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## UNIVERSAL PENSION

Govt okays  
draft act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday gave the final approval to the draft of Universal Pension Management Act, 2022.

People aged between 18 and 50 can participate in this pension scheme. The expatriate Bangladeshis can also take part in it, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam told reporters at the Secretariat after a cabinet meeting.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting virtually from her office.

He said the cabinet gave the nod to the draft law on condition that it be vetted by the Legislative Division. It will then be placed before parliament.

As per the draft law, a person will have to provide a premium for at least 10 years to get pension from the age of 60 until his death. The amount of premium will

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Flood victims gathered around a boat to get relief materials including drinking water being given away by a voluntary organisation in remote Boithakhali village of Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila yesterday. The people of the haor area have been desperate for relief since being hit by the deluge five days ago.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

**Not an order but  
a 'humble request'**

**CEC Awal says about letter to MP  
Bahar over Cumilla city polls**

MOHUDDIN ALAMGIR

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday apparently changed his tune about the step the Election Commission took against ruling Awami League lawmaker AKM Bahauddin Bahar ahead of the Cumilla City Corporation polls.

He said the commission did not order the lawmaker to leave the electoral area but made a humble request.

"We are frequently hearing that he [Bahar] was ordered by the Election Commission to leave the area. But we have thoroughly checked and found the MP was never ordered to leave the area by the Election Commission," he said in a press conference.

"We haven't seen him participate in the campaign in public. But some said he took part in the electioneering tactfully. We had an expectation that if we requested him, there would be no more debate on the matter."

The CEC said according to the electoral code of conduct, Bahar is a very important person who enjoys government privileges and he is not allowed to join any polls campaign.

The Election Commission can't even order a common man to leave an area, let alone a member of parliament,

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## FINING JOURNOS

**'No record of press  
council members  
disapproving it'**

**Says its chairman in an  
interview with Star**

GOLAM MORTOZA

The Press Council Act-1974 was being amended with a provision to fine a journalist up to Tk 10 lakh for offences under the law. Bangladesh Press Council Chairman Justice Nizamul Haq Nasim said the council's senior journalist representatives had been consulted with, and they gave their blessings.

However, five journalist members of the current press council committee told this newspaper that they were not consulted and this initiative was not discussed with the committee.

**The Daily Star discussed the issue with Justice Nizamul Haque Nasim before the cabinet yesterday crossed out the fine amount mentioned in the draft amendment and left it at the press council's discretion.**

**The Daily Star (DS):** You said press council's journalist representatives agreed with the amendment and also



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**Tk 10 lakh  
struck out,  
fine stays**

**Cabinet okays draft  
of press council act**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The information and broadcasting ministry yesterday placed the draft Press Council (Amendment) Act-2022, before the cabinet with a provision for the council to fine media outlets up to Tk 10 lakh for compromising state security, harming public harmony, and unethical journalism.

The cabinet, however, crossed out the fine amounts, said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam at a press briefing after the cabinet meeting.

Anwarul said the draft proposed a fine of Tk 5 lakh for intentionally violating section 12 of the act. He, however, did not say what is in section 12.

He said the press council act would be applicable to print and digital media houses.

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The Public Library building is being knocked down in the capital's Shahbagh. The housing and public works ministry will build a new structure for the library with modern facilities. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## 'Hungry for two days'

Says mother of five; flood-hit  
people in Sylhet plead for  
relief materials

STAR REPORT

"Sir, please note down my name. I have five daughters and we have been going hungry for two days."

Shamsunnahar of Mrittimalah village in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila spoke these pleading words to a correspondent of this newspaper yesterday, in the hope that getting her name "on record" will somehow conjure some relief materials.

Mrittimalah and many other villages on the bank of Chengerkhali river -- a tributary of the Sarigowain -- are flooded and most of their residents have taken shelter in the nearby college, schools and in Shalutikar bazar, which is on higher ground.

After reaching the bazar at 10:30am, the correspondent was surrounded by a crowd. They said their houses were flooded, the paddy they had stored was damaged and now they were in dire need of relief materials.

Kuddus Miah, a freedom fighter, said, "Everyone of all nearby villages is in distress and without food or relief."

A woman said she had seen many people come with relief materials, but they preferred to go to remote villages while people in the bazar stayed hungry for days.

While visiting Boithakhali, Toakul, Lakshminagar, Newarkandi, Chaitabari and several other villages in the upazila, the correspondent witnessed a desperate need for relief materials.

**"The previous flood during Baishakh took away Boro harvest from the fields. This flood has taken rice from granaries in our homes, leaving nothing to eat."**

Sirajuddin of Gowainghat

The correspondent also found that a lack of coordination between government and private relief distributors was prolonging the distress.

According to Divisional Commissioner Md Mosharrof, around 40 lakh people have been marooned in Sylhet and Sunamganj districts since Wednesday.

As many as 3.72 lakh people have taken shelter in the two districts. The administration in the two districts has disbursed 1,062 tonnes of rice, Tk 1.62 crore and more than 13,000 sacks of dry food.

However, the materials are yet to reach many of the shelters. Even the 56 shelters in Sylhet city are yet to receive relief materials, said Ruhul Alam, executive engineer of Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) and also in-charge of the shelters.

"We were allotted only 500 sacks of dry food when there are 6,000 people in the shelters. But we are trying to get dry food with our own funds," he said.

"It's been three days, we have not received any government relief, but locals are generously feeding us," said Md Mostu Miah of Sylhet city's Chhararpur area, who along with 150 others took shelter at Durgakumar Pathshala near SCC and district administration offices.

Md Taj Uddin, a resident of Boithakhali village, said, "None of us imagined that the flood would turn so severe. We had to leave all our belongings and our homes. We have lost everything. We have nothing to eat."

At Lakshminagar village, 60-year-old Sirajuddin said

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Get ready to mitigate flood damage  
PM asks ministers, top civil servants and armed forces personnel



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Warning that the flood situation may worsen, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked ministers, top civil servants, and armed forces personnel to take all our preparations for mitigating damage caused by flood.

At a meeting of National Disaster Management Council at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday, Hasina instructed Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque to arrange higher ground for Aman seedbeds if the floods prolonged.

She added that Aman paddy on around 26,000 hectares was damaged by the floods and that they would have to be more careful about Aman paddy.

The agriculture minister informed the meeting that Aman seedbeds on 400 to 500 acres were damaged by the floods, said sources.

The PM said farmers who have lost summer vegetables to the floods would get government assistance during winter crops season.

Briefing reporters after the cabinet meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said the prime minister issued directives on being prepared to tackle more floods in the days ahead as the weather was not favourable.

She asked the agriculture minister to go for floating rice varieties if the floods hit again, said the cabinet secretary.

"We were afraid that the floods could damage the food storages, which have

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With their home flooded, a family is loading a boat with household items in Dakat Mara Char of Bogura's Sariakandi upazila to move to a safe place. Flooding has marooned about 56,000 people in the upazila. The victims in the char are yet to receive any relief materials.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

## Russia stepping up attacks

Says Kyiv; EU's top diplomat calls Moscow's blockade of Ukrainian grain 'a war crime'

### AGENCIES

Russian forces have stepped up their shelling in Ukraine's Kharkiv and Donetsk regions, Kyiv said yesterday, after President Volodymyr Zelensky warned to expect greater hostilities ahead of a historic EU decision on Ukraine's bid for candidate status.

Nearly four months after Russia launched a bloody invasion of his country, Zelensky said there had been "few such fateful decisions for Ukraine" as the one it expects from the European Union this week.

"Obviously, we expect Russia to intensify hostile activity this week ... We are preparing. We are ready," he said.

Leaders of the EU's 27 member states will discuss at a summit on Thursday and Friday whether to add Ukraine to the list of countries vying for membership.

EU foreign ministers gathering in Luxembourg kicked off the week urging Moscow to stop blocking the export of vitally needed grain from Ukraine, a top global supplier.

"One cannot imagine that millions of tonnes of wheat remain blocked in Ukraine while in the rest of the world people are suffering hunger. This is a real war crime," the bloc's top diplomat Josep

Borrell said.

In a video address to the African Union yesterday, Zelensky said Ukraine is engaged in "complex negotiations" to release its ports from Russia's blockade, warning that the global grain crisis would last as long as Russia's "colonial war".

On the ground, Russia appeared to be making some battlefield advances in the east.

In its daily update yesterday, Ukraine's

**"One cannot imagine that millions of tonnes of wheat remain blocked in Ukraine while in the rest of the world people are suffering hunger."**

-- EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell

presidency reported heavier Russian shelling in the Kharkiv region in the northeast.

In the Donetsk region, the intensity of the attacks "is growing along the entire frontline" it said, leaving at least one person dead and injuring seven people, including a child.

Fighting also continued in the key

industrial city of Severodonetsk in the east, with Ukraine saying it had lost control of the adjacent village of Metyolkine, reports AFP.

Russia's defence ministry said it launched missile strikes during the past 24 hours, with one attack on a top-level Ukrainian military meeting near the city of Dnipro killing "more than 50 generals and officers".

It said it also targeted a building housing Western-provided weapons in Mykolaiv, destroying Ukrainian artillery and armoured vehicles.

The Ukraine war is fuelling not only a global food crisis but an energy crisis too.

Hit by punishing sanctions, Moscow has turned up the pressure on European economies by sharply reducing gas supplies, which has in turn sent energy prices soaring.

Germany on Sunday announced emergency measures including increased use of coal to ensure it meets its energy needs after a drop in the supply of Russian gas in recent days.

China's imports of oil from Russia meanwhile jumped by 55 percent year on year in May, customs data showed yesterday, as Beijing continued to refuse to condemn Moscow's war.

## Loss, damage rise tenfold

FROM PAGE 1  
protection programmes to bail out the poor and vulnerable groups from such damage and loss, they said.

Zahid Hussain pointed out that flood is now causing more damage than in the past because the natural drainage system has been clogged due to unplanned road constructions.

Economic loss from disasters can go up if natural correction mechanism to mitigate the crisis is disrupted because of unplanned infrastructure development, he noted.

Zahid further said the areas vulnerable to different natural disasters have already been identified by the government. For example, it is well-known that Sylhet and Sunamganj are prone to floods in April-May.

He said the government's social protection system has to be more responsive to the impact of disaster to mitigate the crisis of poor and vulnerable groups.

Released on Sunday, the report, "Bangladesh Disaster-related Statistics 2021: Climate Change and Natural Disaster Perspectives", is the second of its kind conducted by the BBS last year. The first one was carried out in 2016.

Its main objective was to develop a national database on disaster risk and impacts, including economic losses.

