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Let's Co-Create!





B1 BB cyber heist
Case against Filipino business dismissed



P3 Effort to ensure efficiency
BRTC to track location of more vehicles



P7 'Partygate' scandal
UK PM Boris, FM Sunak to be fined



P13 Atletico host City
Someone hits back at critics



SLOGGING THRU SOOT

With soot all over his body, a worker of an aluminium utensil factory in the capital's Shyampur hurriedly utilises his 15-minute break to have one of the most basic meals, a chapati soaked in tea. A hard day's work at the factory only fetches about Tk 400, with which it is hard to support a family and have a decent meal during the break.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Sri Lanka defaults on foreign debt

Bangladesh's \$200m loan hangs in balance

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ZINA TASREEN

When Bangladesh agreed to provide \$250 million to Sri Lanka last year, little did it think that it would become a side character in the horror show that is unfolding in the island nation.

But that is exactly the position Bangladesh finds itself in after Sri Lanka yesterday announced defaulting on its entire \$51 billion of external debt – an extraordinary move taken to preserve its scarce foreign currency reserves for essential food, fuel and medicine imports.

In March, Sri Lanka's foreign currency reserves plummeted to \$1.94 billion, just enough to foot a month's import bill, but analysts estimate the usable amount is about \$500 million, reports The Financial Times.

The Sri Lankan government was due to make a \$36 million interest payment on a 2023 dollar bond on April 18, as well as \$42.2 million on a 2028 note, Bloomberg compiled data show. A \$1 billion sovereign bond is maturing on July 25. Now, payment for all is suspended.

Although the government has taken extraordinary steps in an effort to remain current on all of its external indebtedness, it is now clear that is no longer a tenable policy.

Sri Lanka's finance ministry

An evening soaked in blood

Memories of the brutal attack on Prof Azad

SHARIFUL HASAN

It all started with a loud sound. To locate the source, I started walking from TSC of Dhaka University towards Bangla Academy. When I reached the Atomic Energy Commission, I saw a small crowd. Upon getting closer, I found a man lying face-down in a pool of blood. I turned his face toward me and recognised him instantly.

"It's our Humayun Azad sir. He is a professor at Dhaka University," I shouted.

"We have to take him to the hospital immediately," I urged the crowd.

This was how I became a part of that bloody evening, when the illustrious writer and academic was attacked on his way home from the book fair. Eighteen years have

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

After 18 years, verdict due today

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

A Dhaka court is set to deliver verdict over the murder of Prof Humayun Azad after 18 long years as the alleged negligence of investigators and prosecution delayed the trial completion.

The illustrated author and academic of Dhaka University was stabbed near Bangla Academy in the capital on February 27, 2004.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



Bleeding profusely, Prof Humayun Azad is being taken to hospital by journalist Shariful Hasan on that fateful night 18 years ago. The Daily Star is publishing this photo manipulating the colour of the image to make it look less gory.

PHOTO: FILE

A book and a bloodthirsty terror outfit

SHARIFUL ISLAM and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) supremo Shaikh Abdur Rahman had directed his younger brother and the outfit's military commander Ataur Rahman Sunny to kill Prof Humayun Azad for writing the book "Pak Sar Jamin Sad Bad".

After going through the book, which criticised religious fundamentalism, Rahman declared Prof Azad a Murtad (apostate) and asked Sunny to watch his movement to and from Ekushey Boi Mela.

The JMB chief took the decision in consultation with other Majlis-e-Sura (highest policy-making body) members of JMB, according to the charge sheet submitted in 2012.

Sunny and another operative Mizanur Rahman alias Minhaj first visited Agamee Prokashani, a publisher of Prof Azad's books, at the fair to identify their target.

Then on the day of the attack on February 27, 2004, Sunny led the assault team of five persons who took position opposite the gate of Bangla Academy

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

SSC, HSC FOR 2023 Exams to be held on all subjects

Syllabuses to be curtailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SSC, HSC and their equivalent exams for 2023 will be held on all subjects with full marks but on curtailed syllabuses, according to a government decision.

The education ministry yesterday decided that next year's Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exams will be held in April and the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exams in June.

The decision to shorten the syllabuses was made considering the fact that the candidates of these public exams will have fewer in-person classes compared to the pre-Covid period.

Schools remained closed from March 17, 2020, to September 11, 2021, and from January 20 to February 21, this year because of Covid-19.

At a press conference at the Secretariat yesterday, Education Minister Dipu Moni said the SSC candidates for 2023 will have 162 days of in-person classes, given that those continue till December this year. They usually get 316 days of in-person classes.

If the classes for HSC candidates for next year continue till December this year, they will be able to attend in-person classes for 200 days against the usual 330 days.

The revised syllabuses for both the SSC and HSC exams will be prepared keeping in mind the fewer number of in-person classes during the pandemic.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 7



Even though they are banned on the highways, battery-run rickshaws swarm the Dhaka-Aricha highway at Hemayetpur and that too going against traffic at speed. Such a practice puts lives at stake and creates bottlenecks on highways.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

HSIA to stay open 24/7 from May

RASHIDUL HASAN

In a sigh of relief, the runway at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport will remain operational for 24 hours from next month instead of June.

Hundreds of outbound passengers faced huge suffering due to chaotic situation and mismanagement at the HSIA for the last five months due to the closure of the runway from 12:00am to 8:00am every day for six months from December 10, last year.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh is constructing and expanding taxiways for the third terminal for which the runway needs to remain closed.

At least 13 to 16 international flights rescheduled their time due to the closure of the runway, sources at the HSIA, said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Difficult to adjust ties with Russia

Says foreign secretary

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh continues to maintain very close relations with Russia and it is "very difficult" for the country to try to "adjust" the relationship, even if anyone would like it to amid the current situation in Ukraine.

Talking to a small group of reporters on Monday, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen conveyed that Bangladesh has taken its positions on the successive UN resolutions in line with its "historical relations" with Russia.

Foreign Secretary Masud recently visited the United States and accompanied Foreign Minister Abdul Momen at the bilateral meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the US State Department on April 4.

The foreign secretary also led the Bangladesh delegation at the 8th Bangladesh-US Security Dialogue held in Washington.

The Russia-Ukraine war was discussed in the regional and international contexts and Bangladesh conveyed its position to the United States, highlighting Bangladesh's relations with Russia which are still extensive and close.

The foreign secretary also said Bangladesh will continue to focus on its economic priorities like the Rooppur project, which Bangladesh wants to complete.

He reiterated that Bangladesh wants to have friendly and diversified relations with all countries.

Global police shut down online hacker's market: Europol

AFP, The Hague

International investigators have shut down a massive online forum that sold access to hacked databases stolen from US corporations, Europe's policing agency Europol said yesterday.



Students of Fine Arts at Dhaka University are busy making preparations for the Mangal Shobhajatra, an essential part of the Pahela Baishakh celebrations in the city. The Bangla new year begins tomorrow.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Peace talks hit a dead end

Says Putin, defends 'noble' war in Ukraine amid allegations of rape, brutality, chemical weapons

AGENCIES

President Vladimir Putin said yesterday peace talks with Ukraine had hit a dead end, using his first public comments on the conflict in more than a week to vow that his troops would win and to goad the West for failing to bring Moscow to heel.

He said Moscow would achieve its goals as Russian troops massed for a new offensive amid allegations of rape, brutality against civilians and possible use of chemical weapons.

Ukrainian officials urged civilians to flee eastern areas ahead of the anticipated offensive, while the battle for the southern port city of Mariupol was reaching a decisive phase, with Ukrainian marines holed up in the Azovstal industrial district.

Addressing the war in public for the first time since Russian forces retreated from northern Ukraine after they were halted at the gates of Kyiv, Putin promised that Russia would achieve all of its "noble" aims in Ukraine.

In the strongest signal to date that the war will grind on for longer, Putin said Kyiv had derailed peace talks by staging what he said were fake claims of Russian war crimes and by demanding security guarantees to cover the whole of Ukraine.

"We have again returned to a dead-end situation for us," Putin, Russia's paramount leader since 1999, told a news briefing during a visit to the Vostochny Cosmodrome 3,450 miles (5,550 km) east of Moscow.

Asked by Russian space agency workers if the operation in Ukraine would achieve its goals, Putin said: "Absolutely. I don't have any doubt at all."

Russia, he said, would "rhythmically and calmly" continue its operation.

Putin said Russia had no choice but to fight because it had to defend the Russian speakers of eastern Ukraine and prevent its former Soviet neighbour from becoming an anti-Russian springboard for Moscow's enemies, reports Reuters.

The West has condemned the war as a brutal imperial-style land grab targeting a sovereign country. Ukraine says it is fighting for its survival after Putin annexed Crimea in 2014 and on February 21 recognised two of its rebel regions as sovereign.

Putin dismissed the West's sanctions, which have tipped Russia towards its worst economic contraction since the years following the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, as a failure.

"That Blitzkrieg on which our foes were counting did not work," Putin said.

He dismissed Ukrainian and Western claims that Russia had committed war crimes as fakes.

Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Malyar, meanwhile, said the government was checking unverified information that Russia may have used chemical weapons while besieging Mariupol.

"There is a theory that these could be phosphorous munitions," Malyar said in televised comments.

The withdrawal of Russian forces from the outskirts of Kyiv brought more allegations of war crimes, including executions and rape of women.

United Nations official Sima Bahous told the Security Council on Monday: "We are increasingly hearing of rape and sexual violence."

Kateryna Cherepakha, president of rights group La Strada-Ukraine, told the council via video: "Violence and rape is used now as a weapon of war by Russian invaders in Ukraine."

Russia's deputy UN ambassador denied the allegations.



India hopes for Pakistan reset after Sharif election

AFP, New Delhi

India hopes that Pakistan's new prime minister will herald a diplomatic thaw between the two nuclear-armed foes after years of tensions, analysts say.

The pragmatic and business-friendly Shehbaz Sharif faces daunting challenges as leader -- among them relations with a neighbour his country has fought three wars against in the past 75 years.

But he hails from an elite political family seen in India as conciliatory towards New Delhi and willing to settle disputes with dialogue instead of denunciation -- unlike his immediate predecessor.

"He is not someone who will go to the extreme of antagonising India," Ajay Darshan Behera, a professor of international studies at New Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia university, told AFP.

A book and a bloodthirsty

FROM PAGE 1

around 8:00pm, according to the police probe report.

Minhaz was with a machete, JMB's killing squad member Noor Mohammad alias Shamim had a knife while Anwarul Alam alias Bhagne Shahid and Nurullah alias Hafiz carried bombs in gunny sacks.

Around 9:15pm, when Prof Azad was walking towards the TSC coming out of book fair, Minhaz and Shamim hacked him indiscriminately in the shoulder, head, face, throat, hands and different other parts of the body.

Soon Alam and Nurullah exploded bombs to create panic, melted into the crowd and fled the scene.

The physical and mental wounds led to the death of Prof Azad in August during his stay in Munich, according to the charge sheet and death certificate.

Arrested in 2006, Rahman and Sunny

admitted to carrying out the attack. Both were executed along with four other top JMB leaders on March 30, 2007 for killing two Jhalakathi judges.

The JMB had killed and maimed many people during their decade-long underground operations that climaxed with around 500 nearly synchronised blasts in all but one district on August 17, 2005.

A spate of deadly suicide bombings following hard on the heels soon put the people's nerves on edge. The attacks left at least 30 people dead and those included judges, lawyers and policemen.

The outfit and its offshoot Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh also killed at least 22 people and injured scores others in vigilante operations in Rajshahi, Naogaon and Natore in the name of ridding the northern districts of underground ultra-left parties in 2004.

An evening soaked in blood

FROM PAGE 1

passed, but the horrific events of that day still seem so vivid.

I was then a second-year student at DU and had just begun my journalism career. As I was a member of Dhaka University Film Society, I used to go to TSC regularly after finishing my classes, and would stay there until 10:00pm.

February 27, 2004 was no exception. It was around 9:30pm. I was enjoying a rehearsal of a music festival with my friends outside TSC that winter evening. The Amar Ekushey Bô Mela was going on with people coming out in numbers.

Our attention was suddenly diverted by what seemed like the sound of an explosion. It was something that will remain in my mind for the rest of my life. When I saw Prof Azad, it was a horrific scene. He was stabbed so brutally that his face was split open. I tried to hold the skin together. My only thought then was to take him to the hospital as soon as possible. As it was night, there were no vehicles available.

A white, private car was coming from the direction of TSC. I went to the passenger in the front and requested him to take Prof Azad to the hospital, but the driver turned the car around and left. I saw a police truck near TSC and rushed to it. After some persuasion, they agreed to take him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

When I was putting him in the truck with the help of an officer, photojournalist Pavel Bhai appeared and started taking photos. I was feeling very helpless but was relieved to see Bitu Bhai, one of our seniors in the university. He came as soon as I called him. We boarded the truck with Azad Sir, and I held him close to me.

"Where are you taking me?" he asked. "To the hospital. You will be fine soon," I replied. "Why are you taking me on a police truck?" "Sir, we are your students. We'll get down soon."

Dhaka Medical College Hospital seemed too far away. When the vehicle finally stopped, Bitu bhai and I took sir to the emergency department. In the emergency department of DMCH, a slip worth Tk 5 had to be taken for every patient. I quickly took a slip and doctors advised me to take Prof Azad to Ward 32 for an emergency operation. The doctors there again asked for the slip.

I tried to get the slip out from my pocket but it was soaked in blood, as was my t-shirt. The doctor asked me to bring another slip. By the time I returned, sir's treatment had started. The doctors were trying to stop the bleeding and asked me to bring some medicine. Bitu Bhai and I brought those. The doctors said they needed more medicine, but we had run out of money. We requested a police officer to make the arrangements for the medicine and he was kind enough to do so.

By then, many -- including the then vice-chancellor of Dhaka University [Prof SMA] Faiz Sir -- had come to DMCH.

Later, we heard that we were able to take sir to hospital within 10-12 minutes of the attack. Doctors said if it was a little later, he could have bled out. We felt thankful that we were able to save our sir. But he died in Germany six months later.

I was a resident of Zahrul Haque Hall which was a little distance away from DMCH. So, I went to Fazlul Haque Hall with Bitu Bhai. I took a bath and changed my clothes. As I started heading toward my hall, I found a procession had already started on the campus protesting the attack. I joined it immediately. Later, I went to my hall.

The next day, I heard that Prof Azad was taken to Combined Medical Hospital at night. Intense agitation started on campus demanding justice for Humayun Azad. Posters and a photo of me holding sir were pasted on the walls. I felt like the police were following me. Some of my friends said I should go home and take some rest. I did so. But I realised later that the police were actually following me.

Around two months after the incident, Prof Azad returned to campus after being treated in Bangkok. I thought I would tell sir and his family what had happened that night. One day, I went to his house on Fuller Road but he was not home. That conversation never happened.

[This is the abridged version of the write-up] Shariful Hasan is a freelance journalist writing for The Daily Star.

Crocodile rescued from shrimp farm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

The forest department yesterday rescued a crocodile from a shrimp farm in Mongla, Bagerhat.

Shrimp farmer Akram said he saw the crocodile in his shrimp enclosure in the morning and called the forest department.

Azad Kabir, in-charge of Karamjal Tourism and Wildlife Breeding Centre at the East Sundarbans Division, said the saltwater reptile appeared to be aged between eight and nine, weighing 10kg.

It could have ended up in the enclosure during high tides in the Gona river, he said, adding that the animal was released in a river.

This has been the second crocodile to be found on private properties in the district in two weeks.

Man found dead by rail bridge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Locals found the body of a 42-year-old man beside a rail bridge in Kalihati, Tangail, yesterday.

Govinda Chandra Ariya's body was found about 2km away from his home in Nagarbari area.

He was an area manager of an ayurvedic medicine company and also the organising secretary of the local Puja Ujapan Parishad.

His cousin Apan Ariya said Govinda was missing since Monday evening and his family members were looking for him.

Saiful Islam, an assistant sub-inspector of railway police, said the body bore multiple injury marks and it was sent to a morgue for autopsy.

Businessman abducted for ransom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A renowned businessman of Patuakhali and his driver were abducted while returning to the town from Galachipa upazila around 9:00pm on Monday.

Businessman Shibu Lal Das's family members said someone called his wife around 3:00am yesterday and demanded Tk 20 crore for his release.

Mohammad Shahidullah, superintendent of Patuakhali police, said six police teams were formed to rescue them.

Police said Shibu's car was found in Amtali area hours after he reportedly went missing.

Dozens dead after gunmen ransack central Nigerian villages

AFP, Jos

Gunmen have killed dozens of people after ransacking villages in central Nigeria, local sources said, in the latest violence blamed on heavily armed criminal gangs.

The attacks on Sunday on villages in Plateau state left more than 100 people dead with scores of homes destroyed, two local community leaders and the commander of a local vigilante force said Tuesday.

Details of the attack are sketchy, with local officials and security forces confirming the assault but declining to give a death toll.

Sri Lanka defaults on foreign debt

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh was supposed to provide \$250 million in exchange for an equivalent amount of Sri Lankan rupees, but it ended up providing \$200 million seeing the worsening economic crisis in the South Asian nation.

