



4 to die for killing Humayun Azad

Dhaka court pronounces verdict after 18 years, calls the murder 'shameful for entire nation'

ZYMA ISLAM and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

Four members of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were sentenced to death yesterday for killing Prof Humayun Azad 18 years ago.

In his observation, Judge Al Mamun of Dhaka's Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court said the murder of the acclaimed author was "shameful for the entire nation".

He also said militants carried out such attacks on people promoting free speech only to destabilise the country.

None from the family of the former Dhaka University academic nor his friends, followers, or colleagues was present in the courtroom yesterday. Neither were the family members of the convicted extremists.

The court also fined the four convicts Tk 50,000 each.

They are Salehin alias Salahuddin, Anwarul Alam alias Shahid, Mizanur Rahman alias Minhaz, and Nur Mohammad alias Shamim.

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Whose pen was mightier than sword

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

If there is one thing that Humayun Azad embodied, it was the secular ethos of an independent nation. Hence his life and works could be summed up as a man's struggle against religious extremism.

A torchbearer of freethinking, he was targeted by bigots for his iconoclastic writing against communal and anti-liberation elements but he never gave up the fight against these forces of darkness.

His unconventional writing and speeches struck at religious excesses, patriarchy and all forms of social injustices. He had to pay with his life after being dubbed a murtad (apostate) by zealots.

Humayun Azad, a Dhaka University Bangla professor, wore many hats – he was an academic, a linguist, a poet, a novelist, a writer for the teens, a critic, and a columnist. His ideals and sense of humanity will remain an inspiration to all defending the right to freedom of expression.

"He championed the cause of freethinking. Nowadays, the practice of freethinking is eroding due to some obstacles as well as self-censorship. If everyone cannot speak his or her mind, our society will turn into a closed one. This is not acceptable," says academican Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam.

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Govt cautious about loans for mega projects

PM says in address to nation on Pahela Baishakh eve



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reaffirmed that her government remains cautious so the loans do not become a burden.

"Once these (mega) projects are implemented, the face of our economy will change. We're taking loans from domestic and foreign sources. However, we've a careful eye so that they do not become a burden," she said in an address to the nation on the eve of Pahela Baishakh.

About the mega projects, Hasina said the Padma bridge is being constructed with own funds. Other mega projects were undertaken through economic studies by local and foreign

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Baishakh gets back colours after two years

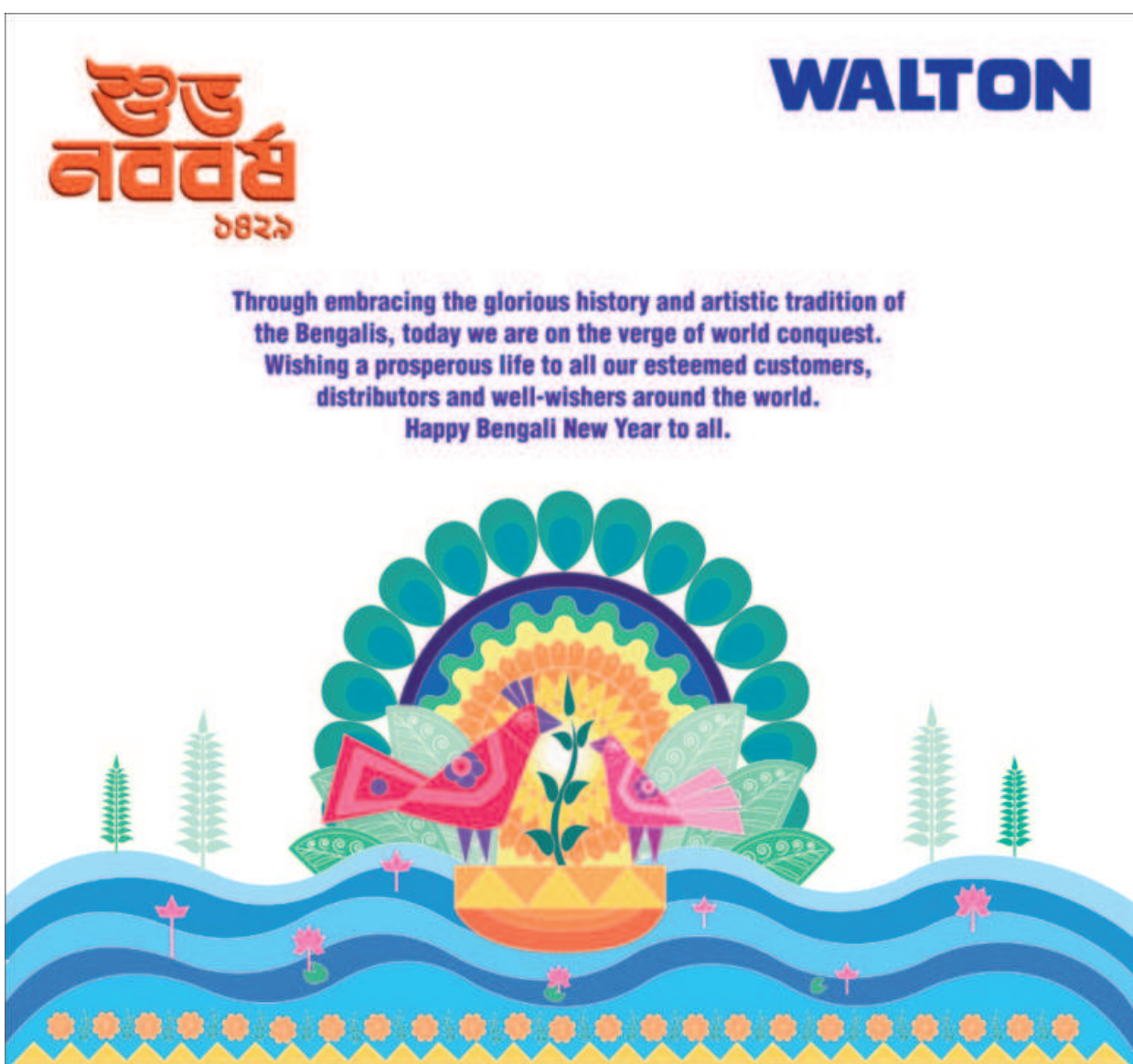
DIPAN NANDY

With the first rays of the morning sun, the nation, after two long years, is set to usher in Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla New Year and the biggest secular festival for Bangladeshis.

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HOLIDAY NOTICE

The Daily Star offices will remain closed today on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh. Therefore, the newspaper will not come out tomorrow.



‘Sympathisers’ of Arsa shoot 2 Rohingyas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two Rohingyas were shot after allegedly a group of “Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army” supporters attacked them in Ukhiya camp in Cox’s Bazar on Tuesday night.

The injured, Hossen Kalaboda, 48, and Abul Basar, 37, were hospitalized, said police.

Hossen is a sub-majhi (community leader) of Camp 2 (South).

Another Rohingya was stabbed by the criminals during the incident, but his identity could not be ascertained.

Witnesses said a group of armed criminals, locally known as sympathisers of Arsa, swooped on Hossen around 9:00pm.

They opened fire on Hossen and Basar and stabbed the other Rohingya.

APBn-14 Commanding Officer Naimul Haque told The Daily Star, “The supporters of ‘Arsa’ attacked the duo and opened fire, leaving two people shot. Inside the Rohingya camp, several armed groups introduce themselves as ‘Arsa’ members so we are trying to identify who exactly launched the attack.”

“Police too were trying to arrest the attackers,” he added.

Rohingyas at the camp said around 12 to 15 armed men, led by Moulovi Mizan and Shahed, opened fire. They said Mizan calls himself an active “Arsa” organiser.

‘Not yet time’

WHO warns against lowering guard on Covid-19

AFP, Geneva

The World Health Organization’s emergency committee unanimously agreed that now is not the time to lower the guard on Covid-19, the group’s head told a press conference yesterday.

“The decision was unanimous that it is not yet the time,” said Didier Houssin, after the committee concluded that the pandemic still constituted a public health emergency of international concern – the highest level of alert that the WHO can sound.

This comes as the UN health body in its weekly update had also stressed that countries should continue surveillance, where possible, and rapid data sharing on publicly available databases.

According to WHO, the SARS-CoV-2 virus continues to evolve. With such intense transmission worldwide, further variants, including recombinants, will emerge. “This is expected.”

It also informed that it is continuing to monitor “several descendent lineages” of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.



Blocks and geo bags dumped to protect an embankment in Noliyan area of Khulna’s Dacope upazila are in dilapidated condition. In the aftermath of Cyclone Aila in 2009, the authorities went for the block dumping, but years of neglect has turned them this way, posing risk of erosion.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Fewer school students attend in-person classes

Shows study conducted by 21 organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About one-third of secondary students and one-fifth of primary students remained absent from schools as educational institutions resumed in-person classes after Covid-induced closure.

A campaign titled “Safe Back to School”, organised by 21 national and international organisations, revealed the findings yesterday.

According to the report, the attendance at the secondary level was between 57 and 69 percent whereas it was between 65 and 86 percent at the primary level.

The primary reasons behind the absence are students’ involvement in economic activities, migration to other places, shifting to other educational institutions such as madrasas, loss of interest and child marriage, said Abu Said Md Juel Miah, team lead of research and evidence at Brac’s advocacy for social change.

He mentioned the reasons while presenting the report at a programme in the capital.

Researchers collected the data related to students’ attendance for three weeks starting from September 12, 2021, when schools resumed in-person classes after the Covid-induced closure from March 17, 2020.

The study was done on 328 primary and secondary schools in 17 districts in seven divisions.

“We have to work at the grassroots level to bring back the victims of child marriage. We have started training 200,000 teachers to work on mental health.”

Education Minister Dipu Moni

The research was conducted on school attendance, maintenance of health safety measures and mental well-being of the students after the long closures of the schools.

According to the report, the proportion of girls’ attendance was higher than that of the boys during the survey.

Absenteeism was 16 percent to 37

percent for boys and 14 percent to 35 percent for girls in the primary schools, and 34 percent to 45 percent for boys and 28 percent to 41 percent for girls in the secondary schools.

About mental health, Save the Children Senior Manager of Advocacy and Campaign Samia Ahmed said they found 47 percent of boys and girls got average scores (29-44) on the Stirling Children’s Well-being Scale.

The mental health survey result means these students were in some kind of depression as they were confined at home during school closure.

Education Minister Dipu Moni said the government has planned to make up for the losses in the primary and secondary schools.

“We have to work at the grassroots level to bring back the victims of child marriage. We have started training 200,000 teachers to work on mental health,” she said.

Each educational institution will have at least two trained teachers and a professional counsellor in each district, she added.

4 to die

FROM PAGE 1

Shahid and Minhaz were present in the courtroom. The two others are absconding.

In her reaction to the verdict, Azad’s elder daughter Mauli Azad said, “Although it’s late, we’re happy to finally get the verdict. We now want its quick execution.”

She hoped that the verdict would be upheld by the High Court.

“We demand that the authorities catch the absconding killers immediately and bring them to book,” she told The Daily Star last night.

Prof Azad was stabbed near Bangla Academy in the capital on February 27, 2004. He was attacked by militants while he was about to get on a rickshaw on his way to his university residence from the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela.

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

The charge sheet in the case, quoting the autopsy report, said the wounds from the attack resulted in the victim’s death. Azad had gone to Germany on a research scholarship.

The attack on the author left a 15cm long, bone-deep gash in the front of his head, a 13cm long gash in his back, and a 22cm gash in the left part of the lower face, in addition to injuries to his arms, according to medical reports.

The skull was fractured and his brain tissue was bruised. He had no teeth left in his lower jaw, and had a few upper teeth.

He was unable to close his left eye, and drooled constantly.

The trial dragged on for 18 years.

Upon hearing the verdict, convicts Minhaz and Shahid stood holding the bars of the lockup, staring at the judge. They looked impassive.

According to Minhaz’s confessional statement, he was one of the two who hacked Prof Azad with machetes.

Shahid was armed with explosives in order to create a smokescreen to help all the attackers escape the scene.

Talking to this newspaper last week, Mauli Azad had said, “Many years have gone by. At first, we used to keep track of the case ... I have given witness testimony myself. We had thought the case would get resolved quickly, but that was not the case.”

Mauli narrated how every year, during his birth and death anniversaries, journalists would ask about the case’s progress.

They would enquire about the proceedings, only to find it progressing at a snail’s pace. The prosecution squarely put the blame for the delay on the challenges of producing witnesses before the court.

“We will get some sort of satisfaction after the verdict,” Mauli had said.

They, however, will have to wait longer to see the verdict’s execution. The judgement is likely to be challenged at the HC. Besides, two of the convicts are on the run.

Baishakh gets back colours after two years

FROM PAGE 1

This time it will be observed with the characteristic vibrancy, unlike the low-key celebration of the previous two years.

Like in pre-Covid days, festivities will start early in the morning with people from all walks of life donning the traditional attire of this joyous celebration. Men in colourful panjabis, women in saris and children in bright clothes will once more be able to join the cultural programme at Ramna Batamul where Chhayanaut will welcome the day.

The revellers will also gather at the traditional Baishakhi Mela – a fair where all kinds of traditional handicrafts, toys and other items will be bought and

sold. It is an integral part of the celebration of the first day of the Bangla New Year in Dhaka and the rest of the country.

Mangal Shobhajatra, a procession seeking the wellbeing of all, will start from the Institute of Fine Arts in the morning. Businesses will open their halkhata (sales books) to start a brand new business year.

“The severity of the pandemic had shrunk everything. The last two years have been very painful for us,” said Chhayanaut President Sanjida Khatun, explaining how Covid-19 forced her organisation to scale back traditional celebrations.

For the last six decades Chhayanaut has taken

the lead in organising the programme to welcome the Bangla new year. It could not hold the event in 1971 during the country’s Liberation War. The last two celebrations of Pahela Baishakh were observed on a small scale and online to comply with the government’s Covid-19 health protocols.

In 1967, Chhayanaut organised its Pahela Baishakh programmes in protest of the then Pakistan government’s blatant suppression of Bangalee culture.

After independence in 1971, the festival became a symbol of the country’s nationalist movement as well as an integral part of people’s cultural heritage and identity.

Whose pen was mightier than sword

FROM PAGE 1

An author himself, Prof Islam considers Humayun Azad one of the best prose writers of our time, and said his book “Prabachanguchchha” (Maxims of Humayun Azad) was an outstanding piece. “He had a strong sense of humour and satire.”

Prof Azad started receiving threats from militants after his book “Pak Sar Jamin Sad Bad”, a scathing criticism of religious extremism, was first published in the Daily Ittefaq’s Eid supplement in November 2003.

The book depicts the story of a zealot who wants to turn Bangladesh into a “Taliban-styled nation”.

This book earned praise from secular thinkers but for the bigots, it was anathema. Addressing a demonstration at Baitul Mukarram in December, leaders of an anti-Ahmadiyya outfit

demanding the arrest and trial of Prof Azad.

On January 25, 2004, Delawar Hossain Sayedee, then a Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker and now incarcerated for war crimes, called for the introduction of the Blasphemy Act to block publications of “such books”. The next month, members of the militant outfit Jama’atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) launched a machete attack on Prof Azad near Bangla Academy when he was returning from the Ekushey Boi Mela, leaving him grievously injured.

Failing to bear mental and physical trauma from the assault, he died in Munich on August 12 that year, while carrying out a research on romantic German writer Heinrich Heine.

Born in 1947 in Munshiganj, Prof Azad

earned critical acclaim for his nonconformist writing and views, and at the same time gained huge readership while never compromising with the market demand.

His novel “Chhappanno Hajar Borgomile” on the role of military autocracy that causes rot in the political system was a bestseller and widely praised. His novel “Shob Kichhu Bhenge Pore” depicted frictions in society.

His feminist book “Naree”, which attracted huge negative reactions from the conservatives, was banned in 1995.

“Dwitiya Linga”, translation of French existentialist philosopher and feminist activist Simone de Beauvoir’s “The Second Sex”, was welcomed by freethinkers but hated by religious extremists, according to Osman Gani of Agamee Prakashani, the

The Mangal Shobhajatra of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University is an element unique to Pahela Baishakh. This event, recognised by Unesco, is also going to be held this time after a break of two years and all preparations have been completed.

“Due to the pandemic, the rhythm in our lives has been lost,” said Nisar Hossain, dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts. This year’s Shobhajatra theme is ‘Nirmal’ (pure) which has been called upon to cleanse the soul.”

Although the daily Covid positivity rate has reached less than one percent, organisers have announced that social distancing will be maintained during the

Shobhajatra.

Cultural personality Nasiruddin Yousuff pointed out that the sudden rise of religious bigotry lends special significance to this year’s Pahela Baishakh, which is celebrated by everyone irrespective of religion.

“This year’s celebration is most important because this time we are facing the big question of our Bangalee nationality. It is worrying that in recent times, so-called practitioners of religion have created an adverse situation in various educational institutions. In order to defeat this evil, this year’s celebration should be even livelier,” said Yousuff, also a freedom fighter, theatre director, and

filmmaker.

Golam Quddus, president of the Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, said, “We are going to have a double festival this time as Pahela Baishakh has coincided with Ramadan. Bangalees will now celebrate religion and culture together. This is not contradictory at all.”

However, a section of people is trying to mislead people for the sake of politics, he said.

Founder of The Flag Girl, Priota Ilthekhar said she is eagerly waiting to celebrate Pahela Baishakh after two years. “This is part of our culture, our heritage and now it is quite safe to celebrate since we are vaccinated and are also getting our booster doses.”

Shorobor Ba Bangla Bhashar Jiboni”, on Bangla language, and “Lal Neel Deepabali Ba Bangla Shahitter Jiboni”, on Bangla literature as two of his seminal works.

His PhD dissertation “Pronominalization in Bangla”, which was later published as a book and pieces on linguistics like “Bangla Bhashar Shatru-mitra” and “Bakyatatva” were well accepted among academics and researchers.