Over the last three decades, Bangladesh has been hit by more than 200

| SECTOR-WISE DAMAGE AND LOSS IN %               |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| SECTOR   | 2015-2020    | 2009-2014    |
| Land degradation (including reduced valuation) | <b>52.56</b> | <b>26.72</b> |
| Crops  | <b>28.90</b> | <b>36.20</b> |
| Dwelling and other infrastructures             | <b>7.38</b>  | <b>17.19</b> |
| Livestock                                      | <b>3.98</b>  | <b>4.76</b>  |
| Fishery  | <b>3.71</b>  | <b>5.82</b>  |
| Homestead forestry                             | <b>1.96</b>  | <b>8.10</b>  |
| Poultry  | <b>1.51</b>  | <b>1.21</b>  |

| DAMAGE AND LOSS BY TYPE OF DISASTER (TOP SIX) |                  |                  |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| DISASTER                                      | 2015-2020 (IN %) | 2009-2014 (IN %) |
| Flood   | <b>56.41</b>     | <b>23.23</b>     |
| River/coastal erosion                         | <b>14.99</b>     | <b>19.76</b>     |
| Cyclone                                       | <b>14.25</b>     | <b>15.41</b>     |
| Waterlogging                                  | <b>5.24</b>      | <b>8.72</b>      |
| Hailstorm                                     | <b>2.73</b>      | <b>6.23</b>      |
| Salinity                                      | <b>1.16</b>      | <b>3.30</b>      |

natural disasters, the latest report said.

The country's proximity to the Bay of Bengal, low-lying terrain and monsoon make it extremely vulnerable to natural disasters.

Flood, erosion, and cyclone together accounted for 85.6 percent of the total damage and loss in 2015-2020 compared to 58.4 percent in the previous period.

According to the report, of the 75,15,977 affected households, 54.69 percent had been hit by flooding, 34 percent by cyclone and 17.83 percent by hailstorm in 2015-2020.

Besides, natural disasters caused a loss of Tk 51,796.1 crore in crops, Tk 7,137.3 crore in livestock, Tk 2,697.6 crore in poultry

and Tk 6,646 crore in fish. The total value of land lost to erosion was Tk 21,974.4 crore with Dhaka division being the most erosion-prone zone, followed by Rangpur and Barisal divisions.

Besides, total economic loss due to land degradation was estimated at Tk 72,209.9 crore in 2015-2020.

Mustafizur said disasters caused more damage and loss to the poor and vulnerable groups because they were increasingly involved in agriculture and other nature-related income opportunities. "It is necessary to ensure environment-friendly and inclusive development..."

He further said that if activities that harm the nature and environment

cannot be stopped, this will lead to more disasters and cause higher economic losses, affecting the poor and vulnerable disproportionately.

Bangladesh is considered to be among the top five countries economically vulnerable to the impacts of global climate change. The government needs to strengthen its efforts to get more funds to mitigate the challenges, he added.

Asked whether the press

FROM PAGE 1  
state [of India] is unlikely to see heavy rains. Flood situation in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Netrakona may remain unchanged during the period," it mentioned.

The report warned that the southeastern part of the country may experience very heavy rains in the next 24 hours.

"Water levels of all major rivers in Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati and

Bandarban may rise rapidly during the period," the report said.

The port city and several districts of Chattogram Division witnessed heavy rains yesterday.

Officials and experts said there is a strong probability that the country's central region may see flooding after floodwater from the northern region starts gushing down through the Jamuna.

Talking to The Daily

## Hungry for two days

FROM PAGE 1  
only 10-15 families out of around 500 have food stock for the next two three months.

"The previous flood during Baishakh took away Boro harvest from the fields. This flood has taken rice from granaries in our homes, leaving nothing to eat."

Abdul Manaf of Rangchi village in Sunamganj's Madhyanagar upazila, said, "The local MP once came and gave us cooked food.

Lutfur Miah of Swajan village in the district's Lakhai upazila said, "It's been days since our village has been flooded and we have lost the last of our rice reserves. We don't know

how we will survive the flood."

Besides the government, hundreds of people and organisations have joined relief efforts.

Binam Talukdar, a voluntary relief worker, said, "We have been feeding hundreds of people in the shelters in Sylhet city and its suburbs. It is shocking to see that the people stranded in the city's shelters are yet to receive relief materials. It's hard

to imagine how people are surviving in the remote villages."

Nazmul Islam, an organiser of Do Something Foundation, distributed relief in Gowainghat upazila yesterday.

"We tried to go to the farthest areas where no one reached before. But how would we know which village has not gotten any relief materials? The distribution would be smooth if there was central

## Father kills daughter, injures 3 others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaujpur

A girl was hacked to death allegedly by her father while her grandmother, mother and sister were critically injured in jured in the incident over a land dispute in Rangpur's Pirogachha on Sunday evening.

Later, the man, Rashidul Islam, tried to die by suicide, said police.

The dead is Rafiya Aktar, 11.

Quoting the neighbours, Pirogachha police said Rashidul of Monglakuthi village had a conflict with his wife over a piece of land. The couple often got locked in altercations over the issue. After returning home on Sunday evening, Rashidul started quarrels with his wife, police said.

At one stage, Rashidul started stabbing his wife indiscriminately. As his two daughters tried to save her mother, Rashidul also stabbed them and his mother.

Rafiya, his elder daughter, died on the spot. Locals sent the other injured to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. Rashidul was undergoing treatment there under police custody.

A case was filed.

## Boy killed in landslide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 12-year-old boy was killed in a landslide triggered by heavy rain in Chattogram city's Sholoshahar early yesterday.

The victim, Raihan, was the son of Din Mohammad.

Nazim Uddin, officer in-charge of Panchlaish Police Station, said the incident happened in Green View Residential area in the dead of night amid heavy rain.

"The boy was sleeping inside their shop and a huge chunk of earth fell on the shop leaving him dead on the spot," he added.

## 20 hurt as police, protesters clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

At least 20 people, including 12 police personnel, were injured in a clash yesterday when police tried to stop a blockade of Chitalmari Police Station by protesters.

Inspector SM Ashraful Alam of Bagerhat police Media Cell claimed that a female student made a Facebook post "hurting religious sentiment". Angered by this, a group of people brought out a procession demanding trial of the student. They headed towards the police station, he said.

He said the 18-year-old girl was detained on Sunday night.

During the clash, the protesters threw brick chunks. They also vandalised two police vans, four motorcycles and furniture of the police station. Police fired bullets to disperse the demonstrators, Ashraful said.

He said the girl denied giving such Facebook posts and that someone else hacked into her Facebook ID and did it.

At least 12 people were detained for their alleged involvement in the clash.

## Tk 10 lakh struck out, fine stays

FROM PAGE 1  
"They [the ministry] proposed the fine amounts, but the cabinet did not agree to those," said the cabinet secretary, adding that the fine would be at the discretion of the council.

There is only a provision for rebuke in the existing press council rules.

In the proposed act, there is a new provision that gives power to the council to order a news outlet to publish a news outlet to publish a certain item.

When his attention was drawn to the fact that cartoons were subjective, he said, "If you publish an obnoxious cartoon against

acc

## Flood victims' plea for relief amid govt's inaction

Alleges Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior joint secretary Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday alleged that the flood-affected people in the country's northeast region, mainly haor areas, are crying for relief amid the government's inaction to mitigate their miseries.

Speaking at a token sit-in programme, he also blamed the government's unplanned construction of dams and a road in the haor region for the severe flood in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Netrakona.

"The haor people of Sylhet, Sunamganj and Netrakona are crying for rice and food. Where will they get food as everything around them has been submerged? How will the food reach them?" the BNP leader asked.

Stating the government is responsible for the flood, Rizvi said, "You (PM) will now see the Padma Bridge in the colourful light and hang onto power with joy in your heart keeping people hungry, starving and inundated. The country's people will no longer tolerate it."

Ganatantra Forum arranged the programme in front of Jatiya Press Club, demanding the release of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia and adequate relief for flood-affected people.

For unplanned construction of the dams and roads, Rizvi said 50-60 lakh people have now been stranded in floodwaters.

Rizvi also criticised the government for its move to shut down stores and shopping malls after 8:00pm since it has long been claiming to have the capacity of providing an uninterrupted electricity supply.

## BRRTC expanding service to 21 new routes in southwest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Under a major expansion plan, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRRTC) is going to launch its services in 21 new destinations of south-western districts, following the inauguration of Padma Bridge.

Currently, the state-run transport agency is operating 18 buses on Dhaka-Khulna and Dhaka-Benapole routes. It will operate 65 buses – mostly AC buses – on 23 routes from June 26, the day the bridge would be opened to the public.

"We are going to expand our services to almost all districts of the south-western region, taking advantage of Padma Bridge," BRRTC Chairperson Tazul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, different private bus operators have already planned to expand their services in the south-western region, as they think bus service through the bridge is likely to see a boom.

**Satkira, Barishal, Shariatpur, Madaripur, Paisharhat of Barishal, Charmuguria of Madaripur, Kasiuni of Gopalganj, Kuakata of Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Gosaihat of Shariatpur, Mollarhat of Bagerhat, Bhandaria of Pirojpur, and Baufal of Patuakhali will come under the new BRRTC services.**

They think direct connection between Dhaka and the south-western region will cut travel times, and increase fuel efficiency as well as the number of passengers.

Major Md Moktaruzzmaan, general manager (operations) of BRRTC, said they will have fixed and fine tuned the routes by June 25.

"If we get a positive response from passengers, we will increase our services further," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said they used to provide services in south-western region from three depots in Barishal, Khulna and Tungipara. Now, most of the services would be started from Dhaka.

Fares would be fixed as per the fare chart of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, another BRRTC official said. Most of the buses would start from Dhaka's Gulistan, some from Abdullapur, Mirpur-12 and Jatrabari, and two from Narsingdi.

BRRTC has given highest priority to Kuakata, as it has

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## HC stays DSA case against Jamuna TV reporter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for six months the trial proceedings against Jamuna Television journalist Nurnabi Sarkar in a case filed under the Digital Security Act in Mymensingh.

The court issued a rule asking the state to explain why the case proceeding against Nurnabi should not be scrapped.

Lutfunesa Beauty, former vice chairperson of Mymensingh's Trishal upazila, filed the case with Mymensingh Cyber Tribunal on June 15, 2021 after Jamuna Television broadcast a report on corruption allegation against a bureaucrat along with a blurred photo of the complainant.

## LOW-LYING AREAS IN DHAKA Flood fear fuels spike in boat sales



Boatmakers busy at work at Kayetpara market. In light of the flood situation in Sylhet, the demand for boats has increased, as many residents of Dhaka's low-lying areas fear they might suffer the same fate if the water level of surrounding canals keep increasing. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HELEMUL ALAM

### HELEMUL ALAM

Md Razib Hossain, a resident of Daseshkhali under Khilgaon thana, came to Kayetpara bazar in the capital yesterday to purchase a boat along with his brother. Razib, who had never purchased a boat before, spent around Tk 6,000 to purchase one. He said he will have to spend Tk 2,000 more to make it functional. The gravity of the flood situation in Sylhet propelled them to make this purchase, fearing that a similar situation can occur in Dhaka's low-lying areas, he said. "Several feet of water has already accumulated in the last one week at Fakirkhali under Khilgaon thana. This is why I've decided to purchase a boat for my family to face the worst," said Md Hasan Ali, who purchased a boat for Tk 14,000. He said 1.5 km of the main road

stretching from Ederkandi to Fakirkhali went under water on Sunday and they've been solely dependent on boats for travel.

Many like them have been visiting the almost 150 years old Kayetpara boat market, located under Khilgaon thana. The area falls under Dhaka South City Corporation's ward 75.

