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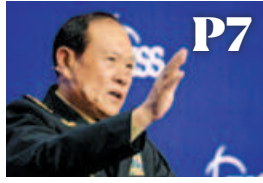
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## DIP IN REMITTANCE Hundi at play again

JAMIL MAHMUD

Remittance inflow fell in 11 months of the current fiscal year mainly because a large number of migrants switched to informal channels like hundi from formal ones for sending money, say experts.

Bangladesh received \$19.19 billion in remittance from July 2021 to May 2022, which was \$22.83 billion during the same period in fiscal 2020-21 -- a drop by \$3.64 billion, shows Bangladesh Bank data.

Experts observe that many migrants are preferring informal channels as hundi activities returned to normalcy following improvement in Covid situation. Besides, a significant gap between the official exchange rate of US dollar and that in the kerb market is also a key reason.

They also pointed out that fiscal 2020-21 saw a boost in inward remittance as many returnee migrants, who lost jobs due to the pandemic, brought home their savings.

A report of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit said 4.08 lakh migrant workers returned home from April 1 to December 31, 2020.

According to BB data, the country received \$18.2 billion in remittance in fiscal 2019-20, \$16.4 billion in fiscal 2018-19 and \$14.9 billion in fiscal 2017-18.

The country-wise data available for 10 months till April of FY21-22 shows inward remittance saw the biggest decline from Saudi Arabia hosting more than 2.2 million Bangladeshis.



**PADMA BRIDGE inauguration 12 DAYS TO GO**

An aerial shot of the Padma Bridge taken yesterday. The long-cherished bridge is set to be opened to traffic at 6:00am on June 26, a day after the inauguration ceremony.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

### REMITTANCE FROM TOP 10 SOURCE COUNTRIES



COUNTRY	JULY '20-APRIL '21 (million dollar)	July '21-April '22 (million dollar)
Saudi Arabia	4,796.34	3,862.10
USA	2,839.36	2,870.38
UAE	2,065.42	1,502.66
Malaysia	1,724.42	849.86
UK	1,699.93	1,692.36
Kuwait	1,577.18	1,384.56
Oman	1,283.34	756.21
Qatar	1,155.97	1,127.02
Italy	663.02	848.07
Singapore	528.47	326.86

SOURCE: BMET, BANGLADESH BANK

Remittance from Saudi Arabia, the largest labour market for Bangladesh, dropped to \$3.8 billion in 10 months of FY21-22 from \$4.7 billion during the same period in FY20-21, shows data of the central bank and Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

Bangladesh saw the second-biggest fall in remittance from Malaysia with remitters sending home \$849.86 million in 10 months of FY21-22 compared to 1.7 billion in FY20-21.

During the period, remittance inflow from six other countries -- the UAE, Oman, Singapore, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Kingdom -- also dropped considerably.

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### LAUNDERED MONEY

Kamal takes flak in JS for amnesty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers of both the ruling and the opposition parties heavily criticised Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday for his budget proposal of legalising laundered money for a 7 percent tax.

Instead of giving facilities to the money launderers, the government should take legal actions against them, said Jatiya Party MP Pir Fazlur Rahman.

"Money laundering has increased in the country... Thousands of crores of taka have been smuggled out of this country which the finance minister could not stop," he said.

If laundered money is allowed to return to

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## Ensure inclusive national election

Say former CECs, commissioners and EC officials at dialogue on next general polls

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

If the next general election is not joined by all political parties, it would not be accepted nationally and internationally, a number of former chief election commissioners, election commissioners and election officials said yesterday.

They suggested capacity building for EC officials so that they can perform as returning officers during the national polls due next year.

While attending a dialogue with the EC at its conference room, they also proposed a proportional representation system of election and recommended that the ministries of public administration and home be placed under the authority of the EC ahead of the parliamentary election.

They also opined against army deployment for election duties. The EC held its sixth round of talks yesterday as part of a series of dialogue with a cross section of people, seeking recommendations on how to hold free and fair elections.

"If all parties don't participate in this election, it won't be acceptable. How you will bring them to election depends on the power of persuasion," former Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said.

He said they had spent a good amount of time getting all the parties to join the 2008 election. "But from their public speeches, it seems that they [certain political parties] are adamant [about not joining the

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### PADMA BRIDGE INAUGURATION

Govt to invite Khaleda, Yunus, WB president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the Padma Bridge is being prepared for opening, the government is set to invite BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Nobel Peace Laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus and World Bank President David R Malpass, among others, at the inauguration of Padma Bridge on June 25.

The authorities will start sending invites from Thursday, Obaidul Quader, minister for road transport and bridges, said today.

The general secretary of ruling Awami League also said Bangladesh foreign missions abroad will invite some foreigners in this regard. "However, no president or prime minister of other countries will be invited."

Quader was speaking at a press conference held at the service area-1 of the Bridge's Mawa end.

He also said they were apprehensive about possible sabotage centring the inauguration and the authorities concerned are investigating into the matter.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the bridge on June 25, which will be open to public at 6:00am the following day, Quader said.

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## Khaleda now stable

STAR REPORT

The physical condition of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is stable after doctors placed a stent inside her heart, said Shairul Kabir Khan, member of her media wing, yesterday.



Evercare Hospital's doctors placed a stent inside her main artery after she suffered a mild heart attack early Saturday.

Khaleda's personal physician Zahid Hossain is continuously monitoring her condition, Shairul said, adding there was no coronavirus-related complication.

She had 99 percent blockage in her main artery, said the party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam, quoting doctors.

Doctors successfully removed the blockage by ballooning, he said, adding the physicians hoped

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Two children play on a rail bridge over a road in Koratitola in the capital yesterday. If they see an approaching train late, they would not be able to move to the side. They also risk falling to the ground through the gaping openings between the sleepers. Children left to their own devices are often seen on Dhaka streets.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## MP FLOUTING POLLS CODE EC's hands are tied

STAR REPORT

The Election Commission cannot do anything against a lawmaker if he "dishonours" the commission's directives, said Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal.

He came up with the remark yesterday after journalists drew his attention to Cumilla-6 Awami League lawmaker AKM Bahauddin not complying with the EC's directive to leave his constituency ahead of the Cumilla city polls scheduled for June 15.

"We have sent a letter asking him to leave the area... If he doesn't honour it, we don't have anything to do."

"We have come to know that he [the lawmaker] has filed a case against the directive," said the CEC hinting that the commission would not do anything until a court delivers a verdict.

"We have some legal power. Some powers are partial and some are complete," he said.

The CEC was talking to journalists after a dialogue with former CECs, election commissioners and secretaries at the Election Commission Secretariat.

As per the electoral code, lawmakers cannot take part in any election campaign in city corporation polls.

Violating the code, Bahauddin has been campaigning

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## Covid cases over 100 after 2 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After around two and a half months, the number of Covid-19 cases surpassed 100-mark yesterday as the health directorate reported 119 cases countrywide.

On March 25, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) reported 102 cases.

Since then, the numbers of daily confirmed cases under the 100-mark and hit the lowest, four cases, on May 5.

Despite an increase later, the numbers remained below 50 until June 6. The number has continued to rise since then.

In the past week ending yesterday, the number of cases has increased by around 81 percent compared to the preceding week.

The positivity rate has also increased.

Yesterday, the DGHS reported 2.06 percent positivity rate against 5,280 samples tested in 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

No Covid-19 patient, however, died yesterday.

So far, the Covid-19 has claimed 29,131 lives in the country.

The first cases of Covid-19 were reported on March 8, 2020. Since then, more than 19.54 lakh confirmed cases of Covid-19 were reported as of yesterday.

## Russia opens rebranded McDonald's restaurants

REUTERS

It might look and smell like McDonald's but now it's Vkusno & tochka. The golden arches are gone, the Filet-O-Fish is simply a fish burger. The Big Mac has left Russia.

A new era for Russia's fast-food and economic scene dawned on Sunday, as McDonald's MCD.N restaurants flung open their doors in Moscow under new Russian ownership and with the new name, which translates as "Tasty and that's it".



An SUV goes against traffic on Hare Road in the capital yesterday. Drivers, especially those employed by people with influence, are often seen putting other road users in danger.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Reshuffle in ACC to hurt high-profile probes

Say officials transferred en masse

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The recent reshuffle in the Anti-Corruption Commission would hamper investigation of many high-profile corruption cases, said officials who have been transferred.

In an order issued on June 1, the ACC transferred 39 assistant and deputy directors to different districts from its headquarters in Dhaka. They have also been asked to join their new workplaces by June 15; they will otherwise be released, the commission said.

Many of the 39 mid-rank officials are involved in probing high-profile graft cases and the investigations would now be delayed, the officials said, adding that they were transferred in the name of serving at a workplace for at least three years.

They alleged that the rule was not followed for officials who have come from admin and judicial cadres.

Although the commission pointed out that the transfer was nothing but a regular process, the officials alleged that the authorities made the decision as a punishment for forming an association.

An ACC deputy director, preferring to be unnamed, said after the sacking of deputy assistant director Sharif Uddin in February over "violating ACC rules", the officials became united in protests. They

also formed Dudak Service Association the same month for their welfare.

"We're preparing for registration with the Department of Social Welfare and awaiting permission from high-ups in this regard. But instead of giving us permission, the authorities transferred the association

**Although the commission pointed out that the transfer was nothing but a regular process, the officials alleged that the authorities made the decision as a punishment for forming an association.**

members."

"All the 39 officials belong to the association," said the deputy director.

In February, the association was formed with 139 members, including first-class and second-class officers, from the headquarters and districts.

At that time, officials said they were having a hard time keeping faith in the high-ups, who came on deputation from admin cadre and have been playing vital roles in decision-making at the commission.

"They have transferred us as a

punishment for forming the association," the deputy director added.

Another official, wishing not to be named, said, "The commission's decision will hamper the ongoing probes of the high-profile corruption cases as the new officials will find it difficult to move forward with the investigations."

Contacted, ACC's Secretary Mahbub Hossain rejected the claim and said in a short text, "It's not right."

This correspondent tried to get his explanation over phone, but he did not pick up.

ACC Commissioner (Investigation) Jahurul Haque, however, said transfer was a regular process. "We've recently opened some new offices in some districts. We need experienced officers there."

He added that the transferred officials had been at the same workplace for over three years and they were getting involved in other activities. "They have become disappointed as their interests are hurt."

According to ACC website updated on April 10, 2019, out of 629 deputy, deputy assistant and assistant directors, 431 work in the ACC headquarters, from where major corruption cases, scrutiny, intelligence, hotline service and graft prevention activities are dealt with.

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## Hundi at play again

FROM PAGE 1

Talking to this newspaper, several economists said banks are losing fast the advantage they enjoyed at the height of the pandemic when the informal channels mostly remained closed. But as the Covid situation improved, remitters switched to informal channels again.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said exchange rate management is crucial in encouraging remitters to use the formal channels.

Pointing to the recent volatility in the forex market, he said there was a difference of Tk 6-7 between the kerb market rate and the official exchange rate of the dollar.

Such a gap should not be more than Tk 2-3, he said, adding that the persistence of a gap bigger than this raises concern over remitters opting for informal channels.

Yesterday, the central bank depreciated the exchange rate of the greenback to Tk 92 per dollar, the 12th depreciation this year, in an effort to stabilise the forex market.

Earlier on June 2, the BB decided to allow the exchange rates of the taka to float against the US dollar for the first time in a decade.

On the central bank move, Mustafizur said, "This will significantly reduce the tendency for remitters to switch to informal channels from the formal ones."

He, however, said the country is seeing a growth in inward remittance in the current fiscal year compared to the pre-Covid period (FY19-20), maintaining the "historical trend".

The BMET data shows Bangladesh saw annual growth in inward remittance for five consecutive years since 2017.

Mustafizur also said the recent outflow of a high number of fresh migrant workers is likely to boost inward remittance within a year, but there is a need for enhanced monitoring and a robust campaign highlighting the risk of sending remittance through informal channels.

With a robust campaign targeting fresh migrants, inward remittance in the next fiscal year could even touch \$24.7 billion received in 2020-2021, he hoped.

According to government data, 7.99 lakh fresh migrant workers went to different countries in 10 months of this fiscal year.

Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said the increase in inward remittance in fiscal 2020-2021 was mainly due to the remitters switching to formal channels from informal ones amid the pandemic.

Besides, many returnee migrants brought all their savings home, boosting inward remittance, he noted.

As the Covid situation improved and activities in informal channels got back to normal, many switched

back to the informal channels for sending money, he said.

Zahid further said "visa trade" is also another reason for which remittance is sent through unauthorised channels.

"There is a 'grey area' in such visa trade," he said, adding that host countries have to come forward to stop such malpractices since Bangladesh cannot stop it alone.

