

# At least 4 killed, scores hurt in Ctg depot fire

## STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed and more than 100 others, including police and firefighters, were injured in a fire and explosions at a private container depot in Sitakunda of Chattogram late last night.

As of filing this report at 2:45am, police and fire service personnel were trying to douse the flames and rescuing people and sending them to hospitals.

Several media outlets were putting the number of injured at nearly 300. The Daily Star, however, could not independently confirm the counts.

Civil surgeon of Chattogram, Mohammad Ilyas Chowdhury Hossain, urged all doctors and blood donors to be at the hospital immediately.

The fire broke out at BM Container Depot Ltd, a private inland container storage, in Shitalpur area by the

PHOTO ON PAGE 12

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



## HOW TO KILL RIVERS

Encroachment, dumping of waste and withdrawal of water

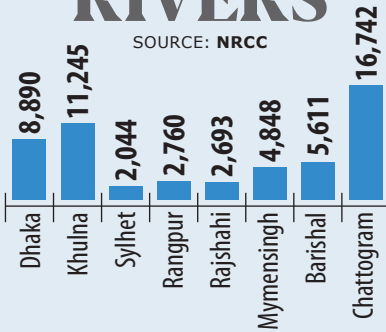
1963-2000:  
**115** rivers died

2000-2020:  
**43** rivers died

SOURCE: BANGLADESH DISASTER FORUM, NEWSPAPER REPORTS

## STRUCTURES ON RIVERS

SOURCE: NRCC



# Gas prices set to rise by 17-20pc

## BERC may announce today

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is set to increase the gas prices by 17-20 percent at the consumer level, according to Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission sources.

BERC will announce the new rates of natural gas at a virtual press conference at 3:00pm today, said a BERC press release issued yesterday.

A BERC official, preferring not to be named, said the commission was going to increase the prices by 17-20 percent on average. They added the BERC had recently sent a proposal to the prime minister to that end.

Homes with single burner stoves could be paying Tk 980-1,050 a month and those with double burner stoves Tk 1,080 to Tk 1,100. They now pay Tk 925 and Tk 975.

In January, state-owned gas distribution companies asked the BERC for an average of 117 percent hike in prices. Apart from this, the state-owned Bangladesh Oil, Gas, and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla) also placed a separate proposal asking to increase the bulk price of natural gas.

The BERC held a public hearing on the proposals from March 21 to 24.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7



## SAVING RIVERS

# Ensure more power to river commission

Speakers urge govt at Star roundtable

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political commitment, proper enforcement of laws and empowerment of the conservation commission might be able to save the rivers, speakers told a roundtable discussion yesterday.

The rivers would not have been subjected to such mindless grabbing and encroachment had everyone recognised them as an integral part of development and wellbeing, said Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of the parliamentary committee on environment ministry.

It should be recognised that a river is not just a waterbody, he told the discussion on Rivers and Our Future organised by The Daily Star at its office in the capital.

Muzibur Rahman Howlader, former chairman of National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), said the government agencies in charge of river conservation do very little to save the rivers.

"I visited 30 districts, prepared a list of grabbers in which the names

of powerful individuals appeared, and made many recommendations. All went unheard. Those in charge of conservation of rivers must be held accountable, if we really want to save the rivers," he said, adding that the top bureaucrats were reluctant to take action.

He then urged the government to increase institutional capacity and empower the NRCC.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said many voices were raised and many media outlets wrote a lot to save the rivers, but no significant change was made.

"I was ecstatic... when High Court issued the directive to demarcate the rivers, thinking it was an epoch-making directive for the conservation of rivers. In reality, we saw it appeared as a curse instead of a blessing as the demarcation pillar legitimised the grabbing," he said.

Asif Nazrul, professor of law at Dhaka University, said a significant legal development took place over the years: the river commission was

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

## #OnlyOneEarth

### LET'S TAKE CARE OF IT

# Atmospheric CO2 level hits new high

AFP, Washington

Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in May were 50 percent higher than during the pre-industrial era, reaching levels not seen on Earth for about four million years, the main US climate agency said on Friday.

Global warming caused by humans, particularly through the production of electricity using fossil fuels, transport, the production of cement, or even deforestation, is responsible for the new high, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said.

May is usually the month with the highest carbon dioxide levels each year.

In May 2022, the threshold of 420 parts per million (ppm) – a unit of measurement used to quantify pollution in the atmosphere – was crossed.

In May 2021, the rate was 419 ppm, and in 2020, 417 ppm.

The measurements are taken at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii, ideally located high on a volcano, which allows it to escape

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7



"I visited 30 districts, prepared a list of grabbers in which the names of powerful individuals appeared, and made many recommendations. All went unheard."

Ex-NRCC chairman Muzibur Rahman Howlader



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ড. মোবারক আহমদ খান-এর পরামর্শে,  
TNO (Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research) এবং  
Rodenburg Biopolymers-এর  
কারিগরি সহযোগিতায় তৈরি  
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অথবা স্ক্যান করুন

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## JS budget session begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The budget session, which will also be the 18th session of the 11th parliament, will begin today.

This year, the session will not be curtailed as in the previous two years for the pandemic, and there will not be any restrictions on the entry of officials and employees into the parliament.

President M Abdul Hamid on May 18 convened the session, exercising the power bestowed upon him as per Article 72 (1) of the Constitution.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal will place the budget for fiscal 2022-23 on June 9, according to the sources at the parliament secretariat.

The initial size of the budget is set at Tk 677,864 crore and the target for revenue income is Tk 431,657 crore, Kamal recently told reporters.

Media personnel will also be allowed to enter and cover the Parliament session in person.

The 17th session of parliament was prorogued on April 9.

## 4 killed in Narsingdi as train hits truck

A CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Four people were killed and another was injured as a small truck collided with a train in Hasnabad area in Narsingdi's Raipura upazila around 12:00 noon yesterday.

The dead are Shahin Alam Khan, 18, Sujath Mia, 25, and Anisur Rahman, 24, all residents of Mayezpara village in Netrakona's Purbodhala upazila, and Anuwarul Islam, 27, of Tarakandi in Mymensingh.

Sub-inspector Emayedul Jahedi, in charge of Narsingdi Railway Police Outpost, said Sylhet-bound Jayantika Express had hit the small truck.

As the train hit the truck, two died on the spot and another breathed his last on the way to the hospital.

Anuwarul died when he was being taken to Dhaka for better treatment.

The bodies were sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Sub-inspector Abdul Kadir of Amirgonj Railway Police Outpost said the accident happened at an illegal level crossing.



Speakers at the "Roundtable discussion on rivers and our future" held at The Daily Star centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Ukraine fights back in Severodonetsk

Claims Russian forces suffering huge losses; efforts on to resume export grain from Ukraine

AGENCIES

Ukraine yesterday said its forces were managing to push back against Russian troops in fierce fighting in Severodonetsk despite Russia "throwing all its power" into capturing the strategic eastern city.

Lugansk regional governor Sergiy Gaiday said in an interview posted on his official social media that the invading forces had captured most of the city "but now our military have moved them".

"Right now, our soldiers have pushed them back, they (the Russians) are suffering huge casualties," Gaiday said in a live TV broadcast yesterday.

"The Russian army, as we understand, is throwing all its efforts, all its reserves in that (Severodonetsk) direction," he said. "Russians are blowing up bridges, so we could not bring in reinforcements to our boys in Severodonetsk."

Severodonetsk is the largest city still in Ukrainian hands in the Lugansk region, where Russian forces have been making gradual advances in recent weeks.

Thousands of people have been killed, millions sent fleeing and towns turned into rubble since President Vladimir Putin ordered Russian troops into Ukraine 101 days ago.

The advance of Russian forces has been slowed by stiff Ukrainian resistance, repelling them from around the capital Kyiv and forcing Moscow to focus on capturing the east.

The press service of Ukraine's presidential office yesterday said

**The press service of Ukraine's presidential office yesterday said Russian attacks killed four civilians in the Lugansk region as a whole.**

Russian attacks killed four civilians in the Lugansk region as a whole. The situation in Lysychansk - Severodonetsk's twin city, which sits just across a river - looked increasingly dire.

About 60 percent of infrastructure and housing had been destroyed, while internet, mobile networks and gas services had been knocked out, said its mayor Oleksandr Zaika.

In the city of Sloviansk, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) from Severodonetsk, the mayor has urged residents to evacuate in the face of intense bombardment, with water and

electricity cut off.

Ukraine also reported two victims from a missile strike on the port of Odessa in the southwest, without specifying if they were dead or injured.

Russia's defence ministry said it had struck a "deployment point for foreign mercenaries" in the village of Dachne in the Odessa region.

It also claimed a missile strike in the northeastern Sumy region in a place where it said Ukrainian soldiers were receiving training from foreign instructors on using howitzers.

Russian troops now occupy a fifth of Ukraine's territory and Moscow has imposed a blockade on its Black Sea ports.

But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was defiant on Friday.

"Victory will be ours," he said in a video speech marking the 100th day of the war.

Later, in his nightly address, he dismissed the Russian army as being reduced to "war crimes, shame and hatred" after failing military objectives.

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said "certain results have been achieved", pointing to the "liberation" of some areas from what he called the "pro-Nazi armed forces of Ukraine".

## 7 held for cutting off teacher's wrist

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Rab yesterday arrested seven men for their alleged involvement in cutting off the wrist of a teacher in Kushtia.

Squadron Leader Mohammad Ilias Khan, company commander of Rab-12, said they were arrested from different areas in the district on Friday night.

Three rounds of ammunition, a magazine and a foreign pistol were recovered from the accused.

On Tuesday, the right wrist of Tofazzal Hossain, assistant professor of the Department of Economics at Kumarkhali's Banshgram College, was severed.

A case was filed in this connection.

## Physically challenged girl raped in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A physically challenged minor girl was raped allegedly by a teenage boy in Patuakhali's Baufal upazila on Friday.

According to locals, the victim shared her experience with her mother after the incident.

On information, locals placed four suspects in front of her and she identified the teenage boy.

Members of Baufal Police Station later went to the spot and detained the accused.

The victim was sent to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital for medical tests and treatment, said Al Mamun, OC of the police station.

## Robber arrested in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Police yesterday arrested an alleged robber from Dakshin Satalari village in Bagerhat's Morrelgonj upazila.

The arrestee Kabir Bayati, 48, has 17 cases, including three related to robbery, filed against him, said police.

He was arrested in a case filed over the robbery at the house of Mahibul Haque, retired secretary of the Ministry of Aviation and Tourism, in Fakirhat upazila's Lakhpur area.

KM Ariful Haque, superintendent of the district police, said Kabir would be placed before a court with a remand appeal.

## AL expels controversial Selim Khan

UNB, Chandpur

Widely discussed Awami League leader and Laxmipur union chairman Selim Khan has been expelled from the party.

Laxmipur union Awami League at an extended meeting removed the criticized chairman, who excavated sands illegally from the Meghna river, from his post yesterday.