"If Sri Lanka says that we will give you LIBOR + 4 percent if you take the money after two years, it would be wise to turn down the offer. That would never materialise given Sri Lanka's financial position," he said, adding that the IMF is unlikely to provide its own funds to repay loans.

Sri Lanka has previously entered into 16 relief programmes with the IMF and has stayed the course for only half of those.

The country's foreign debt to GDP ratio is to the north of 60 percent and the total debt to GDP ratio is more than 100 percent.

Not just that, its external debt carries high interest rates and has short repayment tenure, according to Hussain.

In its statement yesterday, Sri Lanka's finance ministry said creditors were free to capitalise any interest payments falling due after 5 pm local time at an interest rate not higher than the normal contractual rate applicable to the credit.

Capitalisation is the addition of unpaid interest to the principal balance of a loan. The principal balance then increases and more interest is accrued over the life of the loan.

Or, creditors can choose to receive repayments in Sri Lankan rupees.

The latter option would have been acceptable had the Sri Lankan rupee not plunged to a record low to become the world's worst-performing currency --

worse than the currency of Russia, which is facing a cocktail of economic sanctions from the west.

The Bangladesh Bank though remains unfrustrated. "We are not concerned yet -- Sri Lanka still has time to pay back," BB Spokesperson Md. Serajul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina though called for caution when it comes to foreign debt even though it is far below risky levels.

Following a presentation yesterday on "offshore tax amnesty" and "a review of Bangladesh's macroeconomy against the backdrop of Sri Lankan economic crisis" by the National Board of Revenue and the finance division, she directed all concerned to take necessary measures so that Bangladesh could maintain its current position regarding foreign debt.

HSIA to stay open 24/7 from May

FROM PAGE 1

Some 90 to 110 flights now depart and land within the 16-hour window, they added.

Several passengers said they had to suffer a lot due to mismanagement and the chaotic situation at the airport due to lack of manpower, additional ground handling facilities and other necessary services.

Passengers have been suffering a lot as mismanagement and chaotic situation prevails

everywhere at the airport including inside and outside the terminal, airlines' check-in counters, immigration and boarding bridges.

Every day, 28 airlines operate 90 to 100 flights, carrying around 15,000 passengers to different destinations from HISA.

Chairman, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said the runway will be open for 24 hours flight operation from the next month as the ongoing

work for construction of the high-speed taxiway will be completed by the end of this month.

The CAAB chairman said when the third terminal will be open by the end of 2023, many aircraft will come to the runway.

Since the runway at Dhaka airport is one, the construction of two additional high-speed taxiways has been undertaken to reduce the duration of the aircraft on the runway and to enable it to exit the runway faster.

PAHELA BAISHAKH SEXUAL ASSAULT

Trial in limbo

Only 3 out of 34 witnesses
gave depositions in 5yrs

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

Trial of the case filed over the Pahela Baishakh sexual assault incident at Dhaka University (DU) did not make any headway even after five years, due to the prosecution's failure to produce witnesses before court for their statements.

During Pahela Baishakh celebrations on DU campus on April 14, 2015, a group of young miscreants went berserk at TSC area for about an hour, sexually assaulting at least 20 women.

Till March 6 this year, only three out of 34 prosecution witnesses gave their depositions, after charge framing, according to the prosecution.

Among the remaining 31 witnesses, 11 did not show up in court to give testimonies for unknown reasons despite being summoned, throwing the trial into uncertainty, the state lawyers said.

The trial is now pending at the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-8 of Dhaka.

The court has issued several summonses with non-bailable arrest warrants against the 11 absentee witnesses, as they did not comply with multiple court orders in the past, said Monira Begum Moni, a state lawyer.

The 11 witnesses are police inspector Zahid Anwar, assistant sub-inspector Monirul Islam, constable SM Rezaul Haque, Bangladesh Chhatra Union DU unit's former president Liton Nandi, DU marketing department's former student Ishaat Kashfia Ila, Suman

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Due to ongoing classes, Esha Chakma couldn't visit her home in Rangamati to join her family in Biju celebrations. Despite that, her festive spirit couldn't be halted as she prayed for the well-being of all beings by releasing flowers in the fountain at Charukola with her friend. However, she believes that if the government had provisions for a holiday on Biju, she wouldn't have to miss out on their annual celebrations. This photo was taken at Dhaka University yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Take steps against illegal lenders: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered for setting up complaint boxes at all districts and upazilas to receive information and allegations from people about the functions of unauthorised financial and microcredit institutions and individual money lenders.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has been directed to issue notice to deputy commissioners and superintendents of police to take necessary steps.

During hearing a writ petition, the HC bench of Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman and Justice AKM Zahirul Huq ordered the central bank to submit a complete report after complying with yesterday's and previous directives on this issue in 60 days, Supreme Court Spokesman Md Saifur Rahman told The Daily Star.

SC lawyer Syed Sayedul Haque Suman on September 7 last year submitted the petition as a public interest litigation.

He said BB yesterday submitted a compliance report before the HC bench, saying that it has formed 19 teams to monitor the activities of unauthorised financial institutions and money lending.

For the same petition, the HC on September 27 last year had directed the government to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

An effort to ensure efficiency

BRTC to bring more vehicles under location tracking

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) is bringing more of its vehicles under vehicle tracking system (VTS) to ensure transparency and efficiency in fleet management.

VTS is a software system used to monitor location of vehicles. It uses global positioning system (GPS) for tracking, giving authorities real-time information.

Driven by benefits the state-run transport agency is getting after introducing the system for 500 buses, it will now add 700 more buses and trucks under VTS, officials said.

BRTC has already floated a tender for procuring VTS equipment for 500 trucks and 200 buses, and software services for 1,200 buses and trucks, including for buses in which VTS devices are already installed.

"It would bring transparency and accountability of BRTC services. It would decrease wastage of assets and increase passenger services," BRTC Chairperson Tazul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the agency will gradually bring all its vehicles under VTS.

BRTC owns 1,650 buses, of which 1,256 are in service. Of those that are out of service, 178 have to be written off, and 204 need major repairs, according to its 2020-2021 annual report.

The agency provided services to 4.31 crore passengers in the last fiscal year. It also owns 590 trucks, of which 498 are in operation, reads the report. These trucks carried 6.55 lakh tonnes of goods during the same period.

BRTC often draws criticism for the early demise of its vehicles, due to lack of skilled mechanics and spare parts, inadequate maintenance, and authorities' poor decisions, said experts and users.

Besides, corruption by a section of

➤ BRTC will bring 700 more buses, trucks under VTS

➤ It will gradually bring all vehicles under system

PERKS OF VTS

It can track real-time location, distance travelled, number of trips

Using these info, fuel use, operation time of vehicles can be checked

Swift action can be ensured against violations



BRTC officials is to blame for poor services, which ultimately had turned it into a losing concern, they said.

However, Tazul Islam said the situation has changed a lot, as the agency is now making profit. Implementation of different initiatives, including introduction of VTS and fleet management automation system, have helped change the scenario.

VEHICLE TRACKING SYSTEM

A BRTC official said VTS was already built in 500 buses procured from India in 2019, and later, they installed necessary software to make the system operational in early 2020.

Using the system, authorities can know real-time location of vehicles, the distance they travel and the number of trips among other information, he said.

"As we can know the distance travelled, we can determine the amount of fuel

vehicles require. So, no one will be able to use or pretend to use more fuel than what is needed. So, the system is saving fuel costs," he told this correspondent, wishing anonymity.

Tazul Islam said they regularly check how many vehicles are in operation and can immediately know whether they are late to start operation. Before, it would take over a month to get this information, after every depot would place its monthly report.

Besides, BRTC is implementing a fleet management automation system at three of its 22 depots, which will allow authorities to get other types of information, including income and expenditure.

The system is also being implemented in five other depots on pilot basis, a BRTC official said.



National Eidgah to see main Eid jamaat after 2yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main jamaat of this Eid-ul-Fitr will be held at the National Eidgah on the High Court premises in Dhaka at 8:30am.

If the congregation cannot be held due to inclement weather or any other unavoidable reason, the main jamaat will be held at 9:00am at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

The decision was taken at an inter-ministerial meeting held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs yesterday to decide the official programme to celebrate the upcoming Eid.

Minister of State for Religious Affairs Faridul Haque Khan presided over the meeting, the meeting sources said.

PAHELA BAISHAKH Celebrations to end by 2:00pm



STAR REPORT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shafiqul Islam yesterday said all public events celebrating the Pahela Baishakh must end by 2:00pm on April 14. No food shops will be opened as the celebration will be held during the month of Ramadan, he said while assessing security arrangement for the Bangla New Year celebration at Ramna Batamul, reports UNB.

The celebration points, including Ramna Batamul and Dhaka University campus, are set to be under CCTV camera surveillance, he said.

Ishraque gets bail

UNB, Dhaka

BNP leader Ishraque Hossain secured bail yesterday, six days after he was arrested and jailed in an arson attack case.

Police said the case was filed for torching a car near the Bangladesh Bank in 2020.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Tofazzal Hossain passed the order on a bond of Tk 5,000.

Ishraque's lawyer Taherul Islam Tawhid said his client was out of the country on the day of torching a vehicle for which he was arrested.

He said the BNP leader was granted bail as he submitted the proof before

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Tale as old as time

Halkhata slowly turning into a lost tradition

DIPAN NANDY

Halkhata is a tradition that is almost synonymous with Pahela Baishakh celebrations. It refers to the practice of opening new ledger books for account-keeping on the first day of the Bangla New Year.

However, time has worn out the culture, which is why it's not seen as much as before.

In the past, traders in the rural areas used to open shops on the first hour of Pahela Baishakh, clean and decorate it with paper flowers. Customers were greeted with traditional snacks like jilapi or muri.

The thousand-year-old tradition is on the verge of getting lost with time. Traders of Old Dhaka will organise the Halkhata festival on Friday, on a more limited scale this year.

Traders said in the past, it was an occasion of unparalleled joy. But nowadays almost everyone does the book-keeping based on the Gregorian calendar.

Biswajit Ghosh, a gold trader from old Dhaka's Kotwali, said, "In the past, we used to organise Halkhata on a much larger scale. But considering the state of business for the last two years due to the pandemic, there is no point in organising such an extravagant event."

"We used to send invitations to our customers.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

It was all very festive. This year, we have made arrangements on a smaller scale for Ramadan too," said Pandab Ghosh, proprietor of SR Jewellers.

The absence of the Halkhata festival has also affected seasonal Halkhata traders.

Noor Alam Mollah, a seasonal trader at the weavers' market, said his business is not satisfactory this year. Abdul Hamid, another seasonal trader, echoed him. "The business isn't what it used to be. But we are still surviving somehow," he said.

This tradition is on the verge of getting lost with time. Traders of Old Dhaka will organise the festival on Friday, on a limited scale.

USAID Bangladesh Advancing Development and Growth through Energy (BADGE)

গ্যাপ্‌স ফান্ড এর জন্য আবেদন আহ্বান

বাংলাদেশে ইউনাইটেড স্টেটস এজেন্সি ফর ইন্টারন্যাশনাল ডেভেলপমেন্ট (ইউএসএআইডি) এর অর্থায়নে পরিচালিত বাংলাদেশ অ্যাডভান্সিং ডেভেলপমেন্ট অ্যান্ড গ্রোথ থ্রু এনার্জি (ব্যাডজি) এর বাস্তবায়নকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান টেট্রা টেক ইএসআই, গ্যাপ্‌স ফান্ড প্রদানের বিজ্ঞপ্তি ঘোষণা করছে। বাংলাদেশী স্থানীয় এনজিও, তুলসুল সংস্থা, কমিউনিটি গ্রুপ, উদ্যোক্তা, একাডেমিয়া এবং রিসার্চ এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান যারা বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন, নবায়নযোগ্য বিদ্যুৎ, বিদ্যুতের গুণগতমান আধুনিক ও নির্ভরযোগ্য পরিষেবা উন্নয়নে কাজ করে, যা ব্যাজ প্রকল্পের লক্ষ্য অর্জনে সহায়ক, সে সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের কাছ থেকে গ্যাপ্‌স ফান্ড এর আবেদনের আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে। বিস্তারিত জানতে, www.bdjjobs.com এর টেন্ডার/ইউআই সেকশনে দেখুন।

Solicitation of Notice of Funding Opportunity

Tetra Tech ES, Inc., is the implementing organization of the BANGLADESH ADVANCING DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH THROUGH ENERGY (BADGE) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Tetra Tech announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity and solicits Grant Applications that supports the results of the USAID-BADGE project. In this regard, Tetra Tech is requesting for Grant Applications from local non-profit organizations, grass-root organizations and community groups, local entrepreneurs, academia, and research and development institutions that are working in energy access, clean energy, improving quality and reliability of supply and modern energy services. For details, please visit Tender/EOI section of www.bdjjobs.com.

Take steps

FROM PAGE 3
immediately shut down the offices of unauthorised financial and microcredit institutions and cooperative societies, and to take appropriate legal actions against them for lending at high interest rates. Lawyer Muniruzzaman appeared for BB and DAG Wayesh Al Haruni for the state.

Ishraque

FROM PAGE 3
the court in this regard. On April 6, police arrested Ishraque, while he along with Jatiyatbadi Sramik Dal leaders was distributing leaflets highlighting the government's failure in controlling the prices of daily essentials.

CONSULTANT
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Swindling by offering

FROM PAGE 5
Ziauddin started his fraudulent activities when he went to Australia for study purposes in 2004. He, with some foreigners, started vegetable and fish import business from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The arrestee at one stage laundered Tk 9 crore from the business to Hong Kong and fled to China through Hong Kong later on. He moved to Oman in 2014 and took lease of 700 acres of land from the government to turn the deserted area green.

Besides, he rented an office in a corner of a 20-storey building in China but told people that the entire building housed his ceramic factory.

He supplied tiles in Bangladesh under different brand names. Later, he announced establishing ceramic factory "Hi-tech Ceramic Industries" in Bangladesh, saying this will create huge profit. Moin said Ziauddin

shared his business plan with different people and convinced them to invest, assuring great profits. He took them to Oman and China to show his "green project" and business establishments.

The arrestee told his clients that top government officials of Oman are his business partners and offered them partnerships in his businesses.

Ziauddin, during primary interrogation, told Rab that he swindled around Tk 200 crore from more than 50 persons in this process and took loans from banks worth Tk 270 crore, said Moin. He bought around 130 bigha of land in different districts across Bangladesh, collecting money from the investors.

Later, he mortgaged the land to different banks to take the loans. The Rab official said they found that Ziauddin has laundered around Tk 60 crore abroad, mainly in China, UAE and Oman.

M'singh abuzz with Baishakh preparations

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh



After a two-year halt due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students of the fine arts department at Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (JKNIU) are passing busy hours to finish preparations for the Pahela Baishakh celebrations.

Students were seen working with "folk motifs" and other traditional items to make Mangal Shobhajatra more flamboyant, said Mohammad Emdadur Rashed, head of the department.

Students of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Fine Arts College, Brahmashoili and Mymensingh Bhibagiyo Charushilpi Parishad, Borshoboron Utjapon Parishad and other organisations are also preparing for Pahela Baishakh.

Trial in limbo

FROM PAGE 3
Sen Gupta, and four DU campus-based tea sellers - Mohammad Shahjahan, Mohammad Malek, Mohammad Masud and Mohammad Shahalam.

"Our responsibility is to inform the court for issuing summonses or non-bailable arrest warrants for witnesses to appear before it [court] on the scheduled date for depositions. But police is the only agency obliged to produce such witnesses before court, as per provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, after finding their whereabouts," special public prosecutor Mohammad Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star.

"If police fail to do so, there is nothing for the court or prosecution to do," he said. "Trial proceedings are being delayed, as the witnesses are not coming to court on time."

The Daily Star spoke to police officer Zahid Anwar, Shahjahan, Malek, Masud and Shahalam over the phone yesterday.

Zahid, who is now posted at Fenchuganj Police Station, claimed that

he did not get any court summons for testimony. No one informed him about the depositions.

The four other witnesses echoed the police officer. A day after the incident, police filed a case with Shabbagh Police Station against some unknown people.

On December 18 that year, Dipak Kumar Das, a sub-inspector of police's detective branch, submitted the final report to the court, saying none of the assaulters was identified or arrested.

On February 26, 2016, Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) was given charge of the investigation, after the prosecution filed a no-confidence petition with the court against the final report.

Later, DB arrested one of the suspects, Mohammad Kamal, from Chawkbazar. With the lone arrest, PBI inspector Abdur Razzak submitted a charge sheet to the court on December 19, 2016. The trial court framed charges against the arrestee on June 19, 2017.

Accused Kamal is now on bail.

Crime sees sharp

FROM PAGE 5
2021 due to the pandemic as most people stayed at home. But such crimes are on the rise with the increase in people's movements.

CRIME ON THE RISE
At least five people were killed in the capital in the last two months and some others came under attack while being mugged.

A vegetable vendor, Mosharrar Hossain (50), was hacked to death by muggers at Jatrabari in the early hours of February 20 as he went out of his home to buy vegetables.