Md Rony, a boatmaker said, "During the dry season, we would make five to seven boats in a week, but now, we're making 30 due to the demand."

He said the demand started increasing in the last three months and even more within the last week.

There are five boat makers who usually make around 20 boats every day and sell those to different areas of the country specially at the outskirts of Dhaka, said Rony.

"We're busy making boats from 6:00am to 6:00pm every day at present and can make four boats in a day," said Md Joy Miah, another boatmaker.

He said they sold around 18 boats last week.

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A pedestrian balances himself as he almost slips on the mud accumulated on Beribadh Road in Hajaribagh. In the effect of the downpour over the last few days, the road has turned quite risky to tread on.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

No festival planned for opening of Padma Bridge  
Says info minister

UNB, Dhaka

The government is not organising any festival to mark the opening of the Padma Bridge, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud said yesterday.

There will just be an opening ceremony and a public rally on June 25, he told reporters at the secretariat, adding that the Padma Bridge has become a "symbol of our ability."

He said people across the country are jubilant as the construction of the bridge has become a reality despite opposition from BNP.

"BNP doesn't want any inaugural programme over the opening of the Padma Bridge and they hatched conspiracy to foil its opening. But their conspiracies have been thwarted," said Hasan.

Referring to the flood situation in Sylhet and

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## DU STUDENT MURDER Family rejects police probe

COURT CORRESPONDENT



The family has rejected the probe submitted by police to the court in a case filed over the death of Dhaka University student Elmia Chowdhury Meghla.

Victim's father Saiful Islam Chowdhury, who filed the case, told the court that he would file a no-confidence petition against it on the next scheduled date.

Talking to reporters at the court premises, the complainant said his daughter was tortured to death, but police submitted the probe report under section 306 of the Penal Code, which means the accused abetted the victim to take her own life.

Dhaka's Additional Chief Metropolitan

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## NSU SCAM Court refuses to hold bail hearing

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday refused to hold hearing on the bail petitions submitted for four members of North South University's (NSU) trustee board at the jail gate for one day in a Tk 304 crore money laundering case.

The accused are MA Kashem, Benajir Ahmed, Rehana Rahman and Mohammed Shahjahan.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after their lawyers submitted four petitions.

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## PRAYER TIMING JUNE 21

|        | Fazr | Zohr  | Asr  | Maghrib | Esha |
|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Azan   | 4-05 | 12-45 | 5-00 | 6-52    | 8-17 |
| Jamaat | 4-40 | 1-15  | 5-15 | 6-55    | 8-45 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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Mohiuddin Ahmed no more

UNB, Dhaka

Former secretary, diplomat, and freedom fighter Mohiuddin Ahmed passed away yesterday at his Uttara home in Dhaka after a prolonged illness.

Mohiuddin (80) was undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and returned home four days ago. He left behind his wife and two daughters.

The diplomat was the first in Europe to join the Liberation War while he was the second secretary at the High Commission of Pakistan in London.

He expressed his allegiance to Bangladesh by addressing a public gathering at Trafalgar Square on the first day of August 1971. It was a huge protest rally that was held under the banner "Stop Genocide: Recognise Bangladesh."

During his career, Mohiuddin served in different capacities at Bangladesh missions in Delhi, Geneva, Jakarta, Jeddah, and New York and as a secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and principal at the Foreign Service Academy.

No festival

FROM PAGE 3  
northern region of the country, Hasan said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has instructed the authorities to go all out to rescue the marooned people and reach relief materials to them. The army has been deployed for rescue operation.

The leaders and activities of the ruling party Awami League are working in the flood-affected areas alongside the local administrations, he said.

A BCL leader died while working in flood-hit areas, he added.



Demanding due payment of workers at five jute mills and reopening of the mills under state initiative, the Workers-Farmers-Students-People Unity formed a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Commuters suffer as usual

Delayed drain construction making Durgabari Road non-functional

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The suspension of a drain's construction in Mymensingh's Durgabari Road has been causing immense difficulties to hundreds of commuters.

Locals cannot even pass the area on foot due to construction materials being scattered all over the place. The non-functionality of the busy road has put students of Mahakali Girls School and College and the devotees and visitors to Durgabari Temple into a great inconvenience.

According to locals, the situation is getting even worse due to the frequent rainfalls in the last few days.

The construction has remained halted for more than a week now, according to local trader Kamal Mia. Durgabari resident Sukumar Das said Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) is yet to take any step in this regard.



Moreover, construction materials for a high-rise building adjacent to the drain site have been lying on the road for months. Locals alleged that the authorities have not paid any attention to their sufferings.

Contacted, MCC executive engineer Md Rafiqul Islam said Masud Hightech, a construction firm from Dhaka, was appointed to construct the drain as part of the city's package construction

programme. The firm was asked to complete the work immediately but a month has already passed since that, said the executive engineer.

"We would immediately contact the officials of the firm and instruct them to complete the construction as soon as possible," he added.

The contractor could not be contacted for comments, despite repeated attempts.

## Govt to set up 5 burn

FROM PAGE 5

due to non-compliance and other irregularities. The minister also said licenses of 49 drug manufacturing companies and production and marketing of all types of medicines by 14 pharmaceutical companies have been suspended during this period.

Meanwhile, 2,036 cases have been filed in the mobile court run by the DGDA and a fine of Tk 2.67 crore has been realised on charges of producing and marketing fake, contaminated and

unregistered medicine.

In response to another query from M Abdul Latif, the minister said no medical personnel can refuse emergency medical services to anyone taken to hospitals, clinics or doctors.

Replying to a question by BNP MP Gulam Mohammad Siraj, Maleque said steps would be taken to introduce separate units in government hospitals of all districts to provide medical services to addicts in future.

## Lower court judge

FROM PAGE 5  
cause proceedings initiated by it on June 6.

The HC on April 10 granted ad interim bail to Zakirul in a counterfeiting-related case. On May 24, Zakirul appeared before the court of Jamalpur's Additional District and Sessions Judge Jinnat Jahan Jhunu for bail. But, Jhunu rejected his petition without any explanation.

Deputy Attorney General Abul Hashem represented the state during the proceedings of the matter.

## Flood fear fuels

FROM PAGE 3

Mohammad Anowar Hossain, another boat trader, said the boat price ranges between Tk 3,500 to Tk 15,000.

"We make a boat with Chambal tree wood, since boats made of Garjan wood is very costly. These boats last for two to three years," he said.

Abdur Rahman (75), a boat man who operates

on the Norai canal from Meradia ghat to Trimohoni since 1988, said he also purchased a boat in the first week of May at a cost of Tk 20,000.

"The water on the Norai canal which joins Balu river in the downstream is increasing. There is a chance of flood in the low-lying areas if the water level increases," he said.



## Court refuses

FROM PAGE 3

As the High Court (HC) rejected their bail earlier and the matter is pending with it, he had no jurisdiction to hear on the issue, the judge told the defence lawyers.

The judge, however, fixed June 30 for the next hearing.

On May 5, ACC filed the case against the four and also NSU Board of Trustees Chairperson Azim Uddin Ahmed.

Ashaloy Housing and Developers Managing Director Amin Md Hilay was also made accused in the case.

## Foolproof security

FROM PAGE 3

business schedule, Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the two newly constructed stations virtually at 3:30pm from her official residence Gono Bhaban.

Padma Bridge (Uttar) Police Station is under Munshiganj District Police, while Padma Bridge (Dakshin) Police Station is under Shariatpur District Police.

During the same programme, the PM will also hand over 120 homes constructed under a project, 12 newly built police hospitals, six police barracks for female officers, and an online general diary (GD) service.

Each of the police

stations will have 40 officers, including one assistant police superintendent, one inspector, two sub-inspectors, two assistant sub-inspectors, and 15 constables. Both of the four storey buildings have been constructed next to the toll plaza at both ends of Padma Bridge.

Police will oversee tax collection at toll booths and traffic around the bridge and service roads. Road and railway slabs, and works of gas pipelines will also be their concern, according to officials.

The two buildings were built at a cost of Tk 35 crore each by the Padma Bridge authority.

## Fire guts 6

FROM PAGE 5

Locals alleged that there is no proper monitoring while establishing the area's warehouses due to the negligence of some businessmen.

They also expressed their concern over the authority's inaction, as there is no proper source of water in the area even after the occurrence of several fire incidents over the last couple of years.

## BRTC expanding

FROM PAGE 3

set three routes to connect to the major tourist spot, he added.

Satkhira, Barishal, Shariatpur, Madaripur, Paisharhat of Barishal, Charmuguria of Madaripur, Kasiani of Gopalganj, Kuakata of Patuakhali, Pirojpur,

Goshat of Shariatpur, Mollarhat of Bagerhat, Bhandaria of Pirojpur, and Baful of Patuakhali will come under the new BRTC services.

Some destinations would be linked by more than one bus service, depending on the demand, sources said.

## Family rejects police probe

FROM PAGE 3

Court of Dhaka.

In the charge sheet, the IO said the charges brought against them of abetting the victim to take her own life were primarily proved and they should be brought under trial for their alleged involvement.

Iftekhar is now in jail, while his parents are on bail.

Elma, a final year student of the dance department at DU, was allegedly tortured to death at her in-laws' residence in Banani on December 14 last year. Elma married Iftekhar, who lives in Canada, six months ago from the date of her death and used to stay with her husband's family.

Her in-laws took her to United Hospital on December 14 last year where doctors declared her dead.

Elma, a final year student of the dance department at DU, was allegedly tortured to death at her in-laws' residence in Banani on December 14 last year where doctors declared her dead.

## No respite in sight for residents

FROM PAGE 5

blocked drains and canals are responsible for the waterlogging.

He also mentioned that several CCC teams with excavators got engaged and started clearing out the blocked drains and canals to direct the rainwater towards Karnaphuli.

"The situation has worsened. There has been a power outage of nine hours till 3:00pm. We have been stuck in our apartments," said Saima Alam, assistant professor of Chattogram University and resident of Halishahar's Shantibagh.

Mobarak Ali, president of CCC Standing Committee to Prevent Water Logging, said excessive rainfall, high tide, the rise of water level in Karnaphuli and

cancelled their classes, while the zoology department had to postpone their exams.

In Rangamati, a flash flood from the hill upstream has inundated Bhaghaichari, Jurichari and Barkol areas. The rising water level in Kaptai lake has compelled the authority to suspend the operations of water vessels on the lake for an indefinite period.