Nasir Uddin Ahmad, president of Laxmipur union Awami League, confirmed.

Party sources said Selim Khan has been expelled from the party permanently for tarnishing the image of the party.

Earlier on May 29, the Appellate Division cancelled the High Court judgement allowing Selim Khan to extract sand from the Meghna River in Chandpur.

## Sri Lanka in diplomatic spat over confiscated Russian plane

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's main airport yesterday denied the island nation's government was behind a decision to detain an Aeroflot aircraft, after Russia lodged a diplomatic protest over the move.

The Airbus A330 was seized at the Bandaranaike International Airport on Thursday, the same day it arrived from Moscow, after a directive from a court in the capital Colombo.

Flight SU289 was about to return to the Russian capital with 191 passengers and 13 crew aboard.

Sri Lanka's top envoy was summoned to the Russian foreign ministry on Friday to receive a "resolute protest" over the detention, Russian state news agency TASS reported.

But Airport and Aviation Services, which runs Bandaranaike airport, said in a statement the dispute was "purely of a commercial nature" and should not be subject to state involvement.

The plane was stopped on the orders of Colombo Commercial Court in response to a commercial dispute filing by Celestial Aviation Trading 10 Limited of Ireland.

## At least 4 killed

FROM PAGE 1  
Dhaka Chattogram highway around 10:00pm.

Faruk Hossain Sikdar, assistant director of Fire Service Chattogram Headquarters, said the cause of the blaze could not yet be confirmed.

It quickly spread among containers stored there.

"While the firefighters were working, suddenly there was a massive explosion leading to the casualties. At least seven firefighters were injured in the blast," he added.

At least 16 fire engines were engaged.

Sub-Inspector Nurul Islam Ashek, in charge of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) Police Outpost, told The Daily Star around 12:30am, "We are receiving many injured, including police, fire service personnel and locals."

Inspector Sumon Bonik of the police outpost at CMCH said at least seven

policemen were injured. Locals said the shockwaves from explosions were felt from three kilometres away. Traffic on the Dhaka Chattogram highway was halted.

"We have sent injured firefighters to Combined Military Hospital Chattogram," Faruk Hossain Shikder, assistant director of Bangladesh Fire Brigade Chattogram, said over the phone.

"I cannot say the number of other injured people. But there are many injured," he said.

Our staff Correspondent from the spot said around 200 containers were on fire around 2:00am. Firefighters were struggling to douse the flames.

"Most of those injured were depot workers and officials of C&F agencies as they mostly work at night, he said, quoting locals.

Bangladesh Inland Container

Depots

Association Secretary Ruhul Amin Sikder said an export-oriented container loaded with hydrogen peroxide exploded around 9:30pm.

He suspected that the container might have been exposed to high temperatures. There were 16 to 18 such containers loaded with the chemical, said Sikder.

Hydrogen peroxide itself is not flammable but it can accelerate flames under certain circumstances.

This paper tried to reach the depot's Deputy Managing Director Nurul Akhter over the phone but failed to reach him.

Sikder said he had heard that Nurul Akhter also got hurt.

Our staff correspondents in Chattogram FM Mizanur Rahaman, Arun Bikash Dey, Mohammad Suman, Shimul Nazrul, and Dwaipayan Barua contributed to this report.]

## Ensure more power

FROM PAGE 1  
The court declared the river as a living entity. "This sounds soothing. But the actual situation did not change."

The Department of Environment (DoE) has been given enormous power without accountability, he said, adding that the department's officials often feel scared to take actions as the ones who crackdown on polluters during caretaker government in 2007 were later made officer on special duty.

Malik Fida A Khan, member of the NRCC, recommended that the issue of river pollution be included in text books to create awareness among children.

Former Buet professor Mujibur Rahman said international negotiation was required to lower the rate of siltation in different

rivers because the issue involves siltation upstream. Deforestation and lack of vegetation on the river banks are among the main reasons behind increased siltation, he said.

Since Bangladesh lies in a Delta with its high population density, the country can experience a "humanitarian catastrophe" if it fails to save the rivers, said Sharif Jamil, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon.

Sharmeen Murshid, chief executive officer of Brotee, said political parties have to show their ideological visions to save the country's rivers.

Besides, the NRCC has to play a proactive role in this regard, she said.

Sheikh Rokon, secretary general of Riverine People, said the economic value of rivers

## Iran supreme leader accuses 'enemy' of trying to use protests

AFP, Tehran

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday accused the "enemy", a reference mainly to the United States, of seeking to use protests to weaken the Islamic republic.

In the past few weeks, demonstrations against the rising cost of living and corruption have occurred in several Iranian cities.

"Today the enemy counts on popular demonstrations to strike the Islamic system," Khamenei said during a televised address.

The May 23 collapse of a building under construction in the southwestern city of Abadan has sparked protests demanding that "incompetent officials" be executed after the tragedy killed at least 37 people.

## Gas prices set to rise

FROM PAGE 1  
Its technical evaluation committee had recommended a 20 percent price hike on average at the hearing. But a consumer rights organisations placed alternate options to hiking the price.

The Consumers Association of Bangladesh

and some business organisations, including the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries, urged the government not to hike the prices when people are struggling with inflation.

The price of natural gas was last increased in July 2019.

## Atmospheric

FROM PAGE 1  
the possible influence of local pollution.

Before the Industrial Revolution, levels of CO2 held steady at around 280 ppm, a level maintained for approximately 6,000 years of human civilization that preceded industrialization, according to NOAA.

The level now is comparable to what it was between 4.1 and 4.5 million years ago, when CO2 levels were near or above 400 ppm, the agency said in a statement.

At that time, sea levels were between five and 25 meters higher than now, high enough to submerge many of today's major cities. Large forests also occupied parts of the Arctic, according to studies.

CO2 is a greenhouse gas that traps heat, gradually causing global warming. It remains in the atmosphere and oceans for thousands of years.

Its warming effect is already causing dramatic consequences, noted NOAA, including the multiplication of heat waves, droughts, fires or floods.

"Carbon dioxide is at

levels our species has never experienced before - this is not new," said Pieter Tans, a scientist with the Global Monitoring Laboratory.

"We have known about this for half a century, and have failed to do anything meaningful about it. What's it going to take for us to wake up?"

## Oman and Iran ink deals on oil field, gas pipelines: official

AFP, Muscat

Oman and Iran signed deals to develop two gas pipelines and an oil field along their maritime border, Oman's energy minister said yesterday, less than two weeks after Iran's president visited the sultanate.

The visit by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on May 23 came amid stalled international talks to revive a deal on Tehran's nuclear programme, leaving the Islamic republic under sanctions.



## RMG workers, police clash in Mirpur

Demanding pay hike amid rising prices of daily essentials, workers block roads for hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment workers from several factories clashed with police yesterday, after the workers blocked roads in different parts of the capital's Mirpur, demanding a pay hike, as prices of daily essentials have shot up.

The protesters said wages must be raised or prices of all commodities must be reduced.

Witnesses said the workers started protesting at Mirpur-13 sporadically around 11:00am, halting vehicular movement. The protest continued till 2:30pm there.

After lunch, the protesters moved to Mirpur-10 intersection, where workers of other factories joined. They all then blocked roads at Mirpur-10, Mirpur-13, Mirpur-14, Pallabi, and Mirpur Indoor Stadium area, Kafrul Police Inspector (Investigation) Kamrul Islam told The Daily Star.

The workers reportedly vandalised a bus of Border Guard Bangladesh in front of the stadium. Two police motorbikes were set on fire. Some parts of the stadium were also damaged, police said.

Later, police tried to stop the agitated workers, and at one point, locked into clashes around 5:00pm. Police fired tear gas, while workers threw brick bats, witnesses said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



What started out as sporadic demonstrations ended in a clash between garment workers and police. The workers blocked several roads in Mirpur yesterday, demanding a pay hike to cope up with increasing commodity prices. This ultimately led to workers throwing brick-bats and police lobbing tear-gas shells at each other. During the clash, the protesters vandalised multiple vehicles. At least 16 were detained.

PHOTO: SHAHEEN MOLLAH

## Hajj flights begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hajj flights carrying pilgrims will start from this morning.

Carrying 419 pilgrims, the maiden hajj flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines is scheduled to leave Dhaka airport around 9:00am, Jahid Hossain, director of sales and marketing at Biman, told The Daily Star.

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbub Ali and State Minister for Religious Affairs Md Faridul Haque Khan will see the pilgrims off at the airport.

However, two other airlines of Saudi Arabia -- Saudia and Flynas -- will start operating hajj flight on June 10, said M Shahadat Hossain Taslim, president of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh.

An intended pilgrim will have to pay a minimum of Tk 5,22,744 for performing hajj under private agencies, meaning that they will have to pay Tk 1,68,150 more than the amount in 2020.

## Need more women behind the wheel

Says Quader at certificate-giving event of Brac driving school

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Roads Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday directed the authorities concerned to work with "serious commitment" so that female drivers can be recruited for government jobs.

The minister also reiterated that the huge development in road transport sector will not be fruitful unless discipline in the sector is restored.

He was speaking at a programme organised by Brac to hand over certificates to 10 female drivers who graduated from Brac driving school.

Quader said female drivers are cautious and patient. They drive vehicles following all traffic rules, and so accidents involving vehicles operated by female drivers are rare.

"Roads are relatively safer when vehicles are driven by women," he said.

The minister said BRTC sought drivers for 102 posts, but only three female drivers applied, and two of them were recruited.

BRTC sources, however, said although they give priority to female drivers, most do not have a heavy-vehicle licence, and so, they cannot be recruited to operate buses or trucks.

At one point of his speech, Quader also asked Nur Mohammad Mazumder, chairman of BRTA, why female drivers could not be recruited for government jobs.

When the BRTA chairman said they have already

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

PRAYER  
TIMING  
JUNE 5



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-05	12-45	5-00	6-45	8-15
Jamaat	4-40	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Polls won't be credible without BNP

Ex-CEC Nurul Huda tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former chief election commissioner KM Nurul Huda yesterday said the next parliamentary election will not be credible if BNP does not participate.

He mentioned that it is the ruling party's responsibility to ensure BNP's participation.

Nurul made these comments at a shadow youth parliament titled "Credible election is possible under the current election commission", organised by Debate for Democracy.

The former CEC was the chief guest of the event, held at the capital's BFDC auditorium.

About the ongoing debate over using electronic voting machines (EVMs) in the next election, Nurul reiterated his approval for using them.

He said, "Considering Bangladesh's political practices, I think we should use EVMs for at least the next 20 years. We have seen how people used to hijack ballot boxes and cast fake votes. There is no scope for such malpractices with EVM."

In response to a question about BNP's participation, Nurul said, "I think if BNP does not participate in the next election, the polls will not be



**The ruling party should take initiatives to resolve conflicts and disputes with other political parties and ensure their participation in the polls. The election commission should not intervene in this matter.**

NURUL HUDA  
Former CEC

credible. BNP is a very big and powerful political party."