Fish trader Mohir Uddin (50) was beaten and robbed by muggers disguised as Leguna driver and staff. They took away Tk 5,900 from Mohir and threw him from the running vehicle. He later succumbed to his injuries.

In mid-March, bdnews24.com senior reporter Kamal Hossain Talukder got injured while muggers attempted to rob him at Bangabandhu Avenue in Gulistan.

Even policemen were not spared from such incidents. On March 23, five policemen were stabbed by a mugger on Bangshal Police Station premises while searching them after a team of police arrested two muggers at the police station on a police van.

A Dhaka University student was stabbed in the first week of March when he attempted to catch muggers who snatched mobile phone from another student, from the university bus near City College.

Though DMP has recently beefed up the night-time security in

the city, such crimes have hardly decreased.

The issue came to light after a physician - who was robbed on a moving bus - took to social media to share his eight-hour ordeal and lack of cooperation from police, which generated much criticism.

After the incident, DMP conducted some raids and busted a few gangs of robbers and muggers.

AKM Hafiz Akhter, DMP additional commissioner (detectives), said there are risks of surge in mugging during Ramadan and Eid. Police are instructed to remain alert, he said.

At a recent monthly crime conference, DMP Commissioner Shafiqul Islam directed to provide security while transporting large sums of money like RMG workers' salaries and allowances ahead of Eid. Besides, he also instructed police to make a list of muggers and extortionists.

Omar Faruk, professor of criminology and police science at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University in Tangail, said financial instability is one of the major reasons for crime.

In any society or state, when there is no balanced distribution of wealth and equality in income, crime will continue to take place, he added.

"What is happening in our country is that people cannot adjust with their livelihood with the hike in price of daily essentials. Lower and middle income people are bearing the brunt. So, these people are taking the opportunity to commit a crime," he said.

Computer operator turns

FROM PAGE 5
"factory", which was set up by renting a flat.

Based on information, police first came to know that a fake currency trader came to Dhaka from Natore to collect consignment, said Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DB police.

Following the trail, police learned about the factory, he said, adding that the arrestees were already accused in three to four cases.

Mashiur said the gang used to sell each bundle of

fake notes amounting to Tk 1 lakh and fake rupees for Tk 12,000 to Tk 15,000 to Jahangir.

Jahangir then sold those currencies to different fake note dealers in bordering districts like Naogaon, Bogura, Natore and Chapainawabganj. He made Tk 3,000 to 5,000 profit from each bundle.

Police said Liton met all the three members in jail.

Asked about fake rupees, DC Mashiur told The Daily Star that the syndicate was trying to make rupees for the first time to check its

market and popularity. This newspaper managed to talk to arrestee Liton about the syndicate's activities.

He said it costs around Tk 3,000 to 4,000 to prepare fake notes amounting to Tk 1 lakh, and he would sell around fake notes amounting to Tk 1 crore in a month.

In February, law enforcers arrested a rupee forgery syndicate, which used to smuggle rupees from Pakistan and distribute them from Bangladesh's borders.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Bogra
ee_bog@eedmoe.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice No. 30/EE/EEED/bog/2021-22/Roc Road = 8 Lots Date: 12.04.2022

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

Tender ID	Description of work	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Fees for tender documents
683895	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Zanata College, Sadar, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683896	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Hafkori Degree College, Nandigram, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683897	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Nimadighi Adarsa College, Nandigram, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683898	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Zamur Islamia College, Serpur, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683899	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Rahima Nasser Ali Degree College, Serpur, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683900	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Moydan Hata Mosaraf Mondal Degree College, Shibganj, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683901	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Chowdhuri Adarsha Mohila College, Shibganj, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30
683902	Construction of Roc Internal Road at Habibpur High School and College, Shibganj, Bogura.	27.4.2022 15:00	28.4.2022 11:00	28.4.2022 10.30

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

Md. Ataf Hossain
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Bogra

6" x 3 Column
GD-737

Invitation for Tenders
AFCONS-KPTL JV, Makur Rahman Road, Vill: East Arichpur, P.O: Monnou Nagar, P.S: Tongi, Dist: Gazipur, Pin: 1710, Bangladesh would like to invite sealed bids from all eligible manufacturers/suppliers of Bangladesh having valid trade license for the below mentioned items for executing project of Bangladesh Railway.

1	Procuring entity name	AFCONS-KPTL JV
2	Procuring entity code	N/A
3	Procuring entity district	Gazipur
4	Invitation for	Procurement of Deformed bars/Re-bars for execution of Bangladesh Railway Project: WD-1 Construction of 3rd & 4th Dual Gauge Railway Tracks in Dhaka-Tongi section and Doubling of Dual Gauge Track between Tongi-Joydebpur section excluding signaling works, Bangladesh Railway. PO/DTJL/PWD/Isar/203, 8th Feb 2022
5	Invitation Ref No. & Date	Open Tendering Method
6	Procurement method	Instant LDC
7	Budget and source of funds	EJM BANK INDIA
8	Development partners (if applicable)	N/A
9	Project/programme code (if applicable)	N/A
10	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Package WD1: Construction of railway track, embankment, Bridge & Culverts, Station Buildings, Platforms and Sheds and Level Crossings along with associated works in Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur Section including supply of all labour, material, equipment etc., in connection with construction of 3rd and 4th Dual Gauge tracks in Dhaka-Tongi Section and Doubling of Dual Gauge Track in Tongi-Joydebpur Section as per Drawings and Specifications under "construction of 3rd & 4th Dual Gauge Railway Tracks in Dhaka-Tongi section and Doubling of Dual Gauge Track between Tongi-Joydebpur section excluding signaling works, Bangladesh Railway. PO/DTJL/PWD/Isar-2
11	Tender Package No.	Please refer point-10
12	Tender package name	Date
13	Tender publication date	13-Apr-22
14	Tender last selling date	25-Apr-22 11:00am
15	Tender submission date and time	20-Apr-22 1:00pm
16	Tender opening date and time	25-Apr-22 3:00pm
17	Name & address of the office(s) for selling, receiving and opening of tender document	Address: AFCONS-KPTL JV, Makur Rahman Road, Vill: East Arichpur, P.O: Monnou Nagar, P.S: Tongi, Dist: Gazipur, Pin: 1710, Bangladesh
18	Pre-tender meeting (optional)	Date: Time: N/A
19	Eligibility of tenderer	Recognized Manufacturers of Deformed Bar having valid trade license and approved by Bangladesh Railway in any project awarded in 2018 and thereafter. Recognized supplier of Track Ballast who have experience of supply of ballast to Railway project (need certificate from client).
20	Brief description of goods or works	2,005 MT Deformed Reinforcement Bar (8-32 mm); Grade: 60, 72.5 & 80 for execution of Bangladesh Railway Project as mentioned in point-10 1,50,000 MT of Railway Ballast (Pakur Source) as per Bangladesh Railway specification
21	Brief description of related services	N/A
22	Price of tender document (Tk)	1,000.00
23	Lot No.	Identification of lot
1	1	WD-1 Construction of 3rd & 4th Dual Gauge Railway Tracks in Dhaka-Tongi section and Doubling of Dual Gauge Track between Tongi-Joydebpur section excluding signaling works, Bangladesh Railway
		AFCONS-KPTL JV SITE LOCATION AT BR-02, BOUBAZAR, TONGI
		Location: Tender security amount (Tk): Completion time in weeks/months: N/A
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
24	Name of official inviting tender	AFCONS-KPTL JV
25	Designation of official inviting tender	Project Manager
26	Address of official inviting tender	Makur Rahman Road, Vill: East Arichpur, P.O: Monnou Nagar, P.S: Tongi, Dist: Gazipur, Pin: 1710, Bangladesh
27	Contact details of official inviting tender	+8801704123160 saumetn@afcons.com
28	The procuring entity reserves the right to - deleted - reject all tenders.	
Authorized Person of AFCONS-KPTL JV Makur Rahman Road, Vill: East Arichpur P.O: Monnou Nagar, P.S: Tongi Dist: Gazipur, Pin: 1710, Bangladesh		

D-40

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Dhaka PWD Division-IV, 15, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka
Phone No. (02)-223388778 Fax: (02)-223388778

e-Tender Corrigendum Notice (OTM)
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works:

Sl No.	Tender ID	Invitation Reference Number (IFT No.)	New last selling date & time	New closing and opening date & time	Correction
1	672689	157/Dpp/D-IV/V of 2021-2022	25-Apr-2022 14:00	26-Apr-2022 15:00	Similar work certificate instead of value Tk 170.00 (one hundred seventy) crore new value Tk 140.00 (hundred forty) crore.

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

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered bank's branches up to date & time mentioned in respective tender. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Mahabubur Rahman
Executive Engineer
Dhaka PWD Division-IV, Dhaka

GD-745

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Pragati Foundation for Education and Development
Permanent Sanad Holder

TENDER INVITATION
Tender is invited from the bonafide / intending suppliers / firms for the following items/works:

- Procurement of Computer with Monitor and Multimedia Projector for different classrooms
- Procurement of Wooden door, Glass door, Steel door and Covering Duct for various blocks of EWU
- Providing Cleaning Service at EWU

The schedule of the items with terms and conditions (hard copy) can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (2nd floor) of the University up to **26.04.2022** during office hours (**up to 02:00 p.m.**) on working days. The schedule of item no. a will also be available in the e-tender process (<http://tender.ewubd.edu>). The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is **Tk.500/-** (excluding online service charge for e-tender process).

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule by **27.04.2022 within 12:00 p.m.** Hard copy of the tender must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the Office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. Tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on the same day (**27.04.2022**) at **12:30 p.m.** at the Conference Room (4th floor) of East West University in presence of the bidders (if any) by **ensuring health safety**.

The bidders must mention the "name of the items" at the top of envelop. Otherwise the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Establishment of Fish Landing Center in
Deral Upazila under Sunamganj District
Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation (BFDC)
BFDC Bhaban, Lavel-4, 23-24, Kanwan Bazar, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215
E-mail: deral.sunamganj.fc@gmail.com

Memo No. 33.03.0000.114.07.003.22/93 Date: 12/04/2022

e-Tender Notice
(Tender Notice No. 01 (DFLC_CW_01)/2021-2022)
Invitation Reference No. 33.03.0000.114.07.003.22/93;
An e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of works	Location of the works	Tender last selling (date & time)	Tender closing & opening (date & time)
1.	684170	DFLC_CW_01	Construction work: Procurement of works and physical Services 1. Site preparation (Project site: Rajanagar Union, Deral Upazila, Sunamganj District) and 2. Land Development [1. Site development (Earth Filling) and 2. Mechanical Compaction]	Union: Rajanagar, Upazila: Dera, District: Sunamganj	27/04/2022 17:00	28/04/2022 12:30

1. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
2. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 12:20, 28/04/2022.
3. Detail about the tender have shown in e-Tender notice and e-Tender document. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Isanul Haque
Project Director

GD-736 Est. of Fish Landing Center in Deral Upazila under Sunamganj District

Computer operator turns counterfeiter

Four of fake-note gang held, says DB

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Taizul Islam Liton did not continue his studies after the eighth grade. After dropping out of school, he started working as a computer operator in the capital's Nilkhet area in 2004.

While working there, he also learned computer-graphics work. Later in 2009, while working as an operator, he got acquainted with one Duruzzaman Biswas.

Turned out, Biswas, now in jail, had a fake-note forgery gang, and he wanted Liton to work with him.

Liton then started making fake documents, stamps, notes and Indian rupees. Eventually, he became the leader of the gang.

Police's detective branch (DB) disclosed the information yesterday, after arresting him and three of his associates from Lalbagh.

The three are Jahangir Alam, Ali Hayder and Mohosin Mia.

For the last six months, the gang was getting ready to spread fake currencies in the market and border areas ahead of Eid, said DB police.

Police recovered around 20 lakh fake Bangladeshi notes and 1.5 lakh fake Indian currencies from their possession. Police also seized a laptop, printer, and different types of ink, chemicals and scanner from their

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



In rural Bangladesh, while getting fresh harvest is a harbinger of hope for the adults, for the kids its a tool for play. Children in Sylhet make a game out of throwing scrapped straw at each other, in the air and jump around on the large pile. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASR

Crime sees sharp rise in capital

34 killed in 3 months; experts blame financial instability, social disorder, lapse in vigilance

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Incidents of various crimes, especially killing and mugging, have recently seen an upward trend in Dhaka, showing a worrying sign of declining law and order situation.

The target killing of Awami League leader Jahidul Islam Tipu on a busy city street has already generated fear among residents. Moreover, 22-year-old college student Samia Afran Prity also fell victim

to indiscriminate shooting by the criminal.

Two days later, Dhaka residents witnessed another cruel crime. A woman was hacked to death in front of her children at her home by AC repairers, who took away her valuables from the house, according to police.

In the first three months of this year, at least 34 people were killed in the capital, according to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police data. Last year, 166 people were killed while the number of people killed in

2020 was 219, the data shows.

The murder of dentist Ahmed Mahi Bulbul, who bled to death after being stabbed by muggers in Shewrapara, also added to the fear.

Twenty six mugging cases were recorded in January and February this year, according to DMP data. At least 145 mugging incidents were reported last year and 176 in 2020.

Police said the crime rate was low in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Swindling by offering partnership

Man arrested for 'embezzling Tk 200cr'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab claimed to have arrested a man who embezzled over Tk 200 crore from different businesspersons, offering them partnerships in his "name-only companies".

Arrestee Ziauddin alias Zaman (55) is the chairman or managing director of at least 12 such business institutions, Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, told a press conference yesterday.

A team of Rab arrested Ziauddin from Dhaka's Uttara on Monday, after several victims made complaints, he said, adding that the arrestee was accused in at least 18 cases.

Rab seized 37 cheque books, 6 bottles of foreign liquor, fake US dollars amounting to \$6,000 and other fake currencies amounting to Tk 99,000 during raids at his house and offices.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Ziauddin

53 muggers held in Dhaka: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab claimed to have arrested 53 members of mugging and extortion gangs during separate raids in different areas of Dhaka on Monday.

"We carried out raids at 15 spots under the jurisdiction of Rab 3 and arrested them," said Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, at a press conference yesterday.

Rab also seized Tk 1.5 lakh, 60 mugged cell-phones and 46 sharp weapons from their possession, he said.

The Rab director said they intensified their drive as muggers and extortionists become more active during Ramadan and ahead of Eid.

Muggers are active when the roads are usually deserted during iftar and sehri. Besides, a section of people is extorting money from goods-carrying trucks, traders of kitchen markets, and at shopping malls and footpaths, he said.

Rab has identified more than 50 spots in Dhaka, and such drives will continue, Moin said.

PRAYER TIMING
APRIL 13

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:22	12:45	4:45	6:23	7:45
JAMAAT 4:32	1:15	5:00	6:33	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR
11	13	6:23	
12	14	4:15	6:23
13	15	4:14	6:24

In any society or state, when there is no balanced distribution of wealth and equality in income, crime will continue to take place.

OMAR FARUK, professor of criminology and police science
Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

North-West Power Generation Company Limited (An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board) and a successor utility for generation of electricity to meet the growing demand of system is looking for energetic and promising person for immediate appointment on contractual basis to the following post and invites applications from Bangladeshi Nationals:

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Basic Salary	No. of Post	Age
01	Executive Director (Planning & Development)	Tk. 1,49,000/-	01	Age maximum 60 (sixty) years as on 12.04.2022

Duties and Responsibilities:
Executive Director (Planning & Development) shall act as a member of the Management Team of the Company to assist the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for overall co-ordination of Company's management, planning, development and preparation of the project profiles for the power generation system, ensuring the compliances of laws, rules and regulations for Good Governance. He/ She is also responsible for the technical studies, engineering, construction, supervision of project of the Company and shall assist the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for negotiating project financing issues with development partners etc.

Required Qualification and Experience:

- At least Graduate in Electrical/ Mechanical/ Civil Engineering from any recognized university/college/institute.
- No third Division/Class at any stage of the academic career shall be acceptable. Candidates passed in the grading system must possess at least a GPA 3.0 on a scale of 5.0 and a CGPA 2.5 on a scale of 4.0.
- At least 05 (five) years of working experience in the senior managerial position (SE & above) in the relevant field
- At least 20 years of working experience as Asst. Engr. & above position in large power utilities of which 05 years' experience in power project/design & planning/operation & maintenance of power plant.
- In addition to the above required Qualification and Experience, the Candidate must demonstrate
 - Skill in the preparation of DPP, PPP Projects
 - Strong participatory leadership ability.
 - Knowledge in Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Total Quality Management (TQM), Project Management and Corporate Governance.

Compensation Package:

- Basic Salary, House rent allowance, Medical Benefits, Bonus, Fringe Benefits, Gratuity, Transport, Telephone, etc will be given as per the pay structure and the rules of North-West Power Generation Company Limited.
- Income Tax: To be paid by the employee.