His long-time colleague, Prof Abul Kashem Fazlul Haq of DU Bangla department said “Shamsur Rahman/ Nihshanga Sherpa” “Lal Neel Deepabali” and two volumes of essays on Bangla language titled “Bangla Bhasha” are considered important works for students (of Bangla language and literature).

Prof Azad got a PhD in linguistics from Edinburgh University. Starting his

professional career as a teacher at Chittagong College, he later worked at Chittagong University and Jahangirnagar University before joining DU in 1978.

He received the Bangla Academy Award in 1986 and posthumously Ekushey Padak, one of the highest civilian awards, for his outstanding contribution to literature and linguistics in 2012.

“With his death, there is a great vacuum in the literary field. And the vacuum is yet to be filled,” said his publisher Gani.

Prof Manzoorul Islam concludes: “The spirit of protest is dwindling in our society ... we accept everything without anyone raising questions and debate. Humayun Azad will remain our inspiration in the struggle against attempts to snatch away our freedom from us.”

Hasina greets new Pakistan PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has congratulated newly elected Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

In a message of felicitations yesterday, Hasina stressed that the entire region must work together to overcome its challenges for common benefits.

On April 11, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif, brother of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, was elected the 23rd premier of Pakistan because 174 lawmakers voted in his favour after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MNAs boycotted the election.

Earlier, Imran Khan was ousted from the PM’s post by a no-confidence vote in parliament following a week of political turmoil.

Woman killed in her home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A housewife has been murdered in her home in Nothkhola Uttarpara village of Tangail’s Basail upazila.

The in-laws of the victim, Lima Akter, 30, said she along with her four-year-old son were asleep in their room early yesterday. Her husband, Moynal Hossain, is an expatriate worker in Saudia Arabia.

Around 2:00am yesterday, the in-laws heard her screams and saw one of their neighbours, Wasim, fleeing from that room.

Lima was then found lying in a pool of blood. There was a large chunk of brick next to her. Her head was severely injured, they said.

The family members, with the help of locals, rushed her to Tangail General Hospital, where on-duty doctors declared her dead.

Later, her father-in-law filed a murder case against Wasim with Basail Police Station.

OC Mostafizur Rahman of the police station said they were trying to arrest Wasim. The motive behind the murder was yet to be known, he added.

Bangladeshi killed in Brunei road crash

UNB, Chattogram

A Bangladeshi expatriate was killed in a road accident in Brunei on Tuesday, said his family.

The victim, Nur Mostofa, 45, was the son of freedom fighter Sirajul Islam of Dharmapur village in Chattogram’s Sitakunda upazila.

Five others also sustained injuries in the accident. Their identities were yet to be known. They were undergoing treatment at a local hospital, sources said.

Mostofa, who went to Brunei years back, was crushed under the wheels of an unidentified vehicle, said his cousin Nur Alam.

A friend of Mostofa from Brunei called his wife around 8:00pm on Tuesday and informed her of the accident, he added.

Nur Alam said they sought the help of Bangladesh embassy and other authorities concerned to bring back the body.



ARE WE THERE YET... Adip's eid vacation seems to have got off on a pretty rough start. When their 7:00am train got cancelled yesterday, his parents stood in line to get a refund. This turned into a four-hour-long wait. Meanwhile, the three-year-old, unable to stand the wait or heat, fell asleep on the luggage. This photo was taken at Kamalapur Railway Station around noon.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Hasina to join GCRG

BSS, DHAKA

Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres on Tuesday night phoned Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and invited her to join the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (GCRG).



In reply to the invitation, the prime minister thanked the UN Secretary General and gave her consent to join the GCRG during talks between the two leaders that lasted for 12 minutes, according to a press release signed by PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim. "She (Hasina) accepted his invitation," the release said.

Guterres released the initial recommendations

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PRAYER TIMING					
APRIL 14					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4:20	12:45	4:45	6:23	7:45	
JAMAAT 4:30	1:15	5:00	6:33	8:15	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					
SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING					
RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR		
12	14		6:23		
13	15	4:14	6:24		
14	16	4:13	6:24		

An awful day for train passengers

Operation suspended for 8 hours, as staffers go on strike to reinstate benefits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of passengers suffered immensely, as operation of trains across the country remained suspended for around eight hours from early yesterday.

Running staffers, including loco-masters who were directly involved in operating trains, went on a wildcat strike, without giving any prior notice, to reinstate their post-retirement benefits. Train operation resumed around 1:35pm yesterday, following assurance of Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan of meeting their demand.

As a result, all trains got delayed for hours, making thousands of passengers spend their time at stations amid hot weather. The authorities were forced to cancel 22 inter-city as well as 103 local and mail trains.

Meanwhile, railway made NID or other valid identity cards mandatory for advance train tickets, the sales of which will begin on April 23 – ahead of Eid. A dedicated compartment for women would be added with each inter-city train during the Eid rush, Sujan said, as he was briefing media at Rail Bhaban yesterday about plans to manage the rush.

ISSUES AND SUFFERINGS
In January, running staffers threatened to go on strike to press home the demand for restoring their previous benefits for working extra hours.

These staffers have to work beyond their duty time, and they get extra pay for the additional hours they worked. Similarly, they used to get pension facilities on the basis of the pay for their extra work. But, the finance ministry last year declined to give the pension benefit, incensing the staffers.

They, however, postponed the strike in the same month, following assurance of ministry Secretary Humayun Kabir.

However, sources said the staffers went on the sudden strike yesterday, after coming

SALE OF ADVANCE TRAIN TICKETS STARTS APRIL 23

STATIONS TO GET TICKETS FROM

- Kamalapur**
All intercity trains to western destinations; Khulna bound special train
- Airport**
Ctg, Noakhali-bound trains
- Tejgaon**
M'singh, Jamalpur-bound trains; Dewanganj special train
- Cantonment**
Netrakona-bound Mohonganj, Haor express
- Phulbaria**
Sylhet, Kishoreganj-bound trains

to know that the finance ministry recently turned down the railway ministry's proposal to reinstate the benefits. Ultimately, passengers bore the brunt of the strike.

Jorina Begum arrived at Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka at 5:30am, as her train to Khulna was scheduled to depart at 6:00am. She joined the line for a refund at 7:00am. While talking to this newspaper at 10:15am, she was still unable to reach the counter.

Similar situations were reported from other parts of the country.

Later, the minister held a meeting with leaders of agitating staffers and assured to meet their demand, as he will talk with the prime minister over the issue on April 19.

In another development, the finance ministry yesterday cancelled their April 10 circular and sought more information from the railways ministry to reconsider their proposal.

ADVANCE TRAIN TICKETS
With Eid likely to be celebrated on May 3,

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ICT CASE SC to hear Shahidul's appeal on July 24

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fixed July 24 for hearing the leave to appeal petition filed by internationally acclaimed photographer Shahidul Alam against a High Court verdict on him in a case filed under a



controversial section.

In its verdict, the HC on December 14 last year rejected a petition in which Shahidul challenged legality of the case filed against him under Section 57 of Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006. In the case, he was imprisoned for 107 days.

The section 57 has been abolished after formulation of the Digital Security Act in October, 2018.

Yesterday, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice M Enayetur Rahim, however, refused to stay the trial proceedings, saying that the full bench of this court will hear the petition and take a decision.

The chamber judge set the date after Shahidul's lawyer Sara Hossain prayed for fixing a date for hearing the petition and staying

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Stuck in legal tangles for 21yrs

Death reference, appeals in Ramna Batamul attack case still pending with HC

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Twenty years have passed since two bombs blasted during Bangla New Year celebrations at Dhaka's Ramna Batamul on this day in 2001, but the final justice is yet to be delivered. Appeals and death reference in connection with the case are still pending with the High Court.

Ten people were killed and dozens injured in the blasts at an event organised by Chhayanaut. Legal tangles, including repeated adjournments and reconstitution of HC benches, have caused delays in disposal of the case.

It is still uncertain when the appeals filed by the convicts and death reference will be heard and a judgement will be delivered by the HC.

Contacted, Law Minister Anisul Huq said the lower court has finished trial proceedings of the case, following the initiatives he took after becoming minister. "The case is now pending with the High Court. I don't know its present status. I will inquire about it."

The case has been included in the HC's hearing lists 375 times since 2014, but the benches concerned adjourned hearing each time,

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'Quality not quantity'

Rehman Sobhan stresses changes in governance, investment to ensure quality education

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Driven by market demand, the country's private education system is producing a quarter-educated generation, observed Rehman Sobhan, eminent economist and founder of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), yesterday.

"If you want to know how the market functions in Bangladesh today, you should begin by simply looking at the syllabus of the private universities. This gives you a clear idea of the nature of market demand, which has limited the structure of the syllabus to three or four subjects," he said.

Underscoring the need for quality over quantity, Sobhan said massive and revolutionary changes in the governance system are required alongside huge investments to ensure quality education.

The eminent economist was addressing a virtual discussion on a book titled, "Political Economy of Education in South Asia: Fighting Poverty, Inequality and Exclusion" organised by CPD.

Brac University Professor Emeritus Dr Manzoor Ahmed; John Richards and Shahidul Islam, University of Toronto Press, co-authored the book.

CPD Board of Trustees member Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam said, "We need not only a paradigm shift but leapfrogging into a future which will probably open up possibilities for the real education that our children should get."

"I want public discourse in education. But do you think authorities will always be listening to the voice of people? I'm really alarmed by the bureaucratisation of our education ministry."

Earlier, author of the book, Manzoor Ahmed gave a presentation on the book where he pointed out how the failure of politics is affecting the country's education.

"Wealthy people send their children to the best educational institutes. This creates a division among students," he said, highlighting the discrimination in the education system.

Unintended pregnancies hindering progress

In interview with Star, UNFPA country rep emphasises family planning, education

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Nearly 121 million pregnancies globally are unintended, among which 60 percent end up in abortion. In Bangladesh, around 59 out of each 1,000 pregnancies are unintended, reveals a report.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has launched the State of World Population (SWOP) Report 2022, which focuses on the issue of "Unintended Pregnancy".

On the occasion of the report launching, UNFPA country representative Eiko Narita sat for an exclusive interview with The Daily Star recently.

"When a pregnancy is unwanted or unplanned, it can result in worsened health, lost education, lost income and increase in family hardship for women," Eiko Narita said while talking to The Daily Star at the UNFPA country office in Dhaka.

Over the past three decades,

When a pregnancy is unwanted or unplanned, it can result in worsened health, lost education, lost income and increase in family hardship for women.

EIKO NARITA




Bangladesh has achieved significant progress with all Millennium Development Goals achieved. In 1993-94, almost a quarter of females were unable to access family planning services and that has gone down to 12 percent today and that's a significant achievement, according to Narita.

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COLOURS EVERYWHERE... Dhaka University's Charukala has been adorned with colourful, illustrative murals -- a staple tradition -- to welcome the Bangla new year. Even before the festivities began, these three friends visited the faculty of fine arts yesterday and took a quick snap to commemorate a new beginning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম
স্মারক নংঃ এ-২(৬)/০২/২০২২/৪০৯৪/সাধারণ
তারিখঃ ১৩-০৪-২০২২



বিজ্ঞপ্তি

চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বিভিন্ন বিভাগ/অনুষদ/হল/দপ্তরের শূন্যপদসমূহ পূরণের নিমিত্ত গত ০৮-০৪-২০২২ তারিখ বিভিন্ন দৈনিক পত্রিকা, চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ওয়েবসাইট ও জাতীয় তথ্য বাতায়নে প্রচারিত ০৭-০৪-২০২২ তারিখের স্মারক নং-এ২(৬)/০১/২০২২/৩৮৫২/সাধারণ সংখ্যক নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির ১৬ নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত ব্যবসায় প্রশাসন অনুষদের কম্পিউটার ল্যাব, সহকারী ০৬(ছয়) টি পদ নিম্নরূপভাবে আদেশক্রমে সংশোধন করা হলোঃ

পদের নাম : কম্পিউটার ল্যাব, সহকারী

বেতন স্কেল : ৮৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-

সংশোধিত বিভাগের নাম : একাউন্টিং বিভাগ ১টি, ম্যানেজমেন্ট বিভাগ ১টি, ফাইন্যান্স বিভাগ ১টি, মার্কেটিং বিভাগ ১টি, হিউম্যান রিসোর্স ম্যানেজমেন্ট বিভাগ ১টি ও ব্যাংকিং এন্ড ইন্স্যুরেন্স বিভাগ ১টি।

যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা : অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

প্রফেসর এস. এম. মনিরুল হাসান
রেজিস্ট্রার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)
চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম

জিডি-৭৫৬



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TEACHER WANTED

Applications are invited for following positions:

SL	Subject	Qualification	Preferences	Pay Scale
1.	English	Minimum Honors in English	English medium background will be preferred	As per ODIS pay scale
2.	Math	Minimum Bsc in mathematics		
3.	Physics	Minimum Bsc in physics		
4.	Chemistry	Minimum Bsc in chemistry		
5.	Accounting	Minimum Honors in accounting		

Instructions/Procedures for submission of Applications

- Interested applicants are requested to send their CV via odisofc@gmail.com by 10/04/2022
- Applicants must attend the written test to qualify his/her skill for a post in a specific subject.
- Three year's experience is required for each of the above position.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Satkhira Medical College, Satkhira
E-mail: satkhiramc@ac.dghs.gov.bd

Memo No. Smc/Sat/Sh-2/E-tender/2021-22/782
Date: 13/04/2022

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

Tender ID No.	Package No. and description	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
686245	Supplying Medical Equipment for Satkhira Medical College, Satkhira	28 April 2022 12.00	28 April 2022 14.30

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 document from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any branch of any registered banks within the date mentioned in the tender notice. Further information & guideline are available in the national e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Professor Dr. Md. Ruhul Quddus
Principal
Satkhira Medical College
Satkhira

GD-755

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

2nd 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	08-May-2022 14:00	09-May-2022 15:00	Similar work certificate instead of value Tk 140.00 (one hundred forty) crore new value Tk 151.00 (one hundred fifty one) 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-749

An awful day

FROM PAGE 3

depending on moon sighting, advance tickets for April 27 will be sold on April 23. Tickets for April 28, 29, 30 and May 1 will be sold on April 24, 25, 26, and 27, respectively.

Fifty percent of the tickets, however, would be sold online. One person would be allowed to buy four tickets. Selling of tickets both at the counter and online will start at 8:00am.

The minister said six special trains would be operated ahead and on Eid day. BR will start selling return tickets from May 1, he added.

Unintended

FROM PAGE 3

“However, we have started witnessing a stagnation over these successes in the last five years,” she said.

She noted some issues, including the decrease in the child marriage rate by only 1 percent in the last five years in the country.

About 15.5 percent of all adolescents in Bangladesh don't have their family planning needs met, resulting in unintended pregnancies. Additionally, gender-based violence, access to sexual reproductive health measures and lack of sex education play a negative role in women's empowerment.

“We are really at a point where we might actually be reversing the gains,” she said. She also stressed taking measures against the increased rate of child marriage in the country during and after the pandemic.

“Child marriage has a significant contribution to unintended pregnancies as

Stuck in legal

FROM PAGE 3

following the state's adjournment prayers, said defence lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir.

An HC bench led by Justice Krishna Debnath (now an Appellate Division judge), which was scheduled to hold hearing on the death reference and appeals on October 24 last year, sent the case files to then chief justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, as the bench was reconstituted.

Neither the then CJ nor current CJ Hasan Foez Siddique has assigned any other HC bench for hearing and dealing with the case, Manir said

Deputy Attorney General Shaheen Ahmed Khan said if the HC starts the hearing, 15 to 20 working days may

SC to hear

FROM PAGE 3

the trial proceedings.

Appearing for the state, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin opposed it.

Lawyers Md Ramzan Ali Sikder, M Asaduzzaman and Abdullah Al Noman were present for Shahidul.

Sara Hossain told The Daily Star if the lower court concerned runs the trial proceedings, Shahidul will be prejudiced as his petition is pending with the apex court. The trial court is scheduled to hear the case on May 11, she said.

Citing the grounds on which the SC may allow the petition, the lawyer said the case cannot run as its investigation had not been completed before the repeal of Section 57 of the ICT Act.

Section 61 of the Digital Security Act does not allow proceedings of the case against Shahidul, she said.

She said Shahidul's petition, rejected by the HC, is acceptable as his constitutional and fundamental rights are involved in it and there are procedural errors in case.

On August 5, 2018, Shahidul, now 67, founder of Drik Gallery and Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, was picked up from his Dhanmondi residence during a widespread demonstration for safe road. Police filed the case and he was later remanded for seven days.

In court, Shahidul said he was tortured in custody. Police denied the allegation. Shahidul was denied bail and sent to jail by a court on August 13. On November 15, 2018, the HC granted him bail.

5 martyred of a family recalled

CITY DESK

The 51st martyrdom anniversary of five members of the family of Saidur Rahman, founder (President) of Projonmo '71, will be observed tomorrow. On this day in 1971, Fazlur Rahman, his wife Hosne Akhter, and three sons Mostafizur Rahman Moznui, a college student, Hasinur Rahman Hiron, a school student, and Azizur Rahman Babu, also a school student, were killed at their railway government residence in Sayedpur under Nilphamari by the Pakistan occupation forces and their collaborators for their involvement in the Liberation War.

Saidur's mother was buried alive after being charged with a bayonet. Saidur along with his elder sister Dilruba Khatun (Kajol) and younger sister late Camellia Rahman (Kakon) escaped narrowly.

Saidur Rahman, a senior news presenter of Channel-i, requested all to pray for the salvation of the departed souls.

Hasina to join GCRG

FROM PAGE 3

of his GCRG on Tuesday, set up in response to the hunger crisis triggered by the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. The PM expressed confidence to fulfill vision of the group.