Ten shelter centres have been opened in Khagrachari municipal area, where landslides also occurred. However, no casualty was reported.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer  
Education Engineering Department  
Bogra  
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e-Tender Notice No. 34/EE/EED/bog/2021-22/5974 = 12 Lots

Date: 20.06.2022

## e-Tender Notice

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

| Tender ID | Description of work   | Last selling date & time | Closing date & time | Fees for tender documents |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 710178    | Repair & Renovation Works at Sonpocha High School, Sarikandi, Bogra.                        | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710179    | Repair & Renovation Works at Gangnagar High School, Shibgoni, Bogra.                        | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710180    | Repair & Renovation Works at Nishindhara Fakir Uddin School and College, Sadar, Bogra.      | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710181    | Repair & Renovation Works at Shikarpur Krishnapur High School, Sadar, Bogra.                | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710182    | Repair & Renovation Works at Baghpara Shahid Danesh Uddin School and College, Sadar, Bogra. | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710183    | Repair & Renovation Works at Kichar Girls High School, Sadar, Bogra.                        | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710184    | Repair & Renovation Works at Ziazhur High School, Kahalou, Bogra.                           | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710185    | Repair & Renovation Works at Serua Adarsho High School, Serpur, Bogra.                      | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710186    | Repair & Renovation Works at Gosaibari KO Girls High School, Churnat, Bogra.                | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710187    | Repair & Renovation Works at Boro Changur BL High School, Nandigram, Bogra.                 | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710188    | Repair & Renovation Works at Pothaihara Girls High School, Dupchachia, Bogra.               | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |
| 710189    | Repair & Renovation Works at Shahid Siraj Khan Memorial Academy, Adamdighi, Bogra.          | 5.7.2022<br>15.00        | 6.7.2022<br>11.00   | 6.7.2022<br>10.30         |

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender shall be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline hard copies shall be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Md. Altaf Hossain  
Executive Engineer  
Education Engineering Department  
Bogra

7 x 3 Column

GD-1273

**Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.**

H.S. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KURMITOLA, DHAKA-1229, BANGLADESH,  
PHONE-8901500-19, 8901

## Lower court judge apologises for rejecting bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamalpur's Additional District and Sessions Judge Jinnat Jahan Jhunu yesterday offered unconditional apology to the High Court for rejecting the bail petition of an accused, even though the HC had granted him ad-interim bail earlier in a case.

Besides, Jhunu submitted an application to the HC, saying that she has committed an "unintended mistake" by rejecting the bail petition of Md Zahirul out of carelessness and promised that she will remain careful in discharging duties in future.

Earlier in the day, Jhunu appeared before the HC bench of Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain and Justice Ahmed Sohel in compliance with its previous summons order.

The bench exonerated Jhunu from the show-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Govt to set up 5 burn units in 5 divisions  
Health minister tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken a plan to set up burn units in five divisional medical colleges and hospitals in the country with Saudi Arabian funding, Health Minister Zahid Maleque told parliament yesterday.

He said this during a question-answer session, chaired by Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury.

In response to a query from ruling Awami League MP M Abdul Latif, the health minister said the units would be set up in Sylhet, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barishal and Faridpur.

The health minister said the project was approved at the Eneec meeting on December 7 last year and will be implemented from July 2022 to June 2025.

"In addition, a 100-bed burn unit will be set up at Chattogram Medical College Hospital funded by the Chinese government. Another project has been taken to set up a burn unit in Mymensingh and Khulna district under the fourth sector programme," said the minister.

Meanwhile, in reply to a query from ruling AL MP Aminul Islam, the health minister told parliament that mobile courts of Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) has cancelled registration of 136 commercial drugs in 2021

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



With water level of the Teesta rising rapidly, flood victims of Shankardah village in Dinajpur's Gangachara upazila relocate pieces of their dismantled house to a safer place. Inset, in Kurigram's Holokhana union, a family relocates to a safer place after flood waters from the Dharla river submerged their home.

PHOTO: COLLECTED, STAR

## The north cries FOR HELP

Govt relief yet to reach victims as flood situation intensifies

## STAR REPORT

As the flood situation worsens in the northern districts, thousands of people are passing hard days amid food and drinking water shortage. Many flood affected people have taken shelters at flood centres, embankments, roads and other places as their homes have perished under water.

The cry for relief is getting louder as the government's relief programmes are not sufficient, claimed flood victims.

In Sirajganj, houses of some 3,430 families in almost 100 villages have been submerged. A total of 181 flood shelters have been opened in the district, said Md Akteruzzaman, district relief and rehabilitation officer (DRRO).

A portion of an embankment was eroded in Rautara village of Shahjadpur upazila and an earthen road was washed away in Malshapara area in Sadar upazila by the flood.

The Jamuna was flowing 37cm above the danger level at Kazipur point yesterday morning, according to the water development board.

"I along with my family are passing days under the open sky as our home has been flooded. We're facing a shortage of food and drinking water," said Maruf Hossain, a resident of Brammangacha village in Shahjadpur upazila.

The district administration has allocated 140 metric tonnes of rice for the flood victims.

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, the rivers Brahmaputra and Dharla were flowing above danger level, inundating a vast area.

Farmer Abdul Hamid (60), drowned in flood water at Kisamat Chandrapur village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

"We've taken shelter on the road and have been staying in a polythene-wrapped hut ever since my house went under water. My cattle also perished in the flood," said Ahela Bewa (65), a resident of Char Jatrapur area in Kurigram Sadar upazila.



Another victim, Noor Mohammad (58), of the same area said, "The fence and furniture of my house have washed away. My cattle are facing an acute crisis of fodder."

Rikta Begum (30), of Sardob village in Kurigram Sadar upazila, said, "Our entire village has been flooded, still we haven't received any assistance from the government."

Kurigram's DRRO Abdul Hye Sarker said the district administration has allocated 295 tonnes of rice, Tk 14.50 cash, and 1,000 packets of dry food for flood victims.

In Bogura, around 58,000 people of Sariakandi upazila and Sonatala upazila have been marooned as the Jamuna continues swelling.

Some 31 primary schools have been shut in the two upazilas, as the schools' premises have gone under water, said DRRO Golam Kibria. The river was flowing 53 cm above the danger level at the Mathurapara point Sariakandi yesterday afternoon, said WDB officials.

Rina Begum, a flood victim of

Dakatmara char under Sariakandi upazila said, "We have been stuck on a small piece of land with our cattle, three children and other family members for the last five days."

"We are very worried about our children as they are so little. We are trying hard to shift them to a safe place," she said.

Mazeda Begum of the Kuripara char in the same upazila said, "We have no food and cannot cook since the flood water entered our home on Sunday night."

Anis Mollah of the Chapnagar char of the same upazila said, "We are marooned for the last six days and are yet to receive any flood relief."

However, the DRRO Golam Kibria said they have allocated 40 tonnes of rice for the district's flood victims.

In Rangpur, the flood situation keeps getting worse as the water level of the region's major rivers is rapidly increasing. Several thousand people have been stranded due to the flood.

[Our correspondents from Pabna, Lalmonirhat, Bogura and Rangpur contributed to this report]

## WATERLOGGING IN CHATTOGRAM No respite in sight for residents

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Though the night-long torrential rain paused yesterday morning, many low-lying areas of the port city remain waterlogged.

Bahodderhat, Chandaon, Chawkbazar, Badurtola, Bakala, Kapasgola, Katalganj, Shulokbazar, different areas of Halishahar and North Agrabad, Anandabazar, Rahmatganj and other areas are still inundated in knee-to waist-deep water till the filing of this report.

Many of these areas also experienced power outages for several hours till yesterday afternoon.

This has caused immense suffering to residents of the areas, even resulting in two deaths.

Two persons died from electrocution while trying to disconnect the IPS unit at an inundated ground floor of three-storey "Khan House" at Katalganj under Panchlaish

yesterday morning, informed Nazim Uddin Mazumder, officer-in-charge of Panchlaish Police Station.

The deceased were identified as Abu Taher (65), gatekeeper of the building, and Md Abul Hossain (35), a driver.

Patenga Met Office recorded a 242 mm rainfall in Chattogram in the last 24 hours till 6:00am yesterday. According to the office, there was 94.5 mm of rainfall in the region in the last 12 hours till 6:00am.

People belonging to the lower-income groups in different slums of these areas were the worst sufferers. Many families are also faced with a shortage of food.

Chattogram City Corporation Mayor Md Rejaul Karim Chowdhury could not leave his Bahodderhat residence for official work till yesterday afternoon as the locality remained waterlogged. Afterwards, he visited different

## Brunt of the weekends

JU regular students neglected as teachers busy with weekend courses

SHEIKH TAJUL ISLAM TAJ

Teachers of Jahangirnagar University have allegedly been found neglecting the academic activities of regular students due to their involvement in the weekend programmes running in various departments.

Faculty members of the English department have claimed to be "overburdened" with "regular courses". However, it was found that most of them have been taking at least three courses in the weekend programmes, owing to more remunerations generated in those courses.

According to the students of the department, neither have they held sufficient classes and regular exams nor published the grades on time and properly.

"I could not sit for any tutorials or classes. Prof M Moniruzzaman's course. Surprisingly, I discovered my tutorials and attendance marks on a mark sheet issued by him," claimed a student of the department, requesting anonymity.

When asked, Prof M Moniruzzaman said he gave back the assignment copies to the students after grading them so he couldn't verify the claim.

"This 'privatisation of public universities' has become a regular phenomenon. It must be stopped immediately."



PROF ANU MOHAMMAD

"The student might have submitted. A mistake might have occurred."

Meanwhile, an enrollee of the department's weekend programme said they have had regular classes with the very same teachers, and the grading was done on time and properly.

"These problems are nothing new in this department. We are overburdened with courses. We have a shortage of teachers," said Sabera Sultana, head of the department.

However, she could not state the reasons behind conducting weekend programmes by the overburdened faculty members.

Regular students of other departments have been bearing the brunt of the weekend courses as well. "Our department is always late with results. We got our second-year results a year after the final exam," said a student from the economics department.

"This 'privatisation of public universities' has become a regular phenomenon. It must be stopped immediately," said Prof Anu Mohammad of JU Economics department.

Contacted, JU VC Prof Nurul Alam said, "It's unacceptable for teachers to ignore regular students. I will immediately talk to them."

"Weekend programmes are not allowed. Our instructions were to hold classes on weekends for regular students to compensate for the learning loss during the pandemic. I will talk to the vice chancellor in this regard," said Prof Dil Afroza Begum, acting chairman of UGC.

## 2 to die for AUST student murder

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday confirmed the death sentence of two people and upheld life imprisonment of two others for killing Subir Chandra Das, a student of Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST), in 2013.

Subir Chandra Das (22) was strangled to death by the convicts over previous enmity on January 21, 2013. His body was found near a brick kiln at Kotalia village in Savar the following day.

On October 23, 2016, a Dhaka court sentenced Farhad Hosain Sizu and Mohammad Hasan, two classmates of Subir, and sentenced Md Shahique Ahmed and Shawon alias Kamrul Hasan to life imprisonment for the killing.

## Fire guts 6 shops in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A fire broke out at a market adjacent to Ganginarpur Mosque in Mymensingh city, engulfing at least six shops yesterday morning.

Traders said the fire service was informed when shops were being opened around 10:45am.

A fire service team rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, after an hour long effort, said Niaz Ahmed, deputy assistant director of Mymensingh Fire Service and Civil Defense.

The losses haven't been assessed yet, said the official, adding that the fire may have originated from a short circuit in a cycle store depot on the market's second floor.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



The residents of port city are faced with immense sufferings as waste-deep water has clogged many low-lying areas, even claiming life of two persons. People of lower income groups are the worst sufferers as many of them are unable to cook food with their homes being inundated. Power has been cut off and many were unable to go to work. These photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## Govt okays

FROM PAGE 1  
be determined by a rule under the proposed law, he added.