General Conditions:

- Persons employed in Government / Semi-Government / Autonomous organization(s)/Govt. owned company(s) should apply through proper channel.
- The candidate shall be fluent in spoken and written Bengali and English language and capable of working in challenging and stressful situations.
- Computer literacy of candidates is a must.
- Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview.
- The Authority of North-West Power Generation Company Limited reserves the rights to cancel any or all applications without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Submission of Application:
Application (cover letter) with a detailed CV signed by the applicant and attested copies of all educational and experience certificates including training and other activities, National ID card and 03 copies recent PP size photo must reach by 05.05.2022 (within office hour) to **The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), North-West Power Generation Company Limited, Unique Trade Center (Level-04), 8, Panthapath, Karwanbazar, Dhaka-1215.**

(Md. Mamunur Rahman Mondal)
General Manager (HR & Admin.)
North-West Power Generation Company Limited.

ঢাকা পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড
DHAKA POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
(An Enterprise of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh)
Website: www.dpdc.gov.bd

Memo No: 87.404.401.07.01.001.2022.378 Date: 10.04.2022

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Name of the Post: Assistant Engineer-Number of posts 33*. Please visit www.dpdc.gov.bd for detail job circular.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Khagrachari.
Phone No:02333343197
email:-eekha@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No: 35.01.4600.435.07.067.20. 531 Date: 11/04/2022

e-TenderNotice

This is to notify for all concern that e-Tender is invited and published in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of work for the following Tender. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the web site: www.eprocure.gov.bd.

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Package No & Date of Publishing	Description of work	Last Selling and Closing Date & Time
1	Tender ID:685170 e-GP/33/EE/KHAG/2021-2022 Publishing 12.04.2022	Supplying of 1st Class/P.J Bricks, Stone Chips, Local Sand, Empty Gunny Bags, Fire Wood, Road Marking Paint, Paint & Thiner for use in Road Maintenance work at different Roads at RHD Matiranga, RHD Manikchari Stack-yard under Khagrachhari Road Division during the Year 2021-2022.	27.04.2022 Up to 11.00 27.04.2022 Up to 13.00
2	Tender ID: 685172 e-GP/34/EE/KHAG/2021-2022 Publishing 11.04.2022	Supply of Asphalt materials for Routine Repairing (Maintenance) Works of different Roads under Khagrachhari Road Sub-division-1, & Ramgarh Road Sub-Division under Khagrachhari Road Division during the year 2021-2022.	27.04.2022 Up to 11.00 27.04.2022 Up to 13.20

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is mandatory. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to as per e-Tender Notice. Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Zahirul Islam)
ID No:-602150
Executive Engineer, RHD,
Khagrachhari Road Division,
Khagrachari.

GD-744

Pak army takes note of recent criticism

Expresses confidence in leadership's 'well-considered stance to uphold Constitution'

DAWN ONLINE

A meeting of Pakistan Army officials yesterday took note of the recent criticism directed at the institution on social media and expressed complete confidence in the leadership's "well-considered stance to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law".

According to a statement issued from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the 79th Formation Commanders' Conference was held at the General Headquarters that was attended by the army's corps commanders, principal staff officers and all formation commanders and presided over by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

"The forum took note of the recent propaganda campaign by some quarters to malign [the] Pakistan Army and create division between the institution and society."

"National security of Pakistan is sacrosanct. Pakistan Army has always stood by the state institutions to guard it and always will, without any compromise," the ISPR statement said.

It added that the forum expressed "complete confidence in the leadership's well-considered stance to uphold the Constitution and rule of law at all costs".

The military has come under criticism this week, especially in the wake of former prime minister Imran Khan's ouster through a successful vote of no-confidence.



This handout photo taken yesterday and received from the Philippine Coast Guard shows coast guard personnel evacuating local residents from their flooded homes in the town of Panitan, Capiz province as heavy rains brought on by Tropical Storm Megi inundated the area. The death toll from the storm to hit the Philippines this year rose to 42. PHOTO: AFP

'263m to face extreme poverty'

AFP, London

Fallout from the Ukraine conflict, growing inequality and Covid could force more than a quarter of a billion people into extreme poverty this year, Oxfam forecast yesterday.

The British-based charity issued the warning in a report published before next week's annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

"New Oxfam estimates show that 263 million more people could be pushed into extreme poverty in 2022, due to the combined impact of Covid-19, inequality and food and energy price inflation -- accelerated by the war in Ukraine," Oxfam said.

"Poorer countries face looming debt crises and the purchasing power of wages is depressed, while corporate profits soar and billionaire wealth reaches unprecedented levels."

"Without immediate radical action, we could be witnessing the most profound collapse of humanity into extreme poverty and suffering in memory," said Oxfam International Executive Director Gabriela Bucher.

"This terrifying prospect is made more sickening by the fact that trillions of dollars have been captured by a tiny group of powerful men who have no interest in interrupting this trajectory."

The World Bank had previously estimated that 198 million people

faced extreme poverty -- defined as living on less than \$1.90 per day -- due to the Covid pandemic.

Another 65 million people are at risk due to fallout from Russia's Ukraine invasion -- including soaring energy and food prices.

The total number of people in extreme poverty worldwide could reach 860 million. Oxfam called for an immediate global economic rescue plan to tackle the vast problem.

"G20 leaders, the IMF and World Bank, together with all leaders, must act," it declared.

The organisation urged debt cancellation and more aid for the world's poorest nations, while calling for higher taxation on the wealthy.

At least 45 dead in S Africa floods

AFP, Durban

At least 45 people have died in floods and mudslides after rainstorms struck the South African port city of Durban and surrounding KwaZulu-Natal province, the authorities said yesterday. "The latest reports indicate that over 45 people have lost their lives as a result of the heavy rains, this number could possibly increase as more reports come in," the province's Department of Cooperative Governance announced in a statement. Days of pounding rain flooded several areas and shut dozens of roads across the southeastern city, while landslides caused train services across KwaZulu-Natal to be suspended. Video footage shared by private emergency and rescue workers and paramedics showed flooded city highways, submerged cars and collapsed houses. The disaster management department in KwaZulu-Natal province urged people to stay at home and ordered those residing in low-lying areas to move to higher ground.

TENSIONS OVER N KOREA US aircraft carrier deploys off Korean peninsula

REUTERS, Seoul

The USS Abraham Lincoln strike group is operating in waters off the Korean peninsula, the US Navy said yesterday, amid tensions over North Korea's missile launches and concerns that it could soon resume testing nuclear weapons. "The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group is conducting bilateral operations with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force in the Sea of Japan," Commander Hayley Sims, a spokesperson for the Japan-based US Seventh Fleet, said in a statement. This is the first time since 2017 that a carrier group has been deployed to the waters between South Korea and Japan.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Narail
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.6500.000.07.001.20-505 Date: 11-04-2022

e-GP Tender Notice-22/2021-2022

e-GP Tender is invited in the National e-GP System (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of works mentioned below under LGED, District: Narail.

SL No.	Tender ID	Package	Name of work	Tender last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
1	685337	SupRB/Naril/Replace/21-22/W-255	Construction of 10.05m long 2-V Rcc Box culvert on Babra Office-Suktogram Bazar Road at chainage: 200m under Replacement category [Road Id: 265283005] under Kalia Upazila, Dist: Narail.	09-05-2022 17:00	10-05-2022 15:00

Md. Sujayet Hossain
Executive Engineer
LGED, Narail
Telephone No. 0481-62331
E-mail No. xen.narail@lged.gov.bd

GD-734

EOCU এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২০৮

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইউসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করছে:

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ
০১।	ইউসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/২০২২/১২২ তারিখ: ১২/০৪/২০২২ইং	০১ (এক) প্রকার করোণাটেক কার্টন {01 (one) Kind of Corr.Carton} (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৪১,৯০০ পিস

সিকিউরিটি/ আর্নেস্টম্যানি	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ১০০০.০০ প্রতিসেট	২৪/০৪/২০২২ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	২৪/০৪/২০২২ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যবিধি অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাদের ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পাফে: ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Divisional Forest Officer
Social Forest Division, Faridpur

Invitation for Tenders

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2	Agency	Bangladesh Forest Department
3	Procuring entity name	Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur
4	Procuring entity district	Faridpur
5	Invitation for	a) Construction of Boundary Wall at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.
6	Invitation Ref No.	26/SFDF/Rev of 2021-22
7	Date	13/04/2022

KEY INFORMATION

8	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
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FUNDING INFORMATION

9	Budget and source of funds	Revenue Fund (GoB)
10	Development partners (if applicable)	N/A

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

11	Project/programme code (if applicable)	<use MOF code>
12	Project/programme name (if applicable)	<use MOF name>
13	Tender Package No.	SFDF/2021-22/W-13
14	Tender package name	a) Construction of Boundary Wall at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.
15	Tender publication date	13/04/2022
16	Tender last selling date	26/04/2022, 5:00pm
17	Tender closing date and time	27/04/2022 V 12:00pm V
18	Tender opening date and time	27/04/2022 V 12:30 V
19	Name & address of the office(s)	Address Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur. - Selling tender document (principal) Office of the Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. - Selling tender document (others) Office of the Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.

No conditions apply for sale purchase or distribution of tender documents

-Receiving tender document	1) Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur 2) Office of the Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.
-Opening tender document	Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

19	Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer	1. Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the Applicable Law. 2. Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. 3. Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of law and regulations of Bangladesh. 4. Other eligibility are in tender documents.
20	Brief description of works	a) Construction of Boundary Wall at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.
21	Brief description of physical services	Written in tender document.
22	Price of tender document (Tk)	1000.00 (one thousand Takka) only
23	Lot No.	Identification of lot
3	a) Construction of Boundary Wall at Gopalgonj SFNTC. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalgonj SFNTC. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj.	Office of the Gopalgonj SFNTC, Gopalgonj. 3% 35 days

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

24	Name of official inviting tender	Mohammad Golam Qudus Bhuiyan.
25	Designation of official inviting tender	Divisional Forest Officer.
26	Address of official inviting tender	Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
27	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel. No. 02478803083 <Fax No.> Nil E-mail: dfostdf@gmail.com
28	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings.	

Mohammad Golam Qudus Bhuiyan
Divisional Forest Officer
Social Forest Division, Faridpur
Phone: 02478803083

GD-742

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Pabna
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.7600.000.07.309.21-1231 Date: 12/04/2022

Invitation for Tender (Works)
e-Tender Notice: 27/2021-22 (OTM & LTM)

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

Sl No.	Name of work	Tender ID No.	Tender security (Tk)	Closing opening date & time
1	2	3	4	5
1	Package No. RDRIDP/Pabna/Bhangura-Submersible-05/21-22. Construction of Submersible road from Koyra-Gopalpur at Ch. 00-1400.00m, Upazila-Bhangura, Dist-Pabna (Road ID-176194004).	685358 OTM	525000.00	10/05/2022 14:00pm
2	Package No. SupRB/Pab/Replace/21-22/W-251. Construction of 18.00m long RCC Girder Bridge on Dashuria GCM (Tatulola)-Kadimpara Hat R&H road at Chainage: 1287m under Replacement category (176392003), Upazila-Ishwardi, District-Pabna.	681150 OTM	700000.00	
3	Package No. SupRB/Pab/Replace/21-22/W226. Construction of 11.05m long RCC Box Culvert on Dashuria GCM (Tatulola)-Kadimpara Hat R&H road at Chainage: 5600m under Replacement category [176392003], Upazila-Ishwardi, District-Pabna.	679668 OTM	325000.00	
4	Package No. RDRIDP/Pab/Sujanagar-16/21-22. Improvement of Raninagar Bazar-Tetulgachi Vita Shahid Master Bari road at Ch. 00-1000.00m, (Salvage cost-53818.00), Upazila-Sujanagar, Dist-Pabna	683370 LTM	210000.00	09/05/2022 14:00pm
5	Package No. RDRIDP/Pabna/Ishwardi/Maintenance-38/21-22. Maintenance work of Dorgapara RHD (Asik Rice Mill)-Dashuria GCM Traffic More via Dorgapara Central Jame Mosque road at Ch. 00-1000.00m, Upazila-Ishwardi, Dist-Pabna.	682384 LTM	160000.00	
6	Package No. e-Tender/LGED/Pab/GOBM/21-22/W-81. Periodic Maintenance of Rangamati R&H- Fishery Road via Alhara Madrasa Road form Ch. 00-1000m (Santhia) Dist-Pabna (Road ID-176724042)	685357 LTM	125000.00	

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches and purchase e-Tender documents up to dated: 09/05/2022 Time: 17:00pm (OTM) & 08/05/2022 Time: 17:00pm (LTM). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Anisur Rahman Mondal
Executive Engineer
LGED, Pabna
Tel: 0731-66133, Fax: 0731-66088
E-mail: xen.pabna@lged.gov.bd

GD-741



People run toward a platform on their way to board a train at Slovyansk central station, in the Donbass region yesterday, amid Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Ukrainian leaders of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions in the Donbas have asked civilians to evacuate west in reaction to an anticipated Russian offensive to take the eastern region. PHOTO: AFP

RISE IN RIGHTS ABUSES US rebukes India Blinken says Washington monitoring some recent concerning developments

REUTERS, Washington

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States was monitoring what he described as a rise in human rights abuses in India by some officials, in a rare direct rebuke by Washington of the Asian nation's rights record.

"We regularly engage with our Indian partners on these shared values (of human rights) and to that end, we are monitoring some recent concerning developments in India including a rise in human rights abuses by some government, police and prison officials," Blinken said on Monday in a joint press briefing with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar and India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh.

Blinken did not elaborate. Singh and Jaishankar, who spoke after Blinken at the briefing, did not comment on the human rights issue.

Blinken's remarks came days after US Representative Ilhan Omar questioned the alleged reluctance of the US government to criticize Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government on human rights.

"What does Modi need to do to India's Muslim population before we will stop considering them a partner in peace?" Omar, who belongs to President Joe Biden's Democratic Party, said last week.

Modi's critics say his Hindu nationalist ruling party has fostered religious polarization since coming to power in 2014.

Since Modi came to power, right-wing Hindu groups have launched attacks on minorities claiming they are trying to prevent religious conversions. Several Indian states have passed or are considering anti-conversion laws that challenge the constitutionally protected right to freedom of belief.

In 2019, the government passed a citizenship law that critics said undermined India's secular constitution by excluding Muslim migrants from neighbouring countries. The law was meant to grant Indian nationality to Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jains, Parsis and Sikhs who fled Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan before 2015.



BIDEN-MODI TALKS ON UKRAINE WAR

Indian stance frustrates US



AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a "candid exchange of views" on the Ukraine crisis at a virtual summit Monday, but the United States appeared to have made little progress in wooing India away from its neutral stance on Russia's invasion.

"It is important that all countries, especially those with leverage, press Putin to end the war," Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters after the virtual summit, which was followed by an in-person meeting with his Indian counterpart and the defense ministers from both countries.

"And it's also important that democracies stand together and speak with one voice to defend the values that we share," Blinken said after the talks, described by one US official as "warm and productive."

Biden made no major demands of India, a key strategic ally in US plans to contain growing Chinese power in the Asia-Pacific region, and there was no indication of significant progress toward a unified posture on the Ukraine conflict.

But White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Biden "made clear that he does not believe it's in India's interest to accelerate or increase imports of Russian energy and other commodities."

Modi has tried to walk a tightrope between

maintaining relations with the West and avoiding alienating Russia, but has raised concerns in Washington by continuing to buy Russian oil.

In his talks with Biden, he merely said the situation was "very worrying" and recalled his support for talks between Russia and Ukraine, which Washington views with skepticism.

Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar showed a hint of annoyance when he told reporters asking about Biden's push for India to cut energy imports from Russia that "probably our total purchases for the month would be less than what Europe does in an afternoon."

Biden has been pressuring world leaders to take a hard line against Moscow, although a US official said there was no "concrete ask and concrete answer" on energy imports.

"India has to make its own decisions about how it approaches this challenge," said Blinken, noting however that India "has made very strong statements ... condemning the killing of civilians in Ukraine" and was "providing significant humanitarian assistance."

Failing to win over such a key ally to its cause, Washington appears instead to be heaping on the pledges of friendship to prevent India from gradually slipping into the Russian camp, with Moscow actively courting it.

'PARTYGATE' SCANDAL UK PM Boris, FM Sunak to be fined

AFP, London

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and finance minister Rishi Sunak are to be fined for breaching Covid-19 lockdown laws in what has become known as the "Partygate" scandal, prompting calls yesterday for their resignation. "The prime minister and chancellor of the exchequer have today received notification that the Metropolitan Police intend to issue them with fixed penalty notices," a Downing Street spokeswoman said yesterday. The announcement came after London's Metropolitan Police said they had issued more than 50 fines over the parties, without disclosing the number or identities of those being fined. The leader of the opposition Labour Party, Keir Starmer, swiftly called for the two most senior members of the government to resign. "Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak have broken the law and repeatedly lied to the British public," Starmer tweeted.

Clashes rock West Bank Palestinian stabs Israeli cop before being shot dead

AFP, Jenin

Fresh clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian militants rocked the West Bank city of Jenin yesterday as a Palestinian stabbed a police officer in Israel before being shot

dead. Israeli troops launched a fourth day of operations around Jenin after an assailant from the flashpoint district shot and killed three people in a Tel Aviv bar last week in the latest of a spate of attacks that have stunned the Jewish state. Prime Minister



Naftali Bennett -- who warned in response that there would "not be limits for this war" -- overnight visited the Tel Aviv shooting scene and vowed: "We will not let our enemy stop our lives. We will continue to live our lives and at the same time we will fight where they are located, in their bases, at their source -- and, please God, we will win." The Palestinian official news agency Wafa said "clashes erupted" for a fourth day between young Palestinian men and Israeli soldiers "who fired live bullets, stun grenades and tear gas at them". The Israeli army said its "soldiers responded with live ammunition toward suspects who hurled explosive devices at them, as well as toward armed suspects in the area".