Land Purchase at GULSHAN
Wants to buy 10-15 katha land or more at any prime ocation of Gulshan (Preferably beyond gulshan-2) by Expatriate Bangladeshi for out right Purchase. Only genuine Sellers are kindly requested to Contact. **01711-521084**
NO COMMISSION/SERVICE CHARGE FROM SELLER



IRCON INTERNATIONAL LTD.
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line Project, Khulna, Bangladesh
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
NT No. IRCON/9043/BD.KHU-MON/TENDER/STFEL-RF/139/2022-19 Dt. 13.04.2022
Open Tender in Single packet bid system are invited for “Supply of HYSD (Grade Fe-500) Steel reinforcement bars of various dia. conforming to IS 1786-1985 for Khulna-Mongla Port Rail line Project” (Quantity – 515 MT).
Estimated Cost of work : USD 5,07,623.00
Earnest Money Deposit : Not Applicable
Completion Period : 15 (Fifteen) days
Cost of Tender Document : Tk. 5,000 /-
Last Date & Time for Bid Submission: Dr.21.04.2022 upto 15.00 Hrs. Opening at 15.30 Hrs.
For further details and updates, Bidders may visit IRCON office, House No. 411, Road No. 4, Sonadanga R/A, Phase-2, Khulna-9100.
Project Manager/KMRLP
Ircan International Ltd.
Contact No.01783965380, email at kmprlbd9043@ircon.org

Tender Notice

actionaid

ActionAid Bangladesh invites sealed quotations from qualified manufacturer / supplier for supplying the below mentioned items:

Category	Name of item
Category-A (Construction: Durable)	1st Class Bricks, Cement, Sand, Brick Chips
Category: B (Construction: Non-Durable)	Brak Bamboo, Mull Bamboo
Category: C (Hardware)	Polythene Sheet, Nylon Rope, Nylon Rope, Jute Bag, Geotextile Roll, Geotextile Bag, Tarpsaul

Interested manufacturer / supplier can collect tender schedule on 14th April 2022 to 20th April 2022 at 9:00AM to 3:30 PM and submit their quotation on 14 to 20 April 2022 up to 1:00 PM. The Tender Schedule can be collected from ActionAid Cox's Bazar Office (House No-752, Ward-11, Jhawola, Masjid Road, Cox's Bazar- 4700 Contact: Md. Salauddin Shikder, Mobile: 01687282838) or from web site: <https://actionaidbd.org/post/default/request-quotation-1q-supply-construction-and-hardware-materials> The authority of ActionAid Bangladesh reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason whatsoever



Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Rajshahi
www.rajshahieducationboard.gov.bd
Invitation for e-GP Tender
HEAVY DUTY HIGH SPEED HP M806DN BLACK-WHITE PRINTER/EQUIVALENT & HP LASERJET M806DN MAINTENANCE KITS AND DRAMS, TONER, PRINTER
Memo No. 1709/2nd/Vander-46(4th part)
Date: 08/02/2022
e-Tender Notice No. 124/Vander (2021-22) Date: 08/02/2022 is invited in National e-GP Portal System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods. Details are given below:

Serial Number	Tender ID	Description of goods	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time
1.	675044	Package-1 Heavy Duty and High Speed HP M806DN Black-White Printer/Equivalent, HP LaserJet M806DN Maintenance Kits and Drams, HP LaserJet Printer M806DN 25X Toner, HP LaserJet M404DN Printer/Equivalent, HP LaserJet M404DN Printer Toner	24 Apr 2022 Time: 12:05	24 Apr 2022 Time: 15:05 BST	24 Apr 2022 Time: 15:05 BST

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.

Correction

1. Trade license Valid for 2021-22;

2. Income Tax Clearance Certificate for 2021-2022 (Including TIN No.)

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for the e-GP downloading e-Tender documents from National e-GP System Portal have to deposit online through any registered online banks branches up to **24 Apr 2022, Time 12:05 BST**; respectively. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from helpdesk (help desk secretary@rajshahieducationboard.gov.bd).

With the Order of the Chairman
Md. Humayun Kabir
Secretary
Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education,
Rajshahi
Phone: 02588856286

GD-758

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Divisional Forest Officer
Social Forest Division, Faridpur
Corrigendum of Invitation for Tenders (IFT)

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	Dhaka
5	Invitation for	a) Construction of Boundary Wall at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj
6	invitation Ref No.	26/SFDF/Rev of 2021-22
7	Date	14/04/2022
KEY INFORMATION		
8	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
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 Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj.
15	Tender publication date	14/04/2022
16	Tender last selling date	27/04/2022 3.00PM
17	Tender closing date and time	28/04/2022 V 12.00pm
18	Tender opening date and time	28/04/2022 V 12.30pm
19	Name & address of the office(s)	Address
	-Selling tender document (principal)	Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur.
	-Selling tender document (others)	Office of the Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj.
No conditions apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents		
	-Receiving tender document	Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Faridpur
	-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 Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj. b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalganj SFNTC Gopalganj. c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj
21	Brief description of physical services	Written in tender document.
22	Price of tender document (Tk)	1000.00 (one thousand (Taka) only
23	Lot Identification of lot	Location
	3	a) Construction Boundary Wall at Gopalganj SFNTC, b) Construction of RCC Road at Gopalganj SFNTC, c) Repair of Training Center at Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj.
		Office of the Gopalganj SFNTC, Gopalganj.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
24	Name of official inviting tender	Mohammad Golam Quddus 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
28	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings	<Fax No.> Nil e-mail: dfosdf@gmail.com
Mohammad Golam Quddus Bhuiyan Divisional Forest Officer Social Forest Division, Faridpur Phone: 02478803083		
GD-751		

Barishal ready to welcome Baishakh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Barishal city is all ready with its extravagant and colourful festivities to welcome the Bangla New Year 1429 in high spirits.

At 8:00am today, Barishal's Charukola will inaugurate an array of festivities for the day on Barishal City College premises, said Nazmul Alam Ovi, joint coordinator of the programme.

Udichi Barishal unit has also arranged a "Mangal Shobhajatra" from Brojo Mohun Bidhyaloy (BM School) ground at 8:10am, with a "Rakhi Bandhan" (friendship ties) ceremony, according to Saifur Rahman Miron, president Udichi in Barishal.

On the occasion of greeting the new year, local businesspeople have also made preparations to observe "Halkhata Utsab" in a befitting manner.

They will welcome customers with snacks and sweets.

Meanwhile, the administration has taken measures as well.

"Local administration and law enforcement have taken special measures for the safety and security of people attending functions and fair grounds of Pahela Baishakh and related programmes," said Jasim Uddin Haider, deputy commissioner (DC) of Barishal.

"We'll ensure uninterrupted power supply at night, deploy mobile patrol teams in both uniform and plain clothes, and check-posts at key points," said Md Shahabuddin, Barishal metropolitan police commissioner.

"We'll also make sure continuous vigilance against pick-pockets and eve teasers is present," the official told The Daily Star.



PHOTO: STAR

Last of the 'shokher hari' potters

Artisans in Rajshahi struggling to preserve this cultural symbol

ANWAR ALLI, Rajshahi

What makes "Shokher Hari", (a decorative clay pot made in rural regions) unique is its colours and presentation. It bears testament to Bangalee craftsmanship and the utilitarian purpose of a pot -- making it one of the most unforgettable earthenwares in our region.

However, this craft, popularly made in Rajshahi, and a symbol of art and culture -- is ceasing to exist due to a lack of support.

Sushanta Kumar Paul (62), award-winning maestro of artisanal pottery from Bashantapur, Rajshahi, and his family members are considered to be the last potters in the country who have been preserving the craft.

But at present, many of Paul's family members have started engaging in agriculture alongside pottery for survival.

During a recent visit to Sushanta's residence at Basantapur village in Paba

upazila, this correspondent saw rooms of his house filled with newly harvested onions.

He said they never engaged in agriculture before, but began cultivating crops to survive the pandemic's financial blow. Things got so bad that he had to beg a few years ago when he needed multiple surgeries for his neurological treatment.

In one of the rooms in his house, this correspondent saw one of Paul's daughters-in-law Koruna Rani Paul learning how to shape clay pots.

According to folklore experts, the history of shokher hari and other craft items like tepa putul and terracotta dates back to the 8,000-year-old Indus valley civilisation.

Researchers said lack of capital, and high profits in alternative occupations are hurting the country's pottery industries. The potters also suffer from a lack of raw materials, transportation problems,

inefficient marketing systems, and acceptance in society.

Sushanta said there were around 4,500 potters in the Rajshahi region. Shokher hari was essential in the daily life of Rajshahi's citizens before.

In those times, people used these clay materials to entertain guests and use them in weddings. "Now, potters survive only by participating in the fairs during Baishakh."

"Since the pandemic, fairs aren't fetching us enough money either. How will we survive for the rest of the year?"

Paul says he taught at least 17 family members the craft, but many of them have started finding other jobs. "If they aren't properly taught, this tradition would be erased forever."

Associate Professor Abdullah Al Mamun of Rajshahi University's Department of Folklore said, "The government needs to provide them allowances and loans on eased terms. Potters need to adopt modern production methods and people need to develop respect for ancient traditions and crafts to preserve this heritage."



Of renewed hope and recovery

Dhaka boutiques see rise in sales on Pahela Baishakh

MEHRIN MUDDI CHOWDHURY

"At least the pandemic has subsided and people are coming back to the stores. We reserved a moderate collection for Baishakh, especially for consumers who want to celebrate the occasion with fervour," said Khalid Mahmood Khan, owner of home-grown apparel store Kay Kraft.

"And it's just not Kay Kraft. Many other fashion stores in the city have also produced their Baishakhi collections," he added.

Eid-ul-Fitr and Pahela Baishakh make up the country's biggest shopping seasons. Although Pahela Baishakh coincides with Ramadan this year, businesses still expect at least 15-20 percent of 2018/19 sales, which were booming before the pandemic.

Eid sales are also expected to pick up creating a hope that the industry can finally recover from the two-year-long slump due to the pandemic.

Meanwhile, customers are also optimistic about the celebration altogether.

Sabera Anwar, an entrepreneur who initiated the "Go Deshi" venture in 2021, said, "In 2021,




PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED

it [lockdown] was a blessing in disguise for many brands which would have otherwise gone bankrupt. The statistics are slightly different today, at least 60 percent of the consumers are opting to go to brick and mortar stores to purchase products instead of viewing them online. We had to open a Go Deshi outlet this year to cater to their needs."

According to Sabera, the wage rates of the artisans have increased substantially. Monthly wages of artisans have risen by as much as Tk 8,000-10,000. There's a shortage of imported fabrics in the market and the price of cotton has increased extensively.

"On the demand side, consumers are more stringent with their budgets, because of the dreadful pandemic experience. Hence even though the producers are optimistic about the current sales prospect, it will still take a few more years to recover what we have already lost in the last two," she said.

"For us, Baishakh is the New Year. So definitely there is a Baishakhi collection at my store. And I am extremely hopeful that the sales will be satisfactory as well," said fashion designer Chandana Dewan.



ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ

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০৬.০২.৬৭৫৮.১৬৫.০৭.১৯৪.১২.১৭৭৯

তারিখঃ ১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি


অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠান গাররা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের জন্য নির্মিতবা ০১টি ক্রাট তৈরী পেশক ও ০২টি সেক সাপটেইড পশুন এবং গাররা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের পশুনসমূহে শক্তিশালী টাণ বেটের সাহায্যে নিরাপত্তা সহকারে টেংগিং পূর্বক মুঠি, আনুষ্ঠানিক, কলগে ও সের বোলার ছান কালের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠান/প্রকাসাদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত বামে নির্দিষ্ট শর্তসাপেক্ষে উল্লিখিত তারিখে সীমিত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	কাজের স্থান	ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ।
০২	কাজের বিবরণ	১। অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে গাররা বন্দরে টার্মিনাল এর সার্ভিস জেটির নিরাপত্তা সহকারে টাণ বেটের মাধ্যমে ০১টি ক্রাট তৈরী পেশক পশুন এবং ০২টি সেক সাপটেইড পশুন টেংগিং পূর্বক মুঠি করার কাজ। (৪০ মিটার x২০ মিটার পশুনিটার পূর্ব পাশে নির্ধারিত একটি ক্রাট তৈরী পেশক পশুন এবং একটি সেক সাপটেইড পশুন ধারাবাহিকভাবে স্থাপন/মুঠি করার কাজ সম্পন্ন করতে হবে। ২। গারক-এর ০১টি ৪০ মিটার x ২০ মিটার পশুন, ০২টি ২০মিটার x২০ মিটার পশুন (ডেমো বিশিষ্ট) এবং ০৩টি ৩০ মিটার x২মিটার পশুন গাররা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশিত মোতারকে আনুষ্ঠানিক পূর্বক মুঠি করার কাজ। ৩। গারক-এর বর্তমানে অবস্থিত পশুনসমূহে গমনাগমনে ব্যবহৃত কলগে-টৈব নির্মাণ কয়/বেশি ৮(আট) মিটার বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে একটি কলগেট স্থাপন করার কাজ তার গ্রাঙ্গে ককা (Hinge) লাগিয়ে বর্তমান Steel কলগেটটি সংকুচ করতে হবে। Steel কলগেটটি আশের মত পারক-এর ৪০ মিটার x২০ মিটার পশুনিটার উপর লাগানো করা কাজ সম্পন্ন করতে হবে। ৪। পশুনগারির তথা সমগ্র বারের দৃঢ়তা বৃদ্ধির পাঠে দুইটি সের বোলার স্থাপনের কাজ করে শেষের পশুনের আশের স্থাপিত পশুন/পশুনসমূহ শক্তভাবে দলী ভীরের সাথে বাধার ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে।
৩	সিডিটলের মূল্য	টাকা ১০০.০০ (অশেরতমোশা)
৪	সিডিটল গ্রাভি স্থান	ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ এর বার্ষিকিক শাখা অথবা ওয়েবসাইট থেকে সিডিটল ডাউনলোড করা যাবে।
৫	সিডিটল সত্ত্বাধারের দরপত্র তারিখ	১৩ এপ্রিল ২০২২ হইতে ১৮ এপ্রিল ২০২২ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
৬	দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৮ এপ্রিল ২০২২ বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকা
৭	দরপত্র বোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৮ এপ্রিল ২০২২ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা দরপত্রবোলা বা অমনীত গ্রহণবিধির উপস্থিতিতে (যদি থাকে)
৮	দরপত্রবোলায় যোগ্যতা	বার্ষিক কাজের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ সরকারী/স্বায়তশাসিত সংস্থা/বেসরকারী অন্য যে কোন সংস্থার কাজের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন (বর্ণিত কাজ করার যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন) জনগণ প্রতিষ্ঠানে থাকতে হবে।
৯	দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করিতে হইবে	হালনাগাদ ট্রিড লাইসেন্স, বারকর সার্টিফিকেট, স্ট্রাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি (বিশত ৬ মাসের স্টেটমেন্টসহ), গ্র্যান্ডিফিকেশন যদি থাকে, শাসপোর্ট সাইজের ফবি ০১ কপি (তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকানাগুলোর জন্য প্রযোজ্য থাকে)। তালিকাভুক্তকৃত ঠিকানা/সরবরাহকারী দরপত্রের অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে সম্পূর্ণ মূল্যের শতকরা ৩ ভাগ (৩%) অ্যান্টিসিফান্স হিসেবে ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ এর নামে দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে।


১০। বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ

ক। দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র সংগ্রহকালে নিম্নলিখিতকরকারীর কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে।
খ। দরপত্র বোলার তারিখ হইতে ৬০ দিন পর্যন্ত দরপত্র বলাবৎ থাকবে।
গ। অসুমেদিত বারমধ্যে আসোকে কার্যক্রম প্রদান করা হবে।
ঘ। দরপত্রের উল্লিখিত সময়ের মধ্যে কার্য সম্পাদন করতে হবে।
ঙ। দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় কারণ সন্বিত ব্যতীত দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার/ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
চ। জাতি ও ট্যাক্সবন্দ প্রদান করতে হবে।

পক্ষে স্বাক্ষরস্থান পরিচালক



এম. সাফেদুদ্দিন
ক্যাডেট বিএন
জিএম (এজেন্ট)
ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ
সোনাকান্দা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ



The government needs to provide them allowances and loans. Potters need to adopt modern production methods, and people need to respect these crafts to preserve their heritage.

ABDULLAH AL MAMUN
Associate Prof, Department of Folklore at RU

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD

Ferry Division, Topkhana, Sylhet

Phone: +8802-996631429

Email: eefdsyl@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. ১২৭

Date: ১৩/৪/২০২২ইং

Notice for e-GP Tender(s)

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of Works/Goods and related service of RHD, Ferry Division, Topkhana, Sylhet: e-Tender ID No-674010 & 673992, total 2 (Two) e-Tenders. These are online tender(s), where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. For further information, visit e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Mazedul Hossain

ID No. 602319

Executive Engineer (C.C.) RHD

Ferry Division, Sylhet

GD-759

Bangladesh Development Bank Limited

Head Office, BDBL Bhaban

8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000

IT System Department

Invitation for Re-Tender

13/04/2022

Subject: Supply, Installation & Operation of Bulk Masking/Non Masking SMS Service (Push & Push-Pull) at BDBL Head Office for next 03 (Three) years

Tender is invited from the reputed SMS Service Provider for Supply, Installation of SMS Service (SMS Push and Push-Pull Service) and Integration with CBS in Quarterly Payment basis for 03 (three) years. Necessary informations are given below:

01.	Procuring entity	IT System Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level-06), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
02.	Procurement method	Through Open Tendering Method (OTM) of Public Procurement Rules, 2008 and The Public Procurement Act, 2006 (Corrected up to 2021).
03.	Invitation for Re-Tender No.	BDBL/ITSD/OTM/2022/01 Dated: April, 2022
04.	Source of funds	BDBL own fund.
05.	Brief description of goods and services	Supply, Installation & Operation of Bulk Masking/Non Masking SMS Service (Push & Push-Pull) at BDBL Head Office for next 03 (three) years.
06.	Name & address of receiving tender security & other documentary evidence	IT System Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level-6), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
07.	Last date and time for selling tender schedule	26-04-2022 up to 10:00am.
08.	Last date and time for submission	26-04-2022 up to 2:00pm.
09.	Date, time and place for tender opening	All tenders will be opened at IT System Department, Head Office, Dhaka on 26-04-2022 at 2:30pm (Intending tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend at the time of opening of tender).
10.	Eligibility of tenderer	The minimum number of years of general experience of the tenderer in contracting industries in public sector as Prime Contractor shall be 3 (three) years. The tenderer must submit documentary evidence of their experience and i. The tenderer must have experience to implement Bulk Masking/Non Masking SMS Service with CBS integration at least 02 (two) Bangladesh schedule bank/financial institution. ii. Any distributor on behalf of the Service Provider can't participate in the tender, iii) The tenderer must have A2P SMS Aggregator Provider in Bangladesh licensed by BTRC. iv. The tenderer must have MNP license agreement. v. The tenderer must submit documentary evidence of their experience, license, failing which the tenderer would be treated as Non-Responsive.
11.	Time for completion of the works	02 (two) weeks from the date of issue of Contract Award.
12.	Tender security	1,50,000.00 (one lac fifty thousand Taka only) Tender security money only will be required in the form of Pay Order in favor of Bangladesh Development Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka.
13.	Price of tender schedule	Taka 2,000/- (two thousand) only (non-refundable).