The economist suggested that the National Board of Revenue improve its intelligence capabilities to detect under-invoicing -- an act of showing the price of an item on an invoice lower than the actual one.

Through under-invoicing, many importers try to evade tax by making a part of payment through informal channels, he said.

Md Serajul Islam, executive director and spokesperson for Bangladesh Bank, said migrants sent their earnings through proper channels at the height of the pandemic as their mobility was restricted at that time. Besides, many migrants had to return home permanently.

He further said the government has been trying to fuel growth in inward remittance by giving cash incentives.

The cash incentive for remitting through the banking channel has been raised to 2.5 percent from 2 percent, Serajul pointed out.

The central bank has recommended a further increase in the incentive, he said without elaborating.

## Kamal takes flak in JS for amnesty

FROM PAGE 1

the country legally, then there is no need for a money laundering law in Bangladesh, he further said.

"This [amnesty] will encourage people to amass money through illegal means," he added.

Meanwhile, another JP MP Shameem Haider Patwary asked the finance minister to rethink the matter.

## Govt to invite Khaleda, Yunus

FROM PAGE 1

Stages were being set at the Mawa end in this regard.

He said Hasina will inaugurate the bridge at 10:00am and then take part in a rally at the Mawa end. Other politicians, dignitaries and foreign diplomats will also be present there.

The PM will then cross the bridge and then take part in another rally at then Janjira end, Quader said.

At a June 4 programme, Quader verbally invited Mercy Tembon, World Bank's country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, to the opening ceremony.

That day he told reporters that BNP

This amnesty should not be availed if there is any specific allegation of money laundering, he said.

Such an amnesty was given in India but that failed to bring any success, he added.

Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan demanded punishment of the top 12 corrupts in the country.

"By doing this, the government will be able

to bring down 50 percent corruption in the country. If not, I will resign from the parliament," he said.

Pran Gopal Dutta, MP of the ruling Awami League, also asked the finance minister to revise the proposal.

"There is no positive impact of this amnesty. If the money launderers were honest, they would have kept the money in the country," he said.

Chairperson Khaleda Zia would also be invited to the inauguration ceremony "if the relevant law permits". Law Minister Anisul Huq later said there was no legal bar in this regard.

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.

On several occasions, the PM accused Yunus of playing a role behind the cancellation of the WB loan.

## Minibus bomb attack kills four in Afghan capital: police

AFP, Kabul

A bomb blast on a minibus killed at least four people and injured several others in the Afghan capital on Saturday, police said.

The explosion in an eastern district of Kabul was the latest in a series of deadly attacks that have rocked Afghanistan in recent months, a little under a year since the Taliban takeover.

A team of Taliban security personnel had been deployed to the area to investigate the bombing, police spokesman Khalid Zadrar told AFP.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the bombing that occurred in a district mainly inhabited by members of the Sunni Pashtun community.

## HC questions legality of ACC rule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of a section of the ACC rules that curtailed individual's right to directly lodge corruption case with the court.

The court issued a rule asking the ACC and the government to explain in 10 days why section 13(3) of the Anti-Corruption Commission (Amendment) Rules 2019 should not be declared illegal and scrapped as the section allegedly damaged the individual's right to directly file corruption case with the court and curtailed the court's authority to directly accept such case for trial.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo came up with rule.

## June 25 SSC exam rescheduled to June 24

UNB, Dhaka

The Secondary School Certificate and its equivalent examinations for June 25 have been shifted to June 24.

The decision was made because of the inauguration of the Padma Bridge, said Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to inaugurate the Padma Bridge on June 25.

Students will take the English 2nd paper test on the first day of the exams.

Besides, the activities of all coaching centres across the country will remain suspended from June 15 to July 7 as the SSC examinations are scheduled to begin on June 19, she said.

Like the previous year, the examinations will be held on shortened syllabus.

A total of 20,21,868 students are expected to sit for the examinations.

## Jet fuel price goes up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local airlines are about to face a blow both at home and abroad as the price of jet fuel increased again in the domestic market.

The price of jet fuel for international airlines, however, remained unchanged.

Sources in the aviation industry said passengers would have to pay more for the price hike.

This is the 15th time Padma Oil Company Limited increased price of jet fuel in the last 19 months.

The price of jet fuel is now Tk 111 per litre after it was raised by Tk 5 per litre.

## Destiny director sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Destiny-2000 director Farha Diba was sent to jail in a money laundering case yesterday.

Earlier, she was sentenced -- in absentia -- to eight years imprisonment in the case.

Judge Shaikh Nazmul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka passed the order.

Farha surrendered before the court through her lawyer, seeking bail in the case, said sources.

The same court on May 12 sentenced her with the imprisonment and fined her Tk 40 crore, in default of which she will have to serve two more years in jail.

The judge also sentenced Destiny-2000 managing director Mohammad Rafiqul Amin, to 12 years and fined Tk 200 crore, in default of which he would have to serve three years in prison.

## EC's hands are tied

FROM PAGE 1

for Arfanul Haque Rifat, the ruling AL-nominated mayoral candidate.

Amid such a situation, the EC on June 8 issued a letter to Bahauddin asking him to leave his constituency.

Later, he filed a petition with the High Court challenging the directive.

In response, the HC issued a rule asking the EC to explain as to why this directive should not be declared contradictory to the constitution.

Meanwhile, independent mayoral candidate Monirul Haque Sakku, who is the

former joint secretary of Cumilla South District unit BNP, yesterday unveiled his electoral manifesto.

He served as the city mayor for two consecutive terms since 2012.

Citing that he undertook many development activities in the city, Sakku vowed to continue the development work, if he is re-elected.

Replying to a question, he said he would accept the polls result whatever it may be, if the election is held in a fair manner.

[Our Cumilla correspondent contributed to this report.]

## Ex-DGHS DG

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All the accused pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Judge Al Asad Md Asifuzzaman of Special Judge's Court of Dhaka yesterday read out the charges to them, said Anti-Corruption Commission Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir.

Earlier in the day, the judge dismissed their petitions seeking discharge from the case, added the state lawyer.

The judge fixed July 4 for starting trial of the case.

The accused were charged for their alleged involvement in embezzlement of government funds in the name of coronavirus sample collection and treatment without having any licence to do so.

According to the case statement, the accused pocketed over Tk 1.37 crore through fake Covid tests in the government-run lab Nipsom.

The ACC filed the case against Shahed and four

others, excluding the name of Azad on September 22 of 2020.

On September 30 last year, ACC Deputy Director Md Farid Ahmed Patwary, also investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka.

In the charge sheet, Azad, former director general of DGHS, was named as evidence regarding his involvement in the scam was found during the investigation.

## Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1 the treatment would temporarily relieve her of heart-related issues.

"Khaleda's life will be in danger if she is not sent abroad for advanced treatment," he added.

The government will have to bear all the responsibilities if any unwanted event takes place, he added.

## Move to return workers to Bahrain underway

UNB, Dhaka

Bahrain has agreed to allow 161 stranded Bangladeshi workers back to Bahrain under a special arrangement after six months of Bangladesh's request.

Bangladesh Embassy in Manama has requested the Bangladeshis, who remain out of the list, not to get frustrated but try to convince their sponsors in Bahrain for their re-entry.

"It's unfortunate that most of the sponsors are not willing to bring them (Bangladeshi workers) back to Bahrain (due to Covid-related economic problem)," said Bangladesh Ambassador to Bahrain Dr Md Nazrul Islam in a Facebook live recently, noting that the number that remains out of the approved list is over 800.

He said the embassy will inform all if the Bahrain government allows more Bangladeshis to return to Bahrain.

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With no surveillance on the part of the authorities, this open space beside the main road in Hazaribagh Beribadh area has been turned into a garbage dump. One can find almost all types of waste here, even unusual ones like this sweatshop car, which was meant for repairs, but now grows rust amidst the polluted area. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Back pain curable without painkillers Doctors tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine in every 10 patients suffering from back pain can get well through rest and physical activities without taking any painkillers, said physicians at a seminar yesterday.

Painkillers can also cause severe damage to different organs, including kidneys, they said at the seminar at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

The medicine, rheumatology and neurosurgery departments of BSMMU jointly organised the seminar.

While presenting a keynote, Dr Mohammad Hossain, a professor of neurosurgery at BSMMU, said, "Majority of such pains is quite usual. Around 90 percent of patients get well if rest properly and engage in physical activities."

"But patients with pains in their legs or weakening leg strength in addition to the back pain should go to doctors as early as possible. We call this condition the Red Black sign," he said.

He said majority of the back pain is caused due to prolapsed disks. A prolapsed disc often presses on a nerve root which can cause leg pain and other

**Majority of such pains is quite usual. Around 90 percent of patients get well if rest properly and engage in physical activities.**

DR MOHAMMAD HOSSAIN  
Professor of neurosurgery at BSMMU

symptoms.

Moreover, according to Prof Mohammad Hossain, back pain may arise due to injury, tumours, and changes in the waist areas of elderly people.

To diagnose the reasons, doctors can suggest an MRI, he said, "People with such conditions can contact the Neuro-spinal Surgery department at the BSMMU for treatment."

"There is no need to go abroad for any spinal surgery. BSMMU has every arrangement for this," he added.

Speaking as chief guest, Prof Sharfuddin Ahmed, vice chancellor of the university, said, "People should not take painkillers for every pain. It has many side effects."

Stressing on physical exercise, the VC said, "To get relief from back pain, people should avoid lifting heavy objects, maintain proper body weight, and practice

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# The rebirth of Rasulbagh park



PHOTO: STAR

DIPAN NANDY

Despite its name, no one could call Rasulbagh Children's Park a place appropriate for children a few years ago. It used to be crowded with those who abused drugs, and a little rain waterlogged the whole place.

But the park has been reborn. It was modernised under the "Jol Sobujer Dhaka" project of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), at a cost of Tk 4.98 crore.

This 28-acre field has a place for adults to play football. The park includes a 150-metre walkway, a public plaza and a mini pavilion. A cafeteria and gymnasium are also present.

The park's security is maintained through CCTV and WiFi facilities. DSCC has set up toilets and water-treatment plants at the site adjacent to the mosque, and there are also

special arrangements for women.

Visiting the park recently, this correspondent saw children and teenagers having fun on the swing and slide. The park echoed with their laughter and excitement.

Sahir, who came to play with friends, told this correspondent that earlier, there was no place to play in the area. "Now, I can play on this field. It doesn't take any money to play here."

The park's ample greenery, with its seasonal variation, will familiarise children with a variety of flowers and fruit trees. It was the local children who planted these saplings. Among them, Burmese grape (lotkon), mud-apple (sofeda), elephant apple (chalta) and star-fruit (kamranga) trees can be seen in the park.

Architect Rafiq Azam, the new designer of the park, has removed the walls around the

area. He told The Daily Star that while designing, it was decided that the ground would be for everyone.

Haji Maqbool Mia, a senior resident of Rasulbagh, said earlier, there was a narrow walkway to the park. The area's condition was poor due to small shops and various structures around the walls. The open space of the park became the dustbin of nearby houses.

"Although it was called a children's park, there was no arrangement for children to play in the field," he added.

He said that if it rained a little, the park would become a small waterbody. The garbage from the nearby drains and sewage line polluted the environment. Because of this, the residents suffered unbearably.

In this regard, architect Rafiq

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## Need to unite for int'l recognition

Speakers tell meeting on 1971 genocide

DU CORRESPONDENT

The country will need to be united once again for international recognition of the genocide carried out by the Pakistani army during the 1971 Liberation War, said speakers at a meeting yesterday.

Activists and prominent researchers met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam at the official residence of DU Vice Chancellor to make a strategic plan to get the recognition.

Demand for the recognition is set to be placed before the United Nations Human Rights Council in its 50th session, scheduled to be held between June 13 and July 8 in Geneva.

BASUG, an organisation of the Bangladeshi diaspora, submitted a written statement in this regard, said Mahboob Zaman, organiser of its Bangladesh chapter.

"Several organisations are working for the cause. All the documents and data regarding the genocide are scattered, which we need to collect and organise," said Mahboob, also a freedom fighter.

"Some separate activities, including establishing the Liberation War Museum and the Genocide Museum, have been done so far. But we need something bigger and more collective to try and achieve international recognition."

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## Renew Odhikar's registration Demand 37 eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-seven eminent citizens yesterday protested and condemned the cancellation of registration of non-governmental organisation "Odhikar".

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of the decision and renewal of its licence.

In a statement, they said this decision of the NGO Affairs Bureau is tantamount to the contempt of court and contradictory to the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution as a case involving its registration is pending with the High Court.