"If an elderly person dies before the age of 75, the nominee will get the pension for the remaining time. If anyone dies at 62, his or her nominee will get a pension for 13 years," he said.

At any time, people could withdraw themselves from the scheme and they will get back their money, he said.

According to the proposed law, there will be a five-member national pension authority headed by a chairman and also a 15-member governing body with the finance minister at its helm, said the cabinet secretary.

The Finance Division has placed the draft of the Universal Pension Management Act, 2022, aiming to bring the growing elderly population under a sustainable social safety net so they can better cope with the fallout from unemployment, disease, old age complications, or penury amid the high life expectancy rate.

Also yesterday, the cabinet cleared a proposal for Bangladesh to sign and ratify Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled.

The cabinet cancelled its previous decision over the formation of the Sovereign Wealth Fund, which was taken in 2015.

## Get ready

FROM PAGE 2  
a capacity of 7,500 tonnes, in Sunamganj."

Hasina is expected to visit the flood-affected areas in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Netrakona today.

She will hold a press conference at 11:00am on Wednesday, said a release from the PMO's Press Wing yesterday.



People on boats looking for shelter after evacuating their flooded homes on Char Jatrapur in Kurigram's Sadar upazila. Due to the swelling of the Brahmaputra, the entire char has been inundated, leaving many homeless. The photo was taken on Sunday afternoon.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## La Nina behind

FROM PAGE 16

When it is colder, the monsoon wind becomes very strong and brings in moisture. That is what is causing so much rainfall in the greater Ganges and in the Brahmaputra-Jamuna basin, he said.

Rashed added this intense rainfall will take place in coming months too and all the water will go down to the Bay of Bengal through Bangladesh.

Asked about the current forecasting system in Bangladesh, and whether it is possible to forecast specific weather events earlier, he said countries like the USA and many South American countries have been using seasonal forecasting based on

La Nina using oceanic atmosphere dynamics.

He further said Bangladesh currently just mentions level of water but not the area of inundation.

"If they want to do it, they have to find out the correlation between depth of water and the area of inundation. Then they would be able to say how much area would be inundated if the water level increases to a certain level.

With seasonal forecasting, which is the modern system, it is possible to forecast an event three months ahead.

"If we could forecast the flood three months ago, the government could have been far better prepared," he said.

## Driver knifed

FROM PAGE 16

Mostafa out of his lorry and stabbed him after an altercation, helper Aminul said.

Mostafa died on the way to Dinajpur M Abdur

Rahim Medical College Hospital.

After visiting the spot, Fakhrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Biral Police Station, said they would investigate the incident and identify the culprits.

## 'No record of press council members disapproving it'

FROM PAGE 1  
demanded it, but a number of them said they did not even know about it. Can you explain this?

**Nasim:** When we discuss something in the press council, we invite all bodies and they join us accordingly. As an example, when we were planning to make a digital list of journalists, we also invited all related organisations.

**DS:** Then why are representative journalists claiming they don't know about the issue?

**Nasim:** I cannot comment on that. Only they can clarify this.

**DS:** Then there's a confusion regarding this issue.

**Nasim:** There is no confusion at our end.

**DS:** If this law amendment is approved, would the journalists not be exposed to higher levels of trouble and inconvenience?

**DS:** Was there a discussion with editors and journalists who are part of the current committee?

**Nasim:** Yes. In our

## Not an order but

FROM PAGE 1

he added. "We also did not order Bahauddin Bahar to leave the area. We humbly requested him. However, words got spread that the MP did not comply with the Election Commission's order to leave the city. That's not entirely true."

On June 8, the Election Commission issued a letter to Bahar, asking him to leave the electoral area as it found that the MP was taking part in electioneering of ruling party candidate Arfanul Haque Rifaat.

It became a hot topic of discussion as Bahar did not comply with the EC directive.

The letter also read, "The commission humbly requests Bahar to leave the electoral area to cooperate with the commission in compliance with the electoral code of conduct."

On June 12, the CEC said the Election Commission cannot do anything if he is a lawmaker.

He came up with the remark when journalists drew his attention to Bahar not leaving the area.

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

use this language out of politeness".

According to election expert Badiul Alam Majumder, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagarik (Shujan), the EC issued a notice under section 22 of the code of conduct asking the MP to leave the area, with which he failed to comply.

The CEC then said the commission could not do anything further about it, though section 31 and 32 of the code of conduct clearly specify penalties for such violation, including imposition of fines, jail sentence and even cancelling the candidature of the candidate supported by the MP, he said.

"Consequently, the CEC and the other commissioners failed to faithfully discharge the duties of office according to the law. It is painful to see that by today's [yesterday's] statement, the CEC is further demeaning this important constitutional body."

He added, "The CEC said they did not order the lawmaker but made a request -- what is the difference? His comments are misguiding. Are they trying to make someone happy? we don't understand this."

About the issue, former election commissioner Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hussain told this newspaper, "When the Election Commission makes a request, it is actually an order. They

areas, we send letters requesting to put a stop to these. We also conducted a couple of investigations. It's not that we haven't done anything. But we cannot get involved with each and every incident."

**DS:** Do you have the legal authority or not?

**Nasim:** We, the press council, will mostly work to improve the quality of journalism. Legally, I am allowed to give a statement. But will that help? I think it will go in vain. Instead, if they are allowed to get some legal aid, we can arrange that.

Most importantly, we do not wish to get involved with matters of other courts. We will work with the ones that comes to us, and will keep on working in this manner.

**DS:** If a journalist is tortured, you will not get involved?

**Nasim:** We don't have any authority in this regard.

## Envoy laud

FROM PAGE 16

Charles Whiteley, ambassador and head of delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, said the inauguration of the Padma Bridge is going to be an "unforgettable moment".

In a message, the envoy conveyed warmest congratulations to Bangladesh.

"We look forward to using the bridge ourselves and to seeing what it does to facilitate people to people, family and commercial links. Congratulations, Bangladesh."

The Russian embassy in Dhaka said Padma Bridge is a "true game changer" and "landmark achievement" as it offers multiple opportunities in terms of regional trade, investments, connectivity, employment, tourism, and many other fields.

"The dream of Sonar Bangla cherished by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is coming true right before

our eyes," said the embassy in a media release.

Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming on Sunday lauded Hasina's wise leadership and determination in building the "dream bridge".

Terming the Padma Bridge a symbol of courage, he said, "It's an outstanding achievement. This is going to be a big day [June 25] for Bangladesh," he said in a Facebook message.

He termed Hasina a "true representative" of the people.

Lauding Hasina's courage and leadership, Li said Hasina was key in making of the decision to build the bridge with the country's own resources.

He said bridge would serve as an everlasting bond of brotherhood between China and Bangladesh.

"Whenever I think of the bridge, three words come to my mind: courage, determination and prosperity," he added.

The Padma Bridge is the longest bridge Chinese companies have built outside of China, he said.

## Without public

FROM PAGE 16

companies were charging consumers Tk 150 extra per cylinder on average, Shamsul said.

"There are lots of corruption allegations against Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation. If the public hearing is held, consumers would be able to know how much extra money BPC takes from them for each litre of fuel," he said.

He said the CAB has filed a writ petition challenging the price hike of diesel and kerosene in November through a government gazette. "The High Court is yet to deliver a verdict on the petition."

After the launch of public hearings in the gas and power sectors by the BERC, it was found that liquefied petroleum gas [LPG] marketing

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology  
Directorate of Planning and Development

## Corrigendum in International Tender

Corrigendum to the tender notice published in "The Daily Star" and "The Daily Prothom Alo" on 10/5/2022 for Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Magnetron Sputtering Tool with Accessories for the Dept. of GCE, BUET, Dhaka.

Ref. No. P&D/FPIS-31/BEPIC-04/21/GCE-02/International Tender/DR-171; Date: 20/06/2022

Tender Package No.: BUET/GCE/EPIC/2021/Procurement/G01

| Sl. No. | Particulars                           | Existing  | Amendment  |
|---------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1.      | Tender Specification                  | Chamber designed to incorporate load-lock via CF flange.  | There is an item named "load-lock" mentioned in the tender specification. The tenderers should quote the price of this item separately.  |
| 2.      | Tender Security                       | Pay order/Bank Draft  | Pay order/Bank Draft or Bank Guarantee   |
| 3.      | The existing statement under GCC 28.2 | The insurance coverage shall be made by Manufacturer.   | The insurance coverage shall be made as per Incoterms mentioned in ITT 23.12(d).   |
| 4.      | The clauses in GCC 27.1               | <p>b. 80% (Eighty percent) payment of the LC value shall be made upon submission of documents specified in GCC Clause 23 against the goods to be delivered.</p> <p>c. 20% (Twenty percent) of the LC contract value will be paid after satisfactory completion of installation, Testing and commissioning of the Equipment at site and Acceptance Certificate to be issued by the user/purchaser and providing Bank Guarantee of ten (10) percent of contract price with the validity of one year from the date of installation to secure warranty period</p> | <p>b. 90% (Ninety percent) payment of the LC value shall be made upon submission of documents specified in GCC Clause 23 against the goods to be delivered.</p> <p>c. 10% (Ten percent) of the LC contract value will be paid after satisfactory completion of installation, Testing and commissioning of the Equipment at site and Acceptance Certificate to be issued by the user/purchaser and providing Bank Guarantee of ten (10) percent of contract price with the validity of one year from the date of installation to secure warranty period</p> |
| 5.      | Tender Last Selling Date              | 23.06.2022 (during office hours)  | 03.07.2022 (during office hours)   |
| 6.      | Tender Closing Date and Time          | 22.06.2022 at 11.30 AM (BST)  | 04.07.2022 at 11.30 AM (BST)   |
| 7.      | Tender Opening Date and Time          | 22.06.2022 at 12.00 PM (BST)  | 04.07.2022 at 12.00 PM (BST)   |

Director  
Directorate of Planning and Development  
BUET, Dhaka

GD-1274

# When objects speak

Unique design exhibition underway at Brihatta Art Foundation

ZAHANGIR ALOM

'Objects in Conversation' is the first design exhibition in Bangladesh, highlighting the cultural consequence of furniture as design objects. Exploring relationships across disciplines and between generations, the exhibition elaborates on the various manners in which culture, materiality, and philosophical inquiries emerge to form personal and collective design identities.

"With 33 objects produced by 17 designers including architects, artists, and artisans, the exhibition, curated by Bishwajit Goswami, Diane Rhyu Taylor, Ulrike Fellner, celebrates the fluidity between art and design," mentions Nusrat Mahmud, Co-Founder, Brihatta Art Foundation. "As an artist-run, collaborative art platform, the Brihatta Art Foundation supports the collective efforts of artists, architects, designers, producers, and researchers in inaugurating a shared dialogue about design in Bangladesh."



