiles at full range since 2017.

It was conducted under Kim's "direct guidance", and ensures his country is ready for "long-standing confrontation" with the United States, state media outlet KCNA reported Friday.

"We see this as part of a pattern of testing and provocation from North Korea... we think there is likely more in store," White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters travelling on board Air Force One with President Joe Biden.

The missile appears to have travelled higher and further than any previous ICBM tested by the nuclear-armed country - including one designed to strike anywhere on the US mainland.

At the UN Security Council on Friday, the United States called for a "resolution to update and strengthen the sanctions regime" against Pyongyang.



This combination of photographs show the landmark Tokyo Tower before and with its lights switched off during Earth Hour in Tokyo, Japan, yesterday. From Singapore to Buenos Aires, cities around the world turned off their lights yesterday to mark Earth Hour. This year's event invite people around the globe to unite in a moment of reflection on our relationship with each other and our collective home.

PHOTO: AFP

1,351 Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine

AFP, Moscow

The Russian army on Friday updated its losses in Ukraine to 1,351 soldiers, while saying that it had evacuated more than 400,000 civilians and condemning Western supplies of weapons to Kyiv.

At a Moscow briefing, senior military officials gave the first update on Russian deaths in weeks, adding that 3,825 soldiers had been wounded.

A senior representative of the General Staff, Sergei Rudskoi, said that Russia was carrying out an operation "on the whole territory of Ukraine".

He claimed that Ukraine had lost 14,000 troops while 16,000 were wounded.



I believe we are entering a Third World War, not a conventional conflict but an information war. It is like radiation -- you don't feel it, you don't touch it, but it affects you.

Ukrainian Deputy FM **Emine Dzhamalova** slams Russia's misinformation war

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

51 years of freedom

How much have we redeemed the sacrifices of martyrs?

BANGLADESH observed 51 years of its independence yesterday with a muted fervour, and understandably so. Every year, we visit March 26 with a mixed feeling of happiness subdued by the sadness associated with it. It is a day of elation as well as of mourning. The wanton death and destruction foisted on the helpless Bengalis by the marauding occupation army of Pakistan—from the night of March 25 till they meekly surrendered to the joint Bangladesh-India command—has left a scar that is difficult to heal. The price we have paid for our freedom was aptly articulated by a British newspaper following our victory on December 16, 1971, which merits repetition: "If blood is the price of independence, then Bangladesh has paid the highest price in history."

Indeed, we have overpaid the cost of our independence, but perhaps no cost can be very high for the most precious thing in a person's, nay, a nation's life—freedom—if the sacrifices of the brave freedom fighters and martyrs are fulfilled. So after 51 years of living as a free nation, as we recall with gratitude their sacrifices as well as the contribution of national leaders and the visionary leadership of Bangabandhu, we must ask: Have those dreams been fulfilled?

We have many things to feel proud of. Our per capita income has increased manifold as we transitioned from a Least Developing Country to a developing one. But the distribution of wealth and opportunities has not happened in an egalitarian manner. The rich have gotten richer, the marginalised even more so. Yes, indeed there are fewer people below the poverty line now, but we ask whether the vision for attaining a poverty headcount of 14 percent by 2021 has been achieved.

While the economic indices have recorded many positives, democratic indices have left much to be desired. The strongest pillar of democracy—the people—have had their rights defiled, given the manner in which the last two elections were held. It is indeed a matter of disquiet that people's confidence in democratic institutions, and interest in participating in the polls, have sapped to a dangerously low level. Political space for the opposition has shrunk dangerously, and the freedom to express opinions without fears of retribution is all but absent. Draconian laws have been formulated to stifle people's voices. Repression against women has not abated, and corruption in the public sector—and consequently flight of valuable resources—remains unaddressed.

These are hard questions that we cannot help but ask, and we must address these with due diligence. Otherwise, the sacrifices of our martyrs and freedom fighters will go in vain.

Early diarrhoea outbreak is alarming

Investigate the reasons behind it and take remedial steps

IT'S quite worrying that the number of diarrhoea patients admitted to various hospitals in Dhaka has seen a sudden spike although it wasn't expected to peak until April. According to a report, the disease has broken out in at least 10 areas of the capital city. The hospital attached to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr) in Mohakhali alone has been reportedly treating around 1,200 diarrhoea patients daily for the past few days—the highest daily count in the 60 years of its history. Other hospitals, including the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), have also reported a growing trend.

Of the 10 areas identified in Dhaka, Jatrabari in old Dhaka is the worst affected, followed by Dakshinkhan and Rayer Bazar, according to hospital sources. Although we usually hear of children being affected more with diarrhoea, this time about 70-80 percent of the patients have been reported to be adults. Experts say that the germs that cause diarrhoea usually attack in April, causing a spike in numbers. Its early arrival this year may have something to do with people drinking contaminated water or street food containing harmful bacteria.

Whatever the reason may be, the sudden rise in the number of diarrhoea patients including adult patients is an unusual phenomenon that deserves to be properly investigated by the public health officials. Experts believe that only scientific research can identify the reason behind the quick spread. In this regard, it can be said that the water supplied by Dhaka Wasa in the old part of the city is notorious for having hazardous pollutants, which residents have to drink as there is no other alternative for them. Adults are also often seen consuming street food and drinks—including various types of sharbat, sugar cane juice, etc.—in their rush to go to work or for other compulsions.

An outbreak of this nature, at a time when we are still fighting with the Covid-19 pandemic, shouldn't be taken lightly. All hospitals should be alerted to the danger and equipped to handle any surge in patient numbers. We also urge the health authorities and city corporations to do everything possible to ward off diarrhoea by addressing the possible reasons for its spread before it travels to other parts of the city or elsewhere, and becomes too difficult to handle.

Bangladeshis are so 'senti'



NO STRINGS ATTACHED

Aasha Mehreen Amin is senior deputy editor at The Daily Star.

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

BENGALIS are well-known for being unusually driven by emotion, a trait that has brought about many great things—our right to speak in our mother tongue, our right to be independent. But there are also emotions that cannot even be translated—like "obhiman", an emotion shared by our other South Asian friends, which could be described as hurt pride that crops up at the drop of a hat. This is amply displayed in old Bangla (and Hindi) films or dramas where the protagonists stubbornly indulge in this emotion to ensure that characteristic tear jerking ending. In general, it is quite natural for us to become "senti" (sentimental) over the smallest things—like someone forgetting to acknowledge a "big brother's" position in the social food chain by not giving him the mandatory reverent "salam", which, in the contemporary context, may lead to dismemberment or a painful death.