"Odhikar has been collecting information and doing research and advocacy for many years to establish rule of law and human rights. We think the activities of this organisation regarding the

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## They can't legally air talk shows Says info minister on online news portals

UNB, Dhaka

Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud has said online versions of newspapers or news portals are not legally allowed to broadcast talk shows and bulletins.

The minister highlighted the gazette guideline in this regard yesterday to journalists during a meeting at the ministry.

"Recently Association of Television Channel Owners (ATCO) leaders brought the matter to our attention that online versions of some newspapers and online portals are publishing talk shows and news bulletins for which they don't have any approval," he said replying to the questions of journalists.

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PRAYER  
TIMING  
JUNE 13



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-05	12-45	5-00	6-50	8-15
Jamaat	4-40	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Project launched to prevent drowning

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday launched a project titled "Integrated Community-based Centre for Child care, Protection and Swim-safe Facilities" to prevent child drowning across the country.

The project would be implemented by Bangladesh Shishu Academy under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA).

Fazilatun Nessa Indira, the state minister, inaugurated the project at an event at a hotel in the capital.

The project will be implemented in 45 upazilas of 16 districts primarily, following three objectives.

## TERRORISM, MILITANCY Over 68pc suspects aged 15-34: CTTC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 68 percent of suspects of militant and terrorist activities belong to the age group between 15 and 34, according to a research report of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit based on the profiles of arrestees.

The specialised police unit has arrested 512 such suspects in 112 cases ever since the Holey Artisan cafe attack in 2016.

Md Nazmul Islam, assistant commissioner of the research and development division of CTTC, disclosed the findings at a workshop yesterday.

The workshop, titled "Reporting on Terrorism", was jointly organised by CTTC and Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (CRAB) at Cirdap.

The findings also revealed that among the suspects, the most vulnerable to being targeted by militant groups are aged between 20 and 24. Around 27.5 percent of the age group join such groups.

Frustration over education, work and personal lives make them easy targets, said officials.

Around 9.4 percent of suspects are between the ages of 35 and 40, while the figure is 8 percent for individuals aged between 40 and 44.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Demanding release of party chairperson Khaleda Zia and allowing her to go abroad for better treatment, BNP held a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday. The north and south city units of the party organised the event.

PHOTO: STAR

## Evolution of cyber crime

Cybercrimes have been on the rise over the last few years.

With new social media platforms and services in place, new modes of crime have emerged.

The process of blackmailing, extortion, sexual harassment and human trafficking has seen an evolution - which is alarming, to say the least.

The Daily Star will run five reports from tomorrow to explore this very evolution, its worst sufferers, the faces behind the crimes and the battle against them. Keep an eye on the city page for more.



## 30 villages in Kurigram inundated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Reddish water from upstream in Assam, India, has been flowing into the rivers of Rowmari upazila in Kurigram resulting in flooding at 30 villages across three unions.

Water of Jinjiram, Kalur and Dharani rivers of the upazila have overflowed due to the onrush of upstream water.

According to residents in Rowmari upazila, reddish water started flowing from Assam on Saturday afternoon. The water submerged villages, roads and croplands. Locals were having difficulty travelling on roads due to the flood.

Sarabesh Ali, chairman of Jadurchar Union Parishad, said nearly 30 villages have been inundated or have faced water-logging. Some flood-affected people have moved to safer areas with their cattle and other belongings, he added.

Rowmari upazila Agriculture Officer Kayum Chowdhury said the reddish water is very harmful for crops.

"Crops covering about 200 hectares of land have now been inundated. There is a risk of crop loss if the water does not drain from the land within 2-3 days," he said.

Rowmari upazila Education Officer Nazrul Islam said 21 schools of the upazila were inundated and regular teaching activities in these schools have been suspended.

Asked, Abdullah Al Mamun, executive engineer of Kurigram Water Development Board (WDB), said it will take 2-3 days for the water to recede due to the constant rains. He also said they are preparing a list of affected people.



The residents of Kurigram's Rowmari upazila have been going through an extremely challenging time as reddish water flowing from Assam, India have flooded 30 villages across three unions. Roads are inaccessible, crops are submerged and in the face of such difficulty, many residents have moved to safer regions with all their belongings.

PHOTO: STAR



## 24 hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 24 people were hospitalised with dengue in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Among the new cases, only one is from outside Dhaka.

Eighty-five dengue patients, including 81 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals across the country.

This year, the DGHS has recorded 571 dengue cases and 486 recoveries so far. The directorate has not yet reported any death from the mosquito-borne viral disease.

A total of 105 dengue patients, including 95 in Dhaka division, died in 2021, according to data of DGHS.

## Nazrul memorial centres failing to attract visitors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The memories of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam are at risk of slowly fading away in the very same places where he created those moments.

The two "Nazrul Smriti Kendra" in Mymensingh's Trishal upazila are failing to attract visitors, as the centres have not been updated with new collections for a long time.

The centres started their journey in 2003, and even after 19 years, they are yet to be enriched with more of Nazrul's memorabilia, said locals and visitors.

Nazrul, born at Churulia village of West Bengal's Bardhaman district in 1899, came to Kazir Shimla in Mymensingh's Trishal upazila in 1913 with Kazi Rafizullah, a police sub-inspector, then posted at Bardhaman.

The two centres are located at Kazir Shimla and Namapara of Trishal's Darirampur -- places that are surrounded by the childhood memories of the poet.

The memorabilia at the centres include rare gramophones and records released by His Master's Voice Company; hand-written scripts of the poet in Bangla, English, Hindi and Urdu; some photographs of Nazrul and his family members, and a couch, centre sources said.

The libraries at the centres have not been updated for many years.

Mehtabin Mishu, a college student, said the library's collection should be expanded with works of Nazrul and those who wrote about him to draw in more visitors.

"The few visitors who visit the centres are bored of seeing the same collection, that too in poor condition,"

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



## Inter-district robber gang busted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

They used to only rob trucks carrying paddy, rice, cow or fish feeds.

For the robbery, they stopped the trucks using laser light -- mostly used by policemen these days -- in different points of a highway.

Soon after, the robbers -- carrying local arms -- used to beat up drivers and loot the truck. Then they used the looted trucks to conduct similar robberies.

Police's Detective Branch disclosed the findings yesterday, following arrest of four member of an inter-district robber gang from Shah Ali area in the capital.

The arrestees are -- Makbul Hossain Prokash alias Mangal Hossain Babu, Aslamul Haque Aslam, Rafiqul Islam and Hasan Howlader. Based on information that robbers gathered in Shah Ali area to conduct robbery, detectives conducted a raid and arrested them, said Md Harun Or Rashid, DB joint commissioner.

Aslam is the ringleader of the gang, who is wanted in connection to some recent incidents of robberies, he said.

Led by Aslam, the gang has conducted robbery in Chapainawabganj, Natore, Naogaon, Bogura, Sirajganj, Tangail, Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Manikganj, Dhamrai, Savar, Ashulia, Narsingdi, Shariatpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Faridpur and Jashore, said Harun.

He said two cases were filed against the gang.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## Toxic smoke from brick kilns damages crops in Tangail



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Almost 100 acres of Boro paddy has been damaged in Kodim Deohata and Mir Deohata areas of Mirzapur upazila in Tangail.

Locals alleged that toxic smoke emitted from brick kilns was the reason.

Besides paddy, vegetables adjacent to the paddy fields are also getting damaged by this toxic smoke, they added.

In the last few years, about a dozen brick kilns were constructed at two villages under Gorai union adjacent to the crop fields. The brick burning process started during the beginning of the Boro paddy cultivation.

When the brick burning comes to a halt and the

chimneys are shut off, the smoke gets out through the shafts underneath the kilns. This smoke from the shafts damages the crops. Besides, the chimney's height needs to be about 130 feet so that they cannot damage the crops.

Consequently, as a result of this latent emission, the upper portion of the paddy leaves were burnt and damaged before harvest.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw that the paddy in fields adjacent to the kilns were partially or fully damaged.

Nurul Islam of Mir Deohata village said he cultivated boro paddy on seven acres of land. The paddy leaves, however, started turning gray just after

planting the saplings and rice husks turned sticky, as a result of the emission, he said.

Farmer Abdul Khaleque of the same village said, "The brick kilns started getting constructed in the area about six years ago. In the last three years I didn't even get close to the yield I used to get before the brick kilns were constructed," he said.

Asked about the matter, Mohammad Ali, former UP member and owner of SMB-1 brick kiln, said the brick kiln's operation has been stopped before Eid. "None of the paddy got damaged for the brick kilns," he claimed.

Md Amanullah, owner of HSB Bricks, said height of the chimney of his brick kiln is

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



Traffic movement was halted for hours in Dinajpur town yesterday as storm uprooted a giant roadside tree around 4:30am. It wasn't until three in the afternoon that the tree was removed, allowing vehicles to resume movement. This photo was taken in front of Dinajpur Government College.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

## Buddhist monk found dead in monastery

A CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A Buddhist monk was found dead in a monastery in Bandarban yesterday.

The body of 74-year-old Bhadanta Nanda Bangsho Mahathero was found hanging at Minhajiri Para in Kuhlalong Union near Sadar upazila, said police.

UP chairman Mongpu Marma said when villagers reported the incident around 9:00am, he immediately informed police.

Kajain Pru Marma (55), younger brother of the deceased, said Bhadanta Nanda became a monk at the age of 9.

Villagers said he spent 13 years in Minhajiri Para as the head of the monastery till his death. OC Rafiqul Islam of Bandarban Sadar Police Station said, "As soon as Mongpu Marma reported the incident, we went to the spot, recovered the body, prepared an inquest report, and sent it to Sadar hospital for autopsy."

He said they are looking into the incident.

## Incinerator plants to dispose of medical waste

### Jica shows interest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japan International Cooperation Agencies (Jica) is interested in establishing incinerator plants to dispose of medical wastes produced in hospitals under the city corporation areas.

It is also interested in installing a new water treatment plant following the public-private partnership (PPP) funding model at Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), said Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Ito Naoki.

The ambassador expressed the interest to Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Md Tazul Islam during his visit to the ministry yesterday.

The minister welcomed the proposal to establish a water treatment plant and incineration plant with Japan's aid. He said "The ministry will inform its decision after the proposal is formally made through a letter."

Tazul also said they have taken different kinds of steps to manage medical waste in a disciplined manner.

He said they have already given instructions to the government and private hospitals, clinics and diagnostic centres to hand over the medical waste to garbage collectors keeping it in separate bags.

## GRAFT CASE AGAINST KHALEDA'S BROTHER

### SC clears way to run trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday cleared way for the lower court concerned to run the trial proceedings in a corruption case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's younger brother Shamim Iskander.

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique passed the order.

The ACC filed the case with Ramna Police Station against Iskander on May 5, 2008, on charges of concealing information about wealth worth Tk 20.47 lakh in the statement submitted to it and for amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 1.53 crore.



(L) Zahid Hasan and Mousumi Mou in "Adorsho Boro Bhai". (M) Chitralkha Guha and Siddiqur Rahman in "Laikar Maa". (R) Tarin, Elina Shammi and Mamo in "Shahoshika 2".

## Television industry at full-pace for Eid-ul-Adha specials

**Mosharraf Karim will be working in Sohail Hasan's Eid project, which will start shooting next week. The actor will be featured in multiple projects by Shamim Zaman.**

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Only a month is left for Eid-ul-Adha to arrive, and our television industry is working valiantly to meet their hectic deadlines. Celebrities are following hectic schedules, travelling from one shooting spot to another. Shooting houses at Uttara, locations like Old Dhaka and Pubail, are fully packed for the production of Eid tele-fictions.

Some of the prominent names in the small screen, including the likes of Mosharraf Karim, Chanchal Chowdhury, Apurba, Afran Nisho, Mehazabien Chowdhury, Tasnuva Tisha and Tajnin Tisha, among others, are all gearing up for the season.

Renowned actor Zahid Hasan has recently wrapped up shooting for Saidur Rahman Russell's directorial project, "Adorsho Boro Bhai". "Eid is the busiest time for actors and directors," says Zahid Hasan, "Since acting is our passion and love, we enjoy this time very much."

Tarin Jahan, Zakia Bari Mamo and Elina Shammi have completed shooting for the telefilm "Shahoshika 2", directed by Zibran Chowdhury. It will be aired on Deepto TV.

Tareen shared that she will be working on a few more fictions this Eid. Scripted by Brindaban Das and directed by Niyaz Mahbub, the seven-episode drama, titled "Dream Tares" features Ahsan Habib Nasim and Ahana in the lead roles.



Chanchal Chowdhury and Tasnuva Tisha in "Chatok".

Mosharraf Karim will be working in Sohail Hasan's Eid project, which will start shooting next week. The actor will be featured in multiple projects by Shamim Zaman. "I try to give something special for the audience, especially during festivals," said Mosharraf Karim.

