



At the Bangla Motor intersection, a school van filled with children was spotted going the wrong way from Eskaton yesterday. Following the van driver's illegal manoeuvre, a rickshaw-puller does the same, riding closely behind him. This risky step not only puts their lives at stake, but also increases the chance of accidents on the busy road.

## Focus on region-based development

Says prime minister

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for region-based appropriate development planning in the country.

She said this while addressing the first meeting of Delta Governance Council, held at Gono Bhaban in Dhaka.

The premier said the government took "Delta Plan-2100" to secure the people of this delta and provide them with a better life.

She said it was a wrong decision to construct the bridge over Jamuna River having the length of only four-km unlike Padma Bridge, which was built keeping the proper length.

"I didn't let the Padma bridge be constructed smaller. We've constructed the bridge keeping buffer zones with the river. So, the bridge has become the longest one (in the country)," she said.

"But I think it was a wrong decision to reduce the length of Jamuna bridge to 4-kilometre. Since its design and plan were made earlier, we had nothing more to do there. I only could include the rail line in it," Hasina said.

She said the design of Padma bridge was

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Graft case against Bodi to continue

HC clears way for lower court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared way for the lower court concerned to run the trial proceedings of a corruption case filed against former Awami League lawmaker from Cox's Bazar-4 constituency Abdur Rahman Bodi.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo rejected a petition filed by Bodi seeking stay on the trial proceedings of the case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case with Double Mooring Police Station in Chattogram on December 17, 2007 against Bodi on charge of amassing wealth of Tk 66.7 lakh beyond known source of income, ACC's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

The case is now pending with the Court of Senior Special Metropolitan Sessions Judge in Chattogram.

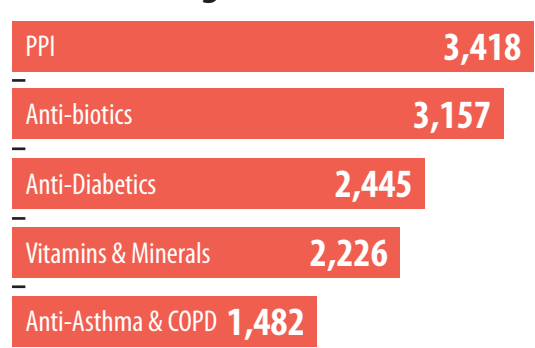
Senior lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan appeared for the Anti-Corruption Commission while Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik and Assistant Attorney General Anna Khanm Koly represented the state.

Lawyer Rafiqul Islam Sohel argued for Bodi during hearing of his stay petition.

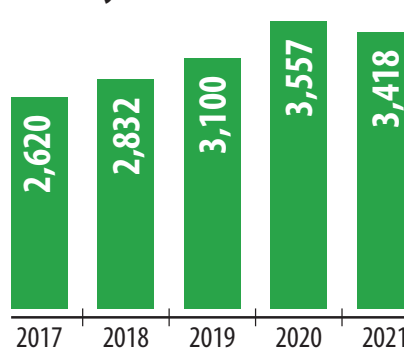
## OVERUSE OF GASTRIC MEDICINE

# An emerging concern

PPI sale in Bangladesh compared to other drugs in 2021 (Amount in Crore)



PPI sale in Bangladesh in last 5 years (PPI Sales in Crores)



MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Thirty-five-year-old Saiful Islam [not his real name] was suffering from diarrhoea for a long time. To get treated, he came from Madaripur to the gastroenterology department at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in February this year.

After a series of diagnoses, a board of physicians found a certain germ in his stool responsible for the diarrhoea – a side effect of taking Omeprazole for the previous three years.

"We just withdrew all medicines for him and he recovered," said Dr Razibul Alam, professor of BSMMU's gastroenterology department yesterday.

"This has become a common case for many patients. The main reason is taking anti-gastric medicine for a longer period," he added.

Doctors discuss many other side effects of taking anti-gastric medicines at a seminar titled "Overuse of PPI: A review of emerging concern" at the BSMMU campus yesterday.

They said Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPI) are the highest selling medicines in the country. These are being used indiscriminately and should be stopped immediately.

First introduced in 1989, the five main forms of PPIs are Omeprazole, Esomeprazole, Pantoprazole, Rabeprazole and Lansoprazole. Of those, Rabeprazole was banned by the

Directorate General of Drug Administration for its adverse effect earlier this month.

"We have to take note that not all the stomachaches are caused by gastric. Hence, PPIs should not be taken without proper reason," said Dr Razibul Alam during his keynote presentation.

The majority of people, as well as doctors, associate common problems like diarrhoea, constipation, and different kinds of aches with gastric and take or prescribe PPIs, which is not the right thing to do, he said.

"Intake of gastric medicines for more than eight weeks is excessive."