BDBL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender either in part or full without assigning any reason whatsoever. If occur any government holiday then the tender opening date will be shifted to next working day.

Saifuddin Ahmad

Deputy General Manager

IT System Department

BDBL, Head Office, Dhaka

Ph: 02-57160451

GD-751



Apu Biswas



Apurba



Sadia Islam Mou



Chanchal Chowdhury



Aparna Ghose

Good food, family time, new clothes Stars share their Pahela Baishakh plans

“Pahela Baishakh creates a sense of excitement and elation for me. The day starts with the beautiful seranation of ‘Esho he Baishakh’. This song holds a special place in the hearts of every Bengali.”

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Every year, the month of April brings the joy and festivities of Pahela Baishakh. Wherever you look, the vibrant colours at play tingle your senses to remind you that the Bengali New Year is upon us.

On this special day, we caught up with celebrities to find out about their plans.

Sadia Islam Mou

Pahela Baishakh is very close to my heart. It is a special occasion for Bengalis all around the world. There are many western occasions that we celebrate, but this day is always memorable for me.

That being said, I will not be going out anywhere on Pahela Baishakh this time. I will spend the day with my family, helping my son with his studies.

Even though I do not have any dance shows this year, many talented artistes who are junior to me will be performing at different events. I wish them luck.

Chanchal Chowdhury

Pahela Baishakh is a part of our heritage and identity. It belongs to all Bengalis, irrespective of their religion or caste.

On this day, all Bengalis come together, putting their differences aside. I wish that everyone washes away their sadness, sorrows, and worries with the Mongol

Shobhajatra this year.

I will not be shooting on Pahela Baishakh.

I am thinking of going to Charukola. I have beautiful childhood memories of this day, I am always reminded of the fairs and festivities in my village.

Bidya Sinha Mim

To be honest, we were not able to celebrate Pahela Baishakh properly for the last two years because of the Covid-19 pandemic. But this year, as the pandemic subsides, I will celebrate the day in a grand way. This is my first Pahela Baishakh after my wedding, so it is very special to me.

I look forward to new clothes and my mother's home-cooked food today.

Ziaul Faruq Apurba

Every year, we celebrate the Bengali New Year with various home-cooked, hearty Bengali meals. We engross ourselves in the festivities of Bengali culture and celebration.

This time, I will be celebrating Pahela Baishakh on the sets.

This New Year, we need to let go off all forms of discrimination and negativity. I

want everyone to be happy and enjoy every second with a smile.

Apu Biswas

I consider myself as a Bengali as I try to incorporate all the rituals and practices of the festivities of Pahela Baishakh whole heartedly.

However, the absence of my mom hurts me immensely as any festivals without her is incomplete. Together, we used to cook up delicious delicacies at our home to welcome the New Year.

However, I will celebrate this year with my son Joy and together we are going to make it a wonderful day. I wish everyone a happy Bengali New Year.

Aparna Ghose

Pahela Baishakh creates a sense of excitement and elation for me. The day starts with the beautiful seranation of “Esho he Baishakh”. This song holds a special place in the hearts of every Bengali.

No matter how far away we live, one can never separate our Bengali identity from us. *Pantha bhaat, Illish, and Nagordola* are a part of our culture.

PHOTOS: STAR & COLLECTED

Nisho and Tanjin Tisha’s ‘Ek Baishakh’ to premiere today

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Popular on-screen pair Afran Nisho and Tanjin Tisha's special tele-fiction “Ek Baishakh” will premiere today on NTV at 2.30 pm.

The plot revolves around Polash (Nisho) who has a chance encounter with a girl named Nilima (Tisha) on Facebook. Gradually, their virtual relationship blossoms into love and they decide to meet each other for the first time on Pahela Baishakh in front of Charukola. Will they meet or will fate intervene?

Directed by Tuhin Hossain, the tele-fiction also stars Achol and Priyonti in pivotal roles.



Season 4 of ‘Stranger Things’ teases new villain

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The fourth season of “Stranger Things” arrives on Netflix on May 27, 2022, with volume one.

It has been six months since the Battle of Starcourt, which brought terror and destruction to Hawkins. Struggling with the aftermath, our favourite characters are separated for the first time – and navigating the complexities of high school hasn't made things any easier.

A new character Victor Creel is glimpsed in the latest trailer for the series. According to reports, he is a disturbed man who is imprisoned in a psychiatric hospital for a gruesome murder in the 1950s. It would seem that Creel is in some way connected to a monster for the new season.



NEWS

BB slaps credit card ban

FROM PAGE 12

and an executive director of the BB, said 12 people had violated the rules of the credit card operation, which was subsequently proved by the central bank.

NBL has also been asked to stop the operation of foreign currency accounts of Rick, Ron, and Montazul.

In January, the central bank fined NBL Tk 55 lakh as it had tried to hide the loan-related information of the cardholders.

In another move, Bangladesh Bank yesterday cancelled the authorised dealer (AD) licence of NBL's West Dhanmondi branch, meaning the bank would not be able to handle any foreign exchange-related business, such as export

and import.

The BB probe found that NBL had operated a foreign currency account for ZH Sikder Women's Medical College breaching rules.

The account was opened with NBL's Dilkusha branch, which was later transferred to the West Dhanmondi branch, violating the guidelines for the Foreign Exchange Transactions 2018.

Dilkusha branch will strictly be monitored by the central bank, according to the BB letter.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach NBL Managing Director Md Mehmood Husain for comments.

Zainul Haque Sikder, who passed away on

February 10 last year, and his family members started to increase their influence in the board of NBL after 2009, plaguing the bank with malpractices, sources said.

Zainul served as the NBL chairman for 12 years in a row. His wife Monowara Sikder is now its chairman, while their sons Rick, Ron, and daughter Parveen Haque Sikder are in the 12-member board of directors.

NBL's default loans stood at Tk 5,955 crore in December last year, up 186 percent year-on-year, BB data showed. Non-performing loans at the bank was only Tk 388 crore in 2009. The bank also faced a capital shortfall of Tk 457 crore last year.

Govt cautious about loans for mega projects

FROM PAGE 1

experts. And many projects are being implemented on the basis of foreign partnerships.

“Our main goal is to accelerate economic activities, create employment, increase resources and make the lives of people easier through infrastructure development,” she said.

The prime minister said 2022 and 2023 will be milestones for Bangladesh in terms of infrastructure development.

The much-desired Padma bridge will come into operation in just a few months. The bridge is expected to contribute 1.2 percent to the GDP, she said.

She said Metrorail will be launched on the 14km Uttara-Agargaon route by the end of this year. It is expected to bring a revolutionary change in the capital's transport system, she added.

The country's first underwater tunnel, Karnaphuli River Tunnel in Chattogram, will be opened in October next, said Hasina.

The first unit (with capacity of 1,200-megawatt) of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, the largest development project in the country's history at a cost of Tk 1.13 trillion, is expected to be commissioned by the end of 2023, she said.

Last month, the 1,320 megawatt Payra power plant was inaugurated ahead of the deadline. “The implementation of other mega projects is progressing fast,” she said.

She said Bangladesh's economy stood on a strong foundation in the last 13 years, which is evident in different macroeconomic indexes. The GDP was only \$102 billion in 2009, which rose to \$416 billion last

year. The per capita income was increased to \$2,591 from only \$702, she said.

She said these achievements have been made possible thanks to far-sighted political thoughts and the implementation of far-sighted economic programmes.

She said the coronavirus pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war, and the emerging situation caused by the war have led to instability in commodity prices in the world market.

Fuel prices have risen abnormally. International transport fares have also risen sharply. As a result, the prices of some products have also gone up in Bangladesh. “But we're not sitting idle. We're trying our best to bring relief to the general public,” she said.

During the holy month of Ramadan, the government is providing several essential

items at affordable prices to some 10 million families through TCB by giving subsidy, she said.

Hasina said there is an arrangement to sell meat, eggs and milk at affordable prices through 15 freezer vans every day by the Livestock Department in the capital. “So, the prices of many essential items have already come down to normal levels.”

Besides, the government has given special allocation of over 100,330 metric tonnes of rice against 10,033,054 (over 10 million) VGF cards on the occasion of upcoming Eid, she said.

“I would like to inform you clearly that there is no shortage of any commodity, including rice, in the country,” she said.

The prime minister extended Bangla New Year greetings to all. “Although many (Bangalee) traditions have been lost

due to various blows, the celebration of New Year on Pahela Baishakh still survives with its own glory,” she said.

She urged all to come forward for building Bangladesh as a happy and prosperous ‘Sonar Bangla’ where there would be no inequality or disparity among people, and no discord among religions.

“The Pahela Baishakh inspires us to adopt a liberal lifestyle by shunning all narrowness and ignorance. It gives us strength and shows a dream to live with fresh enthusiasm removing all sorts of filthiness and shabbiness from the hearts,” she said.

Hasina urged all to join the Pahela Baishakh celebration programmes and enjoy the joy of the Bangla New Year, maintaining health protocol as the coronavirus has not gone completely.

WB rings alarm on reserve use

FROM PAGE 12

The use of reserves for funding development projects is “something to be careful about” as “there are strong limits” on their use, he said.

“All these problems can be traced to too much spending in the country, too much spending by the government. That is another issue that has to be addressed, mainly through an increase in revenues for the government,” Timmer added.

Otherwise, the country can find itself in a currency crisis like Sri Lanka is battling.

Meanwhile, the WB maintained its growth projection for this fiscal year at 6.4 percent and downsized its earlier projection for the next fiscal year by 2 percentage points to 6.7 percent.

The pared-back growth projection comes in light of the jump in global commodity prices increase amid the uncertainty created by

the war in Ukraine and slower manufacturing sector growth as pent-up consumption demand subsides.

The WB projected inflation to remain above BB's target of 5.3 percent. “Going forward, close monitoring of inflation and the potential impacts of the war in Ukraine will be important for the country's sustainable and inclusive growth,” said Mercy Tembon, the WB's country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan.

The Rooppur Power Plant project may face setbacks due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the report said.

“As a result of the war in Ukraine, implementation of \$12.7 billion Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant could be affected by sanctions,” it said.

The report also raised questions about the budget's credibility.

“The gap between the original and executed budgets has grown substantially in recent

years.”

For instance, in fiscal 2019-20, only 70.3 percent of revenue and 80.3 percent of expenditure in the original budget were executed.

“Accurate revenue and expenditure forecasts are a key input to the preparation of a credible budget. In Bangladesh, overly optimistic expenditure allocations are presented with aspirational revenue targets.”

The large gap between budget and execution limits the ability to enforce accountability in public finances and weakens the credibility of the budget.

“It also reduces effective implementation of public investment and service delivery, affecting the overall development outcomes of government programmes.”

The report also said estimated poverty declined last fiscal year to 11.9 percent from 12.5 percent the previous year following stronger economic recovery from the pandemic slump.

FROM PAGE 12

primarily from anti-government propaganda machines, terming it wrong, a lie and far from reality.

“We are studying the report thoroughly and will share in detail with the press on Sunday,” he told journalists at the foreign ministry, reports UNB.

According to the US report, there were numerous reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

For example, it said, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) reported at least 80 individuals died in extrajudicial killings in 2021, including 51 in so-called shootouts or crossfires with law enforcement agencies.

Between May 2018 and June, ASK reported a total of 606 incidents of alleged

extrajudicial executions.

Although policy requires internal investigations of all significant uses of force by police, usually by a professional standards unit that reports directly to the inspector general of police, the government neither released statistics on total killings by security personnel nor took comprehensive measures to investigate cases, the report added.

Human rights groups and media reported that disappearances and kidnappings, allegedly by security services, have continued. Between January and September 30, 2021, local human rights organisations reported 18 persons became victims of enforced disappearances.

Numerous organisations also claimed security forces were involved in widespread and routine commission of torture, occasionally resulting in death, for the purpose of soliciting payment of bribes or obtaining confessions,” the report adds.

The report said human rights observers maintained that magistrates, attorneys, and court officials demanded bribes from defendants in many cases, or courts ruled under influence of political patronage networks.

It said the law provides criminal penalties for conviction of corrupt government officials, but the government did not implement the law effectively.

The report said police jailed opposition party activists throughout the year for criticising the government regarding its actions in managing

Covid-19.

It also said that throughout the year the government widely used the Digital Security Act (DSA) against persons criticising the government.

On December 31, 2021, ASK reported at least 210 journalists faced harassment, physical torture, assault, threats, and lawsuits, including cases filed under the DSA. The organisation stated there were at least 1,134 DSA cases during the year.

The report also highlighted the rights violations of women, minorities, children, workers and socio-economic discrimination.

“Working together, we must commit ourselves to promoting respect for human rights. We must speak honestly about the challenges we face.

Progress on human rights begins with the facts,” said US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas in a statement.

Hriday Mondal

FROM PAGE 12

“As I went out, those people threatened us. It like we are under house arrest. How long can anyone live in fear this way?”

Abdul Hai Talukder, principal of Government Haranganga College in Munshiganj, who is leading the investigation committee, said the secondary and higher education department has asked them to submit a report after investigating allegations against Hriday within five working days.

Hriday was sued recently for “hurting people's religious sentiments”. He was sent to jail and released 19 days later.

BESIEGED CITY OF MARIUPOL

1,000 Ukrainian troops surrender

Claims Russia after weeks of heavy bombardment

AGENCIES

More than 1,000 Ukrainian marines have surrendered in the port of Mariupol, Russia's defence ministry said of its main strategic target in the eastern Donbas region, which has been reduced to ruins but is not yet under Russian control.

If the Russians take the Azovstal industrial district, where the marines have been holed up, they would be in full control of Mariupol, Ukraine's main Sea of Azov port, allowing Russia to reinforce a land corridor between separatist-held eastern areas and the Crimea region that it seized and annexed in 2014.

Surrounded and bombarded by Russian troops for weeks and the focus of some of the fiercest fighting of the war, Mariupol would be the first major city to fall since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24.

Russia's defence ministry said yesterday that 1,026



marines had surrendered, including 162 officers.

Ukraine's general staff said Russian forces were proceeding with attacks on Azovstal and the port, but a defence ministry spokesman said he had no information about any surrender.

US President Joe Biden said for the first time that Moscow's invasion of Ukraine amounted to genocide, a term denounced by Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, reports Reuters.

Meanwhile, presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia arrived in Kyiv to meet Zelenskyy, the Polish leader's office said. Estonian President Alar Karis had earlier tweeted that they were offering political support and military aid.

Moscow's incursion into Ukraine, the biggest attack on a European state since 1945, has seen more than 4.6 million people flee abroad, killed or wounded thousands and left Russia increasingly isolated on the world stage.



This handout photo received from Philippine Army yesterday shows Pilar Village residents being evacuated on boat to the town of Abuyog after their village were struck by landslide on Tuesday due to heavy rains brought about by tropical storm Megi. The death toll from the landslide rose to 80 yesterday with scores missing and feared dead, officials said.

PHOTO: AFP

Pak PM sends positive signals to China, US

Islamabad rejects 'unwarranted reference' to Pakistan in India-US joint statement

DAWN ONLINE

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reiterated the need for cooperation with the United States and India, while assuring Beijing of further deepening of relations.

"The new government wishes to constructively and positively engage with the US to promote shared goals of peace, security and development in the region," the Pakistan's Prime Minister's Office on Tuesday said in response to a White House statement on Shehbaz taking over as the new prime minister.

Talking to the Charge d' Affaires

of People's Republic of China, Pang Chunxue, Shehbaz affirmed his government's commitment to further deepening the win-win economic cooperative partnership between the countries.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's Foreign Office yesterday categorically rejected the "unwarranted reference" to Pakistan in a joint statement issued by India and US following the fourth '2+2' dialogue between the two countries.

In the statement, US and India called on Pakistan to take "immediate, sustained, and irreversible action" to ensure that no territory under its control was used for terrorist attacks.

“

Let me say immediately that I've paid the fine and I once again offer a full apology.