Now that we have reached the digital age and are hell bent on embracing it with a vengeance—we have also acquired the ability to be digitally sentimental. Even what I have written so far could be considered "harmful" or "offensive" or even racist despite the fact that I belong to the race I am poking fun at. Poking fun? Are you out of your mind? We no longer believe in humour anymore didn't you know? In fact, sharing a cartoon may cause grievous injury leading to death. Sorry for the constant death references but our lives often do have an air of The Godfather trilogy.

We are so serious about our sentiments that we are not satisfied with having one choking legal instrument—the Digital Security Act (DSA) to deal with troublemakers. Now we are planning to give it some added support like an unnecessary second corset to pad the first one and make sure that above all, no one dares to hurt anyone's sentiment. Yes, we're that serious about our emotional health. Hence the BTRC (Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission) regulation applicable for digital platforms, social media and OTT - Over the Top platforms. So anything you publish digitally is open for scrutiny by the powerful BTRC ninjas and may lead to long term incarceration. Even with just the DSA, people have found themselves in jail for what people in other countries may consider strange to be seen as crimes—such as singing a song written by an acetic who may have made philosophical observations about spirituality, for being a concerned citizen, or for trying to expose corruption of public officials. If you thought you were safe sending videos of Putin and Zelenskyy singing that catchy Hindi film song "Jati hu mey.." to

your buddies on WhatsApp, think again. Someone important enough may feel "hurt" or "offended" on behalf of either one of them or feel this may sour relations with another country and so is "anti-state" and wham... The notion of back to back encryption no longer holds with the DSA and the BTRC regulation. It has become a myth just stated to make you feel you

it is to get official registration for anything through regular routes. And think of all the OTT platforms. How will we exist if our favourite Netflix shows—our mainstay in terms of mindless entertainment—are considered "harmful" or "incite hatred" and "hurt all kinds of sentiments of all kinds of people", and just censored out? Then of course there are local platforms



ILLUSTRATION: BIPOLO CHAKRABORTY

are a valued client whose privacy matters. Actually privacy of a citizen has become an endangered species and it would be practical to just consider it extinct and get on with life. Let's not get emotional about everything shall we?

Speaking of misplaced emotions, a coalition of around 45 organisations that still believe that human rights are inalienable and sacred have sent an earnest letter requesting BTRC to reconsider this regulation that "imperils people's freedom of expression, and right to privacy, undermines encryption and weakens online safety". They further say: "If enforced, the regulations will have a deleterious impact on human rights, and put journalists, dissidents, activists and vulnerable communities, in particular, at greater risk"

These organisations are also not too happy about the government's plan to adopt a code of ethics which all media would have to comply with (or else...) which would give the Ministry of Information a free rein to control content, something that violates international law. International law my foot, they scoff.

To make things more interesting, the new regulation requires registration of all online platforms and we all know how easy

where popular shows, films and drama serials are aired which may have content that will embarrass or irritate someone or some entity—should we just tell our directors and actors and production people to pack up and try for BTV jobs? That seems the safest bet—at least they will survive even if their creative souls will shrivel up and die a premature death.

Those who have come up with this regulation have decided that vague, arbitrary ideas of being snubbed or having one's religious sentiments trod upon are far more injurious (to certain privileged groups, not all and sundry please) and must be deterred by having citizens locked up in jail for years or having their voices gagged rather than uphold archaic concepts like "freedom of speech", human rights and freedom of expression. In the digital world, we just need some bots or humans who act like bots, religiously following the commands fed to their systems, with no deviation and no attempts to act too clever. This way everyone, I mean those that matter, will remain emotionally happy and can carry on their lives with their sentiments intact and without the nuisance of pesky citizens with the gall to have opinions of their own.

Actually privacy of a citizen has become an endangered species and it would be practical to just consider it extinct and get on with life.

A town with no plastic bottles or polythene bags



Dr. Nawshad Ahmed, an ex-UN official, is an economist and urban planner. He is the author of "Monitoring and Evaluation for Effective Social Development".

NAWSHAD AHMED

RECENTLY, while visiting a small town in the south called Raozan, I was impressed to see how there were no empty plastic bottles or used polythene lying around. Thanks to the initiatives of the municipality mayor and the local MP, the town has been rid of any public display of polluting material. With a total population of about 80,000, it is a clean, relatively calm town—a feast for the eyes for anyone visiting from outside.

The municipality council headed by the mayor has been supervising the collection of used plastic materials for the last one year. The mayor, twice a week, encourages the collection by providing cash incentives for anyone bringing these non-degradable materials to the municipality premises. I was present at one of these occasions when about a hundred people gathered on the premises, bringing about 300 sacks of plastic materials. The mayor paid Tk 200 per sack. He is trying to get Raozan officially recognised as the most environmentally friendly town in the country. With thousands of sacks now piled up near the municipality office, which from a distance looks like a small mountain, the next goal is to use them in a plastic recycling plant which the mayor is reportedly going to establish soon.

In addition to this, the mayor and the councillors, the MP and the upazila

chairman regularly interact with local people to raise awareness of the environmental consequences of polythene and plastic materials. They're mobilising the students, local administration, boy scouts and girl guides to keep not just the municipality area but the entire upazila clean. Local leaders have also encouraged people to plant about two million trees in recent years. All the roads in the upazila are lined up with trees planted by local people. The tree plantation campaign is a regular phenomenon here, its message being—"Clean and Green Raozan".

Public representatives have also been campaigning against illicit drug use and other social evils with remarkable success. Once a hotbed of crime, the upazila is now a peaceful place to live. Local businesses and private enterprises are encouraged by the overall improvement in the law and order situation in the upazila. It is also a food-surplus area. The importance of social harmony and communal peace in unleashing productive forces is clearly demonstrated by these positive efforts. This can be an example for other local governments as well.

Another aspect of Raozan's local leadership is their efforts to encourage small businesses by donating boats, vans, rickshaws and sewing machines to the poor. Local businessmen have also been donating money for building infrastructure in the town. This is keeping the roads and drains in operation. Due to its small size, being an upazila-level municipality, Raozan has a shortage of revenues and receives little government funds. Therefore, private initiative has become crucial for maintaining municipality services, including the cleanliness of roads. A fleet of garbage vans, donated by a local businessman, is seen regularly collecting household waste.