Director Shohag Gazi's seven-episode drama "Laikar Maa" will be aired on Nagorik television. The director informed that shooting for the project has been completed

recently. It featured Chitralkha Guha, Waliul Haq Rumi, among others.

Chanchal Chowdhury also confirmed that he will be taking part in several Eid productions.

Mehazabien Chowdhury and Afran Nisho's pair has given several hit Eid productions throughout the years. "Mehazabien and I will do several fictions during this Eid, and I will also be shooting with other actresses," says Nisho.

Meanwhile, director Shakal Ahmed is busy with his production "Chatok", scripted by Brindaban Das. It features Chanchal Chowdhury and Tasnuva Tisha.

## Jennifer Aniston slam social media stars for being famous for 'nothing'

Jennifer Aniston slammed social stars for garnering fame and stardom with simply doing "nothing" on their own.

Jennifer told the Hollywood reporters that industry is slowly becoming all about "TikTok and Instagram followers".

"You're famous from TikTok. You're famous from YouTube. You're famous from Instagram. It's sort of almost like it's diluting our actor's job," said the actress.

The actress also took jibe at socialite Paris Hilton and Monica Lewinsky calling them out for gaining fame by simply being scandalous.

"The internet has really shaped a new culture about people becoming famous. This thing of people becoming famous for basically doing nothing. I mean see Paris Hilton, Monica Lewinsky, all those," the actress added.



## "Samrat Prithviraj" to release on OTT after flopping in theatres

Akshay Kumar and Manushi Chhillar starrer "Samrat Prithviraj" has been disappointing at the box office. Shows have been cancelled at various places due to the lack of audience, and the film has grossed less than Rs 65 crore across India.

Yash Raj Films has decided to release "Samrat Prithviraj" on OTT, in just four weeks of its release. The film will premiere on Amazon Prime Video before the scheduled time to reduce the damage.

"Samrat Prithviraj" hit the theatres on June 3. The film is based on the life of Hindu emperor Prithviraj Chauhan. The film also stars Sanjay Dutt and Sonu Sood in pivotal roles.



## NEWS

### Ensure inclusive national election

FROM PAGE 1  
election] this year."

In a democratic society having an election system in place, a political party cannot stay out of election for long, according to Shamsul Huda.

"If we can create the environment, they would join the election," he added. "Let there be a government truly elected through fair polls in our country. Let's reduce the use of muscle power."

Another former CEC, KM Nurul Huda, said he believed that the current EC would be able to conduct a free and fair election, but for that it would require cooperation from all political parties.

He also said there is no need to deploy the army for election duty.

Former CEC Justice Abdur Rouf said the winning side terms the election process as fair while the losing side criticises the EC.

"If you want to keep things as it is and do not have the courage to change the situation, then at least set up one polling station for every 500 voters.... This will reduce the voting hours and voting will end by noon," he said.

"You can complete counting of votes in the daytime. The worst thing is that the counting of votes starts in the evening. And then we see jinnas and ghosts and everything else after the sunset."

He also proposed proportional representation, an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds closely with the proportion of the total votes cast for each party.

For example, if a party gained 40 percent of the total votes, a perfectly proportional system would allow them to gain

40 percent of the seats, according to parliament.

Currently, Justice Abdur Rouf observed, political parties are in bad shape. There is no political party in true sense; they don't have a research cell or shadow secretariat; they don't have any vision for the development of the country. "They just make freestyle comments."

He also called for a change in the culture within the political parties.

Former EC Mahbub Talukdar said, "If the election is not participatory, it will not be acceptable nationally and internationally. On the other hand, the next national election will have to be of international standards. A neutral government is needed appointing senior EC officials as returning officers in place of the deputy commissioners."

He also suggested the public administration and home ministries be placed under the authority of the EC during the polls. "Activities of police must be strictly monitored and curbed at that time."

Former EC Mohammad Abu Halif said participation of all political parties in the national polls must be ensured. "But the Election Commission cannot be involved in this. If they become involved, they will see that nothing can be done."

During his tenure, the EC made many efforts to bring in those who boycotted the elections. "But that didn't happen. There was a lot of violence. If there were no elections at that time, there would have been more violence."

Former EC Shah Nawaz

uk. Currently, Justice Abdur Rouf observed, political parties are in bad shape. There is no political party in true sense; they don't have a research cell or shadow secretariat; they don't have any vision for the development of the country. "They just make freestyle comments."

Former EC Shah Nawaz

said the electronic voting machine (EVM) is a very advanced technology and there is no chance of hacking it, as it does not have internet connections.

But the main problem in using it in elections is interference by "goons" who forcibly press the EVM buttons for the voters, he added. "If you can prevent this, trust in the machines will increase."

Former EC secretary M Abdullah too emphasised on participation of all political parties in the election. "If you can bring all political parties into the polls, you will be 80 percent successful."

Another former EC secretary Mohammed Sadique proposed using EVM in elections. He opposed the staggered elections and setting up CCTV cameras at polling stations was an ambitious project.

CEC Kazi Habibur Awal told reporters after the talks that everybody spoke for an inclusive election for it to be accepted. But the EC alone does not hold the election; voters and political parties are vital stakeholders here.

If they lack mutual understanding, it is difficult for the EC to conduct such elections, he added.

"We will start discussion with political parties. We will seek suggestions from them about the kind of structural changes we need to hold free and fair elections," he said.

He added that no single person can hold a fair election; free and fair elections require a proper system.

The EC started the talks on March 13 and so far held five rounds of dialogues with academics, eminent citizens, journalists and election observers.

They will also hold talks with political parties.

### Amend DSA

FROM PAGE 12  
Mohiuddin Sarkar Naem, a journalist based in Cumilla.

The murders formed a broader trend of violence against journalists in the country.

Between January and May, as many as 118 journalists were physically attacked in 62 incidents, according to the statement.

"Continued violence against journalists across the country, including the filed cases and arrests of journalists under the deeply flawed Digital Security Act of 2018, the recent brutal killings of three media workers, as well as the internationally talked about journalist couple Sagar-Runi murder case in which the submission of an investigation report has been deferred for 89th time so far prove that the violation of the rights of journalists and crimes against journalists indicate the persisting culture of impunity and increasingly fragile state of freedom of expression in Bangladesh."

This has created an atmosphere and culture of fear and self-censorship, it added.

Forex reserves

FROM PAGE 12  
opening up and trade resuming in full swing, the cushion started lessening.

Along with the declining remittance and global inflation as a result of the disruptions in the supply chain for the pandemic, the reserves came under pressure.

Between July last year and April this year, imports averaged \$7.4 billion a month. A year earlier, it was \$5.2 billion.

With Malaysia's political

### KL's turn to prove them wrong

FROM PAGE 12  
selection would be based.

According to the experts, Imran's acceptance of Saravanan's proposal is worrying, as the history of labour migration from Bangladesh to Malaysia was never smooth.

According to the history of labour migration from Bangladesh to Malaysia, after a formal beginning of recruitment in 1992, the latter had kept its doors closed for Bangladeshi workers for nearly a decade from 1997. It however opened them temporarily in the 2000 when some 20,000 workers were granted work visas.

Migration then resumed in full swing again in 2006 but closed in early 2009 when thousands of migrants alleged joblessness, abuse and non-payment of salaries.

Then in 2012, recruitment restarted under the G2G arrangements. Over the next three years, only around 10,000 Bangladeshis were able to get jobs in Malaysia.

Analysts said this was due to powerful lobbyists that worked against recruitment under government arrangement.

In 2016, a new MoU - G2G Plus - was signed between Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur. Despite Bangladesh's strong opposition, the then Malaysian government selected only 10 recruitment agencies out of the 745 most eligible ones.

Initially, the migration cost in the MoU was set at Tk 37,000, which was eventually raised to Tk 1.6 lakh. However, in reality, each migrant had to pay Tk 3-4 lakh.

With Malaysia's political

changeover in 2018, the then Mahathir government again closed the migration door for Bangladeshis, citing massive corruption, labour exploitation and other anomalies as reasons. A portion of those in power and a strong business lobby were reportedly behind a syndicate that practised those.

After signing the new MoU with Bangladesh in December last year, Saravanan wrote to Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad on January 14 saying Malaysia would select 25 Bangladeshi agents and 250 subagents for labour recruitment.

Publicly, Saravanan argued that he increased the number of agencies from the previous 10 and cannot allow all agencies to operate as "Malaysia will become a dumping ground for Bangladeshis like in 2007-08."

This argument, however, is not valid.

Malaysian NGO Tenaganita in a research found several anomalies in the Malaysian home ministry's approval of

the quotas demanded by the employers of foreign workers. This means Malaysian employers recruited excessive workers because that meant more money for them.

"It was the Malaysian government that was to blame [for such a high number of migrants], not the number of [recruitment] agencies," said Mohammad Harun Al Rashid, who led the research.

Replying to Saravanan on January 18, Imran Ahmad stressed on allowing all valid Bangladeshi recruiting agencies and ensuring transparency. He highlighted the Bangladesh Competition Act 2012 and the International Labour Organisation's charters on overseas labour recruitment.

Over the last few months, members of the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies and even some agencies, who were part of the previous 10-member syndicate that manipulated the recruitment in 2017-18, also protested the new syndication through press conferences and human chains.

They argued they had enough experience of how the syndication is not effective, though they were the beneficiaries of the system.

Despite all the allegations, Malaysian Minister Saravanan came here, met Imran Ahmad and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and announced his mandate.

Though he said Bangladeshi migrants will have to pay no fees, local recruiting agents refuse to believe it.

It is now Saravanan's turn to prove them wrong.

Reshuffle

FROM PAGE 2  
There is a three-member commission comprised of the ACC chairman. The ACC secretary works under the commission, and there are eight director generals under the secretary, according to its organogram.

Of the 12 top posts, 10 are filled by former and current bureaucrats.

According to the ACC service rules, unless any exceptions, an official cannot work in the anti-graft body for over three years on deputation.

Interestingly, documents show some officials, including the director general, the director and deputy director, have been working in the ACC on deputation from admin and judicial cadres for over three years.

"Why and to serve whose interest they've been working here for over three years? Why do we always face discrimination?" said an aggrieved official.

Asked about the bureaucrats who have been working for over three years, ACC Commissioner Jahurul said, "We've begun the process [transfer]. It will gradually be applied to others too."

Two more

FROM PAGE 12  
Firefighter Gausul Azam died at the ICU of Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in the capital, said its Resident Surgeon SM Aiyub Hossain.

Gausul, 22, who had 70 percent of his body burnt, was flown to Dhaka from Chattogram, the physician said.

Hailing from Jashore, Gausul joined the fire service in 2018. He left behind his wife and a six-month-old boy.

Investigators have said the depot had at least 27 containers carrying hydrogen peroxide which led to the deadly explosion.

## METHANE EMISSIONS Offshore leak spotted from space for the first times

AFP, Paris  
Scientists have for the first time used satellite data to detect a major offshore leak of the potent greenhouse gas methane, according to peer-reviewed research.

The findings add a crucial tool to an expanding space-based arsenal for pinpointing previously invisible methane plumes from the oil and gas industry. Fossil fuel operations globally emitted about 120 million tonnes of the planet-warming gas in 2020, nearly one-third of all methane emissions from human activity, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The new study in the journal Environmental Science and Technology Letters identified a plume from an oil and gas production platform in the Gulf of Mexico that spewed some 40,000 tonnes over a 17-day period in December.

The platform, near Campeche in southern Mexico, is in one of the country's biggest oil producing fields.

Satellite-based methods for spotting methane leaks over land have developed rapidly in



People march across the Brooklyn Bridge to protest against gun violence in the March for Our Lives march and rally in New York City, on Saturday. Across the country in various cities, thousands gathered to demand meaningful gun laws following the recent shootings from Uvalde, Texas, to Buffalo, New York.

PHOTO: AFP

## SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE SECURITY SUMMIT

# 'Will fight to the end'

Says Beijing on Taiwan, asks US to 'stop containing China'

AFP, Singapore

China will "fight to the very end" to stop Taiwanese independence, the country's defence minister vowed yesterday, stoking already soaring tensions with the United States over the island.

The superpowers are locked in an escalating war of words over the self-ruled, democratic island, which Beijing views as part of its territory awaiting reunification.

Frequent Chinese aircraft incursions near Taiwan have raised the diplomatic temperature, and on Saturday US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin accused Beijing of "destabilising" military activity, in a speech to the Shangri-La Dialogue security summit.

Defence Minister Wei Fenghe hit back in a fiery address at the same event, saying Beijing had "no choice" but to fight if attempts are made to separate Taiwan from China.