A gathering of ideas suspended in anticipation, the exhibition invites its audience to imagine designed objects in dialogue. Positioned as protagonists and gathered across generations, the objects recount stories of a collective journey in defining a Bangladeshi design identity. "We have organised the exhibition revolving



Curators Diane Rhyu Taylor, Bishwajit Goswami and Ulrike Fellner.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

around four thematic inquiries, revealing investigations about materiality and climate, reductivism and resources, heritage and modernity, and a philosophical and spiritual quest for the collective self," says Diane Rhyu Taylor, one of the three curators of the exhibition.

Spanning fifty years of designed objects post-independence, the pieces bear witness to their social, economic, and cultural contexts, responding to a society in transition. Illuminating individual and collective aspirations, inquiries, and debates, the collection of the objects acts as a mirror, reflecting a cultural ethos. Encountering the objects creates an opportunity for us as the audience to re-examine our current relationship to our created environments while reflecting on the objects' inherited and embodied values.

To reflect on the designs and understand

the objects requires a reflection on the various contexts from which they were born. The curators invite the audience to participate in the encounter, which is also a celebration of a shared and continuing journey.

The exhibition has a unique perspective when it comes to design, one that pervades mere aesthetics or the practicalities of function, and delves deeper into the story, memory, meaning, and cultural essence of a piece, be it furniture or art. Confronting the objects creates an opportunity for questioning contemporary art practices and re-examining the relationships we establish with things.

Having opened from June 18 at the Brihatta Art Foundation in Dhaka, the exhibition will run until June 26 from Monday to Thursday from 5pm to 8pm, and from 3pm to 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays.

## Ezra Miller to be dropped from DC Extended Universe

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Ezra Miller is likely to be dropped from any future franchises of DC Extended Universe (DCEU) following major controversial behaviour from the actor. Miller recently received a harassment order after behaving inappropriately towards and threatening a mother and her 12-year-old.

Industry insiders shared that even if no further allegations surface,

Warner Bros is unlikely to keep Miller in the role of Flash. Currently, Warner Bros CEO, David Zaslav has yet to announce what will be happening with the upcoming Flash movie, "The Flash", which was set to be released in 2023.

## Movie on Padma Bridge wraps up shooting

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Director Ali Azad recently completed the shooting of his movie which will be based on the biggest bridge in our country, Padma Bridge. The movie titled "Padma er Buke Ey Sopner Shetu" has recently wrapped up shooting and is currently undergoing the editing process. The entire movie was shot around the Padma Bridge area and the film stars Sanj John and Olivia Maishaa in lead roles. Raihan Mujib, Himel Raj, Anwar Siraji, Khuku, and Shanta Paul play pivotal roles in the movie.

Ali Azad has also written the story, dialogue and screenplay for the movie as well. The director hopes to submit the movie to the censor board within this month.



## COUNTRYWIDE

### Farmers forced to sell paddy at low price

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Bikas Mandol of Sikdermollic village in Pirojpur Sadar upazila cultivated Boro paddy on his one bigha land spending over Tk 20,000, which he took on credit from different people and NGOs.

Those who cultivate paddy on other people's land have to spend Tk 8,000 more. This year the production cost also shoot up due to soaring prices of fuel and labour, said farmers.

Bikas could harvest 32 maunds of paddy this year which he sold at Tk 700 per maund. Although it is being sold at Tk 900 now, he has no paddy left for sale.

Usually farmers get over 40 maunds of paddy from one bigha land but this year the production has fallen due to pest attacks. On the other hand sharecroppers have to spend their produce with land owners.

"As I was under pressure to repay my debts, I sold my paddy right from the field," Bikas said adding that this is the common scenario for other farmers as well.

"Most of the farmers have to take loans to cultivate Boro paddy as they have no capital to invest," said Sukumar Roy, another farmer of the village, adding that farmers cannot wait for better prices due to the pressures to repay their debts.

Although the government is procuring paddy directly from the farmers at Tk 1,080 each maund, most of the farmers cannot sell it to the government because of the hyperactivity of middlemen, he said.

"We have to face a great deal of difficulties to sell paddy to the government," said farmer Jalal.

Government paddy collectors are prone to cite many faults with their paddy like high moisture content and other, he added.

"Finding no other alternative, we have to bribe the brokers to get our paddy selected by the government collectors," he further said.

Md Nazrul Islam, food inspector of Pirojpur Sadar upazila's food controller's office, said they procure paddy through lottery system and there is no scope for irregularities.

Sheikh Moshiar Rahman, district controller of food, said farmers cannot supply the type of paddy they demand.

"So, we can never fulfill our procurement target," he also said.

As farmers do not have adequate open space to dry up the paddy, they sell it to wholesalers immediately after harvesting it, he added. According to the Department of Agricultural Extension in Pirojpur, this year Boro paddy was cultivated on 26,070 hectares of land.

### Passed yet not passed

FF spends 13yr at court to get a certificate that he well deserved

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

A freedom fighter's aspirations to become a lawyer were muffled as he was shown failed in the LLB examination by the Rajshahi University authorities. But at last the indomitable spirit of the freedom fighter prevailed as he obtained the certificate after a 13-year-long legal battle with the university authorities.

However, as his physical condition deteriorated due to old age, he could not embark on the journey as a lawyer. Being aggrieved, the valiant freedom fighter is now continuing legal battle against the university authorities to get compensated for the loss.

The 71-year-old freedom fighter Munshi Mohiuddin Ahmed, a resident of Harinath Dutta Lane in Jashore Town, sat for LLB examination from Shaheed Mashir Rahman Law College of Jashore affiliated with Rajshahi University (RU) in 1985.

But he found that he couldn't pass the examination as he got one mark shorter than required. Challenging the results, he applied to the university authorities to reevaluate his answer sheet.

**In 1999, a High Court bench headed by Justice ABM Khairul Haque, who was later became chief justice, rejected the petition and asked the university to publish the result.**  
**Following the HC directive, the RU authorities published the result on March 29 in 2001, which showed Mohiuddin had passed the LLB.**



Munshi Mohiuddin Ahmed

Following his prayer, the answer sheet was reevaluated and some flaws of the two examiners, who had evaluated the copy earlier, were found.

But the university authorities did not publish the result. Rather an inquiry committee was formed by the university authorities to look into reason behind the mistakes. The probe body suggested that the two teachers be kept out of examination assessment job for 12 and seven years.

Later in the same year in 1988, Munshi Mohiuddin Ahmed filed a case with the district assistant judge court seeking directive on publishing his result. Around two years later, the court issued order on RU authorities to publish his results.

Challenging the directive, the RU authorities filed an appeal with Jashore District Judge Court which scrapped the appeal in 1993 and

ordered the university to publish the result.

In the same year in 1993, the university authorities filed a Civil Revision Petition with the High Court Division. Later in 1999, a High Court bench headed by the then Justice ABM Khairul Haque, who was later became chief justice, rejected the petition and asked the university to publish the result.

Following the HC directive, the RU authorities on March 29, 2001, published the result which showed Munshi Mohiuddin Ahmed had passed the LLB.

Later on November 15 last year, the freedom fighter filed a petition with the High Court seeking compensation for long delay in publishing his result.

Following his petition, the High Court on November 21 last year issued a rule asking the authorities

concerned to show causes why the victim would not be paid Tk 30 lakhs as compensation for long delay to publish his academic result.

Education Ministry's Secretary, Rajshahi University's Vice-Chancellor (VC), its Registrar and Examination Controller have been made respondents of the rule.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman issued the rule asking the respondents to show cause within four weeks, said the freedom fighter's lawyer Mohammad Shisir Monir.

Later in March this year, the university authorities replied the show cause.

But The Daily Star could not know the content of the reply letter.

Contacted, the university's Vice-Chancellor Professor Golam Shabbir Sattar, Examinations Controller Md Alamgir Hossain Sarkar and registrar Prof Abus Salam denied making any comment on the matter.

They suggested that the university's legal cell be contacted to obtain information on the matter.

Contacted over phone, the cell's administrator Dr Shahin Zohora asked the correspondent to talk to another officer of the cell.

A man, who identified himself as an officer of the legal cell but denied to disclose his name, said the university authorities replied court's show cause notice in March.

However, the man did not elaborate what the university authorities said in their reply.

Rather, the man told The Daily Star that the freedom fighter's all the claims were not true.

The freedom fighter's son Asif Sahriar Ahmed Somiya said, "My father is very sick and bedridden. We need a huge amount of money to run the treatment. If we get the compensation, we will be able to provide better treatment to my father."

"We will take further legal steps over the matter," he added.

# Motorcycle industry eyeing favourable growth

## JAGARAN CHAKMA

The demand for motorcycle has remained between 4 lakhs to 5 lakhs units during the last few years due to the prolonged economic impact of Covid-19 in the last two years.

However, the market players are hoping to achieve 20 percent growth this year, compared to previous year, as the economy of the country recovers to normalcy.

According to data of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), a total of 20,088 units of motorcycles have been registered with the organisation in the first five months of 2022.

The market insiders are assuming the tally will cross 5 lakhs and another 50,000 units will remain unregistered.

Basically, the motorcycle market witnessed a slow pace in 2020 due to Covid-19, and saw an auspicious start in 2021, but the trend did not finally continue.

Abdul Matlub Ahmed, chairman of Nitol-Niloy Group, which assembles Hero motorcycles in

almost equivalent to the market size of four-wheelers.

According to him, the policy support of the government helped entrepreneurs to manufacture and assemble motorcycles locally, which reduced the price of the vehicle.

Ahmed said the government did not impose new tax on motorcycle industry but rather encouraged to reduce import of completely-built units of motorcycles.

Besides, the government also discouraged the import of luxurious motorcycles, which will help to strengthen the industry.

He said the market is highly competitive at this moment, so consumers are getting benefits from the industry as there is no scope to manipulate the market.

The government has recently granted permission to manufacturers to produce bikes up to 500cc engine capacity, a move that is expected to boost the motorcycle industry in Bangladesh and provide the scope for bike lovers to ride higher engine two-wheelers.

The development comes as demand for

published last April, the government stated motorcycle makers would be able to import machinery and spare parts required to manufacture 500cc bikes. It, however, banned the import of bikes above 165cc engine capacity.

Taskeen Ahmed, managing director of IFAD Motors Ltd. told The Daily Star in April, "This is a positive development. This will attract fresh investment and give a boost to the backward linkage industry and vendor development."

IFAD has already signed a memorandum of understanding with British-bred Royal Enfield to import the latter's famous two-wheelers.

Bajaj is the market leader with 42 percent share of the motorcycle segment in Bangladesh. It sells around 2.5 lakh units on average per year. It manufactures 12,000 units per day at its Zirani factory in Savar.

Dileep Banerjee, chief executive officer of Uttara Motors, the sole distributor of Bajaj motorbikes, said Bajaj's imported motorcycles occupied at best 4 percent of total market, which is very insignificant.

He said the government allowed to manufacture higher engine capacity motorcycles in Bangladesh, which will help imports to come down to zero. He added

that almost all models of Bajaj motorbikes are available in Bangladesh, either through manufacturing or assembly, and the quality is the same as in India.

However,

Banerjee said the company is still far away from manufacturing components in Bangladesh as local vendors are yet to develop.

He believes it is possible to manufacture majority components if the government takes initiatives providing incentives to the entrepreneurs.