UK PM Boris Johnson says after being fined for breaching lockdown laws in the "Partygate" scandal

Imran Khan probed for 'sale of gifted necklace'

NDTV ONLINE

Pakistan's top investigative agency has opened an inquiry against former prime minister Imran Khan over allegations that an expensive necklace received as a gift during his tenure was sold to a jeweller for 18 crore rupees instead of depositing it to the state gift repository, according to media report yesterday. The necklace Khan received as a gift was not sent to the state gift repository, but given to former special assistant Zulfikar Bukhari, who sold it to a jeweller in Lahore for 18 crore rupees, the Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Another Palestinian killed in West Bank

REUTERS, Ramallah

Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank yesterday, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, as troops mounted more sweeps in the territory after deadly Arab attacks in Israel. The ministry said Mohammed Assaf, 34, was a lawyer who worked for a department of the Palestine Liberation Organisation that documents and lobbies against Israeli settlement activity on land Palestinians seek for a state. Palestinian health officials said seven people were wounded with live bullets in the Nablus clashes. The Israeli military stepped up its raids in the West Bank following attacks by two Palestinians from the territory and three members of Israel's Arab minority which have killed 14 people in Israel since late March. More than 20 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since January.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Custom House, Chattogram

Tender Notice

1.	Ministry/Division	Internal Resources Division (IRD), Ministry of Finance (MOF).
2.	Agency	Custom House Chattogram, National Board of Revenue (NBR)
3.	Procuring entity name	Commissioner of Customs, Custom House, Chattogram.
4.	Procuring entity code	N/A
5.	Procuring entity district	Chattogram
6.	Invitation for	Procurement of Goods [Open Tendering Method]
7.	Invitation Ref No.	File No. S-4/51/ADMIN (PROC)/OTM/2021-2022
8.	Date	13/04/2022

KEY INFORMATION

9.	Procurement method	NCT	OTM
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FUNDING INFORMATION

10.	Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget	GOB
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PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12.	Project/programme code (if applicable)	N/A
13.	Project/programme name (if applicable)	N/A
14.	Tender Package No.	File No. S-4/51/ADMIN (PROC)/OTM/2021-2022
15.	Tender package name	Procurement for Supply & Installation of 150 sets Desktop Computer with UPS, 145 Pcs additional Off Line UPS, 50 Pcs Laser Jet Printer (Black and White), 3 Pcs Laser Jdet Printer (Colour), 20 Pcs Scanner.
16.	Tender publication date	14/04/2022
17.	Tender last selling date	08/05/2022
18.	Tender submission date and time	09/05/2022 9.00am to 12.00pm
19.	Tender opening date and time	09-05-2022 12.10pm
20.	Name and address of the office(s)	Address
20.1.	-Selling tender document (principal)	Admin/GL branch (2 nd Floor), Custom House, Chattogram. Tender document will be collected through treasury challan on Misc. code is 1-1131-0010-0421 at Sonali Bank, Custom House, Chattogram branch or Bangladesh Bank in favour of Commissioner of Customs, Custom House, Chattogram
20.2.	-Selling tender document (others)	N/A
20.3.	-Receiving tender document, date and time	ROOM 204, 1 st Floor, Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Customs (Preventive), Custom House, Bandar Road, Nimitala, Chattogram. Date: 09-05-2022, From 9.30am to 12.00pm
20.4.	-Opening tender document, date and time	ROOM 204, 1 st Floor, Custom House, Chattogram, Bangladesh Date: 09/05/2022, 12.10pm (Bidder representative may present).
21.	Pre-tender meeting	Pre-tender meeting shall not be held

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

22.	Eligibility of tenderer	As per Tender Data Sheet (TDS) of tender schedule.			
23.	Brief description of goods	Procurement for Supply & Installation of 150 sets Desktop Computer with UPS, 145 Pcs additional Off Line UPS, 50 Pcs Laser Jet Printer (Black and White), 03 Pcs Laser Jet Printer (Colour), 20 Pcs Scanner.			
24.	Brief description of services	N/A			
25.	Price of tender document (Tk)	BDT 400/- (Taka four hundred) (non-refundable).			
26.	Lot No	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security/earnest money deposit amount	Completion time in days
26.	1.	Procurement for Supply & Installation of 150 sets Desktop Computer with UPS, 145 Pcs additional Off Line UPS, 50 Pcs Laser Jet Printer (Black and White), 03 Pcs Laser Jet Printer (Colour), 20 Pcs Scanner.	Custom House Bandar Road, Nimitala, Chattogram-4100.	5,00,000/- (five lac) BDT in the format of either Pay Order of Bank Guarantee from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of Commissioner of Customs, Custom House, Chattogram.	As per schedule

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

27.	Name of official inviting tender	Mohammad Fakhru Alam
28.	Designation of official inviting tender	Commissioner of Customs
29.	Address of official inviting tender	Custom House, Bandar Road, Nimitala, Chattogram-4100.
30.	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel No: +88031713918 Fax: +88031713988 email: customhousecto@gmail.com
31.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	

Mohammad Salahuddin Rizvi
Deputy Commissioner of Customs
On behalf of Commissioner of Customs

GD-754

“

We're here because we have reasonable grounds to believe that crimes within the jurisdiction of the court are being committed. We have to pierce the fog of war to get to the truth.

ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan says after visiting the Ukrainian town of Bucha

KHULNA SHIPYARD LIMITED
BANGLADESH NAVY, KHULNA
BABE (F)-310/DPM/2021-2022 12 April 2022

TENDER NOTICE

01.	Procuring Entity Name	Khulna Shipyard Limited
02.	Invitation For	Amphibious Excavator
03.	Invitation Reference No.	BABE (F)-310/DPM/2021-2022 DATE: 12/04/2022
04.	Procuring Method	Open Tender (Two Envelop System)
05.	Budget & Source of Funds	Own Finance
06.	Tender Last Selling Date	Date: 21/04/2022
07.	Tender Closing Date & Time	Date: 24/04/2022 Time: 11:15am
08.	Tender Opening Date & Time	Date: 24/04/2022 Time: 11:30am
09.	Name & Address of the Office for Selling of Tender Documents:	(1) Cash Section, Khulna Shipyard Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, Khulna. (2) Naval Store Sub Depot, Khilkhat Name Para, Khilkhat, Dhaka.
10.	Price of Tender Document	Tk. 3,000.00 (Tk. Three Thousand) Non-refundable.
11.	Contact Details of Official	Tel: 02-4411-0990, Fax: 880-41-720404, Email: contact@khulnashipyard.com, oiccomf.ksv@gmail.com
12.	Special Instructions	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all or any tenders prior to acceptance without showing any reason.

GD-746 Manager (Commercial & Purchase)

ইসলামি আরবি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
১২৪/৯০/৩, বুক-বি, সড়ক নং-০২, পশ্চিম ধানমন্ডি, বরিশা, মোহাম্মদপুর, ঢাকা-১২০১
www.iau.edu.bd

দরপত্র আহ্বান বিজ্ঞপ্তি (ভবন ভাড়ার নিমিত্ত)

ইসলামি আরবি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা-এর প্রশাসনিক কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বহিরাঙ্গ অস্থায়ী ক্যান্টিনার নিকটবর্তী স্থানে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের চুক্তিতে (নবায়নযোগ্য) আগামী ০১ জুন ২০২২খ্রি. থেকে ০১ টি ১৩,০০০ (কমবেশী ১০০০) বর্গফুট, ০১ আগস্ট ২০২২খ্রি. থেকে ০১ টি ২৮,০০০ (কমবেশী ১০০০) বর্গফুট এবং ০১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২২খ্রি. থেকে ০১ টি ১৫,০০০ (কমবেশী ১০০০) বর্গফুট বর্গফুটের মোট ০৩ (তিন) টি ভবন ভাড়া আবশ্যিক। ভাড়া প্রদানে আগ্রহী প্রকৃত ভবন মালিকগণকে নির্ধারিত দরপত্রের আবেদন ফরম পূরণ করে রেজিস্ট্রার, ইসলামি আরবি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় বরাবর প্রেরণ করতে হবে। দরপত্রের আবেদন ফরম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ক্রয় শাখায় বিনামূল্যে পাওয়া যাবে। দরপত্রের আবেদন ফরম প্রকাশের তারিখ ১১.০৪.২০২২খ্রি.। দরপত্রের আবেদন ফরম জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময় ২৫.০৪.২০২২খ্রি.। দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা এবং উন্মুক্তকরণের তারিখ ও সময় ২৫.০৪.২০২২খ্রি.। দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা। দরপত্রের আবেদন গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে।

উপাচার্য মহোদয়ের অনুমোদনক্রমে স্বাক্ষরিত/-
(মোঃ রেজাউল হক)
রেজিস্ট্রার
ইসলামি আরবি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
মোবাইল নং- ০১৭০৫-৪০৮০০১

GD-750

Barishal City Corporation
Barishal
(German Financial Cooperation with the People's Republic of Bangladesh)

Memo No. BCC/CCAUDP/57/2022

Date: 12/04/2022

Publication of the Result of the Tender Process

This is to notify that in response to the Invitation for Bid (IFB) Vide BCC/CCAUDP/233/2021 dated 29/11/2021 for the Package W2-W6: Drainage Network Core Area 1. (NCB No. BCC-CCAUDP NCB-03), Package: W1, W10, W11: Drainage Network Core Area 1 & 2 (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-04) & Package W8-W9, W12-14: Drainage Network Core Area 2. (NCB No. BCC-CCAUDP NCB-05) under Climate Change Adapted Urban Development Programme (CCAUDP), Barishal Component. Phase-1 Project, in accordance with the conditions stipulated in the IFB, the members of the Bid Opening Committee opened the Tender on 29.12.2021 at 3:00pm, BD local time and received total Five (5) Bids for Package (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP NCB-03) total Five (5) Bids for (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-04) & total Five (5) Bids for (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-05) and performed preliminary records & examinations of all the Bids/Bidders. No withdrawals were found in the submitted Bids. No modifications were found in the submitted Bids. All Ten (15) Bidders were found initially responsive for the comprehensive technical & financial evaluation.

Members of the TEC went through the evaluation criteria of the Bids (Financial and Technical Requirements and Qualifications and performed comprehensive analysis and evaluation on the basis of the criteria, and other terms & conditions stipulated in the Bid Documents. They also examined and verified all technical & financial documents, certificates and evidences as required for the comprehensive evaluation.

Result of the Tender Process for Package W2-W6: Drainage Network Core Area 1. (Reference No. BCC-CCAUDP NCB-03):

In regard to the required Technical qualifications, M/S Al-Mamun Enterprise, M/S. Shafi Enterprise, Mozahar Enterprise (Pvt.) Ltd & M/S Md. Jamil Iqbal have failed to meet the technical requirements and Md. Mahfug Khan Nalchity, Jhalokathi only passed both technical and financial requirements and qualifications, and was evaluated a substantially responsive 1st lowest Bidder with its corrected price amounting to BDT 91,394,220.33 (nine crore thirteen lakh ninety-four thousand two hundred twenty Tk & thirty-three paisa only) which is (-) 0.88% less than the estimated cost BDT 92,209,256.52. Therefore, Md. Mahfug Khan was recommended for awarding the Notification of Award (NOA) for signing Package W2-W6: Drainage Network Core Area 1 (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-3)

Result of the Tender Process for Package W1, W10-11: Drainage Network Core Area 1 & 2 (Reference No. BCC-CCAUDP NCB-04):

In regard to the required Tehnical qualifications M/S Md Jamil Iqbal, Mozahar Enterprise (Pvt.) Ltd, M/S Al-Mamun Enterprise, M/S. Shafi Enterprise and have failed to meet the technical requirements and Md. Mahfug Khan Nalchity, Jhalokathi only passed both technical and financial requirements and qualifications, and was evaluated a substantially responsive 1st lowest Bidder with its corrected price amounting to BDT 79,482,874.17 (seven crore ninety-four lakh eighty-two thousand eight hundred seventy-four Tk & seventeen paisa only) which is (-) 2.12% less than the estimated cost BDT 81,210,727.18. Therefore, Md Mahfug Khan was recommended for awarding the Notification of Award (NOA) for signing Package W1, W10 & W11: Drainage Network Core Area 1 & 2 (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-04)

Result of the Tender Process for Package W8-9, W12-14: Drainage Network Core Area 2 (Reference No. BCC-CCAUDP NCB-05):

In regard to the required Technical Qualifications, M/S Al-Mamun Enterprise, M/S. Shafi Enterprise, M/S Md Jamil Iqbal, Mozahar Enterprise (Pvt.) Ltd have failed to meet the technical requirements and Md. Mahfug Khan Nalchity, Jhalokathi only passed both technical and financial requirements and qualifications, and was evaluated a substantially responsive 1st lowest Bidder with its corrected price amounting to BDT 102,255,379.80 (ten crore twenty-two lakh fifty-five thousand three hundred seventy-nine Tk & eighty paisa only) which is (-) 0.29% less than the estimated cost BDT 102,559,617.70.

Therefore, Md. Mahfug Khan was recommended for awarding the Notification of Award (NOA) for signing Package W8, W9, W12, W13 & W14: Drainage Network Core Area 2 (NCB No: BCC-CCAUDP-NCB-05)

It is noted that the Employer shall promptly respond in writing to any unsuccessful Bidder who after (NOA) in accordance with ITB 41.1 requests in writing the grounds on which its Bid was not selected.

Muhammad Anisuzzaman

Project Director

CCAUDP, Barishal Component Phase-1

Barishal City Corporation, Barishal

GD-748

Celebrate our unity through Pahela Baishakh

Let us shed the darkness of the past to welcome the new year

AFTER two years of observing Pahela Baishakh within the confines of our homes, the festivities are back in our lives this year to invigorate us to start anew, while shedding the negativity of the past. That, in fact, is what the theme of this year's celebrations indicates as well, *"Tumi nirmolô koro, mongolo kore molino mormo muchhaye."* With the threat of Covid largely neutralised through wide-scale vaccination, people are expected to come out in the open to walk on the grass, hear the birds sing and inhale the sweet summer breeze to their lungs' content—all while hopefully maintaining safety protocols. Though the celebrations this year are being tempered down in consideration of Ramadan, we hope the pluralistic spirit of the day endures and carries us through to a better tomorrow.

Pahela Baishakh celebrations transcend all socio-religious barriers or social dikats, and become a unifying force for the people. It is on this day that Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists and people of other faiths enjoy traditional songs sitting side by side at Ramna Batamul, a popular meeting ground in Dhaka, or mingling at a town or village fair. The Mongol Shobhajatra, or the parade of good fortune that starts from the Dhaka University campus, is a call for peace, harmony and good tidings. Thus Pahela Baishakh, being the biggest secular festival in Bangladesh, strengthens and reaffirms the cultural bond shared by people regardless of what faith or community they are from. As a symbol of resistance against intolerance and communal mindsets since the 60s, the celebration of Pahela Baishakh has become all the more significant in an environment in which the seeds of hatred threaten to sprout.

It is, of course, unfortunate that the Baishakhhi downpour is yet to wash away the soot of fanaticism from the hearts of some fellow citizens, who continue to deny the celebration of Pahela Baishakh as a secular event. We hope all security measures will be taken by the administration to make sure the celebrations are carried out safely and smoothly. Let us all join together to celebrate 1429 and all that we share in common—our culture and our love for our country while remaining respectful of each other and of our differences. That is what the beginning of each Pahela Baishakh has always signified: our ability to come together from our respective backgrounds and celebrate the arrival of the new year with happiness and hope.

We wish our readers and patrons *Shubho Noboborsho!*

Covid treatment must be made affordable to all

Overcharging by private hospitals must stop

IT is most unfortunate that two years into the pandemic, the government has still not been able to ensure proper treatment at affordable costs for Covid-19 patients. A recent study by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has revealed the unbelievably high difference in the treatment cost of Covid between government and private hospitals. According to the study, conducted between August 2021 and March 2022, the treatment cost was more than 12 times higher in private hospitals than that in public healthcare facilities; while the average treatment cost was Tk 35,938 in public hospitals, in private hospitals, the cost was as high as Tk 4,58,537.

The study has also revealed that about 65 percent of Covid patients—in both public and private healthcare facilities—were not provided with the required medicine, while over 33 percent didn't get specialist doctors' advice when required. The study has also highlighted the problems and complications that patients had to face due to delayed service delivery at hospitals.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that we have come across such revelations. Last year, a similar study was conducted by the Health Economics Unit of the health ministry that found various anomalies in public and private hospitals in providing treatment to Covid patients. The issue of overcharging—for ICU beds, oxygen support, medicines and diagnostic tests—by private hospitals was highlighted in detail in that study. But has anything improved since then? Did the government take any measures to address the issues? Apparently not. The HEU study also mentioned that the private hospitals who were overcharging were actually not following the national Covid-19 treatment protocol. We wonder what even the point of having this protocol is, if the government cannot make all hospitals comply with it.

The TIB study also made a striking revelation about the cost of the government's Covid vaccination programme. It found that the cost of the programme was less than half of what the health minister claimed recently. While according to the minister, the cost was around Tk 40,000 crore, the TIB has found it to be Tk 12,993 to Tk 16,721 crore. Will the health minister clarify the matter?

While it is the government's duty to ensure proper and adequate treatment for Covid patients at affordable costs, it is also their duty to ensure that the vaccination campaigns run smoothly, without any corruption taking place. Since the issue has been raised by the TIB, we think the government now must make the cost breakdown public. There should be no secrecy regarding this. If any evidence of corruption is found, the government must take action accordingly and urgently to restore public confidence in what has been heralded as a widely successful vaccination campaign thus far.

This Pahela Baishakh, let's make a pledge to ruralise our city



OF MAGIC & MADNESS

Badiuzzaman Bay is an assistant editor at The Daily Star.

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

IT'S been quite some time since we've had a Pahela Baishakh in the middle of Ramadan. The convergence of the two occasions, not necessarily a clash of ideologies, begs appreciation of life in its many nuances and complexities. How do you, for example, reconcile the spirit of restraint of the holy month with the unrestrained joy of life and rebirth associated with Bangla New Year? For now, perhaps we should be grateful that we're finally having this moment, regardless of how subdued its celebration. The familiar drum beat or chorus coming out of the historic Ramna Batamul is not only a nod to tradition but also a welcome sight after two years of pandemic-induced closures, during which we lost more than just music. It means turning a page filled with loss and grief, and giving life a fresh start after it has been rudely stopped in its tracks.