He added, "The ruling party has to take the responsibility to ensure BNP's participation."

During his speech, Nurul said, "The ruling party should take initiatives to resolve conflicts and disputes with other parties and ensure their participation in the polls. The election commission should not intervene in this matter."

He also stated that the biggest regret of his tenure as CEC is that in many places, 100 percent votes were cast, and many candidates won uncontested.

The former commissioner also admitted that the election commission has to face challenges to organise polls under a partisan government.

He said, "There are challenges to hold polls under a partisan government. But we can overcome these challenges if we can ensure that people will come to the polling stations freely, without any fear and intimidation."

He suggested CCTV surveillance at polling centres to ensure transparency.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Abdul Momen asked his US counterpart Antony Blinken to bring BNP to the election process.

At a meeting of Awami League Central Working Committee, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the AL chief, said that the government will make all-out efforts to ensure BNP's participation in the next parliamentary election.

## 'Help us soar' Private airlines urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh won't be able to become a regional aviation hub without an effective aviation sector, said top bosses of the country's air operators and aviation experts yesterday.

They were addressing a seminar titled "Prospect of Bangladesh as a regional aviation hub" at a city hotel, organised by Bangladesh Monitor, a weekly magazine on aviation and tourism.

Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Maifur Rahman presented the keynote in the seminar.

Md Abdullah Al Mamun, US-Bangla Airlines managing director; Mofizur Rahman, managing director, Novoair; Zahid Hossain, Biman Bangladesh Airlines' director, administration and human resources, marketing and sales; and Wing Com ATM Nazrul Islam, managing director, United Airways Bangladesh, among others, were present.

The participants discussed the existing hurdles and opportunities regarding the development of Bangladesh's aviation sector, and how to harness the potential in establishing Bangladesh as a regional aviation hub.

Novoair chief Mofizur said before 2009, number of passengers in the domestic sector was only 3 lakh, while the figure increased to 30 lakh in 2019.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Effective aviation sector for country to become a regional hub
- Lower jet fuel price, duty and tax on spare parts
- Form independent 'Bangladesh Airport Authority'
- Remove inequality between Biman, pvt airlines



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Udichi forms new committee STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new committee of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi has recently been formed with Prof Badiur Rahman, Amit Ranjan Dey being selected as president, general secretary respectively.

Help us soar

FROM PAGE 3 He said such growth is due to the contribution of private airlines. "But due to various reasons, the country's private airlines couldn't stand on solid ground. High rate of jet fuel, obstacles in importing spare parts, excessive duty and tax on different parts, are among some key

reasons behind it," he said. Uneven competition between Biman and private airlines and undue favour to the national airline by the government are also behind this, he said.

an independent "Airport Authority" to ensure better services. Portraying the sorry state of service at the airport's immigration, the US Bangla MD said, "We need dedicated immigration police."

The Novoair MD cited examples of closing down of GMG, United and Regent Airlines. He demanded formation of

RMG workers, police

FROM PAGE 3 Workers had previously staged a protest on Thursday, with the same demands. Mohammad Mamun (40), who works at a factory in Mirpur, said he and his wife both work at garment factories, but now, they are struggling to bear

daily costs of the family. "I've been working at a garment factory since 1998. My wife has been working as a helper since 2016. We were doing fine," Mamun said. "But for the last two months, I couldn't send money to my parents in Madaripur. I'm struggling to bear the education cost of my two children. Our salaries are not covering all the expenses."

Metropolitan Police, told this newspaper that they have detained 16 people in connection with the violence and vandalism. They are now being interrogated.

Contacted, BGMEA senior vice president Shahidullah Azim said while he is aware about the protest and demands, it will not be possible to increase wages, due to the ongoing global crisis. He said the incident was instigated by an influential quarter.

Prof Munir Ul Islam passes away

CITY DESK

Munir Ul Islam, former professor of chemistry department at Chittagong University, passed away at the National Heart Foundation in Mirpur, Dhaka on May 15. He was 82, said a press release.



Prof Islam was at the university for 21 years and retired in 2007. He also worked in Buet, Dhaka; Imperial College London, UK; and King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He left behind his wife Nazneen Akhter Islam, sons Muhi, Munim and daughters Humaira and Kaniza and son-in-law Abir.

Need more

FROM PAGE 3

approached the public administration ministry, and the minister said they will talk to the state minister in this regard. "If necessary, I will talk with the prime minister."

Ahmed Najmul Hussain, director of Brac's road safety programme, recommended to recruit 10 percent women drivers for government jobs and a separate BRTA counter for women seeking driving licence.

Mercy Miyan Tembon, the World Bank's country director to Bangladesh and Bhutan, and Brac executive director Asif Saleh, among others, spoke at the event.

Case FROM PAGE 5 but they didn't listen to both of us," said his wife Zinnatun Nesa. The next morning, Sardar's relatives located the actual accused at a village with the same name in Ganipur, a neighbouring union.

Upon finding the fugitive, police released Sardar around 3:00pm on the same day. "The two persons have the same name; their fathers and villages have the same name too. But the names of their mothers and unions are different," the officer said.

Contacted, Ganipur Union Parishad Chairman Moniruzzaman said he has heard about the matter.

"I also know about the case against Ganipur's Razzak," he said, adding that Razzak is accused in a case filed by his wife, under the Woman Repression Prevention Act. When Sardar's relatives went to the chairman, he helped them locate the accused.

Mostaq Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Bagmara Police Station, said, "A misunderstanding occurred while identifying the person."

Making

FROM PAGE 5

Khedachara village of Matiranga upazila. He has set up a clinic, a pharmacy and a library for villagers. Dirathi Tripura, a local health worker engaged with the clinic, said primary healthcare was beyond the reach of locals before the clinic was set up.

But his work was not just limited to that.

"As alternative means of income, other than working in the forest, were very few, I imparted vocational training to locals, particularly women, and provided them with sewing machines," he said. Russel has also launched a campaign to help women suffering from reproductive health issues and struggling with menstrual hygiene.

"Eight months ago, I started training young girls on making reusable sanitary napkins. A team of 14 can now produce and distribute them among some 500 women of seven villages," said Russel.

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Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

GD- 1153

Sd/ (Md. Abul Kalam) Deputy General Manager

Public Notice In the Court of Learned Joint District Judge Court No. 1, Dhaka Title Suit No. 210 of 2022 Ferdouse Kamal Ahmed and another

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It's a threat to global security  
Momen on climate-induced displacement

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Climate-induced displacement could lead to a global security risk in today's interconnected world, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has said, calling for the international community to share the burden of climate migrants' rehabilitation.

He was speaking at a roundtable on "Environment of Peace: Securing a just and peaceful transition in a new era of risk", organised by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on the sidelines of the Stockholm+50 international meeting in Sweden on Friday.

'We want eco-friendly budget'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Green activists yesterday demanded adequate allocation of budget for sustainable development of Mongla, and protection of the Sundarbans and coastal areas.

Bapa, Waterkeepers Bangladesh and Pashur River Water Keeper raised the demand at a human chain in Mongla.

The speakers said crisis of drinking water in coastal areas is getting acute day by day. Climate change has led to increased salinity, disease, river erosion, and cyclone surge. Therefore, Coastal Development Board should be formed with special allocation in the national budget to deal with the crisis.

# Making a difference where it matters

A conservationist's relentless fight for wildlife, healthcare in CHT

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

When wildlife in Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) is facing the enormous threat of extinction amid massive deforestation, a conservationist has set an example by protecting wildlife sanctuaries by engaging with the community.

Taking the small community on board, he has ensured that wild animals can safely sprawl across the four-square-kilometre radius surrounding the locality.

A career designer at USI Limited Company based in England, 45-year-old Mahfuz Russel returned home from Manchester six years ago, leaving behind his secure job. Since then, he has been working relentlessly to save wildlife.

During his days in Manchester, Russel used to explore the remote countryside and forests of Europe. He even lived several months with the indigenous community in the Amazon and with the African Maasai tribe.



protecting the biodiversity," he added.

The group also holds awareness campaigns twice a month in the village, with occasional participation by the forest department to keep the villagers away from hunting and logging.

Yousuf Ali (45), a resident of Purbo Khedachara, is one of the volunteers. Yousuf used to constantly worry about his chickens, as Indian large civets used to prey upon them. "But for the last three years, the number of attacks by the civets declined dramatically, as now the carnivores get enough food inside the forest," he said.

According to Yousuf, this has been made possible ever since locals stopped hunting.

"We never thought putting an end to the hunting would bring such positive results. We used to hunt junglefowl and other birds. The tactic was terrible. Sometimes, hunters used to set a part of the forest on fire to lead the animals to the net-trap they set up," Yousuf shared. He, however, mentioned that such brutality has declined to a great extent with the introduction of conservation.

"We are now keeping a watch on the forest, seizing snares and rescuing wildlife from those who secretly try to hunt them still," he added.

ASM Jahir Uddin Akon, director of the Wildlife Crime Control Unit of the Forest Department, also lauded Russel's initiative.

"This is an outstanding initiative. CHT was once enriched with wildlife. But due to indiscriminate hunting and poaching, the situation kept deteriorating," said the director.

"We will support the initiative so that it can set an example when it comes to conservation," he added. Not only that, Russel has also been instrumental in providing basic healthcare facilities in Purbo

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

"After I came back to Bangladesh, I took some time off and roamed the country on my bicycle," he said.

"When I first came to the area [Khagrachhari], I saw massive deforestation and wild animals being killed," said Russel. "I was quite shaken by that and decided to do something about it."

"Members of the community used to hunt rare wild animals. Now, they have a volunteer group saving these very animals from poachers, while also creating awareness about their importance in

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When I first came to the area, I saw massive deforestation and wild animals being killed. I was quite shaken by that and decided to do something about it.

Mahfuz Russel

Padma Bridge to be under CCTV watch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

To ensure robust security, the entire Padma Bridge will be under CCTV surveillance. It will be monitored by cameras all the time.

Besides, according to the rules, vehicles cannot be stopped on the bridge, and pedestrian movement is not allowed. Legal action will be taken against anyone who damages any part of the bridge.

An engineer, seeking anonymity, said the entire bridge will be monitored by cameras connected to the internet. So, authorities will be able to notice if anyone stops their car or commits criminal acts.

Bangladesh Bridge Authority Chief Engineer Kazi Md Ferdous said cameras will be installed across the bridge, and audio devices will be added.

When willpower conquers physical restrictions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Captain Kanij Fatema, who was paralysed in an accident during her training at Bangladesh Military Academy on September 18, 2012, has been promoted to the rank of major.

Army chief Gen SM Shafiqul Islam Ahmed in presence of the formation commanders elevated her to the title yesterday at an event at Dhaka Cantonment Army Multipurpose Complex.

Fatema's spine broke due to the accident, according to a press release issued by ISPR.