Due to a wide range of economic and business activities, the town attracts people from rural areas, most of whom are poor. With the growth of the population, the demand for public utilities and services has been growing. The poor live in squatters without health, water or drainage facilities (the municipality recently provided houses to one hundred poor families). There is a shortage of roads, street lights, drains, playgrounds, etc. The town has an area of 32 square kilometres and is an "A Class" municipality. The Department of Public Health Engineering is currently building the first water supply network there. So far, people are fully dependent on underground and pond water. The municipality has a total drainage network of only 10.5 km including 8 km of kutchra drain. The combined challenges of domestic water supply, street lights, sewerage, garbage collection and disposal are enormous. Most of the internal roads are narrow and not maintained properly, and the drains are open.

Raozan municipality has prepared a master plan and an urban development plan taking into account land use, drainage and environmental management, traffic and transportation management, and industrial and recreational facilities. These plans are very comprehensive and have been drawn up to build a potentially healthy city. The city still has a large area of agricultural and hilly land which is expected to go towards other uses with the growth of the population and establishment of new houses and businesses in the future. However, the hilly land and water bodies must be preserved at all costs to preserve the city's environmental balance.

If properly developed, there is a good prospect of Raozan growing into an aesthetically beautiful city in the future.

The mayor and the councillors, the MP and the upazila chairman regularly interact with local people to raise awareness of the environmental consequences of polythene and plastic materials.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

From Cold War to Hot Peace



SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK

Slavoj Žižek, Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, is International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at the University of London.

WITH the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we are entering a new phase of warfare and global politics. Aside from a heightened risk of nuclear catastrophe, we are already in a perfect storm of mutually reinforcing global crises—the pandemic, climate change, biodiversity loss, and food and water shortages. The situation exhibits a basic madness: at a time when humanity's very survival is jeopardised by ecological (and other) factors, and when addressing those threats should be prioritised over everything else, our primary concern has suddenly shifted—again—to a new political crisis. Just when global cooperation is needed more than ever, the "clash of civilizations" returns with a vengeance.

Why does this happen? As is often the case, a little Hegel can go a long way toward answering such questions. In the Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel famously describes the dialectic of master and servant, two "self-consciousnesses" locked in a life-or-death struggle. If each is ready to risk his own life to win, and if both persist in this, there is no winner: one dies, and the survivor no longer has anyone to recognise his own existence. The implication is that all of history and culture rest on a foundational compromise: in the eye-to-eye confrontation, one side (the future servant) "averts its eyes," unwilling to go to the end.

But Hegel would hasten to note that there can be no final or lasting compromise between states. Relationships between sovereign nation-states are permanently under the shadow of potential war, with each epoch of peace being nothing more than a temporary armistice.

This tendency runs directly against the urgent need to civilise our civilisations and establish a new mode of relating to our environs. We need universal solidarity and cooperation among all human communities. In 2017, the French philosopher Alain Badiou noted that the contours of a future war are already discernible. He foresaw:

"...the United States and their Western-Japanese group on the one side, China and Russia on the other side, atomic arms everywhere. We cannot but recall Lenin's statement: 'Either revolution will prevent the war or the war will trigger revolution.' This is how we can define the maximal ambition of the political work to come: for the first time in history, the first hypothesis—revolution will prevent the war—should realise itself, and not the second one—a war will trigger revolution. It is effectively the second hypothesis which materialised itself in Russia in the context of the First World War, and in China in the context of the second. But at what price! And with what long-term consequences!"

The limits of realpolitik

Civilising our civilisations will require radical social change—a revolution, in fact. But we cannot afford to hope that a new war will trigger it. The far more likely outcome is the end of civilisation as we know it, with the survivors (if there are any) organised in small authoritarian groups. We should harbour no illusions: in some basic sense, World War III has already begun, though for now it is still being fought mostly through proxies.

Abstract calls for peace are not enough. "Peace" is not a term that allows us to draw the key political distinction that we need. Occupiers always sincerely

want peace in the territory they hold. Nazi Germany wanted peace in occupied France, Israel wants peace in the occupied West Bank, and Russian President Vladimir Putin wants peace in Ukraine. That is why, as the philosopher Étienne Balibar once put it, "pacifism is not an option." The only way to prevent another Great War is by avoiding the kind of "peace" that requires constant local wars for its maintenance.

Whom can we rely on under these conditions? Should we place our confidence in artists and thinkers, or in pragmatic practitioners of realpolitik? The problem with artists and thinkers is that they, too, can lay the foundation for war. Recall William Butler Yeats's apt verse: "I have spread my dreams under your feet, / Tread softly because you tread on my dreams." We should apply these lines to poets themselves. When they spread their dreams under our feet, they should spread them carefully because actual people will read them and act upon them. Recall that the same Yeats continuously flirted with Fascism, going so far as to voice his approval of Germany's anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws in August 1938.

Realpolitik is no better guide. It has become a mere alibi for ideology, which often evokes some hidden dimension behind the veil of appearances in order to obscure the crime that is being committed openly. This double mystification is often announced by describing a situation as "complex." An obvious fact—say, an instance of brutal military aggression—is relativized by evoking a "much more complex background." The act of aggression is really an act of defence.

This is exactly what is happening today. Russia obviously attacked Ukraine, and is obviously targeting civilians and displacing millions. And yet commentators and pundits are eagerly searching for "complexity" behind it. There is complexity, of course. But that does not change the basic fact that Russia did it. Our mistake was that we did not interpret Putin's threats literally enough; we thought he was just playing a game of strategic manipulation and brinkmanship.

This double mystification exposes the end of realpolitik. As a rule, realpolitik is opposed to the naivety of binding diplomacy and foreign policy to (one's version of) moral or political principles. Yet in the current situation, it is realpolitik that is naive. It is naive to suppose that the other side, the enemy, is also aiming at a limited pragmatic deal.

Force and freedom

During the Cold War, the rules of superpower behaviour were clearly delineated by the doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD). Each superpower could be sure that if it decided to launch a nuclear attack, the other side would respond with full destructive force. As a result, neither side started a war with the other.

By contrast, when North Korea's Kim Jong-un talks about dealing a devastating blow to the US, one cannot but wonder where he sees his own position. He talks as if he is unaware that his country, himself included, would be destroyed. It is as if he is playing an altogether different game called NUTS (Nuclear Utilisation Target Selection), whereby the enemy's nuclear capabilities can be surgically destroyed before it can counterstrike.

Over the past few decades, even the US has oscillated between MAD and NUTS. Though it acts as if it continues to trust the MAD logic in its relations with Russia and China, it has occasionally been tempted to pursue a NUTS strategy vis-à-vis Iran and North Korea. With his hints about possibly launching a tactical nuclear strike, Putin follows the same reasoning.