"We will fight at all cost, and we



will fight to the very end," he told the summit, which brings together defence ministers from Asia and around the world.

"No one should ever underestimate the resolve and ability of the Chinese armed forces to safeguard its territorial integrity."

"Those who pursue Taiwanese independence in an attempt to split China will definitely come to no good end," he added.

Wei urged Washington to "stop smearing and containing China... stop interfering in China's internal affairs and stop harming China's interests". But he also struck a more

conciliatory tone at points, calling for a "stable" China-US relationship, which he said was "vital for global peace".

During his address, Austin stressed the importance of "fully open lines of communication with China's defence leaders" in avoiding miscalculations.

President Joe Biden, during a visit to Japan last month, appeared to break decades of US policy when, in response to a question, he said Washington would defend Taiwan militarily if it was attacked by China.

The White House has since insisted its policy of "strategic ambiguity" over whether or not it would intervene had not changed.

Despite the heightened tensions, analysts said the fact Austin and Wei were willing to meet in person offered a small sign of hope.

The dispute is just the latest between Washington and Beijing, who have clashed over everything from the South China Sea to human rights and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



the last few years, training an uncomfortable spotlight on regulators and industry. But equivalent techniques have been lacking for leaks from offshore oil and gas operations, which account for about 30 percent of global production.

Methane is responsible for roughly 30 percent of the global rise in temperatures to date. While far less abundant in the atmosphere than CO2, it is about 28 times more powerful as a greenhouse gas on a century-long timescale. Over a 20-year time frame, it is 80 times more potent.

Methane lingers in the atmosphere for only a decade, compared to hundreds or thousands of years for CO2.

This means a sharp reduction in emissions could shave several tenths of a degree Celsius off of projected global warming by mid-century, helping keep alive the Paris Agreement goal of capping Earth's average temperature increase to 1.5C, according to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

## ANTI-ISLAM REMARKS IN INDIA More arrests made

AFP, Srinagar, Kolkata

Police in India's Kashmir arrested a youth for posting a video threatening to behead a former spokesperson of India's ruling party who had made derogatory remarks about Islam's religious leader Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), officials said yesterday. Muslims have taken to the streets to protest against anti-Islamic comments made by two members of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in recent week. The BJP has suspended both the party members and police cases have been filed against them. The remarks also angered several Muslim countries, causing a massive diplomatic challenge for the Modi government. Two teenagers were killed when protesters clashed with police in the eastern city of Ranchi last week. Sporadic riots in northern Uttar Pradesh state forced police to arrest over 300 people. In West Bengal, authorities enforced an emergency law prohibiting public gatherings in the industrial district of Howrah until June 16. At least 70 people were arrested on charges of rioting and disturbing public order.

## Sonia hospitalised

REUTERS, New Delhi



The leader of India's main opposition party, Sonia Gandhi, has been admitted to hospital in New Delhi with health issues related to Covid-19, her Congress party said. The party tweeted the announcement but gave no other details. Italian-born Gandhi, widow of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, is the longest-serving president of the Congress party, which ruled India for decades after its founders led the country to independence from British colonial rule in 1947.

## KILLINGS IN INDIA'S NAGALAND 30 soldiers charged

REUTERS, Guwahati

Police in India's northeastern state of Nagaland said 30 army soldiers were charged for killing tribal labourers mistaken for militants during an anti-insurgency operation last year. Investigations revealed that the operation team had not followed the standard operating procedure and the rules of engagement. The police probe was launched after 13 members of the region's predominantly Konyak tribe and one security trooper were killed in December last year after defence forces stationed in the border state mistook the group of labourers for militants entering from Myanmar and opened fire.

# Focus on climate, not war

Says Fiji at Asia's top security meeting

REUTERS, Singapore

Fiji's defence minister yesterday said that climate change posed the biggest security threat in the Asia-Pacific region, a shift in tone at a defence summit that has been dominated by the war in Ukraine and disputes between China and the United States.

The low-lying Pacific islands, which include Fiji, Tonga and Samoa, are some of the most vulnerable countries in the world to the extreme weather events caused by climate change.

Fiji has been battered by a series of tropical cyclones in recent years, causing devastating flooding that has displaced thousands from their homes and hobbled the island's

economy.

"In our blue Pacific continent, machine guns, fighter jets, grey ships and green battalions are not our primary security concern," Inia Seruiratu, Fiji's Minister for Defence, said at the Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's top security meeting.

"The single greatest threat to our very existence is climate change. It threatens our very hopes and dreams of prosperity."

The Pacific islands became a focus of regional tensions this year after China signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands in

April, alarming the United States, Australia and New Zealand, who fear a stepped-up military presence by Beijing in the Pacific.

Beijing has said that it is not establishing a military base in the Solomon Islands and that its goal is to strengthen security cooperation with Pacific island nations.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi conducted a tour of the Pacific islands last month in the hope of securing a sweeping regional trade and security pact, but the island nations were unable to reach a consensus on a deal.



**দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিঃ**  
গাজীপুর-১৭০৩।

সূত্র নং-৫৩.১৮.৩৩০০.০১৯.০৭.০০২.২০২২ তারিখ- ১২/০৬/২০২২ ইং

**ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

করপোরেশনের প্রকৌশল বিভাগের স্যানিটারী, প্রাথমিক, বিবিধ নির্মাণ, মেরামত ও সরবরাহ কাজে ২০২২-২০২৩ ও ২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছর তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য উপযুক্ত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন অস্থায়ী ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে আবেদন আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। আবেদন ফরমসহ নিয়মাবলী ও শর্তাবলী সম্বলিত সিডিউল প্রতিবেদন ২০০/- (দুইশত) টাকা মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য) প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজস্ব প্যাকে আবেদনের মাধ্যমে করপোরেশনের গাজীপুরস্থ প্রধান কার্যালয়ের অর্থ ও হিসাব বিভাগ এবং ঢাকাস্থ লিয়াজো অফিস, ১ম সংলগ্নী ভবন, ৭ম তলা, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, প্রধান কার্যালয়, মতিবিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১০০০ হতে ১৩/০৬/২০২২ তারিখ হতে ০৩/০৭/২০২২ তারিখ পর্যন্ত সন্ধ্যার পূর্বে কৃষ্ণপতিবার বেলা ১০-০০টা হতে ৪-০০টা পর্যন্ত অফিস কর্মদিবসে ত্রয় করা যাবে।

ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক, দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিঃ, গাজীপুর বরাবরে ডাকযোগে বা কুরিয়ার সার্ভিস মারফত সীলমোহরকৃত আবেদন ০৪/০৭/২০২২ তারিখ বিকাল ১১.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে পৌছাতে হবে অথবা একই তারিখ ও সময়ের মধ্যে গাজীপুরস্থ প্রধান কার্যালয়ে নির্ধারিত বাক্সে সরাসরি জমা (ড্রপ) করা যাবে। নির্ধারিত সময়ের পরে কোন আবেদনগ্রহণ গ্রহণ করা হবে না। আবেদনকারীদের সামনে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) প্রাপ্ত সকল আবেদন ০৪/০৭/২০২২ তারিখে সকাল ১১.০৫ ঘটিকায় গাজীপুরস্থ কার্যালয়ে খোলা হবে। অসমাপ্ত, শর্তযুক্ত আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। করপোরেশনের স্বার্থে কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন বা সকল আবেদন বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(মোঃ মোজাম্মিলুর রহমান)  
অতিরিক্ত প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (ইনচার্জ)  
ফোন : ৯২০৫১১০-১১৫/এক্সটেনশন-২৫০

GD-1214

**পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়**  
পরিচালক (পরিচালনা, উন্নয়ন ও ওয়ার্কস) এর দপ্তর  
রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০

ফোনঃ ০৭৩১-৬৪৯৬১  
ফ্যাক্সঃ ০৭৩১-৬৫১৪৮

স্মারক নং-পাবপ্রবি/পরিচালক (পেউও)/এপিপি(২০২১-২২)/৪১৮/১৮৬৮ তারিখঃ ১১ জুন, ২০২২ইং

**উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

ক্র. নং	আইটেম	বিবরণ
১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়/মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগ।
২।	সংস্থার নাম	পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
৩।	সম্প্রদায়িক সনাক্তকারী	পরিচালক (পেউও) দপ্তর, পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০।
৪।	সম্প্রদায়িক ধরণ	পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের জন্য ২০২১-২২ অর্থ বৎসরে কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী, বইপত্র সামগ্রী, শিক্ষা ও শিক্ষা উপকরণ, অন্যান্য যন্ত্রপাতি ও সরঞ্জামাদি, বৈদ্যুতিক সরঞ্জামাদি, অগ্নিনির্বাপক সরঞ্জামাদি, জীবা সামগ্রী, পোশাক, রাসায়নিক, মূল্য ও বাধাই এবং দিরাপত্তা সেবা (আনসার) সম্পর্কিত পণ্য সমগ্র।
৫।	দরপত্র আহবানের সূত্র নম্বর	স্মারক নং-পাবপ্রবি/পরিচালক (পেউও)/এপিপি(২০২১-২২)/৪১৮/১৮৬৬ তারিখঃ ১১ জুন, ২০২২ইং
৬।	সম্প্রদায়িক পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি
৭।	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	রাজস্ব বাজেট (জিওবি)
৮।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময়	১৩ জুন ২০২২ইং থেকে ২৬ জুন ২০২২ ইং (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)।
৯।	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৭ জুন ২০২২ইং দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৭ জুন ২০২২ইং দুপুর ১৩.০০ ঘটিকা।
১১।	যে অফিসে দরপত্র বিক্রয় করা হবে	(ক) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, পাবনা। (খ) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, পাবনা। (গ) জনতা ব্যাংক লিঃ পাবপ্রবি শাখা।
১২।	যে অফিসে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে	(ক) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, পাবনা। (খ) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, পাবনা।
১৩।	যে অফিসে দরপত্র খোলা হবে	পরিচালক (পেউও) দপ্তর, প্রশাসনিক ভবন (দোতলা), পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০।
১৪।	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	(ক) সরবরাহকারীকে/দরদাতাগণকে সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ কাজে কমপক্ষে ০৩ বৎসরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকিতে হইবে। দরদাতা কর্তৃক উদ্ধৃত দরের শতকরা ৭০ ভাগ অর্থের ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদ থাকিতে হইবে। (খ) দরদাতাগণের ক্রেত লাইসেন্স, TIN ও VAT এর হালনাগাদ সনদ থাকিতে হইবে। (গ) দরদাতাগণ পুরো টেন্ডারের পণ্য সামগ্রী একসাথে দরপত্র জমাদান করতে পারেন অথবা যে কোন একটি আইটেমের (Lot) দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারেন। (ঘ) দরদাতাগণের এজেন্সী/ডিলার শীপের সনদ প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে আবশ্যিক। (ঙ) টেন্ডার সিডিউলের ITT, TDS, GCC ও PCC তে বর্ণিত শর্তানুসারে।
১৫।	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	১০০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য।
১৬।	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটি মান	উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ২% টাকা ক্ষেত্রযোগ্য।
১৭।	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর পদবী ও ঠিকানা	পরিচালক (পেউও), পরিচালনা উন্নয়ন ও ওয়ার্কস দপ্তর, পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০।
১৮।	যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা	Mobile No. 01911-218988, e-mail: azizur2007@gmail.com
১৯।	বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ	(ক) দরপত্র জামানত হিসাবে পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০এর অনুকূলে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে অর্ডার জমা দেওয়া যাবে। (খ) আলোচ্য দরপত্র পিপিআর-২০০৬ এবং পিপিআর-২০০৮ মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে। (গ) তফসিল ব্যাংক কর্তৃক হালনাগাদ আর্থিক সচ্ছলতা সার্টিফিকেট ১২ জুন ২০২২ইং থেকে ২৬ জুন ২০২২ইং তারিখের মধ্যে ইস্যুকৃত হতে হবে। (ঘ) দরপত্র দাখিল ও উন্মুক্তকরণের শেষ তারিখ অনিবার্য কারণে পরিবহন বিঘ্নিত হলে/সরকারী ছুটির দিন হলে সেক্ষেত্রে পরবর্তী স্বাভাবিক কর্মদিবসে দরপত্র দাখিল/উন্মুক্ত করা হবে। (ঙ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

প্রকৌশলী মোঃ কর্ণেল জি এম আজিজুর রহমান  
এএফডব্লিউসি, পিএসসি (অবঃ)  
পরিচালক (পেউও), পরিচালনা উন্নয়ন ও ওয়ার্কস দপ্তর  
পাবনা বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজাপুর, পাবনা-৬৬০০

তারিখঃ-১২/০৬/২০২২

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

## It's not an accident if the same mistake is repeated

### Depot blast brings out the urgency of compliance

IT is said that a mistake, if repeated, is no longer a mistake; it is a choice. Any "accident" caused by the repetition of that mistake is not an accident then; it is premeditated. The same can be said about the BM Inland Container Depot blast that went on to kill at least 46 people. The blast's ferocity was blamed on the storage of hydrogen peroxide – an oxidising agent – inside some of the containers. What makes this more painful is a revelation by *The Daily Star* that this wasn't the first instance of fire caused by inept chemical handling by Al-Razi Chemical Complex, a subsidiary of the Smart Group of Industries that also co-owns the depot.