However, Fatema, who joined the army in 2011, was determined to serve the country even after the accident.

Army had awarded her commission with long-term 69 BMA course, under special consideration for her indomitable spirit in 2013, adds the release. Her physical restrictions have succumbed to her willpower. This honour by army will always be exemplary in history for the progress of the country's women, the release added.



PHOTO: ISPR

## Case of mistaken identity

Man with same name as fugitive's suffers in custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Without committing a crime, a man was kept in police custody for about half a day in Rajshahi's Bagmara upazila.

Abdur Razzak Sardar (53) was detained on early Friday, as police made a mistake while matching names to catch a fugitive.

Sardar was released after police confirmed that he was not the accused, said Sunil Kumar Ghosh, in-charge of Bhagnadi investigation centre under Bagmara Police Station. "In fact, he helped us locate the fugitive."

On that day, police came to Sardar's house, located at Bajekola village of Jogipara union, with an arrest warrant and took him with them.

"We tried to tell them something was wrong,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Heaven's Light is our Guide

**Rajshahi University of Engineering & Technology**

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Memo No. Pro/RUET/e-Tender/GOB/67/2021-2022/4157 Date: 04/06/2022

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e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under GOB fund of Rajshahi University of Engineering & Technology (RUET).

SL. No.	Tender ID	Name of works	Tender document last selling time and date	Tender closing & opening time and date
1	707266	Re-construction works of Drainage System at RUET, Rajshahi. Package No. RUET/GOB/W/2021-2022/22	4.00pm on 20/06/2022	11.00am on 21/06/2022

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Engr. Md. Shahadot Hossain  
Chief Engineer  
RUET, Rajshahi

GD-1154

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## We must not humiliate Russia

### Urges Macron, says Putin making 'historic mistake'

REUTERS, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron said it is vital that Russia is not humiliated so that when the fighting stops in Ukraine a diplomatic solution can be found, adding that he believed Paris would play a mediating role to end the conflict.

Macron has sought to maintain a dialogue with Russian President Vladimir Putin since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February. His stance has been repeatedly criticised by some eastern and Baltic partners in Europe, as they see it as undermining efforts to pressure Putin to the negotiating table.

"We must not humiliate Russia so that the day when the fighting stops we can build an exit ramp through diplomatic means," Macron said in an interview to regional newspapers published on Saturday. "I am convinced that it is France's role to be a mediating power."

Macron has spoken with Putin regularly since the invasion as part of efforts to achieve a ceasefire and begin a credible negotiation between Kyiv and Moscow.

"I think, and I told him, that he is making a historic and fundamental mistake for his people, for himself and for history," Macron said.

France has supported Ukraine militarily and financially, but until now Macron has not been to Kyiv to offer symbolic political support like other EU leaders, something Ukraine has wanted him to do. Macron said he had not ruled out going.

Paris sends offensive weapons including Caesar howitzer canon taken from French army stocks.



Pro-democracy activists take part in a vigil outside a train station in Shinjuku district of Tokyo yesterday, to mark the 33rd anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown in Beijing.

PHOTO: AFP

### MYANMAR CRISIS

## Junta troops 'burnt down hundreds of houses'

AFP, Bangkok

Myanmar junta troops have torched hundreds of buildings during a three-day raid in the country's north, local media and residents said, as the military struggles to crush resistance to its rule.

The Sagaing region has seen fierce fighting and bloody reprisals since the coup last year, with local "People's Defence Force" (PDF) members clashing regularly with junta troops.

Troops torched hundreds of buildings in the villages of Kinn, Upper Kinn and Ke Taung over three days last week, locals and media reports said.

On May 26, villagers in Kinn fled as soldiers approached and began shooting into the air, said one resident who requested anonymity.

"The next morning we saw smoke rising from our village before they left."

"Over 200 houses were burned down... my house was totally burned down, only the concrete foundation is left."

Drone footage purporting to show the aftermath obtained by AFP showed columns of smoke rising into the sky from the villages, set along a roughly eight-kilometre stretch of the Chindwin river.

### TIANANMEN ANNIVERSARY

## Hong Kong drives memories underground

China protests as US says victims won't be forgotten



AGENCIES

Hong Kong authorities yesterday detained multiple people as they pounced on any attempt at public commemoration of the 33rd anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown, as China vies to remove all reminders of the deadly event.

On June 4, 1989, Beijing sent troops and tanks to break up peaceful protests, crushing demonstrations calling for political change and curbs on official corruption.

Hundreds, by some estimates more than 1,000, were killed in the crackdown.

Discussion of what happened is all but forbidden on the mainland.

Semi-autonomous Hong Kong had been the one place in China where large-scale remembrance was still tolerated — until two years ago when Beijing imposed a national security law to snuff out dissent after huge pro-democracy protests in 2019.

AFP reporters saw at least half a dozen people being taken away by police yesterday, the majority in the evening. Authorities had warned that "participating in an unauthorised assembly"

risked the maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

They also closed large parts of Victoria Park, once the site of packed annual candlelight vigils.

China has gone to exhaustive lengths to erase the crackdown from collective memory, omitting it from history textbooks and scrubbing references to it from the Chinese internet and social media platforms.

Multiple Western Consulates General in Hong Kong yesterday posted Tiananmen tributes on social media, despite local media reports that they had been warned by the city's Chinese foreign ministry office to refrain from doing so.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday released a statement terming the crackdown "a brutal assault".

"The efforts of these brave individuals will not be forgotten. Each year, we honour and remember those who stood up for human rights and fundamental freedoms," he added.

A spokesperson for the city's Chinese foreign ministry office said it "firmly rejected and strongly condemned" Blinken and other US officials' statements.

## Saudi receives first foreign hajj pilgrims since pandemic

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia yesterday welcomed its first batch of hajj pilgrims since before the coronavirus pandemic, which prompted authorities to sharply restrict the annual ritual.

The group from Indonesia landed in the city of Medina and was set to travel south to the holy city of Makkah in the coming weeks to prepare for the hajj next month, state media reported.

"Today we received the first group of this year's pilgrims from Indonesia, and the flights will continue from Malaysia and India," Mohammed al-Bijawi of the country's Hajj Ministry told the state-run Al-Ekhabriya channel.

"Today we are happy to receive the guests of God from outside the kingdom, after a two-year interruption due to the pandemic," he added, describing Saudi Arabia as "fully prepared" to accommodate them.

Usually one of the world's largest religious gatherings, about 2.5 million people participated in 2019. But after the onset of the pandemic in 2020, Saudi authorities announced they would only let 1,000 pilgrims take part. The following year, they increased the total to 60,000 fully vaccinated Saudi citizens and residents chosen through a lottery.

## Blast at India chemical factory kills at least 10

REUTERS, Lucknow

At least ten people were killed and 22 injured in an explosion at a chemical factory in northern India's Hapur district yesterday, a police official said. The accident happened after a boiler burst at an industrial facility in Dhaulana, around 60 kilometres from New Delhi, police spokesman Surendra Singh told Reuters. "Rescue operations are underway," Singh said, adding that the death toll could go up because of a number of people were severely injured. Industrial accidents are common in India and often blamed on people flouting safety norms, as well as lax inspection by government officials.

## Floods kill at least three in Cuba

AFP, Havana

Heavy rains from the remnants of Hurricane Agatha flooded much of western Cuba on Friday, killing at least three people in Havana. Thousands of residents in the region lost power

and a man in Pinar del Rio province also was missing, Cuban officials said. A 44-year-old man, initially thought missing, was found dead Friday evening in the western province of Pinar del Rio after falling into a stream, according to local news site

CubaDebate. They also reported the disappearance of another person in the region. Agatha had crashed into southern Mexico with the potential to redevelop as a tropical storm in the Atlantic, the Miami-based US National Hurricane Center had said.



## Sexual

FROM PAGE 12

engaged in a heated argument with the men. Boni later went to a restaurant where Arif along with several other men attacked him with sharp weapons.

Local later rescued him and took him to the hospital, said the officer.

The prime suspect Arif was previously accused in two murder cases, said Sazzadul, adding that police were looking for him.

Boni, a resident of the Multinagar area of the town, was an avid cyclist and runner. He was the general secretary of an association called Bogura Cyclists (BgC).

He was also a member of an environmental organisation called BD Clean.

His father Anisur Rahman filed a case accusing Ariful Islam, 28, Sohan, 26, and 3-4 others, said Selim Reza, officer-in-charge of Bogura Sadar Police Station.

## US can indeed raise

FROM PAGE 12

"We urge strengthening the democratic processes, political institutions, the rule of law, protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms, workers' rights and safety, and the protection of refugees as well."

He pointed out that the US provided more than \$8 billion in assistance to Bangladesh since its independence.

In 2021 alone, USAID provided over \$300 million to improve the lives of the Bangladeshis, promote democracy and good

## Focus shifts to war

FROM PAGE 12

The government though will be keeping a block allocation of Tk 5,000 crore, as in this year, to provide assistance to the poor to soften the blow of inflation arising out of the Russia-Ukraine war on them.

The amount might be disbursed in cash or in kind, the finance ministry official added.

Inflation is having an outsize impact on the poor,

governance, and protect the environment.

The journalist asked for his comments on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent remarks on "dropping" former premier Khaleda Zia and Nobel Laureate Prof Mohammad Yunus in the river from the Padma Bridge.

Hasina had also claimed Yunus influenced the US to stop the World Bank from funding the bridge construction.

The journalist then sought Price's comments on law enforcers attacking

said Zaid Bakht, a former research director of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

"For the low-income people, the cost of living is a very stressful situation. The government should help them as much as possible. And Tk 5,000 crore is not enough to help the poor."

But having an allocation to safeguard the poor from inflationary shocks is a step in the right direction, said

peaceful demonstrations.

Price said the freedom of assembly, expression, the right of individuals everywhere to protest peacefully is universal. These rights and freedoms apply equally to the people of Bangladesh as it does to those anywhere around the world. "We call on governments around the world, we call on security services, security forces, and civil forces as well to respect that right, to allow for individuals to assemble peacefully to make their voices heard."

Bakht, who is currently the chairman of Agrani Bank.

Keeping a separate allocation for vaccine procurement is not too necessary.

"After giving the booster dose to one crore people, it seems that the risk factors will be diluted and the necessity of the vaccination will be decreased also. But we need a backup plan and keep an eye on the new covid variants," he added.

## Prices drop in global markets, not at home

FROM PAGE 12

Speaking to The Daily Star, Mohiuddin, owner of Shah Amanat Traders of Khatunganj wholesale market, said, "Loose palm oil is being sold at around Tk 6,500 and loose soybean oil at around Tk 7100 per maund [40.9 litres] in wholesale markets."

He said the prices need to be adjusted in the domestic market in line with those in the international one.

According to Market Insider, a facts and statistics data portal, palm oil was sold at 7,757 Malaysian Ringgit (MR) per tonne in the international market on April 27. It was sold at 6,754 MR per tonne on June 3 — a drop of MR 1,003 per tonne.