POTENTIAL INVASION THREAT

Taiwan issues wartime survival handbook

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan's military published a handbook yesterday advising civilians on how to prepare for a potential Chinese invasion, including where to find bomb shelters and how to stockpile emergency supplies. China's Communist Party has never controlled self-ruled Taiwan but it nonetheless views the island as part of its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary. Those threats have turned more bellicose under Xi Jinping. Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine has also heightened fears that China might one day follow through on threats to annex its smaller neighbour.

After 18 years, verdict due today

FROM PAGE 1

Prof Azad was attacked by militants while he was about to get on a rickshaw on his way to his university residence from the Ekushy Boi Mela.

The judgment in the case against four members of the banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) is set to be delivered today.

Prof Azad was found dead at his apartment in Germany six months after the attack.

The charge sheet quoting the autopsy report said the attack resulted in the victim's death. Azad went to Germany on a research scholarship.

According to the court documents, it took eight years to complete the probe in the case while another eight and half years had gone by to complete the trial, causing frustration among his family members and admirers.

The families even stopped keeping up with the case after a while, said Mauli Azad, daughter of the victim.

"It has been 18 years," she said. "Every time my father's death anniversary arrives, journalists call us asking for updates on the case. We would call the state lawyers, and sometimes find the proceedings pretty much, where they were the year before."

A day after the murder attempt, Azad's brother Manjur Kabir filed an attempted murder case with Ramna Police Station against some unnamed people. The case was later turned into a murder case with his death.

Five days after the incident, Kazi Abdul Malek, an inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department, took the charge of the probe.

After three and a half years of the probe, IO Malek submitted a charge

sheet accusing five JMB men, including its chief Shaykh Abdur Rahman, on November 14, 2007.

However, dissatisfied with the probe, the complainant filed a petition with a Dhaka court, seeking further probe into the case.

Following the petition, the court ordered further investigation on October 20, 2009.

After the court's order, another CID inspector Mustafizur Rahman was assigned to reinvestigate the case. But he was transferred to Chattogram Range Police.

Later, the case was handed over to another CID inspector Luthfor Rahman to reinvestigate.

Investigator Luthfor took two years more time to complete the probe. He submitted a supplementary charge sheet against five JMB operatives -- Nur Mohammad, Mizanur Rahman Minhaz, Anwarul

Alam Anwar, Salehin alias Salahuddin and Hafiz Mahmud -- under murder charges on April 30, 2012.

The court framed charges against five on September 10, 2012. After three months, the trial began with the deposition of the complainant.

The prosecution produced 41 out of 58 prosecution witnesses before the court for depositions from 2013 to 2017, which delayed the trial proceedings.

"The trial proceedings in the case were delayed as some witnesses were abroad. Moreover, the court remained closed for a long time due to the Covid-19 pandemic," Additional Public Prosecutor Shaiful Islam Helal told The Daily Star.

The defence lawyers delayed the trial proceedings, taking many times during arguments, the state lawyers claimed.

However, Faruque Ahmed, a defence lawyer,

said the prosecution failed to produce witnesses before the court in time, so the trial proceedings had delayed.

"We have always helped the prosecution to complete the trial," he insisted.

Contacted, IO Luthfor Rahman said they got the autopsy report from abroad late, so they took time to submit the probe.

After the attack, Azad was treated at the Combined Military Hospital for some 24 days. Later, he was taken to Bangkok for better treatment. He returned home after 46 days.

Of the accused, Mizanur and Anwarul confessed to the attack. They are now behind bars. The remaining two accused are on the run.

On February 23, 2014, accused Hafiz Mahmud was killed in a "gunfight" with the law enforcers after he had fled from a prison van. So, his name was dropped from the trial.

Probe body visits

FROM PAGE 14

(BWDB) Additional Director General Mahbubur Rahman, chief engineer Enayet Ullah, Sunamganj's Additional District Magistrate Anwar Ullah and the ministry's Deputy Secretary Mobasherul Islam.

The probe body visited Chandra Shomar Tal Haor, Gurmar Haor, Gurmar Haor (extended) and Matian Haor, said Jahurul Islam, executive engineer of the BWDB in Sunamganj.

He said the probe body will be visiting haors in Derai and Shalla upazilas today.

After heavy torrential rainfall in India's Meghalaya, a flash flood hits country's north eastern haor region on April 1.

More than 7,000 hectares of Boro harvest were submerged, 4,900 hectares in Sunamganj alone.

Exams to be held

FROM PAGE 1

Dipu Moni said classes for the SSC candidates will continue till February next year and for the HSC candidates till March.

The minister said they were yet to decide on this year's Junior School Certificate and its equivalent exams for class-VIII students.

The exams were not held for the last couple of years due to the pandemic.

The Covid-induced closure of schools is still having a big impact on public exams.

This year's SSC exams are likely to begin on June 19 and the HSC exams on August 22, three and a half months behind schedule. Those will be held on curtailed syllabuses and with fewer marks than usual.

This year, SSC candidates will have to sit for exams on Bangla, English, mathematics and

a fourth subject apart from three optional subjects.

They will not need to sit for exams on religion, information communications technology, Bangladesh and global studies, and science, said Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, acting chairman of Dhaka Education Board.

He further said this year's HSC candidates will have to take exams on Bangla, English, the three optional subjects and a fourth subject. There will be no exams on ICT.

Last year, SSC and HSC candidates sat for tests on only three optional subjects with a shortened syllabus and fewer marks than usual due to the pandemic.

HSC exams were not held in 2020 due to the pandemic. The students were evaluated based on their results in the previous public exams.

Erratic flash floods in haors alarming

Long-term solutions needed to tackle this trend

WHILE flash floods in late April in the haor areas of the greater Sylhet and Mymensingh regions are more or less expected, we're increasingly witnessing a change with such floods coming early and damaging semi-ripe crops before harvest, causing farmers financial losses in huge amounts. We are now seeing flash floods in late March and early April, as it happened just a few days ago, in the districts of Netrakona, Kishoreganj and Sunamganj. The devastating effects of flash floods in 2017—which damaged crops, fish and poultry worth Tk 13,000 crore—and 2019 also come to mind. This early-season occurrence destroys not just crops worth thousands of crores of taka, but also marine life, poultry and livestock. It's worth mentioning that farmers in this region grow Boro paddy on around 400,000 hectares of land, producing Tk 7,500 crore worth of paddy every year.

Given the regularity with which pre-season flash floods have been occurring over the last five or six years, we may be facing a new normal, which merits a long-term solution rather than quick fixes. According to experts, the fact that the timespan for floods is advancing into the harvesting season has much to do with the global climate crisis. Thus, merely constructing levees to protect haor areas, as we traditionally do, is no longer going to be enough. It's an uneconomical and recurring expenditure, whose return is disproportionate to the cost, especially in the face of flash floods becoming more erratic and frequent. Reportedly, all three major levees in this region gave away in the face of floods, while most others are at risk of collapsing.

What's needed is a shift away from total dependence on levees to long-term solutions like river-dredging. We understand that the water resources ministry is planning to start dredging 14 rivers in the Sylhet region. But instead of dredging a few rivers at random, we need a massive dredging plan backed by a thorough study of the river and canal system in the region, backed by the collective wisdom of water experts and engineers.

It will also be worth the money to investigate the underlying causes of the flash floods before permanent solutions are formulated, since there's more than one reason why flash floods occur and why the run-off of the precipitation is impeded. It's also necessary for collaboration with India, since it's the precipitation in Meghalaya that causes the surge downstream in the Sylhet region. Without a permanent solution, our losses will continue to be recurrent.

Work now, pay much, much later?

There is no excuse for the delay in wages for govt's 40-day job scheme

IT is disappointing to learn how the government's 40-day job scheme project fails to be efficient in serving the farmers in the northern districts of Bangladesh, seemingly every year. The annual scheme, which was launched in 2010, is meant to employ farmers for development projects in rural regions during the lean season, so that they may not succumb to the seasonal lack of income. However, according to a report by this daily, most of the labourers in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram are yet to receive their full wages, even though the allocation for these wages—over Tk 13 crore for 8,365 beneficiary labourers from Lalmonirhat and over Tk 43 crore for 27,200 beneficiary labourers from Kurigram—were made in December 2021. It is astonishing that a government project that has been running for so many years should be subject to such inefficiency on the part of government bodies such as the local union parishads and the upazila project implementation offices.

The reasoning by the authorities for this delay is twofold. First, while labourers have been paid their wages into their respective bank accounts all these years, the authorities decided to switch to an e-payment system through mobile financial services this year. But of course, as with any digitalisation initiative, government bodies are struggling to cope with this change. Second, it's being said that local representatives faced "complexities" while preparing the list of beneficiaries, which also contributed to the delay.

The first reasoning may be justified, as many labourers failed to provide the correct mobile phone numbers for the e-payment to be deposited into, and it is, after all, a new method of payment for everyone involved to get adjusted to. However, it's downright alarming that even the basic task of listing beneficiary labourers should be mired in inefficiency, especially since this 40-day employment scheme has been conducted for over a decade in the northern region. Even in 2017, the project could not begin on time in 15 unions of Lalmonirhat as the newly-elected union parishad chairmen demanded verification of the list of beneficiaries in their unions. And there are allegations of local politicians and their close ones being listed among the beneficiaries.

While it is appreciable that the wage for labourers under the 40-day employment scheme has been doubled this year—from Tk 200 to Tk 400—it is of no use if the money doesn't reach them when they need it the most. Such delays every year are also inexcusable. The government must push the local authorities to make the process efficient and free from corruption.

Imran Khan's downfall and the judiciary's role in it



BLACK, WHITE AND GREY

Ali Riaz is a distinguished professor of political science at Illinois State University in the US, and a non-resident senior fellow of the Atlantic Council.

ALI RIAZ

A fortuitous combination of several factors in the past few months have brought down the Imran Khan government in Pakistan. In a sense, the writing was on the wall since early March, when the opposition tabled the no-confidence motion in the lower house of parliament. The citizens' movement for the past several months against the mismanagement of the economy and the unity of opposition parties set the backdrop. The army's unwillingness to support its blue-eyed boy was an important factor, and the discomfort both within the country and outside with the foreign policy pursued by the government contributed to the turn of events. But in the end, undeniably, it was the Supreme Court of Pakistan that pulled the curtain on the Imran Show—at least for now. The active role of the country's highest court, headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, became the decisive element in the political and constitutional crisis that began to unfold in March, but particularly on April 3, when the deputy speaker abruptly rejected the no-confidence motion. It was followed by Prime Minister Khan's decision to request President Arif Alvi to dissolve the parliament, which he did immediately.

Imran Khan's shrewd move to avoid being fired from the job caught the opposition parties off-guard and apparently delivered him a strategic victory. In this move, especially how the no-confidence motion was thrown out, Khan unwittingly opened the door for the judiciary to intervene, because it involved the interpretation of the constitution. The Supreme Court, being the protector and the ultimate interpreter of the constitution, had the opportunity to step in. The modus operandi of the no-confidence motion's rejection was an open invitation to the court, because even a layman would have understood that it was a flagrant violation of the constitution. The Supreme Court intervened even before the opposition parties reached its door. After four days of hearings, the court delivered the verdict—that the way the no-confidence motion was rejected breached the constitution, and a subsequent series of events—and the dissolution of parliament was reversed as well. The court further instructed that a vote on the motion must take place by midnight on April 9.

It is in this context that the question arises whether this role of the court was an example of the independence of the judiciary in Pakistan, or whether the court played this role on behalf of some other force.

The history of Pakistan's judiciary has two strands. One strand is the unwavering support for the executive branch and legitimising its misdeeds. The other one is the stand taken opposing the executive's anti-constitutional activities.

At the time of Pakistan's founding, it was promised that the judiciary would enjoy absolute independence. This was stated in the "Objective Resolution" passed by the Constituent Assembly of the country in 1949, which played the role of the de facto constitution until 1956. A few decades later, the 1973 constitution also said so against the backdrop of a new political reality and the new geography of Pakistan. However, this promise was never kept. Instead of acting as an independent coequal branch of the executive, Pakistan's judiciary has served as the instrument to legitimise the executive's actions.

There have been several instances of Pakistan's courts providing justifications for the executive. The first incident happened in 1955. In October 1954, Governor General Ghulam Mohammad dissolved the Constituent Assembly and declared a state of emergency on the pretext of "a deadlock in parliament." But the fact of the matter was that the Constituent Assembly was trying to strip the governor general of the power to sack ministers. Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan challenged the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in the Sindh court in February 1955. The court ruled in his favour. But the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice Muhammad Munir, overruled the Sindh court's verdict.

It had been rumoured that the governor general had already received assurances from the chief justice that, whatever might happen in the Sindh court, the Supreme Court would rule in the governor general's favour. In another judgment, it was later admitted that in Tamizuddin Khan's case, the

governor general's power to make laws had been circumscribed. But in a third case, on the pretext of the absence of the Constituent Assembly and that the constitution had not yet been promulgated in the country, the Supreme Court granted the governor general the right to make laws. The court's argument was based on the

President Pervez Musharraf. Movement across the country against Musharraf's decision rocked the nation. A full bench of the Supreme Court in July voted 10-3 to declare the president's decision unconstitutional and reinstated the chief justice, and quashed the charges brought against him at the Supreme Judicial Council and the law which



▲ In his move to dissolve parliament and throw out the no-confidence motion, Imran Khan unwittingly opened the door for the judiciary to intervene.

FILE PHOTO: AFP

"Doctrine of State Necessity," which means that "in a situation of emergency or exigent circumstance, a state may legitimately act in ways that would normally be illegal." In other words, it provided the legal veneer to Ghulam Mohammad's unconstitutional acts. These three cases offered a clear idea that the judiciary in Pakistan had become subservient to the executive.

Since then, military rule has been imposed three times in Pakistan and has been legalised by the court each time. The first military rule in Pakistan began on the morning of October 8, 1958, with the military rule of General Ayub Khan. Chief Justice Munir legitimised him with the theory of "revolutionary legality." Under that theory, courts would endorse a coup that "satisfies the test of efficacy and becomes a basic law creating fact." A Pakistani court also provided legitimacy to Yahya Khan's military coup d'etat of 1969. However, after the establishment of civilian rule in the country, it said that the military rule had no constitutional validity. Yet, in 1977, when General Zia-ul-Haq imposed military rule, the court did not say anything to him, instead when Begum Nusrat Bhutto challenged it, the court dismissed it citing the "Doctrine of Revolutionary Legality." As the cases filed in the court after General Pervez Musharraf seized power in 1999 were piling up, the judges of the court were forced to pledge allegiance to the law enacted by Musharraf under a law like that of Zia.

There are other instances where the judiciary had taken a different stance—at least the justices had stood up to the executive. General Zia in 1981 promulgated an order called the Provisional Constitution Act (PCO), which required all judges to take a fresh oath. However, 16 judges lost their jobs and three refused to be sworn in. The remainder, however, succumbed under pressure. This slight resistance became an example of respect for the constitution and the rule of law among judges. It is far short of institutional repudiation to military rule, but a glimmer of hope nevertheless. Before Zia-ul-Haq dissolved the parliament in 1988, Article 58 (2) was added through the eighth amendment of the constitution, which gave him unlimited power. However, after his death, the court said the dissolution of parliament was unconstitutional.

We witnessed a major role of the judiciary in 1993. In April, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dissolved parliament to oust the Nawaz Sharif government. Nawaz Sharif returned to power in May, thanks to the court which threw out the president's order as unconstitutional. The strengths of the judges and lawyers and their commitment to the laws were on display after Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was sacked in March 2007 by

the president used to dismiss the chief justice.

The second phase of the court's direct confrontation with Musharraf took place in late 2007. When the court challenged the legality of the October presidential election, Musharraf dismissed 60 judges, including Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, and placed him and other top judges under house arrest. This galvanised the movement against Musharraf, leading to his fall from power. Another evidence of the court's desire to exercise its independence came in 2012 when the court sentenced Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani on charges of contempt of court and eventually forced him to resign.

Those familiar with these two strands in the history of Pakistan's judiciary will be able to understand that the conduct of Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and the Supreme Court in the last few days was important, but it is not unprecedented. It cannot be claimed that the courts in Pakistan are not influenced by the manoeuvring of the country's political forces, but there is

It cannot be claimed that the courts in Pakistan are not influenced by the manoeuvring of the country's political forces, but there is no evidence to support the claim that the courts in Pakistan were instigated or influenced by other forces in judging the constitutionality of Imran Khan's government's conduct.

no evidence to support the claim that the courts in Pakistan were instigated or influenced by other forces in judging the constitutionality of Imran Khan's government's conduct. Fortunately, it didn't have to intervene further as the vote was held at the last minute. On the other hand, to prevent the downfall of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government due to defections, the court ordered that Article 65 (A) of the constitution must be considered during the no-confidence vote. This article includes the anti-defection provision of the constitution and stipulates that a member of parliament will lose his/her membership if he/she defects. As such, it is erroneous to suggest that the court opened all the avenues for the fall of the government in the name of protecting the constitution, but instead the court's conduct appeared to be an attempt to protect the constitutional integrity of the legislative process.