A civilian trains to throw Molotov cocktails to defend Ukraine in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, on March 1, 2022.

PHOTO: REUTERS

While we should stand firmly behind Ukraine, we must avoid the fascination with war that has clearly seized the imaginations of those who are pushing for an open confrontation with Russia. Something like a new non-aligned movement is needed, not in the sense that countries should be neutral in the ongoing war, but in the sense that we should question the entire notion of the "clash of civilisations."

Unfortunately for the rest of us, MADness is passé. Superpowers are increasingly testing each other, experimenting with the use of proxies as they try to impose their own version of global rules. On March 5, Putin called the sanctions imposed on Russia the "equivalent of a declaration of war." But he has repeatedly stated since then that economic exchange with the West should continue, emphasising that Russia is keeping its financial commitments and continuing to deliver hydrocarbons to Western Europe.

In other words, Putin is trying to impose a new model of international relations. Rather than cold war, there should be hot peace: a state of permanent hybrid war in which military interventions are declared under the guise of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. How often in the past have we heard similar arguments for US-led interventions in Latin America or the Middle East and North Africa?

Can anyone be free in such a predicament? Following Hegel, we should make a distinction between abstract and concrete freedom, which correspond to our notions of freedom and liberty. Abstract freedom is the ability to do what one wants independently of social rules and customs; concrete freedom is the freedom that is conferred and sustained by rules and customs. I can walk freely along a busy street only when I can be reasonably sure that others on the street will behave in a civilised way toward me—that drivers will obey traffic rules, and that other pedestrians will not rob me.

But there are moments of crisis when abstract freedom must intervene. In December 1944, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote: "Never were we freer than under the German occupation. We had lost all our rights, and first of all our right to speak. They insulted us to our faces... And that is why the Resistance was a true democracy; for the soldier, as for his superior, the same danger, the same loneliness, the same responsibility, the same absolute freedom within the discipline."

Sartre was describing freedom, not liberty. Liberty is what was established when post-war normality returned. In Ukraine today, those who are battling the Russian invasion are free and they are fighting for liberty. But this raises the question of how long the distinction can last.

The not-so-great game
We still lack a proper word for today's world. For her part, the philosopher Catherine Malabou believes we are witnessing the beginning of capitalism's "anarchist turn": "How else are we to describe such phenomena as decentralised currencies, the end of the

state's monopoly, the obsolescence of the mediating role played by banks, and the decentralisation of exchanges and transactions?"

Those phenomena may sound appealing, but with the gradual disappearance of the state's monopoly, state-imposed limits to ruthless exploitation and domination will also disappear. While anarcho-capitalism aims at transparency, it also "simultaneously authorises the large-scale but opaque use of data, the dark web, and the fabrication of information."

To prevent this descent into chaos, Malabou observes, policies increasingly follow a path of "Fascist evolution... with the excessive security and military build-up that goes along with it. Such phenomena do not contradict a drive towards anarchism. Rather, they indicate precisely the disappearance of the state, which, once its social function has been removed, expresses the obsolescence of its force through the use of violence. Ultra-nationalism thus signals the death agony of national authority."

Viewed in these terms, the situation in Ukraine is not one nation-state attacking another nation-state. Rather, Ukraine is being attacked as an entity whose very ethnic identity is denied by the aggressor.

A new non-alignment

But if we can be mobilised only by the threat of war, not by the threat to our environment, the liberty we will get if our side wins may not be worth having. We are faced with an impossible choice: if we make compromises to maintain peace, we are feeding Russian expansionism. But if we endorse full confrontation, we run the high risk of precipitating a new world war. The only real solution is to change the lens through which we perceive the situation.

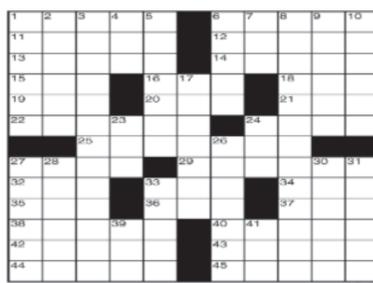
While we should stand firmly behind Ukraine, we must avoid the fascination with war that has clearly seized the imaginations of those who are pushing for an open confrontation with Russia. Something like a new non-aligned movement is needed, not in the sense that countries should be neutral in the ongoing war, but in the sense that we should question the entire notion of the "clash of civilisations."

The new non-alignment must broaden the horizon by recognising that our struggle should be global—and by counselling against Russophobia at all costs. We should offer our support to those within Russia who are protesting the invasion. They are not some abstract coterie of internationalists; they are the true Russian patriots.

Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2022.
www.project-syndicate.org.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
1 Cavalry weapon
6 "Check it out!"
11 "Hello" singer
12 Low joint
13 Store for the future
14 Substantial
15 In the past
16 Holiday lead-in
18 Overly
19 Racket
20 Ozone, e.g.
21 Go astray
22 Soaked
24 Bassoon's kin
25 Binary system
27 Weaving need
29 Takes an oath
32 Hockey's Bobby
33 Letter before
- DOWN**
1 Leafy lunches
2 Slow movement
3 2003 Angelina Jolie film
4 Yale rooter
5 Misplays at cards
6 Toy store
- omega
section
7 Small bill
8 Ollie performers
9 Matador's foe
10 Pooh's pal
17 Hudgens of "High School Musical"
23 Block up
24 Need to pay
26 Poked fun at
27 Changing room fixture
28 Marigold color
30 League newbie
31 Detects
33 Trappers' wares
39 Rent out
41 Old auto



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



FOLLOW The Daily Star OPINION

facebook.com/dsopinion

instagram.com/ds_opinion

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

What may signal mental exhaustion and what you can do about it

Mental exhaustion is similar to physical tiredness, except it affects the mind. Intense mental attention on a difficult task tends to trigger it. If you are always on edge or stressed, you may have a brain drain. Job, kids, parents, and other duties can cause mental weariness.

STAR HEALTH DESK

Your hair-trigger temper or inability to concentrate may be signs of a larger problem. See what else may signal mental exhaustion and what you can do about it.

- **You are angry or impatient:** Mental fatigue can put you in a bad mood. You may be short-tempered or irritated, snapping at people more often.
- **You cannot get work done:** Everyone's productivity varies. But mental fatigue can impair concentration. It demotivates and distracts you. Even simple things can be daunting.

Your hair-trigger temper or inability to concentrate may be signs of a larger problem. See what else may signal mental exhaustion and what you can do about it.