Chhayanaut's musical tribute to Pahela Baishakh, or the spectacles of the Unesco-recognised Mongol Shobhajatra, can be equally evocative for those who see in them a celebration of nature and the pastoral life. But here's the irony: How out of place does this celebration seem when done in a concrete mess like Dhaka? Put another way, we're celebrating the rural idyll and values through nature-themed songs, scenes and motifs while surrounded by flyovers, skyscrapers, shopping malls and endless streams of vehicles. In truth, it's more lamentation than celebration. One of the conundrums of our search for a closer connection to the rural world is that the search itself has morphed into a "fancification" of those rustic products and motifs now on display at the festival sites. It's as if the visitors are customers, and what they are really buying into is a sort of processed pastoral.

Dhaka is a city that is not only increasingly encroaching upon the nearby countryside, but also snubbing out all traces of rustic life and values within itself. I say "values" because taking in the scene without taking in what it represents is superficial. Dhaka's urbanisation is in sharp contrast to the ruralisation of some of the foreign cities that we fondly talk about. I remember reading about the ruralisation trend in the UK, where the desire for a closer connection with nature has led to the countryside creeping into many cities and towns—in how their residents shop, eat, play, read, dress, decorate homes, and even spend their time. You can see rustic playgrounds, wildflower meadows nestling beside tower blocks, rustic furniture, weekly farmers' markets, flourishing rural children's literature, street food being sold out of

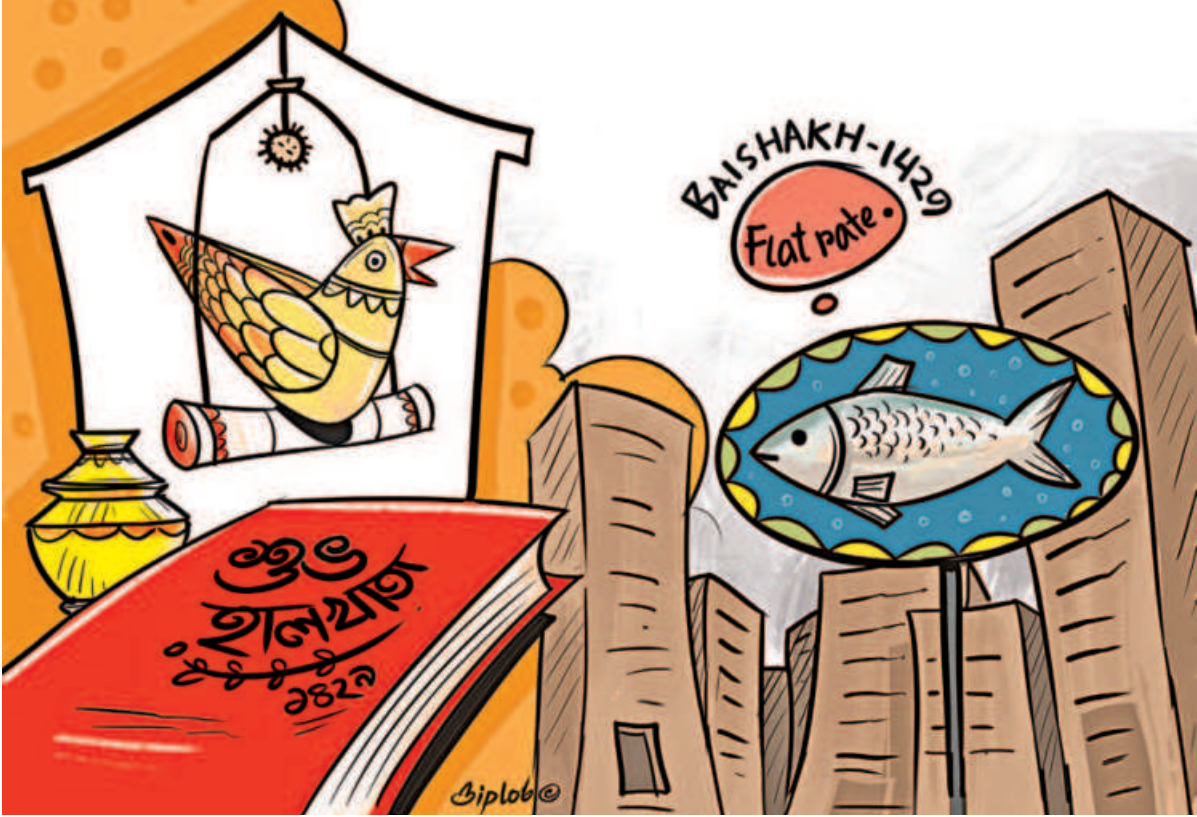


ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

Living in Dhaka as we do, bereft of any real connection with it, what we need is a critical rethink of our desire for pastoral idyll and how we want to achieve it. We must make a conscious effort to turn the clock back on its destructive urbanism.

revamped agricultural trucks, or from village-delivery-style bicycles. The signs of ruralism are everywhere. And there is a deliberate attempt behind it, led by ordinary citizens.

One may argue if this is enough for someone seeking rural contact, or possible in a city like Dhaka. But we are not even giving it a serious thought anymore, let alone a serious

connection and simpleness is the opposite of what living—or dying—means in the countryside.

I got a real taste of that recently after attending the janaza of a relative. He was by no means a popular man—just someone who lived long enough, albeit weakened by infirmity. But his janaza was attended by the whole village. Relatives close and distant, neighbours from

try, apart from having Pahela Baishakh celebrations. As I remarked elsewhere, "Dhaka is trapped in an ironic twist as it grows and falls apart at the same time. Its aggressive development is rivalled only by the progressive decline in almost all other parameters of urban life." Any description of this city these days invariably summons up images of toxic air, loud noise, unsafe drinking water, traffic gridlocks, high population density, high cost of living, inadequate road, transport and recreational facilities, general lack of security, etc.

More than the decline in the quality of sights and scenes, it's the absence of rural values and the essential simpleness associated with them that should bother seekers of rural contact. Imagine walking down a street and being passed by everyone like you don't exist. Imagine not knowing your neighbour. Imagine always looking over your shoulder. Imagine not having meaningful contact with your children or parents. Imagine feeling restless every time you go out, or get on a public transport, anticipating trouble. Imagine feeling lonely even when surrounded by people. Imagine worrying if you'd have a final resting place somewhere you know, or have anyone beyond close relatives at your janaza prayer when you die. This lack of

adjacent villages and even random people who were passing by at the moment felt the need to give him a proper send-off. Memories were shared, tributes offered, and prayers sought. His body, after the janaza, was carried to the gravesite with honour and laid to rest among the people he once knew. As the poet Lang Leav said, "We will remain unwritten through history, no X will mark us on the map; but in books of prose and poetry, you loved me once, in a paragraph." My uncle will remain unwritten in history, but his stories will survive through the people he was connected with.

I have often marvelled at these rural customs, values as well as the power of stories shared and passed through generations. To me, the countryside is more than the purity of water, cleanliness of air, or the unadulterated nature. Living in Dhaka as we do, bereft of any real connection with it, what we need is a critical rethink of our desire for pastoral idyll and how we want to achieve it. We must make a conscious effort to turn the clock back on its destructive urbanism, and begin a gradual process of ruralisation—covering not just the sights and scenes, but also the values that can make us live better. Celebrating Pahela Baishakh is not the answer to the void you feel deep inside.

THE WAR IN UKRAINE

A silent assault on the developing world



Antonio Guterres is the secretary-general of the United Nations.

ANTONIO GUTERRES

FOR the people of Ukraine, the Russian invasion is a waking nightmare—a humanitarian disaster on a terrifying scale. But the war is also fast becoming a matter of life and death for vulnerable people around the world.

We have all seen the tragedy unfolding inside Ukraine: cities flattened; people suffering and dying in their homes and in the streets; the fastest displacement crisis in Europe since World War II. But beyond Ukraine's borders, far beyond the media spotlight, the war has launched a silent assault on the developing world. This crisis could throw up to 1.7 billion people—over one-fifth of humanity—into poverty, destitution and hunger on a scale not seen in decades.

Ukraine and the Russian Federation provide 30 percent of the world's wheat and barley, one-fifth of its maize, and over half of its sunflower oil. Together, their grain feeds the poorest and most vulnerable people, providing more than one-third of the wheat imported by 45 African and least developed countries.

At the same time, Russia is the world's top natural gas exporter, and second largest oil exporter.

But the war is preventing farmers from tending their crops, while closing ports, ending grain exports, disrupting supply chains, and sending prices skyrocketing.

While much of the world has stepped up in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, there is no sign of the same support for the 1.7 billion other potential victims of this war. We have a clear moral duty to support them, everywhere.

Many developing countries are still struggling to recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with historic debt burdens and soaring inflation. Since the start of 2022, wheat and maize prices have increased by 30 percent. Brent oil prices have risen more than 60 percent over the last year, while natural gas and fertiliser prices have more than doubled.

The United Nations' own lifesaving operations are under severe strain. The World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that it faces the impossible choice of taking from the hungry to feed the starving. It urgently needs USD 8 billion to support its operations in Yemen, Chad, and Niger.

Some countries are already sliding from vulnerability to crisis and serious social unrest. And we know that the roots of many conflicts lie in poverty, inequality, underdevelopment and hopelessness.

But while much of the world has stepped up in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, there is no sign of the same support for the 1.7 billion other potential victims of this war. We have a clear moral duty to support them, everywhere.

The Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance that I launched last month aims to develop coordinated solutions to these interlinked crises, with governments, international financial institutions and other key partners. I thank the global leaders in all sectors who are supporting this initiative.

On food, we are urging all countries to keep markets open, resist hoarding and unjustified and unnecessary export restrictions, and make reserves available to countries at the highest risk of hunger and famine. This is not the time for protectionism. There is enough food for

every country to get through this crisis if we act together.

Humanitarian appeals must be fully funded, including for the WFP. We simply cannot allow people to starve in the 21st century.

On energy, the use of strategic stockpiles and additional reserves could help to ease this energy crisis in the short term. But the only medium- and long-term solutions are to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, which is not impacted by market fluctuations. This will allow the progressive phase-out of coal and all other fossil fuels.

And on finance, the G20 and international financial institutions must go into emergency mode. They must find ways to increase liquidity and fiscal space, so that governments in developing countries can invest in the poorest and most vulnerable, and in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This should be a first step towards deep reforms to our unfair global financial system, which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Social protection, including cash transfers, will be essential to support desperate families through this crisis. But many developing countries with large external debts do not have the liquidity to provide these safety nets. We cannot stand by and watch as they are forced to choose between investing in their people, and servicing their debt.

The only lasting solution to the war in Ukraine and its assault on the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world is peace. As the UN works to support the innocent victims of this war—both inside and outside Ukraine—we call on the global community to speak with one voice and support our plea for peace.

This war must end—now.

‘Long delays defeat the purpose of justice’

Prof Abul Quasem Fazlul Huq, the Ahmad Sharif professor at the Department of Bangla in the University of Dhaka, speaks about the verdict on Prof Humayun Azad murder case, which came out yesterday, and the overall situation in Bangladesh in a conversation with Shamsuddoza Sajen and Priyam Paul of The Daily Star.

What is your view on the verdict in Prof Humayun Azad murder case?

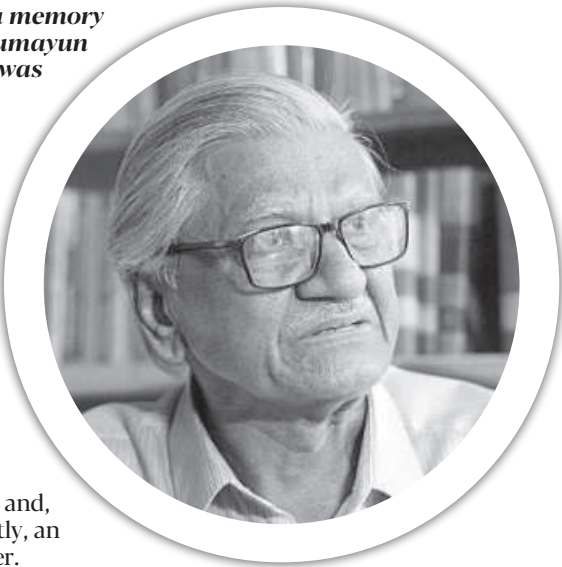
I must appreciate this move. However, we have to look into why it took almost 18 years to get the verdict. Prof Humayun Azad was one of the foremost intellectuals in Bangladesh. If it takes so long in a case of such a prominent personality like him, I wonder what the common citizens must go through when they seek services in our justice system. There is no respite from violence and killing in the country. How long do the common people have to wait to get justice in their cases?

Moreover, even if you get a verdict in your case from a lower court, you have to wait for years to get the final order from the High Court and subsequently its execution. The murder case of Humayun Azad went through the same delayed procedure. Such long delays defeat the purpose of a justice system. In the case of my son Dipan's (Faisal Arefin Dipan, publisher, Jagriti Prokashani) murder, we received a verdict from a special tribunal after five years, and now we are waiting for the High Court's verdict.

Please share a memory you have of Humayun Azad after he was attacked.

Prof Humayun Azad was my colleague at the Department of Bangla in the University of Dhaka. He was talented in many different ways—he was a good researcher, a popular author and, most importantly, an excellent teacher.

Humayun Azad was sent to Bumrungrad International Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand for better treatment following the heinous attack on him (on February 27, 2004). At that time, I was also there on a visit. I called on him at the hospital and spent some time with him. I



▲ Prof Abul Quasem Fazlul Huq

PHOTO: ZIA UDDIN SHIPLU

found him as jolly as ever.

After making some recovery, he paid me a visit before he went to Germany for a fellowship. I told him to come back from Germany soon and make a fresh start in his research and writing projects. Those were my last words with Humayun Azad.

In the recent case of schoolteacher Hriday Mondal, we saw how he was implicated in a false blasphemy charge by his students. Why do you think our education sector is failing to build a tolerant society?

Our entire education system is flawed. Educationists have very little say in the formulation of education policies. The government appoints professors for preparing education policies, but it does not follow their recommendations. It changes the policies according to prescriptions from outside. Will you find exams like PEC and JSC anywhere else in the world? Who was behind the introduction of such a flawed evaluation system? We have to think sincerely if we are really concerned about what is happening in our education sector at

What is the way out of the impasse that Bangladesh seems to be in?

There is no alternative to democracy. To build a peaceful and egalitarian society, we have to ensure democracy in every aspect of life, viz universal democracy. We have to look at democracy from a broader perspective. Democracy is not just limited to elections. It is also about creating space for different voices so that we can discuss our differences without hurting anyone. We also need to seriously think about the process of building democratic political forces. You can learn from foreign models, but you have to build your own political system considering your unique reality.

When Dipan was murdered by extremist forces, journalists repeatedly asked me why I was not in favour of filing a case. My view was that hanging or imprisoning some people would not bring any result—unless good sense prevails among us. I believe that creating a democratic environment in the country is necessary, and we all should make efforts to this end.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net


Stop bullying at schools

It's not uncommon to see almost every school proudly boasting about having the best facilities for their students. However, those facilities don't seem to cover prevention of bullying. Besides academics, it's also the schools' duty to look after their students' well-being—physical and mental. Victims of bullying are often too intimidated to share their troubles.

So, schools should carefully handle these matters. Teachers should treat every student equally and be mindful of any kind of alien behaviour observed in their classrooms. Appropriate action should be taken against the bullies, too.

Fatima Sadri, IUB





Bangladesh Election Commission

Election Commission Secretariat
Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka
www.ecs.gov.bd

Tender for Goods (Multiple Lots)

Tender Notice No. 17.00.0000.029.70.173.21(২য় খণ্ড)-122 Date: 13-04-2022

1	Ministry/Division	Election Commission Secretariat.								
2	Agency	Election Commission Secretariat.								
3	Procuring entity name	Secretary, Election Commission Secretariat.								
4	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.								
5	Invitation Ref. No.	17.00.000.029.70.173.21(২য় খণ্ড)-122								
6	Date	13-04-2022								
7	Procurement method	National Competitive Tender (NCT), Open Tendering Method (OTM) Under Framework.								
8	Budget and source of funds	GOB (Revenue Budget).								
9	Tender package name	Supply of Goods (Multiple Lots)								
10	Tender Package No.	ECGD08 [Lot-1 (Computer and other Ancillary) and ECGD09 [Lot-2 (Office equipment)]]								
11	Tender publication date	14-04-2022								
12	Tender last selling date	27-04-2022								
13	Tender submission date and time	28-04-2022 12.00pm.								
14	Tender opening date and time	28-04-2022 12.30pm.								
15	Name & address of the office(s)									
	(a) Selling tender document	Senior Assistant Secretary, Common Service-2, Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.								
	(b) Receiving tender document	Senior Assistant Secretary, Common Service-2, Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.								
	(c) Opening tender document	Deputy Secretary (Jonobal Babostapona), Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka								
16	Eligibility of tenderers	Bidders that fulfill the criteria described in the tender document.								
17	Brief description of goods and related services	Supply of Lot-1 (Computer and other Ancillary) (ল্যাপটপ, স্ক্যানারসহ প্রিন্টার, কালার প্রিন্টার, ড্রুমস্ক্যানার, Toner for supplied Printer, Toner for supplied Colour Printer) and Lot-2 (Office equipment) (পানির ফিল্টার, হাইড্রোলিক ট্রলি, টাকা গণনার মেশিন, ডিজিটাল ঘড়ি, ডিজিটাল ওয়েট মেশিন, টাইলস পরিষ্কার মেশিন, ফটোকপি মেশিন)								
18	Lot No.	Identification of goods	Price of tender document (Tk)	Tender security	Completion time in weeks/ months	Location				
	1.	Supply of Lot-1 (Computer and other Ancillary) for Election Commission Secretariat	Tk 1,000/- (one thousand Taka)	Tk 82,000/- (eight two thousand)	04 (four) weeks	Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka				
	2.	Supply of Lot-2 (Office equipment) for Election Commission	Tk 1,000/- (one thousand Taka)	Tk 20,000/- (twenty thousand)	04 (four) weeks					
19	Name of official inviting tender	Mohammad Mahub Alam.								
20	Designation of official inviting tender	Senior Assistant Secretary.								
21	Address of official inviting tender	Common Service-2, Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban (2 nd Floor), Agargaon, Dhaka.								
22	Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone: 02-55007539		Fax No. 55007515						
23	Tender security	Tender security must be in the form of Pay Order in favor of Secretary, Election Commission Secretariat, Dhaka.								
24	Special instruction	Supplier must submit distributor authorization letter for Lot-1; (Computer and other Ancillary)								
25	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all tenders.									