COKE STUDIO BANGLA'S 'PRARTHONA'

Caught between subversion and co-option?



NAFISA TANJEEM

Nafisa Tanjeem is an assistant professor of gender, race, and sexuality studies at Lesley University in the US.

THE second song of Coke Studio Bangla, titled "Prarthona" (Prayer), was released on the eve of Ramadan this year. It was the same time when both the mainstream and social media flooded with updates, news, and views on the harassment of a Hindu female college teacher by a Muslim male police constable for wearing a teep on her forehead. Feminists and social justice activists started protesting the incident by updating their Facebook profiles with photos of themselves wearing teeps and demonstrating on the streets. It was also the same time when social media was taken over by sexist, masochistic comments about the killing of a 21-year-old student of North South University (NSU), who was riding her scooter, by a covered van in a road accident. Many blamed the victim for her "transgression," criticising her attire and her parents' decision to get her a scooter. My Facebook newsfeed was swamped by comments and discussions on all of these events.

Perhaps these juxtapositions—where people either produce or criticise orthodox, fundamentalist narratives and practices that exploit women and other minoritised communities, while cherishing the release of a spiritual and subversive music composition that celebrates an egalitarian divinity—are reflective of the unique realities of a postcolonial, neoliberal Bangladesh that is shaped by myriad forces of globalisation.

On the one hand, globalisation has opened doors for foreign direct investment (FDI) and invited The Coca-Cola Company to tap into a growing beverage market worth Tk 2,500-3,000 crore in Bangladesh. Many Bangladeshis are taking pride in the fact that Coke Studio, which sponsored music production in Pakistan, India, Brazil, and other countries, has made a grand entrance into their country and opened doors for supporting local musicians and promoting local musical traditions. Forgotten here is Coca-Cola's long problematic history of lawsuits for racial discrimination against African-American employees and polluting air in



the US, aggravating groundwater depletion in India, conducting cruel animal testing, monopolising markets in the US, Europe, and Mexico, and being the single largest plastic polluter in the world—to name just a few. Coca-Cola recently invested USD 74 million to establish a plant in Bhaluka, Mymensingh, and promised to expand not only the plant and infrastructure, but also its market and portfolio in Bangladesh. Coke Studio Bangla and its latest release of "Prarthona"—a celebration of, as Coke Studio Bangla describes, "the eternity of virtue and how the real magic of devotion can withstand the test of time, connecting generations, old and new"—are parts of Coca-Cola's massive portfolio building initiative in Bangladesh.

On the other hand, the same globalisation has been strengthening the ultra-orthodox Wahhabi-Faraizi-Deobandi-Salafi versions of Islam in this region that originally embraced Islam through more egalitarian and Persianised conquerors, traders, and Sufis. The free flow of Saudi petrodollars, as well as locally sponsored orthodox religious educational and other charity programmes, filled the vacuum in a country that failed to provide social safety to its working-class and most vulnerable communities. The influence of missionary-style religious charity, widespread circulation of orthodox narratives on social media, the government's need to appeal to conservative voters and its strategic softer stance towards certain fundamentalist groups to secure an endorsement, as well as the globalised political consciousness of

ILLUSTRATION:
AFIA JAHIN

Coke Studio Bangla and its latest release of "Prarthona"—a celebration of, as Coke Studio Bangla describes, "the eternity of virtue and how the real magic of devotion can withstand the test of time, connecting generations, old and new"—are parts of Coca-Cola's massive portfolio building initiative in Bangladesh.

the returned Bangladeshi (mostly male) labour migrants—who are aware of global and class inequities, but reject democratic politics in favour of authoritarian Islamic regimes as a way to achieve prosperity that they have witnessed in the Middle East—have been widely influencing everyday vocabularies, gendered norms and practices, and other expectations in Bangladesh.

Against this backdrop, Coke Studio Bangla's choice of two songs—"Allah Megh De" and "Baba Maulana"—and their release on the eve of Ramadan offer an intriguing scope to critically reflect on both the imperialist-capitalist invasion of the global Coke empire, as well as Coke Studio Bangla's powerful subversion of the dominant, orthodox Wahhabi-Salafi popular rhetoric in Bangladesh. Both the devotional songs were written and composed by authors/composers/singers who did not grow up in Muslim families. "Allah Megh De" was written and composed by Girin Chakraborty, who was trained by legendary musicians Allauddin Khan and Aftabuddin Khan. Great folk singer Abbasuddin Ahmed later sang the song and popularised it. "Baba Maulana" was written and composed by Ramesh Chandra Shil, who was popularly known as *kobiyal* Ramesh Shil or Ramesh Maizbhandari. Ramesh Shil grew up in a Hindu family in Chattogram. His songs addressed anti-colonial and social justice struggles, including the revolutionary raiding of the Chattogram armoury, the self-sacrifice of Surya Sen, the non-

cooperation and the Khilafat movements, the 1947 Partition, famine, and the Language Movement. He transformed *kobiyal* from a medium of entertainment into a tool for political and social justice activism. He had a long history of organising with the Communist Party and was a strong supporter of Jukta Front in the provincial election of East Pakistan in 1954. He got arrested after the Jukta Front government was dismissed by the Pakistan central government. He was also a follower of the Maizbhandari Sufi tradition.

Because of the origins of the authors and composers of the "Prarthona" songs, we see an intriguing amalgamation of language that incorporates a prayer to "Allah"—the monotheistic God—by saying that the drought is happening because the King of Clouds got angry and so only Allah can now bestow clouds and rescue the suffering community ("Meghrajya gomraya roise megh dibo tor keda"). Similarly, "Baba Maulana" describes "Maulana" as a "doll of light" ("Noor er putula baba maulana")—a metaphor that would perhaps be heavily discarded in anti-pagan Abrahamic religious traditions.

The fact that the lyrics, as well as the choice of the two songs, are creatively subversive does not lessen the fact that Coke Studio Bangla is still situated within the political economy of what some scholars have described as "coca-colonisation" to refer to the aggressive production and marketing strategies of Coca-Cola exploiting resources and environment, and privileging global as well as local elites. Through the "Prarthona" composition, Coke Studio Bangla challenges the Wahhabi/Salafi dominant narratives of Islam and promotes an indigenous, mystical, egalitarian, and subversive new "Muslim" identity. However, it does so by appropriating indigenous, folk, and Sufi music traditions, which historically took place in *dargahs*, and placing it in an experimental studio. Within the mediated space of the studio, Mizan Rahman, who was never involved with the Maizbhandari tradition, becomes the chief vocal for "Baba Maulana," and Momtaz Begum's usual flamboyant self and her non-elite rawness is turned into a sanitised and derivative "mellow, controlled vocalisation." In this way, Coke Studio resuscitates minoritised musical traditions, but then appropriates as well as commodifies them to produce an indigenised version of "modernity."

Is repatriation the only way for Rohingya refugees?

HUSSAIN SHAZZAD

Hussain Shazzad is a strategic affairs and foreign policy analyst.

RECENTLY, the US officially recognised the coordinated atrocities against the Rohingya Muslim minority, perpetrated by the Myanmar military through a bloody "clearance operation," as "genocide," the gravest of crimes. Within the first three weeks of the deadly military crackdown in August 2017, Bangladesh took in more refugees than the entirety of Europe did during the Syrian crisis. Since then, Bangladesh has been generously sheltering more than 1.2 million Rohingyas on humanitarian grounds. Following this refugee influx—the fastest and largest—Bangladesh and Myanmar signed two bilateral agreements in 2017 and 2019 for the repatriation of these forcibly displaced Rohingyas. But due to the reluctance and non-cooperation on Myanmar's part, repatriation remains a distant reality. The situation has become further complicated due to the ongoing conflict between the military regime and the pro-democracy front, following the audacious coup on February 1, 2021.

However, Naypyidaw's recent proposal to take back 700 Rohingyas frustrated Dhaka, as the former compiled the "verified list" in a way that apparently showed its "lack of goodwill" for repatriation. Again, the question arises: Is repatriation the only sustainable solution to end the plight of the stranded Rohingyas?

But, as per the legal maxim of William E Gladstone, "Justice delayed is justice denied." As almost five years have elapsed without an enduring solution, it's high time we rethought a viable way out of this crisis. The 1951 Refugee Convention, a universal treaty on the status and rights of refugees, could be a legal statute to resolve any refugee crisis with three possible solutions: local integration, resettlement in other countries or voluntary repatriation. An in-depth assessment of those options, discerning distinct spectrums of the crisis,

could offer one that would be feasible in resolving the protracted Rohingya crisis.

An impact assessment study, jointly conducted by the UNDP and the Policy Research Institute, unveiled the immense socio-economic pressure and environmental costs of supporting Rohingya refugees for Bangladesh, an already overpopulated country with more than 165 million people. The total geographical area of Bangladesh is 147,570 sq km, 92nd in terms of country size, and smaller than the US state of Iowa. It is understandable why it is impossible for Bangladesh to accommodate 1.2 million Rohingyas—more than the total population of Bhutan—on its limited land. Moreover, Bangladesh, which has long been struggling with its own unemployment problems, has neither the financial capability to ensure basic needs and life-saving assistance for the Rohingya refugees, nor provide them with employment opportunities.

Arguably, even if Bangladesh started integrating the refugees locally, it would motivate the Tatmadaw not only to continue delaying the repatriation, but also to conduct its brutality on around 600,000 Rohingyas now living in Myanmar, and to make them stateless. Besides, the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights stated point-blank that they did not want Bangladeshi citizenship, and would rather go back to their homeland. So, integrating them locally, against their will, would equate depriving them of fundamental and human rights. This is why the World Bank has been recently hit with extensive criticism for its proposal of local integration—an unacceptable solution on all grounds—of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh.

Apart from Bangladesh, the members of this persecuted minority are now living in 19 other countries. As of today, no other country has expressed interest in granting citizenship to the Rohingya refugees with due economic and social rights. As the countries with the capability to accept Rohingyas are already struggling with the global refugee problem, it is illogical to expect that they would resettle millions of Rohingyas as citizens. According to the UNHCR, around 84 million people worldwide have been forced to flee their

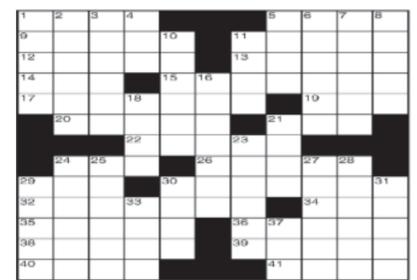
homes, of whom more than 26 million are refugees. The number has been intensified by the recent Ukraine war, which has resulted in the second largest ongoing refugee crisis in the world, after Syria. As overseas resettlement is a voluntary option, depending on the willingness of third-party countries, it should not even be considered as an option until any large country, in terms of geographical area and financial capability, willfully declares their acceptance of Rohingya refugees.

Given the socio-economic conditions of Bangladesh and the intense global refugee crisis, dignified repatriation ensuring internationally monitored safe zones remains the only sustainable solution to put an end to the Rohingyas' struggles. As formal diplomatic manoeuvres see no light at the end of the tunnel, Bangladesh may venture into informal diplomacy as well. Though the Tatmadaw is directly ruling Myanmar now, they indirectly ruled this

quasi-civilian state, as a near-deep state, even when they were not in power. This is why defence diplomacy, especially military-to-military cooperation, could be fruitful not only to understand the Tatmadaw's psychology, but also in convincing them for the safe and dignified repatriation of the Rohingyas. Also, deepening bilateral ties through economic dependency, such as exploring unexamined avenues of economic sectors, leasing agricultural lands, importing natural gas, etc between these two neighbours could also be helpful. Obviously, this does not mean that Bangladesh should stop pushing world communities to exert continuous pressure on Myanmar to expedite the Rohingya repatriation process and end the cycle of systemic abuse against the Rohingyas. Instead, Bangladesh should leave no stone unturned to ensure safe and dignified repatriation for the most persecuted minority of our time.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Robe feature
 - 5 Letter after alpha
 - 9 Church sight
 - 11 Boer fighters
 - 12 Overcharge
 - 13 Arkansas's—Plateau
 - 14 "So that's it!"
 - 15 Amateur publication
 - 17 Fish in a can
 - 19 Silent assent
 - 20 Public outcry
 - 21 Fellows
 - 22 Put a stop to
 - 24 Bible vessel
 - 26 Harvests
 - 29 Verb for you
 - 30 Soup cracker
 - 32 COVID-19
- DOWN**
- 2 Island greetings
 - 3 Queen Anne's house
 - 4 Crone
 - 5 Hype
 - 6 "Seinfeld" character
 - 7 Activate
 - 8 Inquired
 - 10 Purify
 - 11 Map region
 - 16 From Turkey's capital
 - 18 Actor Powell
 - 21 Substance
 - 23 Choose
 - 24 Mecca's place
 - 25 Athlete's dream
 - 27 Party target
 - 28 Was a noisy sleeper
 - 29 Sailor's cry
 - 30 Plops down
 - 31 Contest form
 - 33 Pool tools
 - 37 Holbrook of "The Firm"



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



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With age, I have learned to adapt

Azizul Hakim

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Prominent actor Azizul Hakim has won the hearts of millions over the years with his remarkable performances in theatre, television and films. In a chat with the Daily Star, the 'Redrum' actor talks about his film "Golui", upcoming ventures, and more.

You used to play protagonists on TV, but we see you in supporting roles now. How was the transition?

I am really okay with that, as I love the craft. When I was young, I used to play the role of the protagonist more often than not. I still have the scope to experiment with various roles and characters. I am older now, and I have learned to adapt. I am getting roles according to my age, and I am perfectly fine with that.

You see, unlike other professions, there is no 'retirement' or 'age barrier' in this industry in the conventional sense.

Are you excited about the release of your film "Golui"?

"Golui" will be released this Eid, and its teaser has been widely appreciated by the fans. I am playing the role of Shakib Khan's uncle, who teaches him the art of playing flute and dhol. The character is really interesting, and I request the fans to watch the film in the cinema halls.

How does it feel, returning to theatre after such a long time?

I started my career in theatres with Aranyak Natyadal through the drama "Ora Kodom Ali". After that, I became inactive in theatre, due to my busy schedules on TV.

However, I have returned to the stage with Masum Reza directorial "Joy Joyonti" at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. I have also acted in another drama last week by Masum Reza as well.

What are you working on right now?

I am currently busy shooting for television. I have started shooting for Brindaban Das' serial "Karim & Sons" in Pubail, Gazipur. I am playing the role of the eldest son in the series. Apart from that, I am working in "Bokulpur" and "Monkabbo" as well.

Tell us about your earliest memory in acting.

I started my career with theatre, which doesn't pay much. I got BDT 50 for acting on a play in Chandpur. In 1981, I received my first cheque worth 169 taka for appearing in Afzal Hossain's show "Porichiti". The programme highlighted artistes who were enlisted in BTV during that year. However, my first earning as a professional artiste began when I started working in package series.

Two celebrated films to premiere on TV this Eid

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The films, "Mission Extreme" and "Raat Jaga Phool", will have their television premieres on Deepto TV, this Eid-ul-Fitr.

"Mission Extreme", starring Arifin Shuvo in the lead role, will be televised at 2 pm on Eid day. The next day, Mir Sabbir's "Raat Jaga Phool", will be aired at the same time.

"Mission Extreme" is co-directed by Sunny Sanwar and Faisal Ahmed.

Apart from Shuvo, it also stars Taskin Rahman, Jannatul Ferdous Oishee, Sadia Nabila, Sumit Sengupta, and Shatabdi Wadud among others.

The story, dialogues, and screenplay of "Raat Jaga Phool" is written by Mir Sabbir himself.

Apart from him, it also stars Dilara Zaman, Abul Hayat, Sharmili Ahmed, and Fazlur Rahman Babu.



'Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore' hits STAR Cineplex on April 15

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

"Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore" is set to release at STAR Cineplex on April 15, 2022. The third instalment in the "Fantastic Beasts" film series, it is directed by David Yates from a screenplay by J K Rowling and Steve Kloves.

The cast includes Eddie Redmayne, Jude Law, Ezra Miller, Dan Fogler, Alison Sudol, Callum Turner, Jessica Williams, Katherine Waterston, and Mads Mikkelsen.

The story follows Albus Dumbledore (Law), who assigns Newt Scamander (Redmayne) and his allies with a mission related to the rising power of the dark wizard, Gellert Grindelwald (Mikkelsen).

COUNTRYWIDE

How farmers are doing?

SHYKH SERAJ

March 26 was Bangladesh's 51st anniversary of independence. On this month in 1971, after years of struggles Bangalees went into the battlefield, for the independence of their motherland. I start today's write-up conveying my deepest respect to the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose courageous leadership we achieved our independence. And also to the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives to liberate the country. The country has become successful in many sectors, especially in the farming sector. I would like to highlight on the issue of how farmers are doing after all these years of independence. A few weeks back, I went to Manikganj for filming Hridoye Mati O Manush (Soil & People in Heart) and learned about the farmers' recent state.