- **You zone out:** Mind-wandering or tiredness can be symptoms. It is hard to focus and respond quickly. In certain situations, like driving, this can be harmful.
- **You do not sleep well:** It may seem simpler to sleep when your brain is tired. But not usually. People with high "cognitive workload" jobs report higher sleeplessness symptoms than those who do not. Stress can exacerbate mental tiredness. Are you not sleeping or feeling tired? Tell your doctor. Treatment helps.
- **Unhealthy habits:** You may start drinking or using drugs excessively. Mental exhaustion can be much more difficult for people with addictions. Drug addiction alters brain



regions that help you cope with stress and control impulsive behaviour.

- **You are sad:** You may lack energy or feel tired. That can make finishing work or daily tasks difficult.
- **Lots of worries:** Mental exhaustion triggers the sympathetic nervous system. Anxiety is a warning that something is wrong. You might stress or worry if you are always mentally weary. This commonly occurs with depressive symptoms.
- **Exercise is more difficult:** Mental tiredness affects physical exercise, experts say. Some say your workout tolerance may fade. So, you may appear to be working harder than you are.
- **Food habits change:** Mental weariness can impact hunger in several ways. Some of you may consume more than usual and not pay attention. The stress hormone cortisol can cause food cravings. Or you might not be hungry.
- **You make mistakes:** Your work cannot always be perfect. A tired mind can't detect

and correct errors quickly. That can pose major issues when operating machines, driving cars, or flying planes.

- **You feel more pain:** Mental weariness affects the body differently in each person. But you might have headaches, back discomfort, or gastrointestinal issues.
- **Take breaks:** Short breaks throughout long mental work sessions may help you feel less exhausted. There is no ideal amount of rest time for everyone. But you should recharge every 1-2 hours.
- **Get active:** Exercise during your breaks may help you feel more energised. Try a few minutes of jumping jacks and stretches. A 10-15 minute brisk walk.
- **Find relaxation:** Mental fatigue is difficult to prevent. You may train your body's natural relaxing reaction. Get a massage. Try meditating, yoga, or just watching a hilarious movie. If you need additional help, ask friends, family, or mental health professionals. Untreated mental weariness can negatively affect your emotional and physical health, relationships with others, and quality of life.

Artificial sweeteners may not be safe sugar alternatives

Artificial sweeteners lower the amount of added sugar and calories while preserving sweetness. According to a recent study published in PLOS Medicine, some artificial sweeteners are linked to higher cancer risk.

Millions of individuals eat artificial sweetener-containing food and beverages daily. However, the safety of these additions has been questioned. Researchers examined data from 102,865 French adults who took part in the NutriNet-Santé trial to assess the potential carcinogenicity of artificial sweeteners. Researchers gathered information about artificial sweetener consumption from 24-hour dietary records.

The researchers discovered that enrollees who consumed more artificial sweeteners, particularly aspartame and acesulfame-K, had a greater risk of overall cancer than non-consumers. Breast cancer and obesity-related cancers were shown to have higher risks.



Our findings do not support the use of artificial sweeteners as safe sugar substitutes in foods or beverages," the authors opined. While needing to be reproduced in larger cohorts and experimentally explained, these findings are significant.

Source: PLOS Medicine

Teen internet usage associated with stress and suicidal ideation

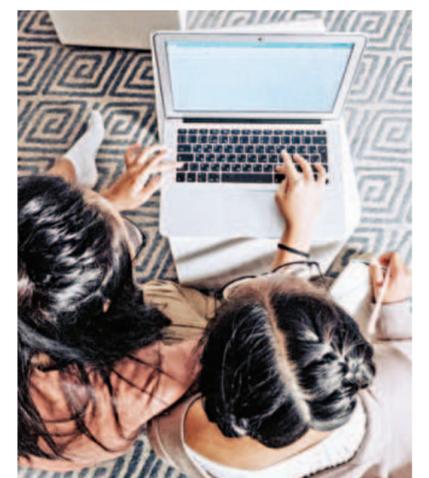
Unsurprisingly, teenagers who spend more time online had higher levels of stress, depression, and suicide thoughts, according to a Korean study of over 30,000 high school students. The new study is published recently in the open access journal PLOS ONE by Yeunhee Kwak of Chung-Ang University, Korea, and colleagues.

The researchers used data from the 2018 Korea Youth Risk Behaviour Web-Based Survey to assess 29,811 high school students aged 16 to 18. There was also data on non-academic internet use, mental health, and general student characteristics.

The study shows students spent an average of 193.4 minutes per day surfing the internet for non-academic purposes. Internet usage was highest among lower-grade students, females, low-income families, and students with low academic success. Students with lower internet usage reported better health, reduced feelings of sadness, and less suicidal ideation than the group with high internet usage.

While the findings cannot demonstrate any causative link between internet usage and mental health, the authors believe that active support and interventions are needed to reduce feelings of stress and sadness in adolescents and that programmes that promote healthy use of the internet, replace internet use with social and physical activities, and help adolescents maintain good relationships could play a role.

Source: PLOS ONE



OSTEOPOROSIS

A silent killer of the bones

MD NAIM HOSSAIN

Due to decreased bone density and quality, osteoporosis caused skeletal weakening and increased fracture risk, notably the spine, wrist and hip. The first indication of this condition is a fracture, a major cause of death and morbidity.

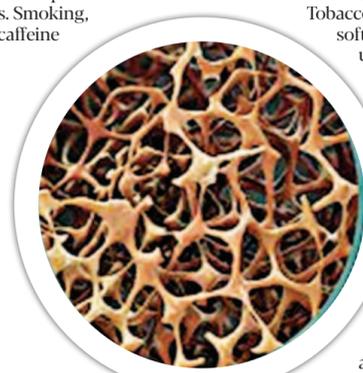
Osteoporosis has several risk factors, some adjustable and some not. Female sex, age, thin build, and family history of osteoporosis are non-modifiable risk factors. Smoking, excessive alcohol use, and caffeine intake are all changeable factors.

Osteoporosis causes a fracture in one in three women and one in five men over 50. The International Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that 30-50% of women and 15-30% of men suffer an osteoporotic fracture.

Osteoporosis affects both men and women and can be prevented or treated. Following menopause, women's bone loss accelerates and continues into the postmenopausal years. Osteoporosis occurs when bone loss occurs too quickly, or bone growth develops too slowly. Osteoporosis develops if your peak bone mass is not reached during your bone-building years.