The decrease in palm oil prices occurred when Indonesia, the world's top palm oil producer, lifted its oil export ban on May 23.

Prices of crude soybean oil declined from \$1,880 per tonne on April 27 to \$1,790 on June 3.

Rafiqul Alam, a private

job holder who lives in the capital's Mirpur, said that when the price of soybean oil went up, traders said it will go down (in the domestic market) if it decreases in the international market.

"It has now gone down in the global market. Yet, businesspeople are saying it not possible for them to reduce prices at the moment. Why? Who will answer this question?"

He added that while the prices of essentials are increasing every week, people's incomes are not. "It is a difficult time for those in the lower-income bracket."

Meanwhile, Rafiqul Islam, owner of Bismillah Store in the port city's Hamzarbagh Kitchen Market, said, "We have to sell cooking oil at the previous rate as we bought them [the stocks of oil] a week ago."

On Thursday, the commerce minister said, "Like the international market, prices will drop

in the local markets too. We will take a decision [in this regard] soon after reviewing the import data of May in around a week."

Taslim Shahriar, senior assistant general manager of Meghna Group of Industries, said the oil purchased two months ago are now coming into the country.

He said, "If you purchase now, the product will come to the country in August. The prices may be reduced only by then."

Shafiqul Ather Taslim, director of TK Group's finance and operations' wing, said, "Considering the overall situation, we sent a letter to the commerce ministry and the tariff commission last Wednesday, saying that the prices need to be adjusted in 15 days."

SM Nazer Hossain, vice-president of Consumer Association of Bangladesh, said that although there is a law, the prices decrease and increase according to the

businessmen's will.

He said prices in the international market have come down but not at the retail level in Bangladesh due to the government's dependency on traders.

"When prices in the international market go up, they automatically rise in the retail market even before the government can adjust them. But when they go down [in the international market], it takes long for them to come down [in the country's retail market]."

According to the National Board of Revenue, six refiners imported more than 15.11 lakh tonnes of palm oil and soybean oil worth Tk 18,182 crore in five months till May this year through the Chattogram and Mongla ports.

Some 78,557 tonnes of palm oil worth Tk 1,116.65 crore (with 5 percent import tax) and 57,557 tonnes of soybean oil worth Tk 957.29 crore were imported last May, according to the NBR data.





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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

## Home is where air pollution is

Lack of awareness and policy initiatives in this regard deeply worrying

HOME is where we feel most protected, away from all the dust, smog, noise, stench and traffic on the streets. But what if home is not the bastion of safety we thought it was? For years, experts have been trying to raise the alarm about how indoor air pollution can be as big a threat to our health as outdoor pollution. They now believe the level of indoor air pollutants can be two to five times higher than that outdoors. Dhaka, as the most air polluted city in the world, is naturally at risk, with a recent study on in-kitchen aerosol exposure identifying its indoor air quality as the worst in the world.

This may not come as a shock given how frequently we've been topping such charts, but it should worry us because of the total lack of concern among the authorities. Citizens, too, seem oblivious of the danger they're in—what causes indoor air pollution, how harmful it is, and what can be done to prevent it. In Bangladesh, more than 75 percent of households still reportedly use solid fuels for cooking. Prolonged exposure to this, coupled with lack of ventilation in mostly small kitchens, form a perfect recipe for disaster, especially for women and children who stay indoors for most of the time. Other factors include tobacco consumption, products for household cleaning and maintenance, and central heating or cooling systems.

It is because of long-term exposure to such indoor pollutants that a staggering 113,202 people die annually in Bangladesh, according to the WHO. Currently, our average life expectancy is being cut by 2.91 years—1.53 years of which by indoor air pollution. Among notable health complications caused by it are ischemic heart disease, lung cancer, lower respiratory infections, stroke, type 2 diabetes, adverse birth outcomes, etc.

With this level of threat staring us in the eye, not knowing about it or not taking steps to prevent it is a luxury we can ill-afford. The problem is how we perceive the safety of homes, schools, nurseries and other such indoor settings. Without sufficient awareness of what makes them unsafe from a health perspective, we're basically storing up problems for the future. All indoor settings should, therefore, must have a proper ventilation system. Even using mechanical ventilations like exhaust fans in kitchens can help mitigate harmful cooking emissions.

The government, on its part, should also step up efforts including by collecting extensive population-level data on the quality of indoor air, directing all city corporations and other relevant agencies to undertake proper measures, and running awareness campaigns. Also, since most families living in poor-quality housing may have no option but to make do with damp, under-ventilated environments, the government should come forward to assist them.

## Will buses ever be women-friendly?

Govt must take stern action to stop sexual harassment there

WE'RE alarmed by a new transport survey that says that 63 percent of the women and girls using public transports in Dhaka had to face various forms of harassment including sexual harassment. While 47 percent of the surveyed complained of being sexually harassed, 61 percent said they were deliberately touched by bus staff while boarding or getting off buses. Some 25 percent of them said they experienced such touches at least three times in the last six months. Equally disturbingly, a significant percentage of those who had faced sexual or other forms of harassment in public transports later suffered from mental health issues.

These findings show that almost nothing has changed in terms of the safety of women and girls in public transports, although the issue has been in discussion for long. The gravity of the situation can be understood from the fact that a number of women were raped and killed inside the buses, too. Sadly, these incidents have not led to significant action on the part of the authorities. Prior to this survey, several other surveys in the past also revealed the toxic male-dominated environment in public transports where women could hardly raise their voices after being harassed or bullied. Although there has been a practice of keeping seats reserved for women, this is not enough to ensure their safety because either the seats are too few for the growing number of women and girls needing public buses, or, as is often the case, they are occupied by male commuters.

Moreover, reserving a few seats alone will not improve the situation as long as the patriarchal mindset of men remains unchanged. While awareness is needed among male passengers, especially male helpers, to change their mindsets, the existing laws against gender harassment/violence also need to be enforced to hold the perpetrators accountable. Women also need to be given necessary support so that they can file complaints against their harassers. In order to ensure this, the drivers and helpers, and even police officers, need to be given proper training on gender issues.

Experts have suggested some specific measures such as increasing the number of women-only buses, installing CCTV cameras and vehicle-tracking systems in all public transports, putting nameplates in every vehicle mentioning the names of drivers and helpers, conducting mobile court drives to punish the harassers, etc. It's time the authorities heeded these suggestions which, we hope, will help ensure a safe environment for female commuters.

## WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

# Saving our 'One Earth' before it's too late



SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN

Syeda Rizwana Hasan is a supreme court lawyer and the chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA).

THE global community is preparing to celebrate the 50th World Environment Day today. As world leaders supposedly emphasise sustainable development, putting effort into finding feasible solutions to combat climate change before its worst effects are realised irreversibly, making countless promises for a sustainable future for all, it's important to take a look around, understand what's happening around us, and ask ourselves, "Are we actually on the right track to protect our One Earth?"

Let's take a step back from the global climate crisis and anthropocentric destruction of the Earth's life systems. Let's talk about the simple things. Water and Air. These are things that we need to survive. Yet we emerge today in an outrageous situation where many across the globe are denied these fundamental human rights. According to the World Health Organization, globally over 2 billion people live in countries that are water stressed and at least 2 billion people drink polluted and contaminated water. Around 99 percent of the entire world's population breathes air that exceeds WHO's air quality standards. This is a global public health crisis. According to water.org, in Bangladesh, more than 1.8 million people do not have access to safe drinking water. The State of Global Air 2020: How Does Air Pollution Affect Life Expectancy around the World report by the Health Effects Institute states that, the life expectancy loss in Bangladesh is 2.91 years. A life without access to clean air and clean water is a life deprived of dignity. As Bangladesh is scheduled to officially graduate from LDC status in 2026, without having access to clean air and clean water, this development rings empty when it doesn't bring significant positive change in the lives of the most marginalised.

Bangladesh has over 700 rivers and they provide the lifeblood for this country. On February 3, 2019, the High Court of Bangladesh issued a landmark decision declaring rivers to be legal entities with rights and appointing the National River Protection Commission (NRPC) as their legal custodian. Regardless of the decision, powerful industries have continued grabbing and polluting the rivers, disrupting their natural flow and destroying their biodiversity. According to Transparency International Bangladesh, 23 percent of wetlands in Dhaka and its surrounding areas were lost between

2010 and 2019. Grabbing and polluting the rivers would impact the vulnerability of the already vulnerable river dependent communities and traditional livelihoods such as fishing. In a country where 60 percent of people have their only animal protein intake from fish, this has every possibility to affect Bangladesh's food security. Rivers are not the only water bodies

the forest. This would be detrimental to the biodiversity, air quality, water quality, health of the plants, and livelihood of the local communities. Globally, the situation of the forests is not very hopeful either. According to IUCN's Issues Brief which was last reviewed in February 2021, more than half of the world's tropical forests have been destroyed since the 1960s, and every second, more than one hectare of



Powerful industries continue grabbing and polluting Bangladesh's rivers, disrupting their natural flow and destroying their biodiversity.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

that are facing the repercussions of environmental degradation. According to the Ocean Conservation Trust, 50 percent of life-giving oxygen comes from the ocean. We have a huge amount of carbon reserved in the oceans. Ocean's plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen in the atmosphere. This phenomenon shows how important of a role the ocean plays to maintain balance in our atmosphere. However, by polluting the oceans and the seas, we are only lowering their capacity to absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. Cox's Bazar, the world's largest sea beach has a tremendous pollution problem due to single use plastic at the hands of tourists. St Martin's Island, the only coral island in Bangladesh, is experiencing an increase in pollution with the rise of unchecked tourism. The region has also been touted as a future energy hub with large scale megaprojects such as the coal powered thermal power plants in Matarbari. Countless numbers of species, both underwater and on land, face risks due to habitat loss and ecosystem destruction.

The Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, has protected our country from catastrophic natural disasters. But the construction of Rampal Power Plant has put the future of the Sundarbans at stake where the power plant's discharge of pollutants would significantly hamper the ecosystem of

tropical forest is destroyed or severely degraded. Many species are threatened by forest degradation and loss. This reduces the forests' ability to provide essential services such as acting as important carbon sinks. Deforestation and forest degradation have an impact on the lives of 1.6 billion people who rely on forests for their livelihoods. One billion of them are among the poorest people on the planet.

With everything that's happening around the world and in our own country—destruction of lands, pollution of water bodies, exploitation of resources, suffering of the most marginalised people—it's not easy to stay hopeful. It's normal to be concerned about the future of the world, not just for us, but for our next generations. But as demoralising as all the phenomena mentioned above might be, giving up is not an option. It is up to the people to hold their representatives accountable for their lack of response to environmental degradation, and to hold the rich and powerful corporations accountable for destroying our natural resources. We as individuals can move away from single use plastic, waste less food, use less energy, but we must act now to change the systems that profit off the destruction of our earth. There is no second planet for us. This is our only home, and we must save it, before time runs out.