According to our report, Al Razi was warned of the hazards of storing hydrogen peroxide in jerrycans before the chemical caught fire as the carrier vessel was waiting for port clearance in Cambodia. The ship's floor was fully burnt in that fire, and a subsequent investigation identified unapproved jerrycans in which the chemical was stored as the cause of the fire. The jerrycans, as investigators pointed out, couldn't sustain the pressure of the chemical and exploded.

The Sitakunda blast is but a bigger, scarier and avoidable version of that accident. It owes as much to the unsafe and unauthorised storage of hydrogen peroxide in the depot as to its lack of a proper firefighting system and concealment of information. Had the supervising authorities taken appropriate steps following the Cambodian incident, perhaps we wouldn't have lost so many lives within mere weeks.

But the fallout continues. The Singapore port, which is used to export about half of our foreign-bound products, has reportedly announced a curb on Bangladeshi transshipment of hydrogen peroxide – generally used in the textile industry – through the port. Its export potential will not be the only thing affected by such restrictions and the negative word of mouth. The whole export sector may be affected as well if buyers and port authorities lose confidence in our ability to handle cargoes properly.

All this points to the need for compliance for all involved in the export-import sector. As things stand, our industrial safety record is already appalling, with poor infrastructure and institutional preparedness at odds with international safety standards that buyers have come to expect. We cannot appear to be overselling our competence and not delivering it when needed. Therefore, we urge the government and all responsible stakeholders to learn from the recent debacle and ensure that proper safety protocols are followed at all times so that the failure of one institution doesn't harm all others or lead to such catastrophic tragedies.

## The danger of driver fatigue should worry us

### Continued lack of concern for road safety is unacceptable

THE frightening regularity with which road crashes continue to occur makes us wonder if there is really any authority looking into this, and if the deaths and injuries being reported have any effect on them. In the first five months of this year, at least 2,785 people died in road crashes. This is a huge number by any margin, and would've been enough to shake the foundation of any responsible institution. But not in our case. Otherwise, why would the government still dilly-dally over implementing the Road Transport Act, 2018? How many more amendments to this law will need to be made until it is ready to meet its objectives?

Besides proper laws and their execution to fix the transport sector, there is also a need for looking at the plight of individuals involved in road crashes. We're talking about drivers and helpers whose employment is seldom formalised. The driver who caused the crash in Savar last week, killing four scientific officers of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, had allegedly been driving for 38 hours, according to a report. This is a common occurrence in the context of road crashes, as most drivers are paid on the basis of how many trips they are able to make. This naturally causes them to drive recklessly and for inhumanly long hours. Many also do not have licences or updated papers. It is perhaps no wonder that corrupt and influential transport owners would take advantage of this situation to further their profits, in a climate where the government itself looks the other way while a large number of unfit and unregistered vehicles ply the streets.

The authorities' apathy to the dismal road safety situation becomes clearer when you see how the recommendations of experts and professionals are jettisoned. For instance, Bhatiapara police had suggested that a "central reservation" or median strip be installed at the accident-prone section of the highway in Gopalganj where nine people recently died in a crash. Things could have been different if the authorities just listened to such recommendations.

We, therefore, urge the government to speed up the implementation of the Road Transport Act. More importantly, stricter traffic regulations are required on accident-prone areas of the highways. But it is also essential for transport owners to be held accountable when road crashes occur – not just drivers who are often held hostage by their need to earn an income. We need a complete overhaul of this sector.

## EDUCATION IN BUDGET 2022-23

# Small mercies and dashed hopes



Dr Manzoor Ahmed is emeritus professor at Brac University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), vice chair of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), and member of the International Advisory Committee of the Yidan Education Prize Foundation.

MANZOOR AHMED

EDUCATORS and concerned citizens have been urging a major increase in public allocation for the education sector, as well as decisive steps for quality and equity measures in education. So far, they have been disappointed, their hopes dashed once again in the national budget for FY2022-23 proposed to the parliament. It may be argued that the proposed budget at least allows for schools to be kept open and running while confronting the extraordinary challenges for the economy to recover from the pandemic fallout, aggravated further by the Ukraine war. Should we not be thankful for the small mercies that at least keep the schools operating in the face of major adversities?

Children who have dropped out of school during the pandemic, boys and girls who have joined the ranks of child labourers, girls who have become child brides – who need help to be brought back to the classroom – may not quite agree. Those still in school, struggling to keep up with their lessons and looking for support such as tutoring or special classes to bridge the learning gap, will also not be satisfied with what is on offer.

Out of the total budget of Tk 678,064 crore for FY23, the allocation for the education sector is Tk 81,449 crore or 12 percent of the total, compared to 11.9 percent in FY22. In terms of GDP ratio, it is 1.83 percent, lower than the outgoing fiscal year's allocation. This is one of the lowest in the world – far below the recommended minimum of 4-6 percent of GDP and 20 percent of the national budget.

The problem is as much about meagre funding as about managing resources and deciding on priorities and strategies to make the system function better. Educators have pleaded for a recovery and remedial plan for education to help 40 million students catch up with the losses suffered due to the pandemic, which have run into a third academic year. Unesco, Unicef, World Bank and others have warned that for countries like Bangladesh, this situation portends a generational disaster unless effective remedial actions are taken.

The budget speech of the finance minister does promise a range of initiatives for "science based education and development of education infrastructure." He goes on to speak about a list of accomplishments, essentially within the present pattern of expenditures to keep the educational operations going. Mentions have been made of teachers recruited, books distributed, stipends paid, ICT equipment installed in schools, TVET training expanded, and initiatives to introduce blended instruction, combining distance and in-person lessons. He suggests that the distance mode supplementing classroom instruction will be the main

compensatory approach to learning losses. This smacks of business as usual that underestimates the severity of the situation.

Evidence from other countries as well as studies by Education Watch and others in Bangladesh show that a much more systematic and focused attention to recovery and revival is needed. Poor learning outcomes – such as more than half

down some planned activities, such as rolling out a new school curriculum. The education agencies, including the curriculum and textbook board, NAPE, NAEM and the directorates, need to focus on implementing a recovery and remedial plan. A successfully implemented remedial plan will lay the ground for implementation of the intended curricular reform. It is



Children who are struggling to keep up with their lessons and looking for support, such as tutoring or special classes, to bridge the learning gap caused by the pandemic will not be satisfied with what is on offer in the proposed nation budget.

FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

of children being unable to read, write and count after five years of primary education – were already a pre-Covid problem. The pandemic-induced education setback has amplified the problem.

Our children are facing an extraordinarily difficult challenge of learning losses, and they need help. Educators have pointed out that children who were in Class V at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 are in Class VII now, skipping two school years and largely unprepared for their new lessons. They have suggested a recovery and remedial plan with four key elements: a rapid assessment of the students' core skill levels; a remedial plan for at least two years for the students to catch up with the losses; technical and financial support to teachers and schools to implement the remedial plan; and a working group involving parents, communities and NGOs in each school to support and carry out the recovery-remedial plan.

The budget statement and indicated allocations do not provide any hint of urgency for a major education recovery and revival plan. For all we know, the education authorities have not proposed specific budget lines for such a plan. They now need to adjust their expenditure plan to support these urgent activities. They should find a way to include and support non-MPO schools in the recovery plan; more than a quarter of primary school students and up to a third of the secondary-level students (even excluding Qawmi madrasas) attend schools not supported by the government. The plight of these children cannot be ignored.

All of this may mean pausing or slowing

generally agreed that the capacity to implement the curriculum in classrooms has been the problem and will remain the problem.

Beyond the urgency of the recovery and revival of the system, a longer-term perspective is needed. There is no national plan as yet for access and completion of secondary education for all young people, an education target under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The government has pledged to provide a "child budget" as a tool for directing and monitoring public resources to meet the essential survival, growth and development needs of children. No such document has been available from the finance ministry.

One year's budget cannot solve the myriad problems in the education sector. But it can signal the direction of change and seriousness of purpose if the authorities can decide what to do. The groundwork has to be done by the education authorities – the two ministries and three divisions in the education sector. For the child budget, the women and children affairs ministry has a major role to play. It has to make the case for larger budgets with credible plans and programmes that would address the public concerns about quality, equity and inclusion objectives of the education system. This discourse should have been ongoing through open dialogue with civil society and as part of a medium-term education sector development plan discussed and prepared in a participatory manner. Transparency and participatory dialogue have not been the hallmark of budget-making and broader priority setting, but it is never too late to begin.

## Expanding RMG business now is risky

### RMG NOTES

Mostafiz Uddin is managing director of Denim Expert Limited. He is also the founder and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE).



MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

BANGLADESH'S garment sector is booming. Our ready-made garment (RMG) exports hit their target for the outgoing fiscal year two months early; exports were USD 35.36 billion till April, crossing the target of USD 35.14 billion set for FY2021-22. Some are forecasting that the exports will hit USD 42 billion by the end of FY2021-22.

This is no flash in the pan. In fact, Bangladesh's RMG export market has been growing since autumn 2021. The country's RMG makers are likely benefitting from brands and retailers shifting production out of China, where supply chain issues and draconian lockdowns have been hampering productivity.

Bangladesh's RMG exports increased 36 percent in the first 10 months of FY22 compared to the exports during the same period in FY21, which was USD 26 billion, according to the Export Promotion Bureau. For context, FY21 was affected by the pandemic, while FY22 saw inflationary impacts.

What has been almost unprecedented in the current boom of the RMG industry is that some garment makers are even turning orders away due to their lack of capacity. The contrast between this and the despair of 2020, when many factory lines lay idle, could not be starker.

Will this situation prevail forever? The short and obvious answer is "no". Already, some experts are forecasting a global recession and even stagflation. It is the worst of both worlds and an economic

phenomenon that is rarely seen. The other reason why orders may plateau and slow down is China, which is now opening up for business. It will fight to be competitive, and it remains a key strategic partner for many global fashion brands. China needs and wants growth.

Enhancing production capacity now, without any feasibility studies or without regard to what future headwind we may be facing, would be risky and reckless. Now is the time to take stock and think strategically.

This brings to mind a broader issue in our industry: There is a lack of understanding about how big we are and of our total production capacity. Do our industry leaders have a clear idea about our overall capacity for denims, t-shirts or jackets? Is there a sense of a coordinated approach? Or are we all doing our own thing, without any idea about the bigger picture? We need to get smart here, just like our customers in the fashion space. Brands and retailers divide their orders into different regions and suppliers in order to minimise their supply chain risk. They know the capacities of their suppliers and are able to capitalise on that to play hardball on prices. We will always be price-takers until we better understand our capabilities.

Now, we need to think strategically before we proceed for expansion, because any surplus or unutilised capacity may handicap us in our relations with brands. Any additional investment would certainly bring additional revenues in the short term, but what kind of long-term impact would it have, and would it simply lead us to a situation of perennial overcapacity?

I believe we need a full assessment of the industry. That means our overall capacity, our key production areas, our main areas of competitive advantage, our strengths and our weaknesses. If we expand without knowing the answers to these questions, we risk being exposed in the long term. It

is vital when doing this assessment that we include all non-legitimate production units that exist and supply indirectly into exports as well as domestic consumption. These factories are a substantial risk to Bangladesh's image.

By taking stock now and assessing the overall state of the industry, we can also spot bottlenecks and decide where investments need to be made.

The wider point is about having a strategy for our RMG industry, which is such a critical industry sector. If we are talking about an industry which could generate USD 40 billion in revenues, could we not, as an industry, spend a few million dollars to devise a broad industrial strategy? Could we not bring in a team of crack consultants to look at the overall makeup of our industry, and how well-positioned it is to meet the future demand for global fashion retailers and their customers?

This kind of deep market research is critical for us moving forward. Knowing your core markets and the key dynamics and drivers in them is critical for success in business. If we were to commission some research on the Bangladesh RMG industry, there are several questions I would like answers to: How large is the industry, and what is its overall production capacity? How does the overall production capacity compare with the current global demand? What kind of trends are we seeing in terms of orders, and are we seeing the start of a potential slowdown in demand? What kind of investment plans do garment makers have in place for the next 12 months? How much diversity are we seeing in terms of core production areas?