Osteoporosis is diagnosed with standard radiography and bone mineral density (BMD) testing. Dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry is the most used approach. The causes of osteoporosis are well known. Less estrogen after menopause or surgical removal of the ovaries is associated with a rapid loss of bone mineral density, while less

testosterone has the same impact in males. Tobacco use, malnutrition, inactivity, soft drinks, and excessive alcohol use are modifiable risk factors. Medications have been linked to an increased risk of osteoporosis.



Five ways to keep bones healthy

1. Eat a well-balanced diet with plenty of dairy, fish, fruits, and vegetables.
2. Exercise regularly to reduce bone loss and retain calcium in the bones.
3. Avoid smoking and limit alcohol.
4. Get vitamin D from the early morning sunlight.
5. Reduce stress which is crucial to bone health

Osteoporosis should be treated with medications and lifestyle, nutrition, and exercise guidance. Getting enough calcium and vitamin D, plus supplements if needed, may help minimise the risk of osteoporosis.

The writer works at the Department of Pharmacy, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University. E-mail: naimislamphr@gmail.com



Household air pollution delays early child development in under-5 years children in Bangladesh

About 250 million children under five years of age in low-income and middle-income countries, including Bangladesh, are at risk of not reaching their full developmental potential. A recent study on 9,395 Bangladeshi children aged 36-59 months published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health by the British Medical Journal Group found that about 81% of children are exposed to household air pollution (HAP), and more than 25% children have delays in early child development (ECD).

Jewel Rana, Doctoral Researcher at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, McGill University and his colleagues conducted this study. The study suggests that HAP exposed children were 47% more likely to have developmental delays than children with no exposure. ECD was measured in four domains, and developmental delays were mostly in socioemotional and learning-cognition subdomains. The effects of HAP on ECD were stronger among boys and urban children though these associations were imprecise. The study recommends that public health policies should promote the use of clean cooking fuels and cookstoves to reduce HAP and help Bangladesh achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) related to ECD and clean fuels by 2030.

Source: BMJ Journals



Appointment
02 22 22 62 466
10666

Plot 15 Road 71
Gulshan Dhaka 1212

www.uhbd.com
facebook/uhbd
info@uhbd.com



Cardiac Centre

Our Cardiac Surgery Team Performs
First Ever
Mechanical Heart Pump (LVAD) Implant
In Bangladesh



A mechanical heart called Heartmate-3 was placed in the left ventricle of a 42 year old female patient's heart through a successful surgery which was conducted for about 4 hours to restore her whole heart function to a normal state. This will greatly reduce the patient's risk of heart failure.













A memorable day for Jessy

SPORTS REPORTER

It was a special day for Shathira Jakir Jessy yesterday. The former Bangladesh women cricketer officiated in the traditional Independence Day exhibition match between Bangladesh Red XI and Bangladesh Green XI at the Academy Ground in Mirpur, and according to Jessy, it was a unique experience.

"It felt amazing. To be officiating in such a game and be around legends like [Khaled Mashud] Pilot bhai, Minhajul Abedin [Nannu] bhai was really special for me," Jessy told The Daily Star.

Since completing her professional umpiring course back in 2009, such opportunities have been few and far between for the



31-year-old. According to her, it is the mindset of the mass that has hindered the progress of female umpires in the country.

"Girls in other countries are making strides in this sector. They are officiating in high-profile matches. But that's not the case in Bangladesh.

"The reason could be that people are not used to seeing a woman officiate a cricket match. Also, there seem to be mental biases at play here. People think that as she is a girl, she is soft-hearted and would just nod to an LBW appeal the moment the ball hits the pads," Jessy explained.

The former cricketer, however, was overwhelmed by the appreciation she and her umpiring partner, Dolly Rani Sarkar, received from the former Bangladesh cricketers and BCB officials present at the exhibition match.

"Even many BCB officials did not know about us. But yesterday was different. We were highly appreciated by everyone and I hope that now we will get more opportunities too," Jessy concluded.

'It's the right time to RAISE THE BAR'

SPORTS REPORTER

As the focus now shifts to Durban and the first Test of the two-match series between Bangladesh and South Africa from March 31, the Tigers' Test outfit took part in a training focused on match scenarios at the Chatsworth Cricket Oval yesterday.

To celebrate Independence Day, members of the Bangladesh team gathered and sang the national anthem ahead of training.

Expectations of the fast-bowling unit rose after a historic Test win at Mount Maunganui earlier this year spearheaded by pacer Ebadot Hossain. They hit further heights after Bangladesh clinched their maiden ODI



"If you look at the performances of our fast bowlers in the past year or two, Taskin, Shoriful, Mustafizur and others have bowled really well. Our confidence increased after the Test win in New Zealand. We were boosted by the victory and that confidence has continued to grow," Ebadot said.

in the pace department means Abu Jayed Rahi, known as a Test specialist, will have to contend for a place in the playing eleven against Taskin, Ebadot and Shoriful Islam.

"Competition has increased given the way our pacers have performed recently. I think it's healthy competition and I think it's the right time for us to raise the bar. We will keep trying to reach the next level," Jayed told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

As in the preceding ODI series, fast and bouncy tracks in South Africa will offer ample purchase to seamers.

According to Jayed, it will be important how the seamers apply themselves when the ball gets older.

"It is important to get early wickets with the new ball, but the challenge for pacers will be in utilising the old ball. I think once the ball gets older, it's

important to contain runs and bank on reverse swing. Length will also be key. If we can get seam movement, it will help a lot," he added.

The architect of that triumph in Mount Maunganui, Ebadot, was taking confidence from that win against New Zealand and the ODI series triumph in South Africa.

"If you look at the performances of our fast bowlers in the past year or two, Taskin, Shoriful, Mustafizur and others have bowled really well. Our confidence increased after the Test win in New Zealand. We were boosted by the victory and that confidence has continued to grow," Ebadot said.

"It was difficult to beat South Africa in their home in the ODIs, but we did it courtesy of the pacers and also the batters. We also want to win the Test series in South Africa."



Bangladesh contingent observe the country's 52nd Independence Day at the Chatsworth Cricket Oval in Durban yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Salah gets better of Mane

REUTERS, CAIRO

Mohamed Salah got the better of his club mate Sadio Mane as Egypt edged Senegal 1-0 in the first leg of their World Cup playoff on Friday to take a slender lead to Dakar for Tuesday's return.

The rematch between the two Liverpool greats, six weeks after Senegal beat Egypt on penalties to win their first Africa Cup of Nations title, saw Salah set up the only goal. Salah hit the crossbar in the fourth minute and then watching the rebound come off Senegal defender Saliou Ciss's knee for an own goal.