## Social protection needs more in next budget



Dr Nawshad Ahmed is an economist, urban planner, and an ex-UN official.

NAWSHAD AHMED

THE social protection allocation in the annual budget has consistently increased over the last 14 years. In FY 2008-09, a total of Tk 13,845 crore was allocated for social protection programmes. This allocation was 14.71 percent of the annual budget and 2.25 percent of the GDP. In the FY 2021-22 budget, Tk 107,614 crore was allocated for social protection programmes. It was 17.83 percent of the annual budget and 3.11 percent of the GDP. However, it has not been possible to cover all eligible people under different social protection programmes despite the sustained increase in budgetary allocations.

The number of households benefiting from social protection programmes in the country went up two and half times, from 12 percent in 2005 to 30 percent in 2020. The number of programmes has also gone up from 77 in FY 2009-10 to 130 in FY 2019-20. It is believed that the increased level of public funding has contributed substantially to poverty reduction in Bangladesh. However, there are still over 10 percent of people categorised as "extreme poor" in the country. This number has gone up since mid-2020, due to the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. But due to paucity of reliable data, it is difficult to estimate the percentage of people living in poverty now. The government undertook cash and food distribution to assist the new poor. These were in addition to the

regular social protection programmes which are aimed at reducing the social and economic vulnerabilities of the poor families.

There are about 130 social security projects and programmes in Bangladesh, the majority of which are small in size. Just a dozen of them employ almost 80 percent of the total social security budget. These projects and programmes can be mainly categorised in two different ways: 1. By sectors like health, nutrition, education, and infrastructure development, and 2. By life cycle, such as pregnancy and early age, school age, working age, and old age.

The government, under the leadership of the cabinet division, has developed the second phase of the Action Plan (2021-26) of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) to strengthen the overall efficiency and impact of social protection programmes. These programmes need to adopt appropriate targeting mechanisms to include the most deserving beneficiaries. Gradually, the government extended the payment of benefits through the Government-to-Person (G2P) system, using mobile financial services, for about 68 percent of total cash transferred. This has cut down corruption and is also cost-effective and time-saving.

After making significant progress on the payment aspect, the government is now focusing on the targeting side of social protection programmes. Identifying the most deserving beneficiaries is a challenge that needs to be resolved urgently for better utilisation of public resources. The government's recent decision of a universal cash transfer approach to improve the coverage of certain safety net programmes is a good one in this regard.

During the past two years, three programmes under the Department of Social Services have expanded coverage

and introduced an online self-registration system to 112 poverty-stricken upazilas in 2020-21 and to 150 upazilas in 2021-22. The three programmes are Old Age Allowance, Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women, and Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled.

Anyone who believes they are eligible for any of these allowances can apply for it through [www.mis.bhata.gov.bd](http://www.mis.bhata.gov.bd). The Social Welfare Officers and upazila, union and paurashava committees verify the information and recommend the enrolment of those eligible into the programmes. The government is planning to cover 100 additional upazilas under this universal approach in FY 2022-23.

These three programmes truly cover the most vulnerable groups in society and the universalisation of coverage was needed to cover all those who deserve to receive benefits. There are definite financial implications of universalisation and, therefore, the government needs to allocate an increased amount of resources for social protection in the 2022-23 budget to cover newer applicants. Historically, in the 262 upazilas where the universal approach has been introduced during the last two years, the number of beneficiaries has increased substantially. The Old Age Allowance covers 5.7 million beneficiaries now across rural and urban areas, which includes about 50 percent of the elderly population of the country. The number increased rapidly from 4.4 million in 2018. The Allowances for Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women currently benefit 2.47 million women, while about one million persons receive disability allowances.

In the future, other major social protection programmes should also adopt the universal approach, and a digital self-registration system should be introduced for improved targeting of beneficiaries.

Identifying the most deserving beneficiaries is a challenge that needs to be resolved urgently for better utilisation of public resources.



'Price Controls! Can't we do anything else to beat inflation?'



AN OPEN DIALOGUE

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

Dr. Abdullah Shibli is an economist and works for Change Healthcare, Inc., an information technology company. He also serves as Senior Research Fellow at the US-based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

ANTONIO Guterres, the UN secretary general warned on May 18th that in the next few months we shall be facing the "spectre of a global food shortage" which could last for years. According to the Economist magazine, the high cost of staple foods has already raised the number of people who face acute food insecurity by 440 million to 1.6 billion globally. As a consequence, "Political unrest will spread, children will be stunted, and people will starve."

What does a government do to alleviate the pain and suffering caused by rising prices and shortages? In 1539, faced with a similar prospect and a cold winter, King Henry VIII of England advised Cromwell, his aide, "They [the citizens] fear the winter, poor devils. Reassure them that should there be scarcities, no one will profit from their distress. Proclaim a fixed price for grain if you must. Set up a commission to investigate hoarding" (Hilary Mantel, The Mirror and the Light). Interestingly enough, food scarcity, profiteering, hoarding and fixed price for food grains are themes that are relevant even today, even after almost five centuries since then.

With inflation raging out of control across the globe and no end in sight, there is a temptation to talk about price control or mandatory price ceilings. Unfortunately, price control by the government has not worked very well in the past and also has acquired a bad reputation in political and economic circles. However, with the inflation rate now almost in the double digits and the price of essential items soaring every day, the public and many other quarters are seeking alternatives to bring down the price level, or at least, to bring it under control. So, what can be done and what is the alternative to price control? Is there anything else available besides raising interest rates, growing more food and importing soybean oil, or using other measures that take a little time to kick in? Central banks and the economists who guide them are aware that there are no silver bullets to kill inflation. But there is a range of policy tools open to the government.

Many forecasters have said that the current round of inflation is "transitory" and once the supply chain bottlenecks are removed and China starts to make more consumer goods, things will go back to normal. But that was more than a year ago! There's nothing that hits the pocketbook of the average citizen harder than the rising prices of essentials. Furthermore, there is no question that inflation is bad for the future of the economy and the political



ILLUSTRATION: BIPOLO CHAKRABORTY

future of a government party. Just as a threat from a foreign enemy or domestic entity never fails to get a ruling party to marshal its resources and respond with all its might to combat these evil forces, runaway inflation calls for action from the authorities.

Bangladesh government has taken up arms and tried to blunt the impact of rising prices with an increased supply of essential commodities, greater subsidies, and exchange rate regulations. But to no avail. Swinging into action, the Directorate of National Consumers Right Protection (DNCRP) last week fined 64 traders Tk 9.18 lakh across the country for their failure to protect consumers' rights. The news media reported that the directorate imposed the fines during market monitoring activities in 33 districts of the country, including Dhaka. All this is price control in practice.

Price control, however, remains a touchy area. A government cannot really regulate the price of goods in the market and any effort to exercise "command and control" tools to keep the price of gas at the pump, rent for the middle and lower-middle income classes, and everyday consumer prices (for food grains, edible oils, sugar, meats, and lentils) may eventually come back to haunt the country sooner or later.

Nonetheless, the government has to exercise its authority to keep an eye on essential items, strengthen its monitoring cells, provide subsidised staples for the lower-income consumers, and use "moral suasion" to keep traders in line. Price control is bad but the government has many other tools at its disposal to bring about price stability. Moral suasion seeks to persuade, rather

than force, an entity to act in a certain way through rhetorical appeals, persuasion or implicit threats. In economics, moral suasion is more specifically defined as "the attempt to coerce private economic activity via governmental exhortation in directions not already defined or dictated by existing statute law," (JT Romans, "Moral Suasion as an Instrument of Economic Policy", The American Economic Review).

The only country which has had any measure of luck with price control over the long haul is China. The inflation rate in China was 2.39 percent in 2020, 2.9 percent in 2019; 2.11 percent in 2018; and 1.56 percent in 2017. The CPI forecast for 2022 and 2023 are 2.2 and 2.3 percent, respectively. Obviously, China has tight "state dominated controls on its economy, which enables it to manage inflation differently compared to other

countries. In China, changes are made to subsidies and other price control measures to check inflation."

How do you control inflation in a market economy? There is no easy answer to this vital question. Today, every politician and average citizen is asking and looking for an easy fix for inflation. How do you bring down the price of soybean oil? Well, to allow more imports would be an easy answer. What about the price of food? Well, you cannot ask for an immediate increase in the supply of grains, meat, edible oil, sugar, or lentils. Because, as we all know these solutions don't really solve the problem overnight, what with the war in Ukraine, a depreciating taka, and new supply chain bottlenecks. The goal for the government ought to be to manage the current crisis and overcome the immediate hurdles with a prudent mix of macroeconomic policy, lower tariffs on imports of everyday use, and regulatory guidance.

Unfortunately, there is no easy path to price stability in the current volatile environment. Market forces are at the helm. Some prices go through ups and downs, and others only keep going up. Take the case of gasoline or crude oil. When supply is abundant, the price goes down. On the other hand, as we have seen over the last 50 years, when there is war in the Middle East or the oil-producing countries suffer any domestic turbulence, the oil market is on fire. Fortunately, these are expected to be temporary, and things calm down. On the other hand, prices of electronic items have gone down in real terms. For Bangladesh, prices of many imported items have recently seen upward pressure due to global shortages, devaluation of the taka, and some degree of market influence by traders or syndicates.

The warnings of Guterres and the Economist Intelligence Unit cited at the beginning only reinforce the hands of policymakers seeking directions or avenues for market intervention. In a recent ruling, the High Court of Bangladesh advised the government to take measures to rein in the syndicates which manipulate the prices of staples.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net

A girl should only marry when she is ready

As a professional trainer of English, I have taught thousands of people coming from a diverse range of backgrounds and age groups. Of them, a significant percentage are women who dream of reaching their full potential.

However, most of their parents dream only of one thing for their daughters—to get them married off to someone who is decent and responsible. It is true that women in our country enjoy more freedoms and are better educated today than they were 20 years back. But have they changed the

situation enough for our girls? The answer is a big no. I have seen aspiring and meritorious girls prepare for a specific exam worrying that if they don't pass, they might have to get married straight away.

There are reasonable parents out there who promise their daughters of a future they want. But, in most cases, these promises end up with statements like: "you can do whatever you want after you get married."

The bottom line is, marriage is an important part of life which

must come at the right time for a girl, i.e., when she is mentally ready.

Sadly, even though women in Bangladesh cover around 50 percent of the total population, they have to overcome so many challenges and hurdles, including being forced to get married before they are ready to do so. This has to change. As a society, we must ensure our girls get the opportunity to flourish.

Syed Wasi CEO & Chief Trainer Center for Innovative Language Learning (CILL)

Table with 4 columns: No, পদের নাম, বেতন স্কেল ও গ্রেড, পদ সংখ্যা. It lists various government posts and their corresponding salary scales and grades.