I believe the future looks bright for garment makers in Bangladesh, but let's not get too carried away. Let's keep cool heads and ensure that the decisions we as an industry make now ensure prosperity in the long term, rather than just a quick buck.

# Odhikar's deregistration: Unacceptable rationale



KAMAL AHMED

Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist and writes from London, UK. His Twitter handle is @ahmedkat

WHEN Bangladesh needs to show that it has been listening to the concerns about respecting human rights and upholding the rule of law, it has done quite the opposite. The reactions coming from the United Nations' human rights body, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and other international rights groups to the deregistration of Odhikar, a leading human rights organisation in Bangladesh, make it clear that no one believes this action to be anything other than a punishment for the work it does. The refusal to renew Odhikar's operating licence follows a letter sent to the OHCHR on May 12, in which the government accused the organisation of "disproportionate bias and prejudice against Bangladesh, in particular the ruling party Awami League" and argued that the UN human rights mechanism should disqualify and shun it as a source of information.

The letter was written as an official response to a joint urgent appeal issued by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the special rapporteur on the rights of peaceful assembly and association, the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, the special rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and the special rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees on non-recurrence on

February 21, 2022.

The joint appeal raised issues related to the alleged cases of enforced disappearances, the role of Rab, ensuring justice for the victims, and making alleged human rights violators accountable. The joint appeal also urged to stop intimidation and harassment



of relatives of the disappeared persons, human rights defenders, and civil society organisations. The appeal specifically raised their concerns about allegations of reprisals against Odhikar. The government response on all those issues raised in the joint appeal was typical repetition of denials of any violations whatsoever, justification of Rab actions, and glorification of internal investigation mechanism of the law enforcement agencies, which has been rejected by most rights groups and experts as hardly credible due to a lack of independence of such procedure.

In relation to the alleged reprisals against Odhikar, the government response argued, "Odhikar is widely known for its disproportionate bias and prejudice against Bangladesh, in particular the ruling Awami League, which is evident in its various reports." It added, "Besides, one of the top members of Odhikar was earlier appointed by the BNP-Jamaat government as the deputy attorney general, which should provide

disqualification for the UN human rights mechanism to accept it as an objective and neutral organisation..."

The refusal to renew Odhikar's licence, which has come within less than a month of the government's flimsy argument against the group of having political bias, only proves that the apprehension of the UN experts was justified. Hence, OHCHR spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani says, "Reprisals against Odhikar have been documented since as far back as 2013, and appear to have intensified, with accusations levelled against the organisation for 'anti-state' and 'anti-government' activities." More worryingly, she says, "this decision will have a chilling effect on the ability of civil society organisations to report serious human rights violations to UN human rights mechanisms."

Similar observations have been made by leading global human rights groups, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED). Eleven organisations in a joint statement said this decision demonstrated "the (Bangladesh) government's determination to stifle human rights work in the country." According to them, "It is the authorities' failure to ensure accountability for human rights violations, rather than Odhikar's exposure of those violations that has tarnished Bangladesh's reputation." Furthermore, these groups have described the process of deregistration as "politically motivated persecution of human rights defenders and critics," and called for allowing human rights groups to do their work without fear and ensure accountability for human rights violations.

Odhikar, founded in 1994, has been documenting violations of human rights by state and non-state actors in Bangladesh since its inception. But it has drawn the ire of the ruling party and the government after its controversial report and alleged death count during the

violent crackdown on Hefazat-e-Islam's notorious Dhaka siege programme on May 5, 2013. The apparent anomaly in casualty figures between the official one and Odhikar's count landed its director in prison. The irony is that the government and the ruling party apparently made up with Hefazat long ago, but Odhikar and its executives are still being haunted for the alleged miscounting of victims in their voluntary role of monitoring human rights.

No wonder that Odhikar's application for the renewal of its operating licence remained pending since 2014. Since then, it has also been unable to access any funds from foreign donors as the regulatory authority, the NGO Affairs Bureau, has kept a lid on such resources. Despite such constraints, it managed to keep working and continue monthly and annual reports on all kinds of rights violations, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and border killings. It sought the Supreme Court's intervention in getting the licence renewed but, ahead of the conclusion of the court's hearing, the government rejected its renewal application. Media reports quoted the NGO Affairs Bureau chief saying that the disposal of the application would end the cause of the legal proceeding.

A strategic move, indeed! But keeping Odhikar's application pending for eight years and refusing the renewal on the grounds that it failed to fulfil requirements of a law enacted two years after the submission of the petition shows that the way has been made to operate against the organisation. And, it comes amid global concern of persecuting it for reporting "serious human rights violations to UN human rights mechanisms," and is bound to be perceived as a reprisal. Appearing vindictive against human rights defenders is not what Bangladesh needs following the imposition of sanctions against an entire unit of its law enforcement agencies by the world's most powerful nation.

VISUAL: STAR

**Keeping Odhikar's application pending for eight years and refusing the renewal on the grounds that it failed to fulfil requirements of a law enacted two years after the submission of the petition shows that the way has been made to operate against the organisation.**

## Interfaith harmony is crucial for India



BHARAT DOGRA

Bharat Dogra is an Indian freelance journalist who has been involved with several social movements and initiatives.

THE foreign policy crisis that has arisen in India due to inflammatory statements will hopefully pass sooner rather than later. For a short while, voluntary restraint on giving many more examples of such harmful, injurious statements may be advisable as a part of damage control. However, the biggest lesson that we must take from this crisis should be to strengthen the firm belief that interfaith harmony is a basic precept of Indian society, on which consensus should be created with many-sided efforts. The task ahead for the ruling regime is not just to "tone down the polarisation discourse" as is being argued in some places – that would be grossly understating a new agenda even before it has been rolled out. The task ahead is to firmly establish that interfaith harmony again becomes a basic precept of policy and society in India. Nothing less than this would be acceptable; nothing less than this should be attempted. The authorities should be sincere, and if they are, everyone should cooperate.

In this great task of re-establishing interfaith harmony as a basic precept, we can learn much from history. Among all the great spiritual leaders of recent centuries, in a country known for many great spiritual movements, those who gave the message of peace and non-violence had the most durable impact on people, to the extent that the highest respect by countless followers even 2,700 years later is for such a legacy of Gautam Buddha and Mahavira Jain. As we move further in history, millions of followers still seek solace in the hugely inspiring, path-illuminating messages of Guru Nanak and Sant Kabir, who ask people to rise above narrow divides to open themselves to the path of true spirituality and ethics.

During the freedom movement, the greatest following was attracted by those leaders who, despite other differences, were completely united – very firmly too – on the basic precept of interfaith harmony. This can certainly be said of the greatest leaders such as Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, Mahatma Gandhi, Badshah Khan, Jawaharlal Nehru, and

Maulana Azad. It is these leaders, with their common ground of a firm faith in interfaith harmony, who received the greatest affection of the Indian people of all faiths.

As for those with a narrow sectarian agenda, they could get a hearing among people only when the real leaders named above were imprisoned or in exile or had achieved martyrdom, and the colonial rulers then used this as an opportunity to support and push ahead divisive leaders who suited their divide-and-rule agenda. In the post-independence period, it is well-known that Jawaharlal Nehru, who was India's prime minister for 17 years and won three general elections in a multi-party democracy with over 45 percent vote, accorded the highest importance to interfaith harmony, and this was reflected in policy, enabling free India to recover from the wounds of partition and walk the noble path of interfaith harmony, protection of minorities and secularism, setting a great example for the world, even as Pakistan got well-deserved criticism for its path of sectarianism.

Equality of all religions was established firmly by the Indian Constitution. The tallest opposition leaders of post-independence India, Jayaprakash Narain and Ram Manohar Lohia, were also very firm in their commitment to interfaith harmony. We must draw on this legacy and build further on this. Even those who in the past were not favourably inclined towards this basic idea of India should realise from recent experiences the importance of interfaith harmony. This gets worldwide respect and admiration, while ideologies based on sectarianism or minority-bashing are condemned worldwide – at times even leading to crisis situations in foreign relations.

However, it is problematic to say that all that has to be done is to tone down communal polarisation. Will it be considered all right if the bigger leaders avoid communally charged statements, but the street-level talk of the cadre remains the same? No, it will not. Cadres become leaders later, and what is in the mind all the time comes out sooner or later in statements, actions and policies.

What we need is nothing less than getting rid of the devil of communal disharmony, communalism and sectarianism from the hearts and minds of all people. The aim of creating a society based on interfaith harmony and equality of all faiths should be accepted as a basic precept; once this aim is well-established, then ways to best achieve this can be

discussed in detail subsequently.

The emphasis in the coming days should be on widespread, broad-based steps to promote interfaith harmony, while also putting checks on those forces and organisations which have been spreading disharmony and hatred in India. It should be made very clear to such

forces and individuals that any activities relating to disharmony and hatred as well as violence will be dealt with very strictly from now onwards.

This article first appeared in *The Statesman*, an ANN partner of *The Daily Star*.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Local Government Engineering Department**  
**Office of the Upazila Engineer**  
**Upazila : Sadar, District: Narsingdi**  
**www.lged.gov.bd**

Memo no. : 46.02.6860.902.14.001.21-564  
Date : 12-06-2022

**Invitation for Tender (Works)**  
**e-Tender Notice No : 07/2021-2022 (Re-Tender)**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following Works, Details are Given Below.

Sl No	Package No	Name of Work	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Tender ID No
1.	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAR/SAD/2021-22/W1-03094	Construction of additional class room MOHSIN ZZAMAN GPS under PEDP4 in Narsingdi Sadar.	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	701250
2.	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAR/SAD/2021-22/W1-04038	Construction of additional class room VATIR CHAR GPS under PEDP4 in Narsingdi Sadar.	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	701251
3.	e-Tender/PEDP4/NRD/SAD/2020-21/W9.185	Repair and Renovation of NARSINGDI SADAR UEO under Sadar Upazila, District- Narsingdi.	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	28-Jun-2022 13:00	701252

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be Accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline / hard copies will be Accepted.

To Submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is Required.

The Fees for Downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be Deposited online through any Registered Bank's Branches up to **17:00 on 27-Jun-2022**.

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)).

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GD-1215

## Chase for penultimate place

REUTERS, DOHA

Australia and Peru both came through playoffs to qualify for the last World Cup, but only one of them will advance this time round when they meet in their inter-continental playoff in Doha on Monday for a place at this year's finals in Qatar.

Australia qualified for the 2018 finals by beating Honduras over two legs while Peru edged New Zealand for their place in Russia.

This time, however, the two have been drawn to play each other in a single match at the Ahmed bin Ali Stadium at Al Rayyan, one of the venues for the finals in November and December.

Australia have already come through a tense playoff, edging the United Arab Emirates at the same venue on Monday to clinch fifth place in the Asian qualifiers.

That earned them the right to go up against Peru, who came fifth in South America's super group.

Australia snatched success last week through Ajdin Hrustic's winner six



## No. 3 and 4 key to Tigers' batting stability

SPORTS REPORTER

Ahead of Bangladesh's two-Test series against the West Indies, all eyes were on the Tigers' top-order in their three-day warm-up game against CWI President's XI in Antigua that concluded yesterday. However, other than Tamim Iqbal's unbeaten 162, there weren't many highlights for the Tigers in the batting department.

There has long been a concern regarding Bangladesh's opening slot. With young Mahmudul Hasan Joy showing glimpses in his first few outings, the quest to find a stable opening partner for Tamim seemed to have come to an end.

Joy, who is still in the early stages of his career, must keep his tendency to play away from the body in check if the youngster hopes to make his mark in the tough Windies tour.

Even if Joy manages to rein in his penchant for playing away from his body, the major area of concern for the Tigers will be their number three and four position in the batting line-up. In fact, these two spots have been a point of vulnerability for Bangladesh in the longest format of the game for some time now.

The team management has pinned their hopes on young Najmul Hossain Shanto to provide stability at number three and the left-hander did get a few starts before failing in the last home series against Sri Lanka, scoring in single digits in four innings.

He did score a fifty in the practice game. But in order to strengthen the Tigers' fragile top-order, Shanto will need to do much more than that and provide Bangladesh the platform to score big.

More than flaws in his technique, questions have been raised over Shanto's decision-making as the 23-year-old has often dug a hole for himself by not being able to contain his urge to play shots even when the situation demanded a safe approach.

Tigers' batting coach Jamie Siddons, however, backed Shanto before travelling to the Caribbean. The Australian believed in Shanto's potential and mentioned that the team management is likely to give the youngster another chance and play him in the first Test in Antigua, starting from June 16.

On the other hand, Mominul Haque, who stepped down from his role as the Test captain following massive criticism

for his poor run of form, was unable to see any turn of fortune as the left-hander was unable to open his account even in the warm-up game.