Dr Sharadindu Kanti Sinha, assistant professor of pharmacology, presented another keynote on the pharmacology of PPIs.

"Long-term intake of PPI medicines may cause nutritional deficiencies, including calcium and magnesium deficiencies, diarrhoea, and overgrowth of the intestinal organism," Dr Sharadindu Kanti Sinha told this correspondent following the seminar.

All of the observations regarding these adverse effects are based on different case studies conducted mainly abroad, he said.

Speaking as chief guest, Prof Sharfuddin Ahmed, vice chancellor of BSMMU, said, "If we can maintain a disciplined diet, we will not suffer from acidity and there will be no need

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Take measures to halt their entry to Bangladesh

Dhaka asks Delhi on Rohingyas

STAR REPORT

Dhaka has asked Delhi to take measures to halt entry of the Rohingyas from India happening in the last couple of weeks.

"We've sent a note verbale," Mashfee Binte Shams, secretary (east) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told UNB yesterday.

Earlier on Tuesday, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said a good number of Rohingyas are coming to Bangladesh from India through fenced areas in recent times, which he described as a matter of worry. He said those Rohingyas went to India in 2012.

Bangladesh is currently hosting about 1 million Rohingyas in Bangladesh, and more than 750,000 of them fled military attacks in 2017, which the US determined as genocide.

When Bangladesh is already facing multiple challenges including financial, environmental, security and diplomatic ones, the illegal entry of Rohingyas from India over the last three weeks triggered fresh concerns within Bangladesh.

Police and intelligence officials said many of the Rohingyas, who lived in different places in India, sneaked into Bangladesh with the help of brokers

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## BRIDGE OVER JAMUNA Railway inks deal with Japan-India joint venture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) yesterday signed a contract with a Japan-India joint venture firm for installing a signalling system and telecommunication equipment for the under-construction Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Railway Bridge over the Jamuna River.

Under the contract, the JV firm – Yashima and Co Ltd in Japan and G Satish Enterprise of India – will do the works within 28 months at a cost of Tk 47.71 crore.

Al Fattah Md Masudur Rahman, project director of the bridge project, and Norio Ikejima, authorised representative of the JV firm, were the signatories of the contract.

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujana was present at the contract signing ceremony at Rail Bhaban in the capital.

The firm, among others, will install a modern computer-based interlocking signalling system with a double line tokenless block between the Bangabandhu Bridge East and West stations.

Construction work on the bridge over the Jamuna started in August 2020, more than three and a half years after the government approved the project. The project costs have gone up to Tk 16,781 crore from Tk 9,734 crore. The current deadline is December 2025.

Till March, the project witnessed 40 percent physical progress. The 4.8km bridge will be built some 300 metres upstream of the Bangabandhu bridge, which has a single rail line.

Once built, the dual-gauge double-track bridge would be the largest dedicated rail bridge in the country.

The bridge would improve the capacity of Bangladesh Railway, with more trains operating between the capital and the western part of the country. It would also help reduce train delays, which are now very common, said officials.

PRAYER TIMING MAY 23



|        | Fazr | Zohr  | Asr  | Maghrib | Esha |
|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Azan   | 4:05 | 12:45 | 5:00 | 6:40    | 8:00 |
| Jamaat | 4:40 | 1:15  | 5:15 | 6:45    | 8:30 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## A renaissance man

Say speakers about Muhith

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former finance minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith was a politician who never patronised any "cadre" in politics and never violated law and order, said National Prof Shahla Khatun, Muhith's younger sister, yesterday.

She made the remarks while chairing a memorial programme in remembrance of the late minister.

Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation organised the event at Dhaka University's Prof Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium.

"Muhith earned respect everywhere he served. The only reason behind it was that he always thought about the people and worked for them," she added.

Dr Binayak Sen, director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said Muhith was kind of a "renaissance man" who also inspired others to achieve excellence in fine arts, music, literature and so on.

"Today's generation tends to approach 'nano-specialisation'. Muhith bhai was very different," he said.

Binayak said he was amazed to see

Muhith's detailed accounts of famine during the Pakistan rule in his resignation letter during the Liberation War.

"His contribution to the decentralisation of development was very important... he worked to make the country a welfare state. We may as well call him a social democrat."

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said, "We adore him as an elder brother, respect him as a teacher, and are overwhelmed with his conduct as a politician. His patriotism and love towards the people for advancing the country are replicable."

"We have criticised his role as a finance minister on multiple occasions but when we saw each other, those criticisms never surfaced. He rather showered our newspaper's work with praises."

Mahfuz Anam also said Muhith's initiative to turn the opinion of the US in favour of Bangladesh during the Liberation War was a necessary step at that time.

As a finance minister, he tried to allocate more to social welfare, including education, environment and health, but

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Speakers at a memorial event in remembrance of former finance minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, organised by Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation at Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5