Banerjee said that sale has already regained and crossed the pre-pandemic levels and higher segment motorcycle buyers will also create an impact as they will shift to 250cc from the now 165cc.

According to him, almost all brands are doing good in marketing of motorcycles in Bangladesh.

"I think the industry will achieve 20 percent growth in 2022 and 2023 due to economy coming back to pre-pandemic levels," he said.

## MOTORCYCLE MANUFACTURING IN BANGLADESH

Back in 2000, Runner Automobiles, the pioneering motorcycle manufacturer and exporter, initiated its journey in Bangladesh. For 20 years, Runner Motorcycles has been continuously expanding its business all over the country, leading in the sub-100cc segment and as the first company to export motorcycles abroad successfully.

Carrying the badge "Made in Bangladesh" in 2000, Hafizur Rahman Khan, now chairman of Runner Group, chose to enter the thrilling yet risky world of entrepreneurship. The company assembled motorcycles by setting up facilities to cater to the national market. It also compiled motorcycles of Dayang brand by importing them in completely knocked-down condition from China.

Later, Runner opted to manufacture the components of two-wheelers. Within a short time, it established its brand title in the domestic industry as "Runner Motorcycles". Runner Motorcycles officially got approval as a bike manufacturer in 2011 and now has state-of-the-art manufacturing processes at its factory in Bhaluka, which produces 100,000 motorcycles annually with the help of over 300 agile factory personnel, and sells over 30,000 units yearly.

## MARKET GROWTH

The market began to grow rapidly in fiscal year 2016-17 when the government slashed the supplementary duty, by 25 percentage points, on the import of the two-wheeler components to encourage domestic manufacture.

Right after the decision, the price of

motorcycles dropped by Tk 30,000 to Tk 50,000 within half a year, and distributors also introduced equal monthly instalments and offers for different festivals.

Besides, the government formulated the Motorcycle Industry Development Policy 2018 which aims to help the industry, although the industry faced numerous challenges due to Covid-19.

Due to effective policy of the government, the market became competitive and the price reduced significantly, rejuvenating the market.

According to industry insiders, the policy helped to develop the motorcycle industry rapidly and created skilled manpower for the sector.

## MOTORCYCLE ASSEMBLING AND MANUFACTURING

Now, nine firms – Japanese brands Honda, Suzuki and Yamaha; India's Bajaj, TVS and Hero; and Runner Automobiles of Bangladesh, Atlas Bangladesh Limited, and Grameen Motor – have made the country almost self-sufficient in motorcycle manufacturing or assembly in the fast-growing market.

Of them, Runner, Honda and Hero mainly manufacture motorcycles.

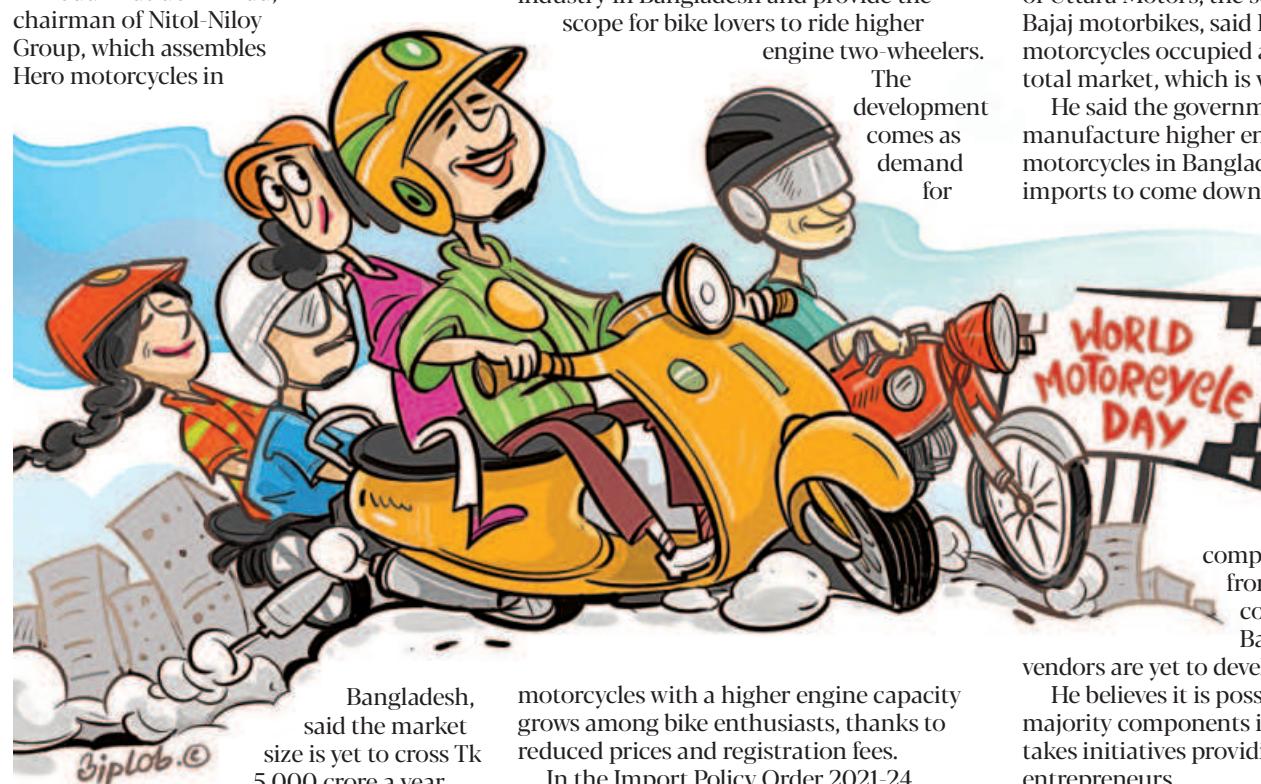
## COMPONENT MAKERS STILL LIMITED

Local vendors for the industry are yet to develop despite government policies aimed to help the motorcycle industry. However, local companies are gradually making a foray into the component manufacturing segment with a view to cutting the country's reliance on imports.

A motorcycle manufacturer requires more than 700 components to produce a bike. The local light engineering industry can make four components, namely drive chain, seat, stand, and battery.

Presently, only four companies manufacture components in Bangladesh, and one of them is QVC Bangladesh. Located in Sundarban union in Dinajpur Sadar Upazila, the company produces around 2.5 lakh drive chains every year against the capacity of about 5 lakh.

SEE PAGE 2



Bangladesh, said the market size is yet to cross Tk 5,000 crore a year,

motorcycles with a higher engine capacity grows among bike enthusiasts, thanks to reduced prices and registration fees.

In the Import Policy Order 2021-24,

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**SEE PAGE 2**

# Walk the Talk

## Subrata Ranjan Das,

Executive Director, ACI Motors Ltd.



The motorcycle market in Bangladesh is currently in the stage of growth. Just last year, the market experienced a growth of 12 percent. However, due to devaluation of our currency against the US dollar along with increasing freight costs, the next year for the market looks to be challenging.

Another major challenge for this particular market is that there is a lot of negative news and speculation in regards to motorcycles in Bangladesh. We need an increased number of safety campaigns as well as more retail financing for motorcycles if we want this market to grow further.

## A K M Tauhidur Rahman,

Head of Sales, Rancon Motor Bikes Limited



Our primary goal is to expand our business, while also meeting the demands and requirements of the customers. We are also bringing in new models and variants for the Bangladesh market, with a focus on higher cc motorcycles. We value our customer's experience, and we are continuously trying to improve our customer's satisfaction. It's one of our key focuses.

While currently the motorcycle industry is growing at a rate between 15 and 20 percent, Suzuki wants to target an even higher growth rate, as we want a big chunk of the market share. We plan to do this by maintaining a steady supply chain. The future of the industry looks optimistic, and I am excited about it.

## Hafizur Rahman Khan,

Chairman, Runner Group



We want to ensure that our motorcycles are the most affordable ones in the market. At the same time, we want to continue to provide international standard products to our customers.

Our primary goal is to manufacture our motorcycles locally, using local components. In line with the economic growth of the last 10 years, it is likely that the motorcycle industry will experience a 10 to 15 percent growth in the coming years. However, disruptions such as Covid-19 may halt this growth. To sustain the existing growth, we need to continue to reduce prices, so that customers get the best experience for the lowest price.

# Riding on the cutting edge

## Innovations in Bangladesh motorcycle market

### AAQIB HASIB

Dhaka is a city unlike any other. It is a city whose heritage, culture and people are vastly diverse, and with each passing day, this diversity continues to grow.

But as more and more people congregate to Dhaka to find their future, the city gets even more congested than it already is. As a result, the traffic in Dhaka seems to get worse every day. And even though the metro rail might be right around the corner, people still need a way to quickly get around the city.

As the standard of living of the middle-class segment of society increases, more of them will soon be buying a vehicle for their transport needs. Now, while many people see cars as that ideal form of transport, in today's traffic a motorcycle would be the more suitable option.

Just imagine it, you are zipping through traffic, manoeuvring between cars and buses that will still be here when you are halfway home. This is the power of a motorcycle.

Now, for those of you who, like me, like to plan things out in advance, the biggest question on your mind might be "how do I pick the right one?"

Well, while there is a wide range of bikes available from a variety of brands, in general, the key thing to look out for are what features they are offering through the many innovations now available in the motorcycle world.

Yamaha, for example, has continually focused on the cutting edge of motorcycle

technology to ensure their customers continue to be served the best motorcycles that money can buy.

A representative from Yamaha told The Daily Star, "Our focus has been to ensure our customers' demands are being met through our bikes. That includes giving them the features they want from their motorcycles."

Two important innovations made by Yamaha include their BlueCore Engines and their Fuel Injection system, both of which increase fuel efficiency, making sure that customers are paying as little for gas as possible. The Blue Core Engine also is more environment friendly, as it also reduces carbon emissions. In 2016, Yamaha also created a device which can check the fuel injection system automatically. This device is available at Yamaha's service centres in Bangladesh. Similarly, the company also created the Yamaha Diagnostic Tool (YDT) which can diagnose a Yamaha bike to find its problems.

The Japanese brand was also the first to introduce ABS in Bangladesh. ABS stands for Anti-lock Brake System, and it helps adjust braking pressure to prevent the wheel from locking while also maintaining the bike's stability.

Best of all, Yamaha introduced the Y-Connect, their latest innovation, which lets riders download an app on their phone to better understand their bikes. The app helps track everything from your bike's RPM and temperature to the state of fuel consumption. Additionally, the app also

lets users track their motorcycle's parking location.

But Yamaha is not the only player in town. There are plenty of other motorcycle brands that are also experimenting on the cutting edge. Bangladesh's own Runner has been working tirelessly to ensure its customers have the best a bike can offer.

In regards to their existing and future innovations, Hafizur Rahman Khan, chairman of Runner Group said, "Our focus is on innovating on the basis of our customers' needs. We have already introduced software-side features that let you track your motorcycle and also provide a warning when you need your engine oil changed, or if your bike is overheating."