Mominul will be under constant scrutiny in the Windies series, especially as the left-hander has only managed to produce single-digit scores in his last seven innings. The absence of the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim also means that Bangladesh would desperately need Mominul to step up.

According to many, with the burden of captaincy non-existent, the 30-year-old will be able to play freely and express himself better in the challenging Caribbean condition where Tigers' batters have always struggled in the past.

Much like the entire Bangladesh team, Mominul would also want to improve his record in the West Indies. The left-hander has only scored 138 runs in eight innings at an average of 17.25 in the Caribbean.

The two-match Test series in the West Indies will be a new beginning for skipper Shakib Al Hasan as well. And whether it will be a successful tour for Bangladesh and Shakib will heavily depend on how batters at number three and four in the line-up fare.

## Windies series broadcast uncertain

SPORTS REPORTER

With less than four days before the first Test of the two-match series between Bangladesh and West Indies, scheduled to take place in Antigua from June 16, it remains uncertain whether the Tigers fans could watch the games live on TV.

Total Sports Marketing holds the broadcast rights of the West Indies Bangladesh series, where Bangladesh are set to play two Tests -- part of the ICC Test Championship -- three T20I and three ODIs but no TV channel has officially acquired the broadcast rights yet.

Normally, T Sports and Gazi TV broadcast the Tigers' games. However, the two local Bangladeshi channels have not yet come up with an agreement to telecast the games.

According to the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) chairman of the media committee, Tanvir Ahmed Titu, the BCB can hardly do anything to resolve the broadcast crisis.

"I hope that our TV channels which generally show live cricket will step up and communicate with the broadcasters to find a resolution," he said.

## Ibrahim concerned about set-piece defending

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh found the back of the opposition net for the first time in five matches when winger Mohammad Ibrahim equalised against Turkmenistan in an Asian Cup Qualifying tie in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday, but the forward is more concerned about the team's habit of letting in goals from set-piece situations.

The men in red and green eventually lost the match 2-1 defeat to the 134th-ranked team, who capitalised on the shaky Bangladesh backline to score the winning goal in the second half.

"You can't blame the defence only for conceding the second goal because defending is the job of the whole team. We have to perform well collectively in defending," Ibrahim told reporters after yesterday's practice session in Malaysia.

"We have to be more focused on set-pieces as we conceded three out of four goals from set-pieces in last two matches despite having good defending organisation," said the Bashundhara Kings winger.

"The goal I scored may encourage me to think about scoring more but that strike has no value as we lost the match. So I'm not getting carried away with scoring the goal," said the lad from Cox's Bazar.

"The coach [Javier Cabrera] is always positive as we are gradually improving. We also need time to adjust with the ideas of the new coach, who is using almost the same formation that Jamie Day used to do," said Ibrahim, who is determined to make it hard for Malaysia in the next match on Tuesday.

## Federer hopes to continue in 2023

AFP, Lausanne

Swiss tennis great Roger Federer said he hopes to recover from his latest knee surgery and get back on the ATP circuit next season.

"How, why and to do what, I don't yet know, but that would be the idea," the 20-time Grand Slam title winner and former world number one told Swiss daily Tagesanzeiger in an interview published on Sunday.

Federer, who will be 41 in August,

has not played since a quarter-final defeat at Wimbledon almost a year ago and his latest knee surgery was his third in 18 months.

"I myself am curious to see what will follow," Federer said. "But I have hope, I have already come a long way. I'm not far. The next three or four months will be extremely important."

Federer told Swiss broadcaster SRF on Saturday

that he is "currently focusing on (his) physical condition, so that there is no overload" and goes to the gym "five to six times a week".

He is aiming for a return to action at the Laver Cup in London from September 23-25 and then his hometown tournament of Basel from October 24-30.

Federer, the winner of 103 trophies over his career, played only 13 matches in 2021 and just six in 2020. He is currently ranked 50th in ATP standings, his lowest in 22 years.



## Pope, Root tons lead England

# FIGHTBACK

AFP, NOTTINGHAM

Ollie Pope hit his highest Test score of 142 not out and Joe Root swaggered to an unbeaten 109 as England raced to 331-2 against New Zealand at tea on the third day of the second Test at Trent Bridge.

Replying to New Zealand's mammoth first innings score of 553, Pope and Root took full advantage of a docile pitch to ease the pressure on England.

Thanks to the pair's commanding displays, England will expect to get close to New Zealand's total in a match that could be destined for a high-scoring draw.

Pope's second Test century, and his first on English soil, came after he was handed a surprise promotion to number three by England captain Ben Stokes at the start of the series.

It was Pope's first Test ton since scoring 135 not out in South Africa in January 2020.

The 24-year-old's England place has been in serious doubt at times in the last few years due to shoulder injuries and a lack of form.

But, batting in a position he had never previously featured in for England or Surrey prior to the first Test, Pope has repaid the faith of Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum.

Freed of the oppressive shackles of the England

captaincy after handing the role to Stokes earlier this year, Root was in vibrant mood himself as he unfurled his full array of strokes in his 27th Test century. Needing only 116 balls to reach his fastest Test ton, Root has picked up where he left off at Lord's with a second successive century.

His match-winning 115 not out led England to a thrilling five-wicket victory over the Test world champions in the opening game of the three-match series. Earlier, Alex Lees compiled his highest Test score of 67 before becoming the only England batsman to perish in Sunday's first two



sessions.

Daryl Mitchell's Test-best 190 and Tom Blundell's 106 on Saturday had put New Zealand in pole position.

But England were able to replicate New Zealand's success in conditions perfectly suited to batting. Lees had resumed on 34, while Pope had made 51 not out overnight, with both having survived a dropped catch by Mitchell on Saturday.

Lees, who had a top score of 31 from his first eight Test innings, reached an assured 50 in 109 balls with a composed clip to the boundary.

But, losing his concentration after the drinks break, Lees needlessly chased a wide ball from Matt Henry and edged it to Mitchell in the slips.



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## Two more depot fire victims die

Death toll now 47

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two more BM Container Depot fire victims, including a firefighter, died yesterday after nearly seven days fighting for their lives.

With the deaths, 47 people, including 10 firefighters, have been killed in the devastating fire and explosion that took place on June 4 night.

Nurul Quader, 22, an employee of the depot in Sitakunda, breathed his last at the Incentive Care Unit of Parkview Hospital in Chattogram city.

"Nurul sustained severe burn injuries and he was admitted to the general unit on June 4 night. As his condition deteriorated, he was moved to the ICU and put on life support. He died around 1:30pm," said Humayun Kabir, deputy general manager of Parkview Hospital.

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A fisherman going to Bheduriya Ghat Bazar in Barishal Sadar upazila to sell his catch. Fishermen fish in the Kalabadar river and sell their catches at the bazar where different types of local fish are sold at wholesale prices. The photo was taken on Saturday. PHOTO: TITU DAS

## COVID-TIME SCAM Ex-DGHS DG, five others indicted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against former boss of Directorate General of Health Services Abul Kalam Azad and five others in a case filed over embezzling government funds.

The five others are: Regent Group Chairman Mohammad Shahed, ex-DGHS director (hospitals and clinics) Dr Aminul Hasan, deputy director (hospital-1) Dr Md Younus Ali, assistant director (hospital-1) Dr Md Shafiqur Rahman and research officer Dr Md Didarul Islam.

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## GRAFT IN RECRUITMENT

# KL's turn to prove them wrong

PORIMOL PALMA

After a meeting with Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmed on June 1, Malaysian Human Resources Minister M Saravanan said the migration cost for the Bangladeshis going to Malaysia under the new deal would be zero.

The deal was signed in December last year.

All costs, including airfare, levy and medical fees, will be borne by the employers, he told journalists in Dhaka.

He also said the government will cancel the quotas of Malaysian employers who collect money from workers.

"The recruitment is scheduled to start "as soon as possible" after the Malaysian cabinet approves the selection of agencies."

This comes as good news for

Bangladeshis aspiring to go to Malaysia for jobs, and more so for the government who heavily relies on remittance that makes up a significant portion of the foreign exchange.

It is also important at a time when maintaining the balance of payment has become challenging with the rise in import cost amid price hike of commodities everywhere.

Labour migration experts and recruiting agencies, however, have little faith in Saravanan's

words.

They argue that the very idea that Malaysia will select the Bangladeshi recruiting agencies for sending workers there is flawed and there are elements of corruption.

The minister also has not specified any on criteria which the agency

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Earth's core is twisting under our feet

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Earth's core doesn't rotate in sync with the rest of our planet, but instead spins faster at times, and at others reverses direction.

That's the finding of new research published in the journal Science Advances by Southern California seismologists John Vidale and Wei Wang.

"The inner core is not fixed," Dr Vidale said in a statement. "It's moving under our feet, and it seems to go back and forth a couple of kilometres every six years."

It's a finding that could help scientists better understand how Earth's core generates the geomagnetic field that blocks radiation from space and makes life possible.



## Forex reserves still ample

Says BB governor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's foreign exchange reserves are still in a comfort zone, said Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir yesterday.

As of June 8, reserves stood at \$41.7 billion, which is enough to settle import bills for about 5.6 months, according to data from the BB.

It is the standard for any country to keep enough reserves to settle import bills for at least three months, he said at a two-day summit titled "Building Cyber Resilience for Banks" organised by the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh.

"So, we are still in a comfort zone," said Kabir, who would be replaced by current finance secretary, Abdur Rouf Talukder, as the head of the central bank from July 4.

In normal times, this would have been adequate. But given the elevated global inflation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund recommend an import bill cushion of 9-10 months.

Last year, Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves were enough to cover 9-10 months' import bills. But with the global economy

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



A view of the damage to the Nika Tera grain terminal, as Russia's attacks on Ukraine continues, in Mykolaiv yesterday. Left, Ukrainian artillerymen fire a BM-21 Grad multiple rocket launcher near Izyum, south of Kharkiv. The war is already taking a dramatic toll on the world economy and placing a huge swath of the world's population, especially those in developing nations, at an increased risk of harm, the United Nations warned.

PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

## Russia strikes weapons depot

22 people hurt; street fighting rages in Severodonetsk

AGENCIES

Russian forces fired cruise missiles to destroy a large depot containing US and European weapons in western Ukraine's Ternopil region, Interfax reported yesterday, as street fighting raged in the eastern city of Severodonetsk.

The governor of the Ternopil region said a rocket attack on the city of Chortkiv fired from the Black Sea had partly destroyed a military facility, injuring 22 people. It was a rare attack in western Ukraine, with the east and south of the country having borne the brunt of Russian

firepower.

Moscow has repeatedly slammed the United States and other nations for supplying Ukraine with weapons. President Vladimir Putin said earlier this month that Russia would strike new targets if the West supplied longer-range missiles to Ukraine for use in high-precision mobile rocket systems.

Ukrainian leaders have renewed pleas to Western countries in recent days to speed up deliveries of heavy weapons as Russian forces pound the east of the country with artillery.

Luhansk Governor Serhiy Gaidai said yesterday that Ukrainian and

Russian forces were still fighting street by street in Severodonetsk. He said that while Russian forces have taken most of the city, Ukrainian troops remain in control of an industrial area and chemical plant where some 800 civilians are sheltering.

"No one can say whether and how many victims there have been in the last 24 hours in Severodonetsk, where intense fighting continues," Gaidai said on the Telegram messaging app yesterday.

"Everyone wants to evacuate now, probably, but so far there is no such possibility."

## শোক সংবাদ

আমরা শোকাহত

অত্যন্ত দুঃখের সহিত জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, খলিল গ্রুপের চেয়ারম্যান জনাব খলিলুর রহমান চৌধুরী'র সহধর্মিণী ও ম্যানেজিং ডাইরেক্টর জনাব নাসরাত খলিল চৌধুরী'র মাতা জনাবা মাহমুদা খলিল চৌধুরী গতকাল রবিবার (১২/০৬/২০২২) সকাল ১০.৫৯ ঘটিকার সময় ইউনাইটেড হাসপাতালে মৃত্যুবরণ করেন। ইন্নালিল্লাহি ও ইন্না ইলাইহি রাজিউন। মরহুমার জানাজার নামাজ আজ বাদ আসর বাইতুল আতীক কেন্দ্রীয় জামে মসজিদ, বারিধারা (বারিধারা সোসাইটি মসজিদ) প্রাঙ্গণে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। আমরা মরহুমার আত্মার মাগফেরাত ও তাঁর শোক সন্তপ্ত পরিবারের প্রতি গভীর সমবেদনা জ্ঞাপন করছি।

খলিল গ্রুপের সকল কর্মকর্তা এবং কর্মচারীবৃন্দ।