Mohammad Mahub Alam
Senior Assistant Secretary
Phone: 02-55007539
E-mail: ecs.seba@gmail.com

GD-753

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল
১৯০ খালইষ্ট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ

নথি নং-০১/জিএল(০৯)মাইক্রোবাস/বিবিধ/২০০৩/১০৭৬ তারিখঃ ১১/০৪/২০২২খ্রিঃ

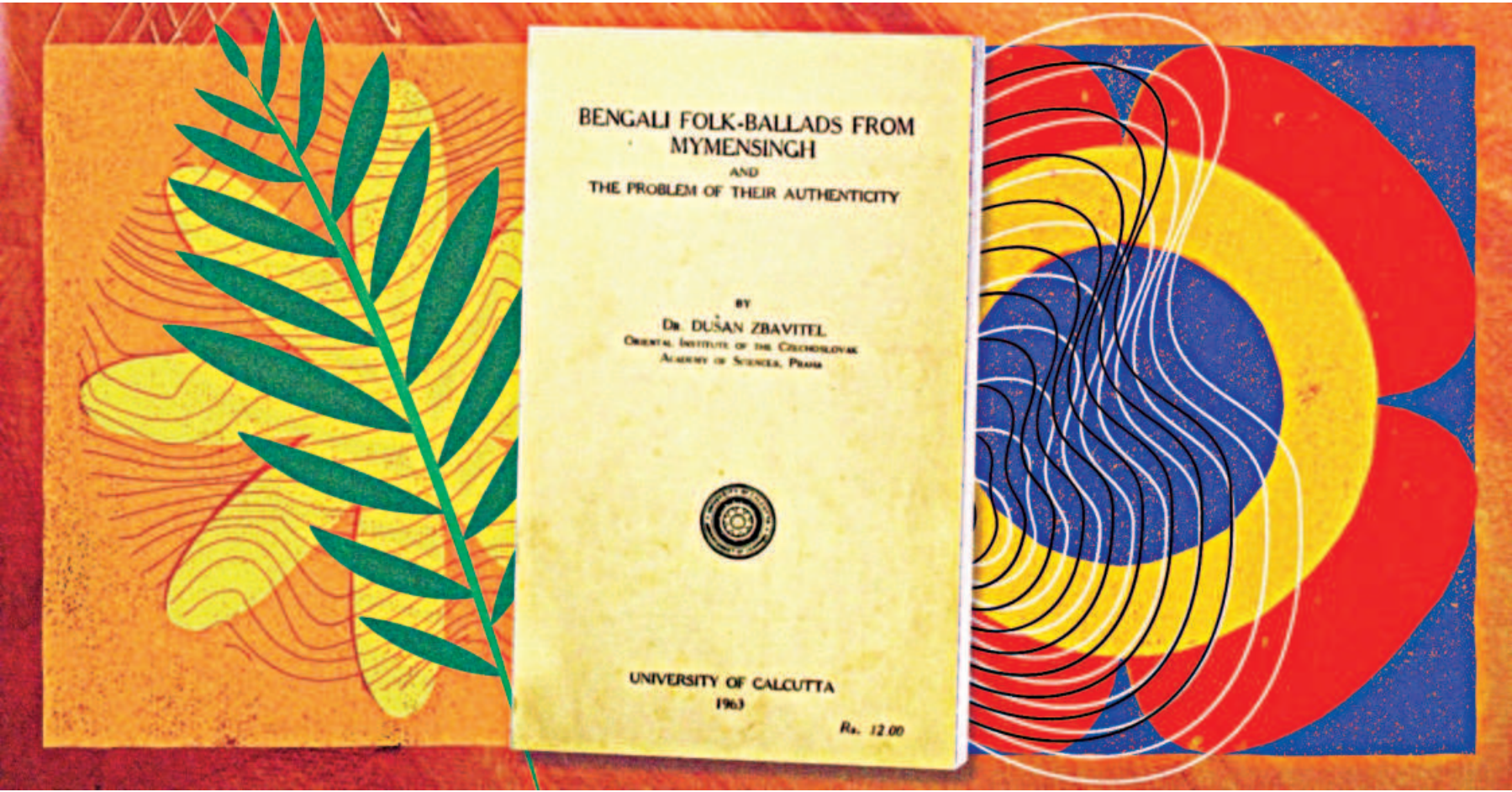
মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা প্রকৃত দরদাতাদের নিকট থেকে The Public Procurement Regulation, 2003 এবং Standard Request for Quotation (SRFQ) for Procurement of Goods মোতাবেক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে নিম্নে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী অনুযায়ী দরপত্র আহবান করা হলো।

০১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ	অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ।
০২।	সংস্থা	ঃ	জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড, ঢাকা।
০৩।	সংগ্রাহক সত্তার নাম	ঃ	কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট কমিশনারেট, ঢাকা (দক্ষিণ), ঢাকা এর আওতাধীন কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, মুন্সীগঞ্জ।
০৪।	কাজের নাম	ঃ	০১(এক)টি মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়া।
০৫।	ব্যয়ের উদ্দেশ্য	ঃ	সরকার অনুমোদিত বাজেট।
০৬।	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	ঃ	উন্মুক্ত পদ্ধতি।
০৭।	গাড়ীর সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	ঃ	ন্যূনতম ১৮০০ সিসি এর চালকসহ ন্যূনতম ০৮ আসন বিশিষ্ট এসি মাইক্রোবাস জ্বালানীসহ টিপটিপ অবস্থায় নোহা, হাইয়েস। ২০১০ সনের মডেলের পূর্ববর্তী মাইক্রোবাস গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
০৮।	কার্যকাল	ঃ	চুক্তি স্বাক্ষরের তারিখ হতে ৩০/০৬/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্রয়োজনে চুক্তির মেয়াদ বৃদ্ধি করা যেতে পারে।
০৯।	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	ঃ	নিজস্ব বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের নামে গাড়ীর মালিকানা সম্পর্কিত কাগজপত্র অবশ্যই থাকতে হবে (হালনাগাদ নবায়নকৃত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আয়কর সংক্রান্ত সনদ (টি,আই,এন), ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, সরবরাহতব্য গাড়ীর হালনাগাদ ব্লু-বুক, ট্যাক্স টোকেন, ফিটনেস, ইন্স্যুরেন্স এবং গাড়ী চালকের ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স (হালনাগাদ নবায়নকৃত) অন্যান্য কাগজপত্র বা দলিলাদি সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
১০।	দরপত্র তফসিলের মূল্য	ঃ	১০০.০০ (একশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
১১।	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয় পদ্ধতি	ঃ	দরপত্র অংশগ্রহণকারী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে তাদের নিজ প্যাডে অথবা সাদা কাগজে দরপত্রের তফসিলে বর্ণিত দলিল পত্রাদির কপিসহ রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল বরাবরে লিখিতভাবে আবেদন করতে হবে।
১২।	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটি	ঃ	দরদাতা কর্তৃক আর্নেস্টম্যানি হিসেবে প্রতিটি দরপত্রের সাথে রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা, কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, মুন্সীগঞ্জ এর অনুকূলে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক এর যে কোনো তফসিলভুক্ত বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক হতে ইস্যুকৃত ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা (ফেরতযোগ্য) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে (প্রতিটি মাইক্রোবাসের জন্য)।
১৩।	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয়ের তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	ঃ	২৮/০৪/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ০৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়, রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, মুন্সীগঞ্জ হতে ক্রয় করা যাবে এবং অফিসে সংরক্ষিত বক্সে ফেলতে হবে।
১৪।	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	ঃ	২৯/০৪/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ০৩.০০ ঘটিকা (দাখিলপত্র খোলা ও যাচাই-বাছাই বিকাল ০৪.০০ ঘটিকায় দরপত্র দাখিলকৃত সকলের উপস্থিতিতে)। রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, বিনমিত্তাহ ভবন (২য় তলা), ২৯০ খালইষ্ট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ।
১৫।	দরপত্র সংশ্লিষ্ট বিস্তারিত তথ্যাবলী	ঃ	দরপত্র তফসিলে বর্ণিত আছে।
১৬।	কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিরেল ক্ষমতা রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা, কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, মুন্সীগঞ্জ সংরক্ষণ করেন।	ঃ	

মোহাম্মদ আলী
রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা (চঃ দাঃ)
কাস্টমস, এক্সাইজ ও ভ্যাট
মুন্সীগঞ্জ সার্কেল, মুন্সীগঞ্জ

জিডি-৭৪৭



COLLAGE: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

SONGS OF OUR SOIL

In praise of Mymensingh’s Bangla folk ballads

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

Folk-ballads are living archives that represent the imagination, values, ideas, and aesthetics of the people to whom they belong. Bangla literature has a rich repertoire of folk-ballads. We are, however, quite oblivious of this treasure trove and, therefore, there is a dearth of research on these folk elements.

Czech Indologist Dusan Zbavitel’s *Bengali Folk-Ballads From Mymensingh And The Problem Of Their Authenticity* can be called a wonderful exception in this regard. It is considered to be the first literary study of the beautiful folk-ballads from Mymensingh. The study was published by the University of Calcutta in 1963.

A brief background of the book may not be irrelevant here. In 1923, Rai Bahadur Dineshchandra Sen edited a volume of epic songs from the Mymensingh District of the then Eastern Bengal under the title *Maimansimha-gitika*. The ballads were mainly collected by Chandra Kumar De, a literary activist from the area. In the following years, Dineshchandra published three more volumes of balladic texts containing epic songs from different parts of Eastern Bengal. The beautiful ballads received enthusiastic response and admiration in India and abroad. However, for some scholars these ballads were too good, and they shared doubts about the antiquity, authenticity and folk character of these lores. Dusan Zbavitel found this uncertainty “highly regrettable” and undertook a study to assign to the ballads their proper place—“one of the high points of Bengali literature”. Dr Zbavitel tried to find out: “what is it that makes them so excellent?”

Zbavitel confined his analysis to the study of the ballads originating in Mymensingh—41 ballads containing more than 21,000 verses. He took an arduous effort of analysing each of these 41 ballads to prove their originality and, I must say, he achieved his goal with marked success.

One key argument put forward by Zbavitel in favour of the originality of the *gitikas* from Mymensingh is that these ballads are not collected by a single person and, still, there are similarities among the ballads: identical images, and similar

artistic approach and common inventory of similes and metaphors. So these ballads couldn’t be the creation of a modern poet as suggested by some detractors.

According to Zbavitel, the most significant aspect of these folk ballads is that they are devoid of any religious implications. They generally show harmonious co-existence of the Hindu and Muslim communities, without religious bias on either side. Zbavitel points out the fact that most of the Hindu ballads were collected from Muslim singers, which

Zbavitel extensively discusses the ideological and artistic approach of the ballad writers, verse and rhyme technique, and use of similes and metaphors in chapter three and four of the book. The most dominant motif, according to Zbavitel, is love. Even the historical and heroic epics can be grouped into this category.

shows, according to him, that these folk poems were enjoyed and appreciated by both the communities with the same eagerness. The secular outlook of the folk ballads is diametrically opposite to the explicit religious connotation of the classical Bengali literary texts such as *Mangal-kavyas* and *Vaisnava* literature.

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chapter three and four of the book. The most dominant motif, according to Zbavitel, is love. Even the historical and heroic epics can be grouped into this category.

As to the literary techniques, the ballad writers, being true to the characteristics of folk epics, do not try to introduce innovations in their lyrical dictions. They are content with the poetic means offered by their predecessors. They want to tell an interesting and touching story in a simple garb, fresh with country scenes and feelings.

Zbavitel also discusses the manner of preservation of the folk ballads—preserved, in most cases, in torsos. Referring to two versions of the same ballad, *Maishal Bandhu*, he argues, “The ‘original’ ballads [were] sometimes rewritten by another folk poet, or other poets, quite freely, without any scruples; whole portions, as well as individual couplets and verses, were taken over, others were replaced by newly replaced passages, and the story itself was often changed.” The reasons behind such changes, according to Zbavitel, might be an effort to offer listeners a ‘better’ story than the original one.

Due to this oral nature of preservation, it is always difficult to prove the originality of folk elements. If we undertake an effort to study the folklore of Bangladesh, Zbavitel’s book will be an invaluable companion guide.

Rabindranath Tagore wrote to Dinesh Chandra Sen in appreciation of the book *Maimansimha-gitika*, “Classical Bengali literary texts such as Mangal-kavyas are ponds dug on by order and at the expense of the rich, but *Maimansimha-gitika* is a source of exuberance from the deepest level of the heart of rural Bengal, a clear stream of genuine pain. There has never been such a creation of self-forgetting *rasa* [aesthetic joy] in Bengali literature.” [translation by the author]

While celebrating the Bengali new year this Pohela Boishakh, may we remember the melody and the essence of communal harmony embedded in *Maimansimha-gitika*.

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BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

The invisible life of migrant domestic workers

NOUSHIN NURI

“Absence is the highest form of presence.” This Joycean quote could not be truer for Nisha.

One day, after her husband is swallowed by the cave while mining for gems in Ratnapura, Sri Lanka, Nisha makes the tough decision of sailing to Cypress for her livelihood. She ends up as the nanny for the child of a woman named Petra. Nisha, like all nannies, is conveniently invisible behind the wholesome meals cooked on time, the garden well-kept, and the child taken care of. But when she suddenly disappears, leaving her passport behind, Petra begins to feel her presence for the first time. *Songbirds* (Manilla Press, 2021) is a tale of migrant domestic workers whose presence becomes more vivid only once they go missing.

Nisha’s story is not entirely a figment of imagination by author Christy Lefteri. In 2018, five migrant domestic workers and their two children went missing in Cypress. Even after the cases were reported, no investigation or even search was initiated. The police simply dismissed them as runaways. It wasn’t until two years later that the real and more tragic fate of these women was discovered.

Though the names and many details of the original victims are not preserved, *Songbirds* holds the essence of the event. Lefteri explores how the police remained negligent to the cases only because the victims were foreign women from poor countries.

Nisha’s disappearance, similarly, is not taken seriously by the police because to them, migrant domestic workers are the “drifters of the world” who drift to lands of better opportunities, unanchored by family ties. Little understood are the circumstances that force these nannies to mother their own children through a virtual

screen—Nisha doesn’t get to see her daughter for 10 years except for video calls twice a week, but it is a part of the price she pays to save up for Kumari’s education.

Nisha calls Kumari using an iPad from Yiannis—Petra’s divorced neighbour, and her lover. She knows it is common for employers to dismiss their maids if an affair is discovered; yet she finds comfort in spending nights with this man.

Yiannis himself is another complex character. An investment banker beaten by the blows of the 2008 financial crisis, he has been lured into the illegal and dangerous trade of poaching songbirds. Once he steps into this trap, even if he wants to, he’s unable to break loose of the neatly sealed underground world of poaching—thus metaphorically transformed into a songbird stuck in a net.

These songbirds migrating from Africa mirror the soul of the migrant domestic workers. They migrate to foreign lands to seek freedom and new opportunities. Like the poached birds, the workers too are trapped with huge debts to the agencies that helped them find work. Like songbirds that keep singing even when they are stuck in the poacher’s mist net, these women, despite the crippling debt and prejudices, dream of finally saving up enough for a good life back home.

Against this backdrop, Christy Lefteri conjures an immersive world through food. Recipes of the savoury *dhal* and sweet *aluwa* Nisha cooked for her employers shows local Sri Lankan cuisine being brought to Petra’s Cypriot home. The pages become aromatic as Yiannis roasts haloumi and olive in the forest or as Nisha’s husband cooks flat crispy bread named *godamba* roti and delicious green jackfruit curry with pandan leaves and coconut milk.

But not once do we hear Nisha’s voice. Her life is told the way it was lived: from the perspective of others. Her story is a tragic one of many migrant domestic workers who take flight to find freedom but find themselves trapped in mist nets of racism and misogyny.

Noushin Nuri is studying business in school and literature at home. She can be reached at noushin2411@gmail.com.



Amartya Sen’s ‘Home in the World’: Life of an intellectual

ILHAMUL AZAM

“When I was born, Rabindranath persuaded my mother that it was boring to stick to well-used names and he proposed a new name for me...Amartya”, writes the author and economist. Amartya Sen is often mentioned along with Rabindranath Tagore and Satyajit Ray for their remarkable contributions to Bengali history, and for their common connection to Santiniketan. Sen enhanced the glory of early Bengali intellectuals and continues to be a part of it till now.

Home in the Real World: A Memoir (Allen Lane, 2021), the most recent memoir of the Nobel laureate, borrows its title from Tagore’s “The Home and the World” and reflects his influence on Sen, which began from young Amartya’s first day at Tagore’s unconventional school. It is an engrossing read with the anecdotal presence of personalities—Satyendra Nath Bose, physicist Paul Dirac, Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhi, and (other) great economists—

drawn from history, their presence in the text is sometimes humorous, sometimes historical, and at others, informative. We learn of Sen’s familial background, his early battle with carcinoma (which he diagnosed from reading medical books even though many doctors denied the cancer’s existence), his convictions addressing rationalism, and his opinion over political issues. The remarkable work moves in a slow, graceful manner as it exudes the fragrance of the 20th century through its pages.