Meanwhile, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia all took a significant step closer to the World Cup finals after Friday's first legs of their playoff matches, but new African champions Senegal are going to have to come from behind if they are to qualify for Qatar.

The playoff results reflected a major shift in power north to the Arabic-speaking countries, who have long dominated African club competition and are now flexing their muscles at national team level too.

Islam Slimani scored for Algeria while Tunisia benefited from a horror own-goal as their sides won away in Cameroon and Mali respectively, while Morocco came from a goal down to draw in Kinshasa against the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Home advantage in Tuesday's return legs sets them all up for a place in November's tournament. The West African derby between

Ghana and Nigeria in Kumasi ended goalless, leaving it all to play for in Tuesday's return in Abuja.

The aggregate winners in the five playoff ties will represent Africa at the World Cup in Qatar.



Swiatek savours 'surreal' No. 1 achievement

REUTERS

Poland's Iga Swiatek said capturing the women's world number one ranking was a "surreal" achievement, with the 20-year-old set to replace retired Ash Barty at the top of the rankings.

Swiatek clinched the ranking after defeating Viktorija Golubic 6-2, 6-0 in the second round of the Miami Open on Friday, becoming the first Polish player to ascend to the No.1 position in singles.

She will become the new world No. 1 when the WTA rankings are released on April 4. At 20 years, 308 days old, Swiatek will be the youngest player to make her No.1 debut since Caroline Wozniacki in 2010. "It's a dream come true, for sure," Swiatek told reporters. "It's that kind of thing that I wanted to happen someday, but I didn't really know that it's going to be possible for me. So it's even more surreal for me."

Swiatek, who won her maiden Grand Slam title at the French Open in 2020, said she is ready to deal with the pressure of being the top-ranked player.



Messi 'didn't expect anything less'

REUTERS, BUENOS AIRES

Lionel Messi paid tribute to Argentina fans in what could be their last home game before November's World Cup finals and said the raucous support in their 3-0 win over Venezuela was vital in preserving his happiness. "I didn't expect anything less of people, of the union between the Argentina public and this team," Messi said after their comfortable

Argentina are one of four South American sides to have qualified for the Qatar finals, along with Brazil, Ecuador and Uruguay. The final round of qualifying games next Tuesday will determine whether Peru, Colombia or Chile go into a playoff against a team from the Asian confederation.

win at Boca Juniors' Bombonera stadium.

The seven-time Ballon d'Or winner has struggled at Paris Saint Germain since signing from Barcelona in August 2021 but he was as spritely as ever against a poor Venezuela side and the adoration of the home crowd was evident.

Argentina fans revere Messi, and all the more so since he led them to the Copa America in 2021 - their first major international honour

in 28 years.

The feeling is mutual, with Messi leading his team mates on a victory lap around the ground and chanting and singing along with the 50,000 crowd. "I've been happy here for a long time, since before we won the Copa America," Messi said.

"People have shown that they love me and I am grateful for that. Everything flows naturally, that makes it easier on and off the pitch."

Friday's game marked Messi's return to the national side after being rested for Argentina's previous two World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Colombia.

He made several unsuccessful attempts at goal from free kicks outside the box but eventually score the third, a curious miskick meters from goal.

Messi chested down a pass from Angel Di Maria and although he didn't connect cleanly it was enough to beat Venezuela's diving goalkeeper.

The 82nd minute goal came after earlier efforts from Nicolas Gonzalez and Di Maria, whose clever play and passes opened up a stuffy Venezuelan rearguard. Argentina travel to Ecuador for their final game.



CAP 10 OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY
BSRM WINS THE BEST BRAND AWARD FOR THE 10TH TIME IN A ROW
 COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPORT
BSRM
 building a safer nation

SHAH CEMENT
 READY-MIX CONCRETE
SMART CONCRETE SOLUTION
 Call for Order
01954 55 66 33

GAS PRICE HIKE PROPOSAL Households with pre-paid meters to bear brunt

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Households with pre-paid meters will suffer most if the recommendation of the 43 percent hike in gas price is implemented -- a development that can slow down the installation of the meters that can enforce watchful consumption of gas.

About four lakh pre-paid meters have been installed since those were introduced about a decade ago, according to the data submitted by the six gas distribution companies at the hearing. A total of 43 lakh households have piped gas connections.

The proposed hike came from the technical evaluation committee of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission at the public hearing held last week.

"We found the existing billing system for the non-metered household users is excessive in comparison with the meter users," said Kamruzzaman, BERC's deputy director for tariff while presenting the recommendations at the public hearing.

A pre-paid user consumes 35-45 cubic metres of gas on an average in a month, which costs Tk 400-550, the BERC found. For the same volume of gas, a non-metered user has to pay Tk 925-950.

The committee recommended increasing the tariff
 SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



Tobacco growers and buyers using the Shaheed Minar of Durakati Government Primary School in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila as their marketplace even on Independence Day yesterday.
 PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

TRAIN TICKETS Online sales run into a snag Hundreds endure long queues at station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saad Rahman, a private service holder, got up early in the morning to purchase train tickets online.

It took him half an hour from 8:00am to log in to ticket.railway.gov.bd, the website selling train tickets.

However, he could not purchase the tickets as the system did not deliver an OTP (one-time password) to his phone.

Failing to buy online tickets of Kishoreganj-bound Egaro Sindhu Express for Sunday, he went to Kamalapur Railway Station around 12:00 noon.

"I found several hundred people in the queues at the station. I decided not to wait there as it could take several hours to reach the counter," Saad told this correspondent.

Visiting Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday, a correspondent of The Daily Star found hundreds of people suffering immensely to get train tickets.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) resumed the online sales through its new vendor, a joint venture firm led by Shohoz Limited, after a five day pause that ended at 8:00am yesterday.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Of coercion and collusion!

A private company has been forcing farmers to sell cropland in league with local influentials, allege farmers

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

A private company has been coercing farmers to sell cropland to set up a power plant at Bhabanipur village in Hemayetpur union of Pabna Sadar upazila, locals have alleged.

The company--Paramount Holdings Ltd--has set up its signboards on over 100 plots in the shoal and fenced up a large area, claiming ownership of the land.

Different types of crops, including banana, wheat, and pulses, are grown in the shoal round the year.

"This year, I cultivated Banana on around 12 bighas of land. But I don't know whether I will

be able to keep the farm, as the company is gradually occupying the entire shoal," said Hafizul, a local farmer.