Manikganj is a diverse agricultural region. I went to Khalashipara in Singair upazila. I walked along the village road and saw a home, quite well built and came to know that it's a farmer's home. In the early 80s, all these houses were clay-made and those have turned into buildings with the growing financial sustainability. A farmer named Sirajul Islam, aged around 65 years, approached me and took me to his backyard. I asked Sirajul how he's doing as a farmer and he replied he's quite happy with everything. "I have been living in this place for the past 24 years. I am a very happy man as all my children are educated," Sirajul said. "Besides mainstream farming, I also fatten two cows every year and sell those during the Eid-ul-Azha. It gives me a lot of financial support," he said. Sirajul, however, said many farmers are now giving their land on lease and stepping away from farming. On a few occasions, the real landowners (farmers) are selling off their land and switching into different professions, said Sirajul. He also talked about the investment in farming and the money comes from abroad as remittance. So, if I summarize Sirajul's thought, a

large chunk of investment comes from those who are not engaged with farming. Some send money from abroad while some others by working at the RMG sector or at different organizations.



PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

I left Sirajul's home and went to nearby farmland, which was full of diversity. Bean, eggplant, papaya, banana, spinach, coriander, sweet pumpkin, gourd, maize, paddy are being cultivated on a vast land. Farmer Rajab Ali, who was working in his field, does four crops every year. Rajab believes seed is the most significant agricultural input among all. "As a result of short-duration crop varieties, farmers can cultivate up to four times a year on the same land," Rajab said. Public and private research institutes have played an important role in this regard. A little further, I saw a farmer irrigating with a pump while many more irrigation facilities, both electric and diesel-run pumps, spread across the field. The development in the irrigation system has taken Bangladesh far ahead. Even the hilly lands are now being cultivated through varied irrigation methods.

Farmer Delwar Hossain, who has sown three crops in one land, said the cost of farm labour is increasing every day. Not only their wages have gone up, there are also food costs involved.

Another farmer Dulal Mia, who earns thousands of dollars by only doing eggplant in one bigha land, said educated youths are joining the farming sector and that's a very positive sign.

I also talked to an educated young farmer Sujan Mollah. His farming strategy is a bit more experience, internet-based and quite profitable as well. After completing his studies, he took charge of his father's farming

venture. Sujan does his farming, blending years of experience of his father and using the internet. The digital revolution under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has helped many young people like Sujan.

Farmer Chandan Mondol believes if the middlemen (intermediaries) are reduced from the agricultural marketing system, farmers can gain more profit. They would get fair prices for their produce, Chandan said. Ali Ibrahim, another farmer, raised the issue of brickfields grasping the farmlands. Many farmers across the country said they need support for hassle-free agricultural credit from the public and private banks. Some farmers told me that they need more support from the Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officers (SAAO). Atique, a farmer from Natore, spoke of the most terrible thing. He said some farmers are losing farmlands by selling them off to industrialists. Some farmers are becoming farm labourer on their sold land. What an irony that is! A farmer, who did papaya on 40 decimals land this year, has already sold the land and now doesn't know what to do next year.

Shykh Seraj is Bangladesh's pioneer development journalist. He received country's two highest civilian honours, Swadhinata Puroshkar and Ekushey Padak. At Channel i, he is the founder director. He is also director and host of Channel i's popular agro-documentary, Hridoye Mati O Manush.



Those who are initiating large-scale agricultural projects are going to make the best profit for sure. At this point, the traditional farmers might be facing some serious odds. We might also lose the cultural and social heritage of the Bengal, the traditional farming and farmers. We have to concentrate on the traditional farmers, the farming heritage and balance those with the modern farming system and technologies. All the best wishes on the 51st Independence Day of Bangladesh.

Suspect on the run after injuring 13

FROM PAGE 14

shot in the incident

The police department tweeted that there were "NO active explosive devices at this time."

"Please stay clear of the area" the NYPD tweeted, urging witnesses to contact a police tip line with any information.

The White House said President Joe Biden had

been briefed on the incident and was in communication with New York officials.

New York governor Kathy Hochul tweeted that first responders were on the scene and promised regular updates as the investigation unfolds.

Mass casualty shootings happen with relative frequency in the United States, where firearms are

involved in approximately 40,000 deaths a year, including suicides, according to the Gun Violence Archive website.

Shootings in New York City have risen this year, and the uptick in violent gun crime has been a central focus for Mayor Eric Adams since he took office in January. Through April 3, shooting incidents

rose to 296 from 260 during the same period last year, according to police statistics.

The incident came just a day after US President Joe Biden announced new gun control measures, increasing restrictions on so-called "ghost guns", the difficult-to-trace weapons that can be assembled at home.

Cost 12 times higher at pvt hospitals

FROM PAGE 14

Covid-19 tests.

The average cost for testing samples (transport, test fees, and other expenses) was Tk 399 at government labs and it was Tk 3,381 at private labs.

The study said although Bangladesh has made

significant progress in providing the first dose of Covid vaccine, it ranks fifth among Saarc countries in providing the full-dose vaccines.

Special efforts to vaccinate the underprivileged and floating people have not

been implemented, except in one or two areas.

Speaking at the event, TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the government has a positive attitude towards tackling the Covid crisis.

"However, in terms of good governance, there

are shortcomings in every field. No specific information on how much money was spent on vaccination is being published. The culture of secrecy is evident. And it is a normal practice to cover up any corruption behind it."

Grandeur to be replaced by mere building

FROM PAGE 14

construct any building," he said, requesting anonymity.

Abdul Baten, immediate past president of Dhaka Bar Association, said the new building will be constructed with permission from two ministries concerned.

"We will construct the building in phases, following the legal procedures," he said.

He said there are 27,760

lawyers in the association and they do not have any place to sit.

Asked about the HC order, Baten said he had not heard about any such directives.

Contacted, Mayor Taposh said the abandoned building was not recognised as a heritage site by the Department of Archaeology. The decision can be reconsidered if

a responsible authority recognises it as an archaeological site.

THE NEELAM GHAR Originally, the building was named the Nag Bhaban after its owner Kunja Lal Nag. According to documents, the land later came under the custody of the ministry of housing and public works.

At the DC office, after the owner of the property

left the country for India in 1947, the land was marked as an enemy property, said a resident of the building.

Yousuf Aziz Muttaqi, an elderly resident of the area, said when he was a student at St Gregory's High School in 1956, his parents lived on a portion on the first floor of the building for four years.

The ground floor would be used for auctions. "I saw the auctions until 1961."

Youth arrested for hurting religious feeling

FROM PAGE 14

Khan, who were present there, thought the resolution was inadequate, he added.

"In the evening, several people went to Kaushik's house in Amarbunia village, looking for him. A local union parishad member, who was there at that moment, asked them to leave... Kaushik got wind of the situation and hid in a fish farm close by," said Ashrafal.

However, Amarbunia mosque committee secretary Nurjamil Hawlader, and a local, Ujjal

Around 8:00pm on Monday, 250 to 300 people stormed Kaushik's house, destroyed it and set fire to a haystack. Later, they attacked a nearby temple. Its door and roof were damaged, said police and eyewitnesses.

On information, police went to the spot and took control of the situation. And Kaushik was taken into police custody, Ashrafal said.

The police officer also said 17 people were arrested over the attack, and 20 people were made accused in the case.

Talking to this correspondent, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jahangir Alam said, "Those who have disrupted peace and order will be identified. The Upazila Parishad will build a new house for the young man's family."

THE IFTAR EXPERIENCE PORT CITY STYLE

Iftar means a little more to us than just the ritual of breaking daylong fast during Ramadan. It means rekindling the bonds we have with our family, friends and community in general. It means being grateful for all that we have, and spreading the kindness and goodness of heart to those who need it the most. But that does not leave the delicacy out of it, which we have made our own over the decades of cultural practices. Every city has an essence of iftar to call its own. In today's issue, we bring everything that makes Chattogram's iftar scene -- the brotherhood, sense of equality and delicacy -- all wrapped in one.

Chattogram's go-to iftar destinations

Be it a roadside stall or upscale restaurant -- almost all the restaurants in the port city -- no matter how big or small -- have something tantalising to offer to customers, who are thronging the places to purchase iftar items.

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Iftar has taken a different form altogether in the subcontinent. In Bangladesh, iftar accounts for not only the delicacy but also the bonds that get strengthened in the process -- be that within the close circle of family or friends or that of the community.

However, the country has its own favourites when it comes to choosing the delicacies. Though many prefer homemade iftar, locals continue to rush to different stalls for diverse delicacies such as jilapi, firni, halim, chicken tikka, kabab, pizza, roll, lassi and doi to make the ritual of breaking fast more pleasing.

Certain places or dishes have special appeals based on the city you're in. As Ramadan begins, the port city has also geared up for an iftar extravaganza.

Be it a roadside stall or upscale restaurant -- almost all the restaurants in the port city -- no matter how big or small -- have something tantalising to offer to customers, who are thronging the places to purchase iftar items.

Like the capital, Chattogram has its area-specific favourites for iftar as well, even though on a smaller scale. Starting from Enayet Bazar's Royal Sweets, Handi at Wasa intersection, GEC's Candi, Sadia's Kitchen, to Lalkhan Bazar's Highway Sweets, Halishahar's Gausia Sweets, Kazir Dewri's Royal Heart and Sakura Kebab, every corner has something to claim to be its own during the festivities of iftar.

Then again, there are some popular iftar places that have the city's heart. One such



outlet is that of Rodela Bikel, a restaurant located at MA Aziz Stadium Market, which emphasises nutrition and hygiene when preparing iftar items. A good number of customers through the shop searching for delicacies.

Another interesting iftar destination for the port city dwellers is Barcode, which offers the "biggest iftar bazar in the city". "Barcode Food Junction" is a combination of four restaurants under a single roof in Shulokbahar at Muradpur in Chattogram city, namely -- "Mezban Khaile Aiyun", "Birchattala", "Teheriwala", "Burgwich Town" and "Ometra".

Their iftar menu features swarma, various items made with meat and countless kebabs. The restaurant offers more than 170 delicious iftar items ranging from different cuisines every day. The food hub has been hosting nearly 350 people, at a time under its roof now.

People from far and wide come here to enjoy a multi-cuisine and live kitchen experience.

All these places make Chattogram's iftar scene a bit more happening every day. What could be a greater joy after a daylong fast to enjoy beautifully curated delicacies with your loved ones?



'No one returns empty-handed from here'

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Every day at the port city's CRB intersection, around 300 people gather to break their fast. Most of these people belong to the lower-income groups of the city, including some with very little means to go by.

The arrangements are done by Bidyanando Foundation, who also ferry iftar items for free across the city on a truck.

Mohammad Hanif, a Bidyanando volunteer, said they serve mutton biriyani along with regular iftar items twice a week. "We also serve some 2,000 packets of iftar items and biriyani every Friday with cooperation from Chattogram Metropolitan Police," he added.

Zulekha Begum, who earns a living by seeking alms, comes to CRB intersection along with her children every day for iftar. According to Zulekha, no one has ever gone empty-handed from this arrangement.

Apart from Bidyanando, Mohiuddin Chowdhury Foundation and other charity organisations distribute iftar to 2,000 people across the city.



Where differences bow to brotherhood

Behind Anderkilla Shahi Jame Mosque's unique iftar arrangements

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Hundreds of fasting Muslims, sitting on the floors, waiting to break their fast with the call for evening prayer -- such has been the everyday scene at the port city's Anderkilla Shahi Jame Mosque during the month of Ramadan for over a decade.

Fasting devotees from all across the city -- of all ages, social and economic classes -- assemble at the mosque premises after the Asr prayers every day to have iftar together.

In the afternoons, all differences and class barriers fail to the call of brotherhood.

Anderkilla Shahi Jame Mosque bears the testimony of the Mughal era in Chattogram and is of immense historic value. The mosque was built by Shayesta Khan in 1667AD on the order of Emperor Aurangzeb to commemorate the Mughal victory over the region.

Maulana Saeed Muhammad Anwar Hossain Taher Jaberi Al Madani -- who has been the mosque's Khatib since 1996 -- initiated the iftar arrangements in 2001, according to sources.

In the early years, the arrangement used to be of a small scale. However, it took its present form in 2008. The practice came

to a halt in 2020 due to the pandemic. But it's back with a new zeal this year, said organisers.

Around 400 people took part in iftar every day so far, said Mohammad Hassan Murad, the khatib's assistant.

"We will arrange iftar for 3,000 people after the 10th Ramadan and for 5,000 people from the 15th," he added.

Preparations for the iftar start in the morning, sponsored by well-off individuals who wish to remain anonymous, said Jainul Abedin, general secretary of the mosque committee.

Twelve cooks prepare the food, while 15 more "khadems" serve them during the iftar. Apart from regular traditional iftar items, seasonal fruits and biryani are also served occasionally.

Md Mamun, a rickshaw puller, said people from low-income backgrounds like himself, are greatly benefitted from this iftar at the mosque as the food is free of cost.

"Here, there is no discrimination between the rich and the poor. Everyone breaks their fast with the same food, sitting side by side on the floors," Mohammad Shahjahan, a student of Government City College, told this correspondent while joining the mosque's iftar yesterday.



HOME AWAY from home

CU campus abuzz with iftar arrangements after two years



NAIMUR RAHMAN

With the number of Covid cases on the wane and subsequently, restrictions eased, the campuses across the country are coming back to its old self. Students are continuing classes, exams and other academic activities to compensate for the loss in academic time due to the pandemic.

For many residential university students, Ramadan this year entails staying away from home. Shared and joint iftar sessions at campuses are the only means for them to keep the warmth and love alive, now that they are missing away from the opportunity to spend the month at home with their families.

Students of Chittagong University (CU) are no different.

"Being away from family is hard, particularly during this time. But we are getting to stay with our friends this year, and it's a pleasure nonetheless," said Arman Khan, a management major at CU, during an iftar party arranged by his department.

Several different associations and clubs like CUSS, CUAC, CUDS, CUA, including the district associations, are organising iftar parties every day. In addition to that, students of residential halls also have their sehri together in their dining space at dawn.

"At first when we heard the classes would continue in Ramadan, we were disappointed. But after spending a few days on campus with friends, it is getting better," said Adnan Hossain, a chemistry major.

"There are iftar parties at different places every other day and we always have our sehri together. This feels like a reunion of sorts, to say the least as if we have been spending the time at home with our families all along," he added.

The iftar market near the campus area has also seen a boom this year. Rofiq Miah, a seasonal iftar vendor in gate-2 area of the campus, said, "During Ramadan, we don't sell our regular items. The entire profit that we make comes from iftar items only."



Rice, milk, sugar and a touch of love

Cafe Arman serving their Ramadan special firni since 1987

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

There's something comforting about firni. This simple yet soothing combination of rice cooked in sweetened milk is one of the most popular desserts in the country.

And no wonder, it has made its way to the food lists of many in Ramadan as well.

In the port city, one name stands out when it comes to enjoying this scrumptious treat outside the home -- three-decade-old Cafe Arman, located on DT Road at Dewanhat.

This humble establishment began its journey in 1987. Ershad Hossain alias Arman is the man behind its success. It's a family endeavour, run by Arman and his three brothers. The place mostly sells snacks and tea. But come Ramadan, Arman rolls up his sleeves and churns up pots after pots of this special delicacy, which has taken the port city by a storm.

On average, they make eight huge pots of firni every day during Ramadan. Each pot contains around 150 kilogrammes of firni. Arman, the chef responsible for making the delicious dessert, supervises the cooking process himself.

Talking to this correspondent, Cafe Arman's manager Md Borhan said, "We also make other iftar items, but firni garners the most demand."

This correspondent saw a long queue of people awaiting their turn while visiting the place. The restaurant workers were seen pouring hot firni into small pots, and boxes for selling. Per kg of firni is being sold at Tk 320, while a small cup is sold at Tk 32. To handle the pressure of Ramadan, around 30 to 40 staff members were seen working.

Ariful Haque (60) of Patharghata area, came to the cafe to get some firni for his family. "I come here almost every week during Ramadan," he said.

Not just Ariful, people from Halishahar, Kotwali, Bakalia, Muradpur, Patenga and other distant places also throng here to purchase firni. Apart from that, seasonal retailers and iftar vendors buy it for selling at their stalls.

So, what's the secret behind their success? What makes Arman's firni so special? Arman smiled and said, "Rice, milk, sugar and a touch of love."

SL committed to BD tour

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket team will arrive in the country in three separate batches following their tour of South Africa, with the first batch of cricketers due on Wednesday morning. The remaining groups will arrive on Thursday morning and afternoon respectively.

Having clinched a historic ODI series 2-1, Bangladesh struggled in the two-Test series, slumping to a 220-run loss in the first Test and a 332-run loss in the second.

But there will be a little time for recuperation before the Tigers gear up for their next international assignment, a two-Test series against Sri Lanka at home in May.