প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ব্যাংক (Overseas Welfare Bank) নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি (Recruitment Notice). The notice details the bank's location, contact information, and the specific requirements for various job positions, including educational qualifications, experience, and application procedures.

Advertisement for East Delta University. It features the university logo, contact information for permanent campus (East Nasirabad, Khulshi, Chattogram-4209), and details for faculty search. It highlights a 'Deadline June 15, 2022' and an 'Exceptional Salary Package'.

Advertisement for The Daily Star. It includes the newspaper's logo, the slogan 'stay updated with', and the website address www.thedailystar.net.



# Thyroid nodules - be cautious of any changes

**You may not know that you have a thyroid nodule until your doctor notices it during a normal medical check. The majority of thyroid nodules do not produce any symptoms. Be cautious of any changes you see and seek early medical attention.**

## STAR HEALTH DESK

The thyroid is a two-inch-long, butterfly-shaped gland found at the base of your neck. This gland is vital to your body because it produces hormones that regulate metabolism, or how your body consumes energy. Thyroid hormones govern various biological activities, including heart rate, respiration, body temperature, nervous system function, and much more.

Thyroid nodules are solid or fluid-filled lumps that occur within your thyroid and do not impede the gland's normal functions. Most thyroid nodules are not severe and do not produce symptoms. Only a tiny fraction of thyroid nodules are malignant. However, when they do create issues, there are effective treatments available.

You may not know that you have a thyroid nodule until your doctor notices it during a normal medical check. Alternatively, your doctor may discover it during a scan for another reason. On the other hand, some thyroid nodules might grow large enough to make swallowing or breathing difficult.

The majority of thyroid nodules do not produce any symptoms. However, certain nodules can become so large that they can be felt and seen, most commonly as a bulge at the base of your neck. Press on your oesophagus, producing shortness of breath or swallowing trouble.

Under certain conditions, thyroid nodules can be visible such as:

**Thyroid adenoma:** It is the overgrowth of normal thyroid tissue. It is usually a non-cancerous condition unless it causes



bothersome symptoms from its size. Some thyroid adenomas lead to hyperthyroidism.

**Thyroid cyst:** Cysts are usually non-cancerous, occasionally containing solid cancerous components.

**Chronic inflammation of the thyroid:** Hashimoto's disease, a thyroid disorder, can cause thyroid inflammation and enlarged nodules. This often is associated with hypothyroidism.

**Multinodular goitre:** The term goitre is used to describe any enlargement of the thyroid gland, which can be caused by iodine deficiency or a thyroid disorder.

**Iodine deficiency:** Lack of iodine in your diet can sometimes cause the thyroid gland to develop thyroid nodules.

**Thyroid cancer:** A nodule's chances of being malignant are slim. A nodule that is huge and hard, or causes pain or discomfort, is more concerning. You should probably have

it examined by a doctor. Certain variables, such as a family history of thyroid or other endocrine malignancies and a history of radiation exposure from medical therapy or nuclear fallout, enhance your risk of thyroid cancer.

Consult your doctor if you notice any unusual swelling in your neck, especially if you have difficulty breathing or swallowing. It is critical to consider the risk of cancer.

Seek medical attention if you develop hyperthyroidism symptoms such as:

- Rapid weight reduction regardless of whether your hunger is regular or has grown
- A pounding heart
- Sleeping problems
- Muscle fatigue
- Irritability or nervousness

Consult your doctor if you experience any of the following signs and symptoms, which might indicate that your thyroid gland isn't producing enough thyroid hormone (hypothyroidism):

- Feeling chilled
- Feeling weary more frequently
- Dry skin
- Memory issues
- Depression
- Constipation

Treatment for a thyroid nodule will vary depending on whether the nodule includes malignant cells or is causing other issues, such as neck pain or excessive thyroid hormone production. In many circumstances, no formal therapy is required. However, be cautious of any changes you see and seek early medical attention.



PHOTO: COURTESY

## WorldFish-invented 'G-3' Rohu grows about 30 per cent more than conventional one

### STAR HEALTH REPORT

Preliminary results from an experimental farm have shown that the 'third generation' or G-3 Rohu invented by WorldFish grows about 30 per cent more than the conventional Rohu fish - says a press release.

WorldFish supplied G3 Rohu fish to hatcheries and nurseries in 2020 and 2021. WorldFish began growing G-3 Rohu on 19 semi-commercial farms in Rajshahi and Khulna. Fish growth is monitored monthly by sampling.

Some G-3 Rohu hatcheries will produce this improved Rohu fish in 2022. Thousands of farmers can now collect G3 Rohu's Renu / Pona. This will increase productivity and income. This experimental farming and the farmers' experience are likely to encourage more farmers to grow this improved Rohu fish.



## Mediterranean diet is superior to low-fat diet for secondary cardiovascular prevention

In a 7-year randomised trial, men (but not women) had fewer adverse CV events with a Mediterranean diet, but it relied on an intensive, long-term dietary intervention that would be difficult to reproduce in most care settings.

The Mediterranean diet (which emphasises fruits, vegetables, legumes, cereals, white meat, fish, and olive oil) lowers the risk for first adverse cardiovascular (CV) events in high-risk people, but evidence of its long-term effectiveness for secondary prevention is sparse.

Researchers randomised 1,000 coronary artery disease patients (83% men; average age, 60) to the Mediterranean or low-fat diet in Spain. All patients saw a nutritionist at least 12 times a year and received diet-friendly food. Both groups' dietary intake changed significantly.

During a median of 7 years, the primary outcome - a composite of myocardial infarction, revascularisation, ischemic stroke, peripheral artery disease, and CV-related death - occurred significantly less frequently in the Mediterranean group than in the low-fat group (17% vs 22%). The effect was confined to men; no difference was detected among women (perhaps owing to their smaller numbers in the cohort).

## Teeth scaling, you cannot wait to tell your friends about

### DR ADILY ADIB KHAN

Most people think brushing for a few seconds with an old brush is the best way to keep teeth healthy. Instead of regular checkups, people visit the dentist when they have a problem. People in our country often complain that they bleed while brushing. Calculus and plaque are common dental terms. You may hear these words in toothpaste ads, which claim to remove calculus and prevent plaque. But what exactly do these words mean?

Understanding these terms is key to creating a preventative oral care routine.

Plaque is a sticky, soft substance that sticks to teeth after eating or drinking. Plaque forms continuously throughout the day, damaging teeth and gums and causing most dental problems. Plaque helps bacteria grow and converts food residue into acid, weakening saliva's protective action and allowing tooth enamel surface corrosion, creating cavities and moving teeth, which can cause gum disease and inflammation.

Uncleaned calculus (tartar) builds up over time. Calculus' effects are clearer. Gingivitis is gum inflammation from calculus. Early periodontal disease causes swollen, bleeding gums when brushing or flossing. Most people ignore the bleeding while cleaning. Calculus



deposits form along teeth's gums. It can cause cavities and other dental issues. Bacteria breed in calculus between the teeth and gums. If not cleaned regularly, the gums and jawbone will separate, leading to periodontitis or terrible gum disease. The immune system attacks the gums and jawbone to fight infection.

Dental calculus takes a long time before it is finally removed from your teeth. A

dentist should be consulted for its quick removal. A dentist uses technically advanced dental calculus removal procedures that are both quick and effective. A dentist uses an ultrasonic scaling instrument or a hand-held scaling tool to remove the calculus. This scalar instrument uses high-frequency vibrations with water to remove the calculus. Once the teeth are clean, the dentist will call you back in the future for a follow-up. Any extra calculus must be followed so that it does not form on your teeth.

Healthy teeth are essential for a healthy and bright smile. Stained teeth can tarnish your eternal smile. Calculus should be removed to ensure germ-free teeth. Dental scaling is a widespread treatment for patients with calculus accumulation.

The writer is the founder of Dental Pixel. Email: adily.adib@gmail.com

## Salmonella vaccine for poultry contributed to rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria



### STAR HEALTH REPORT

According to a new study recently published in the journal PLOS Genetics, resistant strains in Brazil find that exported poultry rarely causes disease in the UK. In addition, an investigation into the evolution of Salmonella bacteria infecting Brazilian poultry shows that the introduction of a Salmonella vaccine, combined with increasing antibiotic usage by Brazilian farmers, has led to the rise of antibiotic-resistant strains that are less likely to cause human disease.

The team found that distinct Salmonella lineages developed in Brazil in the early 2000s, around the time the country introduced a poultry vaccine. These bacteria have three antibiotic-resistant genes. Despite rising in Brazil, antibiotic-resistant bacteria have caused few human Salmonella cases in the UK and have not spread to chickens.

Overall, these findings suggest that the Salmonella vaccine in Brazil, along with increased antibiotic use, enabled the rise of drug-resistant Salmonella, but that these bacteria have not led to more food poisoning cases in the UK.

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## 'Don't cry, Coco'

AFP, Paris

Iga Swiatek cruised to her second French Open title by dominating teenager Coco Gauff in the final on Saturday, as the world number one claimed her 35th successive victory.

Swiatek celebrated her sixth straight title this year in the players' box with her friends and family.

"I told Coco 'Don't cry' and that's what I am doing. Congrats to Coco," said an emotional Swiatek.

"You are doing an amazing job. At your age, I was on my first year on tour and I did not know what I was doing. You will find it, I am sure of that."

A disconsolate Gauff was left sitting on her seat in tears after a nervous performance, punctuated by 23 unforced errors and three double faults.



Poland's Iga Swiatek wears a broad smile as she holds the French Open trophy after beating Coco Gauff of the USA in the final at the Court Philippe-Chatrier in Paris on Saturday. The Polish world number one cruised to her second French Open title, beating the American teenager 62, 6-3 in only 68 minutes, to claim her 35th successive victory.

PHOTO: AFP

## 'I'd prefer to lose the final'

AFP, Paris

Rafael Nadal will become the oldest man to win the French Open title if he defeats Casper Ruud, the Norwegian whose clay court talents he has personally helped foster.

Nadal will be playing in his 14th Roland Garros final on Sunday and 30th overall at the Grand Slams. Victory will deliver a record-extending 22nd major and 14th French Open, 17 years after his title winning debut in Paris.

The 36-year-old Nadal is, however, as surprised as anyone to have got this far.

A chronic left foot injury which has plagued him throughout his career flared up again in Rome last month, putting a serious question mark over even making it to the French capital.

"Without a doubt, I'd prefer to lose the final and have a new foot," admitted Nadal who has not hidden the brutal reality that every match he plays at Roland Garros may be his last.

Despite his fears, Nadal has impressively battled his way into Sunday's championship match. His record at the French Open now stands at 111 wins and just three losses. Djokovic was responsible for two of those defeats.

Nadal was only 19 when he won his first French Open in 2005. Victory on Sunday will make him the tournament's oldest champion, eclipsing 34-year-old compatriot Andres Gimeno who took the title 50 years ago.

World number eight Ruud, 23, is the tour's in-form clay court player. Ruud is the first Norwegian to reach a Grand Slam final.