"We have four bighas of land, jointly owned by four brothers. None of us sold the land, but a man hiding his identity has sold 26 decimals of the land to the company. The company people fenced up the entire land," said Alam Mridha, another farmer.

When they went to the company office demanding an explanation, the company officials asked the brothers to sell their share.

"But we refused," he said.

Many of the villagers do not have updated legal documents of their inherited land. Taking advantage of the situation,

the company is targeting such disputed land, buying them at a low price and then occupying the adjacent area, victims alleged.

Villagers said the company has engaged some influential people as brokers, who forced many to sell their land at a low price.

Asked about this, Union Parishad Chairman Jahangir Alam Khan said former UP chairman Md Alauddin and Pabna Sadar upazila parishad's incumbent Chairman Mosharaf Hossain were coercing farmers to sell their land to the company.

Mosharaf admitted helping the company to buy land legally, but brushed off the allegation

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Humans infect animals more than they know

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Humans give viruses back to animals in "spillback" events more often than previously thought, suggests a new study that has implications for wildlife conservation and public health.

Such events have recently gained attention due to the spread of Covid-19 from humans to wild white-tailed deer in the US and Canada, said scientists, including those from Georgetown University in the US.

Over the course of the Covid pandemic, scientists discovered that the novel coronavirus that causes Covid could spread from humans to hamsters, minks, leopards, zoo lions, and tigers.

With recent data suggesting that a white-tailed deer may have brought the virus back to humans, in at least one case, researchers expressed concerns that new animal reservoirs

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



With passengers having no safety equipment, such as life jackets, on, two men seem to be putting all their strength to push a speedboat out into the sea from Patenga beach in Chattogram for a five-minute tour yesterday. While each person has to pay Tk 100 for such trips, they don't seem to be provided with the security that is needed out in open waters.
 PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

TIPU MURDER DB makes headway in probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators have found some vital clues to the killing of Jahidul Islam Tipu, former general secretary of Motijheel Awami League, and hope to soon inform the media, said the Detective Branch of police.

"The DB is working with consideration of all motives related to Tipu's murder," Rifat Rahman Shamim, deputy commissioner of the DB's Motijheel Division, told The Daily Star.

Asked, AKM Hafiz Akhter, additional commissioner of DB said, they would inform the media soon.

Apart from DB, the Rapid Action Battalion and the Criminal Investigation Department of police are also working to solve the killing.

On Friday, Khandaker Al Moin, director (legal and media wing) of Rab, said they found some evidence and possible

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
 প্রধানমন্ত্রীর শিক্ষা সহায়তা ট্রাস্ট
 উপ-পরিচালকের দপ্তর
 মধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগ, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়
 বাড়ি নং-৪৪, সড়ক নং-১২/এ, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা-১২০৯
 www.pmeat.gov.bd ফ্যাক্স ০২-৮১৯১০১৯

০৭ জুলাই ১৪২৮ বঙ্গাব্দ
 তারিখ: ২১ মার্চ ২০২২ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

ফেলোশিপ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়: ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছরে ট্রাস্টের পিএইচডি কোর্সে ফেলোশিপের জন্য আবেদন আহ্বান।
 প্রধানমন্ত্রীর শিক্ষা সহায়তা ট্রাস্টের আওতাধীন দেশের অভ্যন্তরীণ সরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়সমূহে উচ্চতর শিক্ষার (পিএইচডি) ফেলোশিপ ও পূর্তি প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশি নাগরিকদের নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত অনুযায়ী সর্বসাধারণের আবেদন করা যাবে।

ক) গবেষণার অধিক্ষেত্র:

ক্রমিক	গবেষণার অধিক্ষেত্র
১.	সামাজিক বিজ্ঞান (Social Science)
২.	কলা ও মানবিক (Arts & Humanities)
৩.	ব্যবসায়িক শিক্ষা (Business Studies)
৪.	সমুদ্র বিজ্ঞান (Marine Science)
৫.	আইন (Law)
৬.	জৈব বিজ্ঞান (Physical Science)
৭.	ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড টেকনোলজি (Engineering & Technology)
৮.	বিজ্ঞান (Science)
৯.	জীব বিজ্ঞান (Biological Science)
১০.	শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়ন (Education & Development)
১১.	চিকিৎসা (Medicine)
১২.	সূক্ষ্মকলা (Fine Arts)
১৩.	কৃষি বিজ্ঞান (Agricultural Science)
১৪.	মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা (Madrasa Education)

খ) আবেদনের নিয়ম ও শর্তাবলি:
 ১. ২০২১-২২ অর্থবছরে ট্রাস্ট থেকে এম.ফিল. ও পিএইচ.ডি কোর্সে ফেলোশিপ ও পূর্তি প্রদান নির্দেশিকায় বর্ণিত শর্ত, যোগ্যতা এবং অন্যান্য বিধিমালা অনুসরণপূর্বক আবেদনকারীকে কেবলমাত্র অনলাইনে মাধ্যমে (www.eservice.pmeat.gov.bd/mnp) আবেদন করবেন।
 ২. আশামী ২৮ এপ্রিল ২০২২ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে। নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর কোনো আবেদনগ্রহণ গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
 ৩. সমগ্র শিক্ষা জীবনে ন্যূনতম ২টি প্রথম বিভাগ (সিপিএ ও এ ফেলেস ৩.০০ এবং ৪ ফেলেস ৩.০০) থাকতে হবে। সুতির জন্য আবেদন জমা রাখার তারিখে বয়স সর্বোচ্চ ৪৫ বছর হতে হবে।
 ৪. আবেদনকারীর সাথে সকল শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতার সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি (সেল ও মার্কেট) ও পিএইচ.ডি রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বরের কপি সংযোজন করতে হবে।
 ৫. প্রার্থীকে নিজ নিজ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করবেন এবং সরকারি/স্বা-সরকারি/ব্যক্তিগত প্রতিষ্ঠানের কর্মরত প্রার্থীকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করবেন।
 ৬. কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোনো সময় এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাতিল/পরিবর্তন এবং যে কোনো ফেলোর আবেদন বিবেচনা/বাটিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
 ৭. যে কোন প্রয়োজনে নিম্নলিখিত ফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

হট লাইন: ০১৭৭৪৯৫৩৫৬
 ০১৭৭৪৯৬১৫৬

জিডি-৫৭৯

১৪ই মার্চ ২০২২
 নাসরীন আফরোজ
 ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক (অতিরিক্ত)
 ফোন: ০২-৮১৯১২২০০
 ই-মেইল: md@pmeat.gov.bd