The present financial crisis in Sri Lanka has seen Bangladesh's HP's tour to the country postponed for the time being, but the national team's assignment is scheduled to go ahead as planned with the first Test slated to be played on May 15 at Chattogram's Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

"Regarding the national team's assignment, we are in communication with them and they are fully committed to their schedule of touring Bangladesh," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told reporters yesterday.

Following a recent ICC board meeting, BCB are hopeful of hosting events and also playing against the big sides once the new FTP rolls out. Global events for the next eight years had already been published but bilateral and other international tournament schedules are yet to be announced.

"We are expecting since we made a few requests regarding hosting events and are working towards those. We are hopeful," Nizamuddin said.

Bangladesh have not toured Australia and England in recent times but the BCB are positive that it will change in the next FTP cycle. "We have talked to the relevant boards to resolve these issues and have received positive indications. Hopefully when the next FTP comes, that will be reflected," the BCB CEO said.



'We can't defend anymore'

EKUSH TAPADER

The disastrous Test series against South Africa saw Bangladesh's ability to face spinners called into question and while former left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Jr. emphasised the need to balance things out with more spin-friendly wickets at the domestic level, Nazmul Abedin Fahim, a mentor to many leading cricketers, shone a spotlight on the batters' inability to face spinners on the international stage.

"Those who are in the national team squad right now have less training when it comes to playing spinners. Not getting to play in the national league due to international commitments is a big reason for that. Furthermore, we are now focusing on making domestic wickets flatter and more seam-friendly, which creates a gap in terms of facing spinners. Consequently, we are suffering in the Tests," Enamul began.

"But we need to have a balance in the number of wickets," he added. "One wicket should be spin-friendly and another should be for pacers. But that has not been happening. The emphasis now is to have more grass on the pitch. Of course, that helps the seamers, but we have to make balance things out for spinners at the same time so that batters get more experience of playing the spin," Enamul added.

The former spinner believes that more

"If we can't produce batters who are capable of playing spin, there are no easy solutions. We might be in danger if we do not resolve it. And Sri Lanka may capitalise on that weakness against us in the next series."

NAZMUL ABEDIN FAHIM

red-ball cricket in the domestic format would help batters be more efficient in the Test arena.

"Our preparation with the red ball should come from National Cricket League or BCL. I don't think it's that big a problem. We grew up playing spin. So if we dedicate enough time, train properly and increase the number of four-day cricket with the red ball, the batters can work more on defending spin. I think we can overcome the situation. We know how to play the spin, it's just a lack of preparation," he concluded.

Meanwhile, Nazmul Abedin Fahim illustrated the contrast between the conditions of wickets at home and in

South Africa.

"The wickets they played on are not similar to the spinning wickets we have at home. Over there, the ball not only turns after it drops, but the pace and bounce also pose a big challenge to our batters. We don't usually face spinners in such conditions because pacers dominate," Fahim said before speaking about the need to improve mentally.

"Another thing we can work on is the mental aspect. I think there is a barrier when we face situations that are outside our comfort zone. We will not always find ourselves in favourable situations. Hence, we need to work on our skills and mentality even when we are uneasy," he added.

Defending may be an important facet of Test cricket, but Fahim believes the defensive skills of the Bangladesh batters is unreliable.

"Our defence is not just weak; we can't defend anymore. If I say the defence is weak, that means there is some form of defending. But I don't have any faith in our defence. So, the only way we can do something is through attacking because we know we can't stay at the crease for a long time. It's a form of surrender.

"If we can't produce batters who are capable of playing spin, there are no easy solutions. We might be in danger if we do not resolve it. And Sri Lanka may capitalise on that weakness against us in the next series," Fahim concluded.

Women's domestic cricket in works

SPORTS REPORTER

There was good news for women cricketers as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) unveiled plans to roll out a longer-version domestic tournament to better prepare the Tigresses for international Test assignments.

Bangladesh's women's side were granted Test status last year after the ICC decided that Test and ODI status would be permanently awarded to all women's teams that were full members.

While there were expectations that the Tigresses would play their first Test in 2021, one year has passed and the wait will be extended to next year. "The Test was not supposed to happen this year. What we said was that since Test status was awarded, we would first start domestic games within two years. Then we would move to internationals. This year we have a plan to start two-day domestic games, instead of wholly rolling out the longer version format (four day matches). We are looking into possibilities," BCB director and women's wing chairman Shafiqul Alam Chowdhury Nadel told The Daily Star yesterday.

The number of teams are yet to be decided but the BCB wants to get the tournament off the ground on a small scale. "We will try to begin this year and it will depend on our schedule. If we can't begin this year, it will happen at the start of next year," Nadel confirmed.

The tournament, even if held in a small scale, will improve morale before the Tigresses' first international Test.

Naeem drives unstoppable Legends

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's Legends of Rugganj continued their winning run by picking up their sixth consecutive victory with an 83-run win over Brothers Union in yesterday's Dhaka Premier League (DPL) match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

Rugganj's Naeem Islam, who was in charge of the side before Mashrafe took over, has been the most consistent performer in the league with the bat and is currently the second-highest run-getter with 669 runs at an average of 83.6, only bettered by Anamul Haque Bijoy.

Struggling at 58 for 5, Naeem starred with the bat again with a fighting 45 as he strung together an 81-run stand with Shabbir Rahman, who struck 46 off 50 deliveries. Brothers' pacer Ifran Hossain scalped a four-wicket haul as Rugganj were eventually bowled out for 168 in 44.1 overs. However, Naeem and Chirag Jani made short work of Brothers, with the former finishing with four for 22 and the latter picking up three wickets. Brothers were bundled out for just 85 runs.

Meanwhile, in a rain-curtailed match between Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samity and Shinepukur Cricket Club at BKSP, the latter won by four wickets. Alauddin Babu and Ripon Mondol picked up four and two wickets respectively to restrict Khelaghar to 216 for eight in 33 overs. Avishek Mitra's 56-ball 62 and Tahjibul Isam's 25-ball 40 helped Shinepukur to their fourth win.



Simeone brushes off criticism

Klopp full of confidence

REUTERS

Atletico Madrid won't deviate from their usual style despite heavy criticism when they host Manchester City in the second leg of their Champions League quarter-final this week, coach Diego Simeone said on Tuesday.

After losing last week's first leg 1-0 with an overly defensive gameplan that yielded no attempts on goal, Atletico received plenty of criticism, including from former coach Arrigo Sacchi, who called it "prehistoric soccer, from the '60s."

"Loose lips sink ships," Simeone told a news conference when asked about Sacchi's comments.

"I've been coaching since 2005-06 and I prefer to always respect my colleagues. But that is always former players or coaches that decide to run their mouths to get people's attention. I just ignore them."

Simeone said that his team, who reached Champions League finals in 2014 and 2016, have an identity and will stick with it, despite having to win Wednesday's game to qualify for the semi-finals.

"We're up against a team that plays very well. A very good positional game, but we're hopeful. It's clear that hope alone isn't enough, but we're going to try to take the game where we can hurt them," the Argentine added.

"Words don't say much, the important thing is what happens after the game starts."

Atletico captain Koke echoed his coaches

comments and insisted that the squad revelled in their tough, rugged playing style.

"We have been playing like this for a decade and we enjoy it," the midfielder said.

"We have a plan and we will always be within this plan. We know how City plays, you can't give them space. Let people say what they want. We play the way we play, we have our plan and we are going to continue playing the way we play despite what the pundits suggest."

Meanwhile, Liverpool's goal is to become a team nobody wants to face, manager Jurgen Klopp said on Tuesday ahead of their Champions League quarter-final second leg against Benfica at Anfield.

Liverpool lead 3-1 after victory in Lisbon last week and Klopp's side are in a rich vein of form having lost only once in their last 22 games in all competitions, winning 18 times.

"We were good in Benfica, I liked the game. The main target is again being the one team no one wants to play," Klopp told reporters ahead of Wednesday's clash.

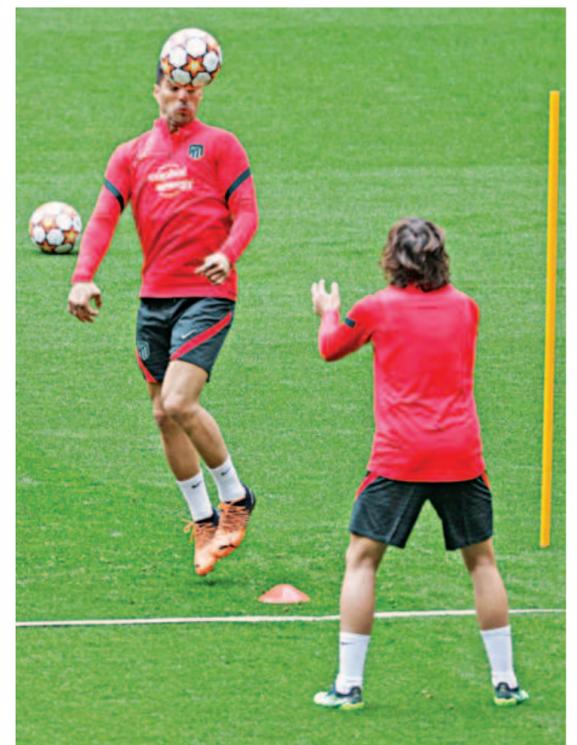
"Really aggressive in a football sense, defending well, knowing more about the way they play."

Klopp said the game would be as tricky as their last-16 second leg against Inter Milan, when they lost 1-0 after a 2-0 win in the first leg.

"A good basis (3-1 lead). But if they score one, like we felt against Inter, the game changes," Klopp said. "We felt it when they scored last week. We really need to make them feel this is a place they don't want to go."



With a 1-0 deficit from the first leg and with coach Diego Simeone coming under heavy criticism for his style of football, Atletico Madrid will tonight look to overturn the deficit and silence the critics when they host English champions Manchester City at the Wanda Metropolitano.



COVID TREATMENT Cost 12 times higher at pvt hospitals

Says TIB study, contradicts with minister's statement on inoculation expenditure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Covid-19 treatment cost was more than 12 times higher in private hospitals than that of public healthcare facilities, reveals a study conducted by the Transparency International Bangladesh.

This huge medical costs in private hospitals have put a financial burden on patients, it said.

Meanwhile, the study said costs for the Covid vaccination programme were Tk 12,993-16,721 crore, which is less than half of the claim of Health Minister Zahid Maleque.

The minister recently said the costs were around Tk 40,000 crore.

The average cost (bed, medicine, ICU, oxygen, and other expenditures) was Tk 35,938 in public hospitals, while it was Tk 4,58,537 in private hospitals, according to the study report shared in a webinar yesterday.

Last year, a similar study, done by the health ministry's Health Economics Unit, disclosed that the higher treatment cost in private hospitals was mainly due to not following the national treatment protocol.

Under the TIB study titled "Governance Challenges in Tackling Covid-19 Crisis: Inclusion and Transparency", researchers also explored the government's success and shortcomings in Covid-19 testing, vaccination campaign and the effectiveness of the financial incentive packages.

Between August 2021 and March 2022, they collected the data for the study through client experience survey in 45 districts, vaccine recipient exit poll survey in 43 districts, entrepreneur survey over phone with 425 entrepreneurs, observation in 105 vaccination centres, and interview.

The study shows that 22 percent patients faced multifaceted problems while undergoing treatment in public and private hospitals.

According to the study report, delayed services due to inadequate medical support caused the deaths of 7.8 percent patients and increased complications for 11.6 percent patients.

Around 18.9 percent infected people took treatment from other districts as treatment facilities in their own districts were adequate, and the average transport costs were Tk 3,535.

Although two years have passed after the pandemic hit the country, the problem of testing samples continues due to shortage of labs and poor management in Covid testing and treatment, the study said.

In public and private healthcare facilities, about 65 percent patients were not provided with the required medicine, while over 33 percent failed to get specialist doctors' advice when required.

On average, patients had to wait for three and a half hours to get a hospital bed. About 15 percent emergency patients got oxygen support late.

The study found 26.5 percent patients went to private hospitals to get better treatment because services in public hospitals were insufficient.

Of those who took part in the study, 28 percent faced difficulty in getting their samples tested, according to the survey.

Around 15 percent said they had to pay extra for

According to the study report, delayed services due to inadequate medical support caused the deaths of 7.8 percent patients and increased complications for 11.6 percent patients.



The century-old Neelam Ghar on the Court Street in Old Dhaka is recognised by conservationists as a rare feat of masonry. The property has been leased out to Dhaka Bar Association by the deputy commissioner's office. The association is now planning to construct a multi-storey building named Bangabandhu Bhaban by demolishing this structure.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

NEELAM GHAR OF OLD DHAKA

Grandeur to be replaced by mere building

HELEMUL ALAM

A century-old building in Old Dhaka, known as the Neelam Ghar, will be knocked down and lost like many other historical structures of the city.

Dhaka Bar Association got the property on lease and decided to violate the agreement and build a 20-storey building in place of the two-storey one.

The two-storey building on Court House Street holds immense architectural value, conservationists say. Built during the British era, the structure was used by the British and Pakistani rulers to auction off confiscated objects. Hence the name Neelam Ghar.

The Deputy Commissioner's Office of Dhaka, which is the custodian of the 15 decimals of land, leased it out to the bar association on February 15 for just a year.

The association laid an engraved foundation stone mentioning Bangabandhu Bhaban at the site on March 7. Dhaka South City Corporation mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh inaugurated it.

According to the lease documents, the lessee shall neither build anything new nor change, modify and repair the existing structure. Selling, handing over, and mortgaging the property are also prohibited.

Taimur Islam, chief executive of conservation organisation Urban Study Group, said the initiative is also a violation of a 2017 High Court directive that ordered the authorities to stop changing, modifying and

"Losing such a beautiful piece of architecture will be a real shame for all of us."

demolishing 2,200 British-era buildings named in the group's list of heritage sites in Old Dhaka.

Neelam Ghar is one of those buildings, he added.

"Losing such a beautiful piece of architecture will be a real shame for all of us," he said.

It is an example of Indo-Saracenic architecture, with clear neoclassical influences, he

said. The two-storey rectangular building has a courtyard and is finished with lime plaster with motifs and decorative elements crafted by hand lime mortar, a hallmark of the incomparable skills of the masons from Dhaka.

"Neelam Ghar most certainly is one of the best examples of lime mortar finish," he said.

The deputy commissioner's office earlier leased out different portions of the building to 12 individuals who maintain that they have been living there for up to five decades.

Many of them have already vacated the property. One of them said the DC office stopped taking their lease fee in 2019 and didn't renew their lease.

Contacted, Deputy Commissioner Shahidul Islam said there was nothing called Neelam Ghar in government records. "We leased out a vested property as its custodian".

An official of the DC office said the bar association will not be able to make any changes to the structure.

"They will need to take permission from the DC office to

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NY SUBWAY SHOOTING Suspect on the run after injuring 13

AFP, Brooklyn

At least 13 people were injured during a rush-hour shooting at a subway station in the New York borough of Brooklyn yesterday, where authorities said "several unexploded devices" were recovered amid chaotic scenes.

Ambulances lined the street outside the 36th Street subway station, where a New York police spokeswoman told AFP officers responded to a 911 call of a person shot at 8:27 am (1227 GMT).

Unverified video footage posted on Instagram appeared to show passengers tending to bloodied victims lying on a smoke-filled station platform.

The images showed subway staff shepherding panicked passengers, some still clutching their morning coffee cups, off the platform and into the carriages of a stationary train. A sign saying 36th Street can be seen in the background.

An unidentified person can be heard saying that a fire had been set in the train car, and that he saw "at least eight people" shot.

According to NBC, citing NYPD and senior law enforcement officials, a man in a gas mask and orange construction vest may have tossed a smoke canister on the platform to distract the rush hour crowd.

The suspect was still at large, according to Manhattan borough president Mark Levine.

The city's fire department gave a toll of "13 injuries at this time," while ABC News quoted police sources as saying at least five people were

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The staffers of Water Development Board dropping sandbags in the Kangsha river to fix the Dubail dyke in Sunamganj's Dharmapasha upazila that gave way to flooding. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Probe body visits four haors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A probe body formed by the Ministry of Water Resources yesterday visited four haors in Sunamganj where farmers suffered crop losses due to early flash flood.

Following allegations of corruption, negligence and anomalies, the ministry on Monday formed the six-member probe body led by its Additional Secretary Syeda Salma Jafrin to look into possible anomalies in building and maintaining levees.

Other members of the body are Sylhet's Additional Divisional Commissioner Debojit Sinha, Bangladesh Water Development Board

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Youth arrested for 'hurting religious feeling' Mob destroys his house, vandalises Hindu temple

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth has been arrested in Bagerhat for "hurting religious sentiment" hours after an unruly mob destroyed his house and vandalised a nearby Hindu temple.

Police filed a case against the 20-year-old man, Kaushik Biswas, saying he "hurt religious sentiment" by posting content on Facebook from a fake ID named "Jehadi Toshonkari".

The cops also filed a case over vandalism and arrested 17 people.

Contacted, Inspector SM Ashrafur Alam, chief coordinator of Bagerhat police's media cell, said the man works as a craftsman in India, where he has been residing for three years. He returned to his village home in Morrelganj upazila a week ago. The Facebook posts were made during his stay in India.

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