Ruud has been training at Nadal's academy in Manacor since 2018 alongside his father Christian, a former top 40 player, and Spaniard Pedro Clar.

Ruud was just six years old when Nadal was first crowned French Open champion and describes the Spaniard as his "idol".

"I could probably tell you all the finals and who he has played and who he has beaten, because I watched them all on TV," said the Norwegian.

"He's the greatest clay court player of all time and one of the greatest all-around players."



## Saifuddin relishes return

Mohammad Saifuddin had been rated as one of the few genuine seaming all-rounders that Bangladesh desperately need, especially in the limited over formats. Following a complex back injury, the 25-year-old has completed his recovery and is all set to make a comeback during the 'Tigers' upcoming white-ball series in the West Indies. The cricketer from Feni spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin ahead of the West Indies tour and shared his plans along with a few other topics during an exclusive interview, the excerpts of which are as follows:

**The Daily Star (DS):** The wait must have been agonising since injury at the T20 World Cup last year pushed you into the sidelines?

**Mohammad Saifuddin (MS):** Obviously it was not easy for me since I was unable to play the BPL [Bangladesh Premier League] and also missed a few series due to injury. As you know, our pace unit is doing really well and since I'm making a comeback to the team, it won't be easy for me to get my place back. I'll have to work extremely hard. However, I'm taking this as a challenge and as I'd be playing in the white-ball format, I am optimistic about giving my best out there.

**DS:** How was rehabilitation during this time? And how difficult is it for a

cricketer to stay out of cricket and watch their teammates play for the country?

**MS:** To be honest, yes, it's very difficult even if you don't play well but as soon as you manage to bounce back on the field, you tend to forget what happened in the previous games.

You see, when a recurring injury forces you out of cricket for a long time, it's really frustrating. Coming back after five-six months is mentally stressful because being a cricketer we always want to go out there in the field and represent the nation.

**DS:** You travelled to the United Kingdom for treatment. What is your current back-pain situation?

**MS:** I went to the UK with Dr. Debashish Chowdhury bhai and underwent a few scans. Fortunately, nothing major was detected and no treatment was required. My back is well and for me it's important to continue the strength-training and gym-work to remain physically fit and strong. Obviously I'll also have to work more on my skills and develop gradually. Look, pace bowlers' life is all about how you can manage injuries and play for

an extended period and I'm focusing on that aspect.

**DS:** What will be your biggest challenge in the West Indies since this will be your first tour there?

**MS:** Honestly, I haven't planned anything yet but I've been following the games played in the West Indies. I watched the games on YouTube and tried to gain some idea about the pitches and conditions there. I think there will be a bit more bounce but otherwise I think it'll remain similar to Bangladesh. As a fast bowler, obviously, it'll be important for me to focus on the dot balls in T20 format while in ODIs you need to be more aggressive while bowling with both the new and old ball.



Denmark's Andreas Cornelius celebrates with teammates following a 2-1 win over world champions France in their UEFA Nations League fixture at the Stade de France on Friday. The 29-year-old Trabzonspor striker scored both goals for Denmark, with Karim Benzema reducing the arrears for the hosts.

PHOTO: AFP

## Ukraine aim to complete World Cup dream in Wales

AFP, Cardiff

Ukraine's footballers made a war-torn nation proud by beating Scotland in their first competitive clash since Russia's invasion, but the job of getting to the World Cup is only half done ahead of Sunday's play-off final against Wales.

A place in Qatar later this year is the prize for the winners at the Cardiff City Stadium, where history also beckons for the home side.

Wales have not reached a World Cup since 1958 and manager Rob Page has described the Ukraine clash as "the biggest match in Welsh history".

The same could be said for different reasons for Ukraine as they aim to provide some solace and national pride to a country devastated by Russian aggression.

"We played for those who fight in trenches, who fight with their last drop of blood. We played for Ukrainians who suffer every day," said Ukraine coach Oleksandr Petrakov after his side outclassed Scotland to win 3-1 in Glasgow on Wednesday.

"We still have the Wales game in front of us. We will do everything to make Ukrainians proud."

Petrakov admitted to being emotionally "empty" in the aftermath of victory at Hampden Park.

However, the 64-year-old, who tried to sign up to Ukraine's territorial defence when war broke out, and his players must summon another huge effort to deliver their World Cup dream.

Six of the starting line-up against Scotland are still contracted

to Ukrainian clubs and had not played a competitive game this year.

As Artem Dovbyk broke clear to score the visitors' third goal with the final kick of the game, his teammates sank to their knees in exhaustion rather than joining in the celebrations.

"We all understand that the game with Wales will no longer be about physical condition or tactics, it will be a game of survival," said Oleksandr Zinchenko.

"Everyone will fight to the end and give their all, because we will play for our country."

Wales beat Austria in their play-off semifinal three months ago thanks to Gareth Bale's brilliant double and were able to name a second-string side for their 2-1 Nations League defeat by Poland on Wednesday.

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# Prices drop in global markets, not at home

MOHAMMAD SUMAN and SUKANTA HALDER

Even though prices of loose palm and soybean oil have dropped in wholesale markets, consumers are not being able to reap the benefits as retailers are still selling those at the government-fixed prices.

Yesterday, a litre of palm oil was being sold at Tk 12 less than the price fixed by the government at the retail level and soybean oil at Tk 5 less, said traders at Chattogram's Khatunganj and Dhaka's Moulvibazar -- the country's two main wholesale markets.

They also said the drop was due to the price decline in the international market and that the government should fix its retail rates accordingly.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi recently said the edible oil prices will come down soon.

Importers, however, are against the reduction. They say they have imported the products, now in the market, at higher prices.

In the wholesale market, loose palm oil is now being sold at Tk 156-158 and soybean oil at Tk 172-174, said traders, adding that the two products' prices have been falling in the international market for the past month.

Meanwhile, the government fixed the wholesale price of loose palm oil at Tk 170 per litre, and loose soybean oil at Tk 178 per litre. The retail price is Tk 2 higher per litre than those.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, loose palm oil was sold at Tk 175-182 per litre, loose soybean oil at Tk 182 to Tk 190, and bottled soybean oil at Tk 195 to 200 in retail markets on Thursday.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



A massive fire burns a private container depot in Chattogram's Sitakunda to ashes, claiming at least four lives and injuring over a hundred. The photo was taken around 2:30am today.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

RIGHTS SITUATION

# US can indeed raise concerns

Says state dept spokesperson about Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Considering the robust partnership among the two countries, the US can raise concerns over various issues in Bangladesh, said Ned Price, spokesperson for the US State Department.

"As part of our partnership, we're in a position to raise a number of issues, shared interests, but also concerns."

The comments came in response to a journalist's questions at a press briefing at the state department on Thursday.

Earlier on June 1, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen sent a message to reporters, insisting them to question the US Ambassador in Bangladesh regarding their own human rights issues.

He had said that nearly 1 lakh US citizens go missing in America every year, and even children are deprived of reuniting with their Hispanic parents.

The minister asked why the US obstructed the broadcast of RT TV (a Russian TV channel) if it wanted "freedom of press".

He also questioned the rights situation of immigrants, including the African-Americans and Hispanics, in the US and the "lack of faith of young Americans in their election process".

Speaking to the reporters, Price said the US regularly raises human rights issues with Bangladesh both publicly and privately.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

BLOCK ALLOCATIONS

# Focus shifts to war fallout from jabs

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government is not keeping a separate allocation for vaccines in the next fiscal year's budget as it pulls back from vaccine procurement given the high inoculation rate and low infection rates.

In the past two fiscal years, Tk 10,000 crore was earmarked in the budget for vaccine procurement. There would not be any such allocation in the upcoming fiscal year's budget, which will be unveiled in the parliament on June 9.

Bangladesh has targeted to inoculate 70 percent of the population with two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine in line with the World Health Organisation's target.

As of June 2, 69.03 percent of the population have received double doses, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services. Of those who have received the full dose,

12.79 percent have received the booster dose.

Besides, Bangladesh has managed to more or less flatten



the curve on coronavirus cases: despite the economy fully reopening, the caseload has remained in double digits for months now, with the odd death here and there from Covid-19.

"We are expecting the situation to stay this way, so there is no need to buy more vaccines," said a finance ministry official involved with the

proceedings.

There are enough doses in stock to get through the booster dose campaign.

"But the enthusiasm to get booster shots has been lukewarm. So we won't be purchasing vaccines afresh," he said, adding that if the need arises, funds can be managed from the revised budget for the next fiscal year.

Even from this fiscal year's allocation of Tk 10,000 crore for vaccines, Tk 6,500 crore could be spent. But even then, that amount would be retroactively adjusted with a \$500 million World Bank loan.

Of the \$500 million, \$400 million would go towards the 6.8 crore doses of vaccines procured from the Serum Institute of India and China's Sinopharm.

"The expenditure on the vaccine will be adjusted as a retrospective cost. As a result, the allotment will remain undisbursed," the official said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

# WB invited to Padma Bridge inauguration

Khaleda Zia may also be invited if law permits, says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday verbally invited Mercy Tembon, the World Bank's country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, to the opening ceremony of the Padma Bridge on June 25.

"I am inviting the World Bank's country director. We will send a letter too. I will not consider who was for it or against it," Quader said addressing a programme at the Brac Center where the WB country director was also present.

In 2012, the World Bank backtracked on its \$1.2 billion money-lending deal for the Padma Bridge construction on allegations of corruption, which were later rejected by a Canadian court. The decision deteriorated the relations between Bangladesh and the WB.

After the programme, Quader, also the general secretary of ruling Awami League, told reporters that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia would also

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Engineers experimentally illuminating some of the 415 LED lamps that would light up the Padma Bridge once it is inaugurated. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Sexual harassers stab student to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A 22-year-old polytechnic student was stabbed to death on Friday by what police said were sexual harassers in Bogura town.

Alzamiu Boni, 22, a computer technology student of Bogura Polytechnic Institute, died while being treated at Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital with a stab injury above his left ear.

Quoting witnesses, Sub-inspector Sazzadul Islam of Bonani Police Outpost said Boni was visiting a small entrepreneurs' fair where a woman, who was with him, was sexually harassed by one Arif and several others.

Boni protested and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

# Swiatek romps to 2nd French Open title

AFP, Paris

Iga Swiatek cruised to her second French Open title by dominating teenager Coco Gauff in the final on Saturday, as the world number one claimed her 35th successive victory.

The 21-year-old Pole stormed to a 6-1, 6-3 win in only 68 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier, equalling Venus Williams' record for the longest winning run by a woman in the 21st century.

Swiatek celebrated her sixth straight title this year in the players' box with her friends and family.

A disconsolate Gauff was left sitting on her seat in tears after a nervous performance, punctuated by 23 unforced errors and three double faults.

The 18-year-old American came up short in her bid to become the youngest Grand Slam singles champion since Maria Sharapova won



SEE PAGE 2 COL 6