Sen depicts his childhood acquaintance with Mandalay, Dhaka, and Santiniketan with homely affection. A vague remembrance is presented of Mandalay, a charming city with a beautiful palace, Irrawaddy river, pagodas, and the distinguished prominence of women within the society. The happiness felt at their house, Jagat Kutir, in old Dhaka, watching engaging films with his Dadamani, and

early memories of going to his father’s laboratory at Dhaka University made Dhaka a place that Sen felt he belonged to. “Being in Santiniketan for the school terms and Dhaka for long holidays seemed an ideal



combination to me [...] All this changed with the partition of the country in 1947 [...] It also meant that we had to move [...] I loved Santiniketan but I greatly missed Dhaka—and Jagat Kutir”, Sen writes.

Amartya Sen spent the best years of his life in Santiniketan or what he preferred to call ‘school without walls’. The air of freedom there—which didn’t exist while he was in St Gregory’s School—was crucial in moulding his thinking and his perception of education; he learned the importance of freedom and reason, a combination that resided with him all his life. The presence of Tagore and his close relationship with Sen’s family make the pages more indulging. Sen’s scholar grandfather, an intimate friend of Tagore, is equally present in the many anecdotes.

One of the interesting chapters of the book is devoted to unfurling the fundamental differences between the two great leaders of India: Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. Amartya Sen shares his scepticism of Gandhi’s sentimentally prioritised and unscientific vision—unlike that of Tagore’s—and expresses resentment for the little attention Tagore’s real ideas received from the western audience.

A quiet, nocturnal Calcutta with its adda, debates, late night walks, theatres, and avenues of books in College street—“I had the wonderful sense that I had come to the right place on earth”—is delightfully narrated from a time when Sen was studying Economics and Mathematics at Presidency College. The intellectual ride swirls through cultures and places across history. It also brings forth a realisation of how the world changed in such a short time.

Readers more interested than I in the conceptions of economics and politics will find much to interest them. I couldn’t really comprehend why a memoir needed to establish such an in depth theoretical understanding of economics. I was more deeply immersed in the story of such an interesting life led by an accomplished person.

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COLLAGE: MAISHA SYEDA



Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema peels away in celebration after scoring his side's second goal which earned them a 5-4 win on aggregate over defending champions Chelsea in the quarterfinal second leg at Santiago Bernabeu in Madrid on Tuesday. (Bottom) Bayern Munich talisman Robert Lewandowski hangs his head as Villarreal players celebrate their aggregate win in Munich.

PHOTO: REUTERS/AFP

Ancelotti credits the ‘magic of the Bernabeu’

AGENCIES/AFP

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti has credited the ‘magic of the Bernabeu’ for his side’s Champions League comeback against Chelsea to reach the semi-finals on Tuesday night.

Real held a two-goal advantage from the first leg at Stamford Bridge but saw that disappear when goals from Mason Mount, Antonio Rudiger and Timo Werner turned the tie around and gave Chelsea the aggregate lead with only 15 minutes remaining.

But Rodrygo pulled back a stunning late goal to force extra-time, before Karim Benzema continued his best ever season by winning it in the added period.

“At no stage did I think that it was over, particularly because we were playing here at the Bernabeu. It’s difficult to put it into words, but this magic spurs you on,” Ancelotti reflected.

“It helped to give the whole team that energy boost to get through to the semi-finals...the magic of this stadium helps the players to never give in.”

Benzema’s tie-winning goal was his 38th of an increasingly spectacular season and his 12th in the Champions League alone after successive hat-tricks



in recent games.

The Frenchman has thrived at Real since taking over from Cristiano Ronaldo as the main man in 2018, with this season representing the most prolific of his career.

His previous record tally for a single season was 32 goals in all competitions and you couldn’t bet against him reaching 50 before 2021/22 is over.

Speaking ahead of the Chelsea game, Ancelotti didn’t hide away from how important the player is.

There were slight concerns that Benzema had suffered an injury as he appeared in discomfort towards the end of the game and seemed to be hobbling. But Ancelotti allayed fears.

“There’s nothing wrong with Benzema,” he confirmed.

‘Villarreal fuelled by Nagelsmann remark’

Villarreal forward Gerard Moreno said comments by Bayern Munich coach Julian Nagelsmann inspired the Spaniards to their shock 2-1 aggregate win over the German giants in the Champions League quarter-finals on Tuesday.

Leading 1-0 from the first leg, Villarreal snatched a 1-1 draw on the night and a semi-final place through Samuel Chukwueze’s 88th-minute goal.

“Tonight they (Bayern) made the mistake of not killing us off and we took advantage of that,” Moreno said.

On Monday, Nagelsmann said Villarreal had made a mistake by winning the first leg by a slender 1-0 margin “which allowed us to survive”.

“In the first leg we made the mistake of not finishing them off. All the comments about that served as motivation,” said Moreno, whose cross set up Chukwueze’s tie-winning strike.

“What this team has done is great.”

Robert Lewandowski had put Bayern ahead on the night to level the tie.

Unai Emery’s Villarreal had already knocked out Juventus in the last 16

following a stunning 3-0 win in Turin.

“It’s an extraordinary feeling, it was not easy for us. We are a small club, from a village, like that of Asterix and Obelix,” said Emery.

“We are moving forward step by step, we had a very difficult quarter-final.”

The Spaniards face either Benfica or Liverpool in the semi-finals. Jurgen Klopp’s Reds take a 3-1 lead into Wednesday’s second leg at Anfield.

“It’s unbelievable, it’s taken a lot of hard work,” said Villarreal captain Raul Albiol, the man of the match in Munich, who at 36 is two years older than Nagelsmann.

“Our victories are as a team. We have suffered a lot in both games, but to be in the semi-finals is great for Villarreal.

“We knew it was going to be a long 90 minutes and we were going to suffer a lot.

“We want more. We see ourselves as causing problems to all our opponents.”

Emery basked in the glory of a historic result for Villarreal in his 50th Champions League match as a coach.

“We took a lot of confidence from the first leg result, but we had to defend well and we tried to create our own chances – we created five and took the final one,” he said.

Clijsters retires for third time

REUTERS

Former world number one Kim Clijsters has retired from professional tennis, the 38-year-old said on Tuesday, bringing the curtain down on her career for probably the last time.

Clijsters, a four-times Grand Slam winner who retired twice in her career in 2007 and 2012, returned to action in February 2020 but did not win a single match and also had to undergo knee surgery in October that year.

She last played at Indian Wells in October last year and was knocked out in the opening round. Read full story

“I want to share with you that I have decided to no longer play official tournaments. I can’t wait to see what new adventures will cross my path,” the Belgian wrote on Instagram.

In an interview with the WTA website, Clijsters explained she had been busy settling down in New Jersey with her family.

“I still love to hit the ball. With my schedule three, four days was enough to keep my rhythm under control but definitely not good enough if I decided to play another tournament,” she said.

“Say, if I picked Australia, it’s three-four weeks. That’s just not possible at this stage in our family life. Life just sort of takes over, right?”

Clijsters ends her career with 41 singles titles and over \$24 million in prize money.



Years of hard work paying off for Ferrari

REUTERS, MILAN

Years of hard work are paying off for Ferrari with a stellar start to the Formula One season, company chairman John Elkann said on Wednesday.

Charles Leclerc has won two of the first three races, finishing second in the other, and has a 34-point lead in the championship.

Ferrari, who last won a title in 2008 and failed to win a race in 2020 and 2021, also lead the constructors’ standings by 39 points from champions Mercedes.

“We said two years ago that we had to work hard to get back to being competitive and the 2022 championship has got off to a truly thrilling start,” Elkann said at Ferrari’s annual shareholders’ meeting.

“Like all our tifosi (fans) around the world, I am delighted we are competing at the highest level,” said Elkann.

Age doesn’t matter: Mirajul

Fifteen-year-old striker Mirajul Islam impressed everyone with his goal-scoring ability in ongoing Bangladesh Championship League (BCL), finishing as the second-tier’s top goal-getter while representing BFF Elite Academy. His performances saw him earn a shot at top-flight football in the Bangladesh Premier League, with Mohammedan set to rope in Mirajul on loan after the Bangladesh Football Federation decided in principle to send the teenager to the Black & Whites for the rest of the season in exchange of Tk 10 lakh. The 10th-grader shared the tales of his journey and spoke about plans for the future with The Daily Star’s Anisur Rahman. The excerpts are below:

The Daily Star (DS): You started with the BFF Elite Academy in the BCL and are set to join Mohammedan in the coming days. How do you feel?

Mirajul Islam (MI): I just now learned that information from you. If it happens, it really is big news for me and I would be very happy. I will try to give my best for Mohammedan although I’m sure there will be a lot of challenges.

DS: You are the top-scorer of the BCL with 10 goals in 11 matches. Does striking goals come easy to you?

MI: No, it is not an easy task. I always try to improve in terms of scoring but nothing is easy. However, I really love to score goals and I feel really good after scoring. Scoring 10 goals in 11 matches was possible because of my teammates, who helped me a lot.

DS: How do you feel you match up against Mohammedan’s foreign recruits and experienced



players for a place in the playing eleven?

MI: I believe I can compete against them. Age doesn’t matter. Performances on the field are more important. I believe in myself and I believe I can secure a place in the starting eleven through my performances.

DS: Do you have experience of playing any position other than striker?

MI: From the beginning, I play as a striker. Before coming into the BFF Elite Academy, I played in the 3rd Division Football League for King Star in 2021 and hit 13 goals in probably 20 matches as we became runners-up in the league. I also participated in the 2018 Subrato Cup in India for BSKP and I hit seven goals.

DS: Can you tell us briefly about your football journey?

MI: In my childhood, my parents, especially my father, prevented me from playing football. However, my two elder brothers, who were also playing football in our village of Jhalakathi, inspired me to play and helped me develop as a footballer. After being admitted to the BKSP in 2017, my parents also inspired me. I joined the BFF Elite Academy from BKSP.

DS: What are your strengths and shortcomings?

MI: I can press well up front and I also have good accuracy with my shots. I am also good at dribbling, but need to improve in one-on-one situations. I also need to improve my heading in front of goal.

DS: What is your ultimate target in football?

MI: My target is to play for the national football team but I think that is still a ways off.



Bangladesh Test team’s captain Mominul Haque departs the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Wednesday morning following the arrival of the first batch of players from South Africa, where the team lost the two-match series 2-0. Talking to media present at the airport, Mominul said they have to learn from their mistakes while emphasising that he was the one making key decisions during the games.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Hriday Mondal voices concern over security Says he's getting threats

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Hriday Chandra Mondal, maths teacher of Binodpur Ramkumar High School in Munshiganj



Sadar, said he would not be able to continue the job if the government did not ensure his security.

He said this to a probe committee, formed by the education ministry, at the school yesterday.

He also told the committee that he and his family members were getting threats from various quarters. "I request the government to give me the opportunity to teach at any school in Dhaka so that I can continue teaching," he said.

Hriday said, "There is no guarantee that I will be able to continue teaching at this school. It's because my family members are being attacked. At night, they would kick on the door and window of my house."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 8



Workers putting the finishing touches on a temporary sculpture which will be part of the Mangal Shobhajatra today. After two years of scaled-back festivities due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the nation is geared up to celebrate Pahela Baishakh with traditional fervour. The photo was taken near Chhayanaut Cultural Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

KILLINGS BY SECURITY FORCES

Govt took few measures to probe those

Says US State Dept report

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh government has taken a few measures to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption, abuse and killing by security forces, said the US State Department in its annual human rights report.

The 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices launched by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Washington early yesterday made mentions of reports of widespread impunity for security force abuses and corruption in Bangladesh.

It said while the law provides for an independent judiciary, corruption and political interference has compromised the independence.

At a briefing at the American Centre, US embassy officials said the document, which portrays the human rights situation of 198 countries, is prepared based on reports from civil society organisations and media.

The report bears significance as the US imposed sanctions on Rab and seven of its current and former officials on human rights grounds in December last year.

The Biden Administration has found progress in Rab's human rights record since the sanction.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam said the report contains some misinformation collected

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WB rings alarm over reserve use for projects

Maintains growth projection of 6.4pc for FY22

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and DWAIPAYAN BARUA

The World Bank yesterday advised the government to reconsider its decision to dip into the foreign exchange reserves for development projects given the elevated balance of payment deficit and the need for exchange rate flexibility.

In March last year, the government formed the Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Fund with proceeds from the country's foreign exchange reserves – a first of its kind fund in the world.

Around the same time, the reserves were channelled to the Export Development Fund, whose size stands at \$7 billion.

The twin decisions were taken when the country had a large balance of payments (BoP) surplus on the back of a surge in remittance, said the Washington-based multilateral lender in its latest report, which was unveiled yesterday.

By the end of fiscal 2020-21, the BoP surplus swelled to \$9.3 billion.

But the situation reversed in fiscal 2021-22 as imports surged and official remittance inflows dropped.

As a result, the large BoP

"The use of reserves for non-monetary purposes such as investment project financing under the Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Fund and the expansion of the Export Development Fund should be reconsidered."

surplus turned into a deficit of \$1.8 billion six months later, according to the report styled "Bangladesh Development Update: Recovery and Resilience Amid Global Uncertainty".

In the context of an elevated

BoP deficit, vigilance and greater exchange rate flexibility are required to safeguard reserves.

"The use of reserves for non-monetary purposes such as investment project financing under the Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Fund and the expansion of the Export Development Fund should be reconsidered."

As of April 13, the country's foreign exchange reserves stand at \$44.3 billion, enough to cover six months' import bills, according to the Bangladesh Bank.

"The reserves are still large – that is a solid position to be in," said Hans Timmer, the WB's chief economist for the South Asia region, at the launch of the report.

But the reserves are being used to support the currency and development activities.

In the first half of the fiscal year, the BB sold \$2.5 billion of reserves to support the exchange rate.

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LOAN SCAM BB slaps credit card ban on Sikders

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Bangladesh Bank yesterday banned 10 members of Sikder family and two officials of Sikder Group from using international credit cards for two years as they took loans from National Bank Ltd beyond their credit card limit grossly violating the banking rules.

The lender gave them \$10.58 million (about Tk 91 crore) breaching the credit card limit set by the central bank.

They had spent the amount from 2017 to 2021 and each of them used several credit cards issued by NBL, according to a BB probe.

As per the rules, a Bangladeshi citizen cannot spend any more than \$12,000 [around Tk 10.34 lakh] in a year outside the country using either their credit card or cash. In the aforementioned years, the 12 individuals were legally allowed to spend \$720,000 (about Tk 6.20 crore) with their credit cards.

Of the 12 banned, Rick Haque Sikder and Ron Haque Sikder, sons of former NBL chairman Zainul Haque Sikder, are NBL directors.

The eight other members of the Sikder family are: Momtazul Haque, Dipu Haque Sikder, Lisa Fatema Haque, Monica Sikder Khan, Mandy Sikder, Zefri Sikder, Shon Haque Sikder and John Haque Sikder. The two executives of the Sikder Group are Syed Kamrul Islam and Varvara Zorina.

The central bank yesterday wrote to all lenders, including NBL, asking them not to issue any international credit cards to them.

Contacted, Md Serajul Islam, spokesperson

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2.3 million city residents to get cholera vaccine Campaign starts next month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 2.3 million people, aged one year and above, will get oral cholera vaccines from next month in five diarrhoea-prone areas in the capital.

"The campaign will be held twice in May and June. The dates will be announced later," Nazmul Islam, spokesperson of the health directorate, said during a virtual briefing yesterday.

Pregnant women will not be included in the campaign which will be held in Jatrabari, Dakshinkhan, Mirpur, Mohammadpur and Sabujbagh areas.

Asked why the campaign will not be held countrywide, Nazmul said they have not received enough vaccines for that.

"We have received the vaccines from the World Health Organization instead of Nigeria."

In 2020, the health directorate vaccinated 12 lakh people in Dhaka's six areas with the first dose of cholera vaccines. Due to the Covid-19 emergency, the second round of the campaign could not be held.

Meanwhile, Nazmul informed that four patients have died due to diarrhoea in Bangladesh during this year's outbreak since the second week of March.

This official number of fatalities in diarrhoeal disease is much lower than the data from the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease and Research (icddr,b).

According to icddr,b, five persons died while undergoing treatment so far among the 45,737 people who got admitted to the hospital between March 1 and March 12.

This year, there has been a record number of diarrhoea patients admitted to the icddr,b hospital.

The number of diarrhoea patients surpassed the 1,000-mark on March 16, for the first time in icddr,b's 60 years' journey.

Send home cash

Bankrupt Sri Lanka asks its citizens overseas

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka yesterday urged its citizens overseas to send home money to help pay for desperately needed food and fuel after announcing a default on its \$51 billion foreign debt.

The island nation is in the grip of its worst economic crisis since independence in 1948, with severe shortages of essential goods and regular blackouts causing widespread hardship.

Authorities are weathering intense public anger and spirited protests demanding the government's resignation ahead of negotiations for an International Monetary Fund bailout.

Central bank governor Nandalal Weerasinghe said he needed Sri Lankans abroad to "support the country at this crucial juncture by donating much needed foreign exchange".

His appeal came a day after the government announced it was suspending repayments on all external debt, which will free up money to replenish scant supplies of petrol, pharmaceuticals and other necessities.

Weerasinghe said he had set up bank accounts for donations in the United States, Britain and Germany and promised Sri Lankan expatriates the money would be spent where it was most needed.



Journalists gather as bodies are exhumed from a mass grave in the grounds of the St Andrew and Pyervozvannoho All Saints church in the Ukrainian town of Bucha, northwest of Kyiv yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
OF
ABDUL MATIN KHASRU M.P.
Senior Advocate and Former
Law Minister

You left us on this day. I don't know where and how you are but I remember you with sweetness and pangs. Wherever you are my prayers follow you all the time.

Kindly pray to Allah for his eternal peace.

Salima Sobhan Khasru
W/O Late Abdul Matin Khasru