"Without innovation, no one can survive in any profession or industry. Forget about success, without innovations, it is impossible to even sustain a business. In regards to the motorcycle industry, innovation is extremely important as well. Currently, our primary focus is to innovate with a major focus on safety. We are working with a2i to make our vision of a completely safe motorcycle a reality. It will give riders warnings when they are crossing speed limits and also aide them if they lose control of their bikes," Khan added.

As technology continues to advance, there is great potential for the motorcycle industry, particularly in Bangladesh. If you are someone who is thinking about buying a bike right now or in the near future, then it would be ideal to keep an eye on the state of innovation in the market.

## Motorcycle industry eyeing favourable growth

### DEMAND INCREASING FOR HIGH-END MOTORCYCLES

The demand for motorcycles with a higher engine capacity is growing among bike enthusiasts in Bangladesh as such models are becoming increasingly safer and cheaper.

The demand for motorcycles with a cubic capacity of 150 achieved a 30 percent growth last year while that of 125cc models grew only 13 percent.

At the same time, 100 to 110cc bikes

witnessed 16 percent growth in demand after the market started recovering from coronavirus-induced shocks, according to market players.

But in terms of market share, lower capacity engines still rule the roost with roughly 55 percent more sales.

Regarding the demand of high-end motorcycles Subrata Ranjan Das, executive director of ACI Motors Ltd, the local distributor of Yamaha told The Daily Star,

"Customers prefer high-end motorcycles due to comfort and extra safety features."

Besides, customers can now purchase a 150cc motorcycle at the same price of a 125cc bike, which is around Tk 2 lakhs.

A total of 3,75,252 motorcycles were sold in 2021, up 21 percent compared to 3,11,016 units sold the year before, according to BRTA.

On average, monthly sales stood at about 31,271 units in 2021 whereas it was 25,918 units in 2020.

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## Will Rohingya repatriation remain a myth?

The world must put pressure on Myanmar to expedite the process

IT is most unfortunate that even after four and a half years have passed since the repatriation agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar was signed in November 2017, the process to take back stranded Rohingyas still could not be initiated. Although bilateral talks between the two countries resumed in January this year – after a two-year suspension due to Covid and the military takeover in Myanmar – no substantive outcome came out of it. Bangladesh has been asking Myanmar to expedite the verification process to fast-track the repatriation of Rohingyas for quite some time. But the Myanmar authorities seem to be reluctant to do so. It appears they are just wasting time in the name of verifying Myanmar nationals, who fled around five years ago after enduring a brutal military crackdown in the Rakhine State.

Meanwhile, international funding for the Rohingyas is declining rapidly. While the humanitarian agencies need more than USD 881 million this year to support the Rohingyas in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char as well as the host communities there, according to the UNHCR, they have only received 13 percent of the required fund as of last month. With the funding for the refugees waning, the government is facing a huge pressure in taking care of such a large number of refugees. The recent rise in violence, drug peddling, human trafficking and other criminal activities in and around the camp areas has also become a security threat for Bangladesh.

Under the circumstances, both Bangladesh and the international community must put greater strategic pressure on Myanmar to take back its citizens, and it must do so by ensuring that the conditions in the Rakhine State are safe and conducive for their return. Reportedly, Bangladesh had handed over the names of 8.4 lakh Rohingyas to Myanmar officials, but so far, they have only verified around 42,000 of them. And despite some attempts to take them back, many Rohingyas refused to return because of the uncertainties surrounding their citizenship and safety. This is only fair. Why would they go back to their country if they are not given citizenship? But having to take their responsibility indefinitely is also unfair from Bangladesh's perspective. The onus rests with Myanmar to solve this unique problem which it created.

In order to resolve the current stalemate, both Bangladesh and Myanmar should hold regular meetings through their Joint Working Group and Technical Working group. And the role of the international community cannot be underestimated either. They should put significant pressure on Myanmar to expedite the verification process and grant citizenship to the Rohingyas. The world must act unitedly to reduce the plight of the forcibly displaced Rohingyas and to repatriate them to their own country.

## Another gag on press freedom?

Proposed hefty fines for journalists are unrealistic

WE'RE alarmed to learn that the Press Council Act, 1974 is being amended with a provision for fining a journalist up to Tk 10 lakh if found involved in any "illegal and criminal activities". The likelihood of this happening has been confirmed by the chairman of Bangladesh Press Council, who said the draft of the amendment may be placed in parliament after it is approved by the Cabinet Division. As per a report by this daily, he also claimed that all journalist-representatives in the council had "agreed" to it and that the issue had been "regularly discussed with the current committee", although some committee members denied having any such discussion. It appears that a discussion to increase penalties did take place five years ago, but none on the proposed amendment.

The mystery surrounding this issue aside, the fact that the press council felt the need to impose such penalties for activities which should already be covered by the existing criminal law is disconcerting. It may involve changing an existing norm too as, according to one member, Press Council cases can only be filed against organisations, not against any journalist. We understand the importance of enhancing the power of the press council, especially when it comes to upholding ethics and fairness in journalism. But often, the threat to ethical journalism is from the system, not from individual journalists. Currently, the council can rebuke a journalist if their wrongdoing is proven but nothing beyond that.

But such hefty fines potentially add to a growing list of legal tools being used to create a culture of fear for journalists, who are already walking a tightrope with various draconian laws and regulations. It may contribute to further shrinking the space for them. They need to work independently to cover stories important to citizens, with no fear of retribution from any quarter whatsoever.

That said, we wholeheartedly support any move to ensure responsible journalism. But hefty fines and repressive laws for individual journalists or media organisations are not the way to go about it. There is no denying that journalists practising objective journalism can strengthen democracy in the country. No country or regime can thrive by throttling the voice of the people. Thus, we find the proposed amendment to the Press Council Act as problematic, and therefore oppose it. We hope it will be rejected by the Cabinet Division.

# EDITORIAL

## Mizanur's unacknowledged detention



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

KAMAL AHMED

WELL-known civic rights activist Mizanur Rahman's narration of his harrowing experience of being picked up by police and tortured under custody, published in this newspaper's online version on June 15, gives us some disturbing snapshots of the unlawful actions of our law enforcement agencies. As a keen follower of developments related to human rights, I am reminded of the term used by the Committee Against Torture (CAT) of the United Nations for these kinds of arbitrary and unlawful abductions by members of law enforcing agencies. It's called "unacknowledged detentions." Though Mizanur's four-and-a-half-hours-long unacknowledged detention came to an end to the relief of his family, the pains and psychological distress he suffered would no doubt stay with him forever.

Is this unacknowledged detention of Mizanur an exception or deviation in policing practices? Unfortunately, recent trends suggest it has become a preferred tactic to bypass the mandatory legal requirement of producing the suspect before a magistrate within 24 hours. People disappear like characters of a fictional thriller and, if luck favours, they reappear, shown arrested just hours before from some strange place and produced before a court with a petition for remand. The UNCAT, in its concluding observation published on August 26, 2019 said, "The Committee is seriously concerned at numerous, consistent reports that the State party's officials have arbitrarily deprived persons of their liberty, subsequently killed many of them and failed to disclose their whereabouts or fate. Such conduct is defined in international human rights law as enforced disappearance, whether or not the victim is killed or reappears later."

In Mizanur's case, when police picked him up from Bikrampur Plaza, he was misled into believing that it would be just a normal chat with the Deputy Commissioner. But soon he realised that something was not right and managed to inform his daughter. Soon afterwards, he was surrounded by several other police personnel and huddled into a car. In the car, they started misbehaving with him and snatched away his mobile phone. While his family members contacted the local police station, Shyampur Thana, law enforcement members expressed their ignorance about his detention. Though, at that time, he was either in their custody or was just being handed over to the Detective Branch (DB).

Unlike other victims of unacknowledged detention, Mizanur gave a vivid description of the demeaning



▲ Mizanur Rahman, famous for his unique protests demanding safe drinking water from Dhaka Wasa, is also known to have taken part in other civic protests and for expressing opinions critical of the government and state entities, including the police, for corruption and irregularities.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

behaviour he was subjected to by a senior officer at the Shyampur police station and the physical torture he had to endure there. In his words, "At one point, the female officer ordered that I be beaten up. A policeman was standing there with a stick. Once ordered, he beat me hard several times." He added, "I have so far fought a lot to live with self-respect. Being beaten like this was unacceptable

police ever picking him up without a warrant, interrogating him without the presence of his lawyer, subjecting him to dehumanising or cruel behaviour and beating him under custody, keeping him blindfolded and hand-cuffed. All these acts are defined as torture under our law. It all happened despite the fact that Mizanur was not a suspect for any criminal acts or named in any

cases anywhere in the country. He is, however, famous for his unique protests demanding safe drinking water from the supplying authority, Dhaka Wasa. He is also known to have taken part in other civic protests and for expressing opinions critical of the government and state entities, including the police, for corruption and irregularities.

What Mizanur encountered since he was picked up from Bikrampur Plaza till his release are punishable offences under our own law, the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013. There are further stipulations by the Supreme Court in implementing the Act due to reported allegations of such violence, particularly in the context of custodial situations where law enforcement

agencies seek to obtain confessional statements from the arrestees following arrest or detention. The UNCAT, too, in its final observation, recommended that the government should "[u]nambiguously affirm at the highest level... that law enforcement authorities must immediately cease engaging in the practice of unacknowledged detention."

The Supreme Court's guidelines were issued in 2016, three years before the UNCAT's recommendations.

We need an end to unacknowledged detention and custodial torture. And it should begin with an independent investigation into Mizanur's unacknowledged detention. Without accountability of the perpetrators of such unlawful brutality and torture, they won't end.

## The Myth of the Strong Woman

Sohana Manzoor is Associate Professor, Department of English & Humanities, ULAB. She is also the Literary Editor of The Daily Star.

SOHANA MANZOOR

YEARS ago, when I was about eight years old, I heard a teacher say that a woman's lungs are stronger than a man's. It sounded strange even to my young and untrained ears. When I asked my mother, she first snapped at the absent teacher, but then explained how in our world, a boy child is valued far more than a girl. And it starts at the cradle – people rush in when a baby boy cries, but not a baby girl. Hence her lungs are stronger because they get more exercise.

The explanation still did not make sense. I was yet to understand what being a woman meant. In our country, most girls are raised with the expectation of fairy-tale marriages. A dream is spun for her with hopes of beautiful dresses, jewellery, a loving husband, and children. She is also taught that however educated, she cannot be happy or fulfilled until she is married. It's as though that fairy-tale is meant to compensate for being taught that girls are softer and lesser than boys in every sphere of life.

After marriage, with her dreams of a happy household, the girl suddenly is faced with the politics of her in-laws. In most cases, she needs permission from her husband and in-laws to even visit her parents. She is tested in various ways by her new family members. These tests are mostly demeaning and often abusive. Her life is dictated by the expectations of others in her new family – including when to have children, whether she can continue her studies, or have a career.

People nod in approval when they find a "selfless" woman. In other words, a woman's selfhood must be sacrificed for the welfare of the society. The ideal existence society intends for her is one of self-abnegation.

However, if she complains about these ordeals, she is told that the happiness of a woman lies in making other people happy, not herself. The definition of "happily ever after" suddenly changes – it was never her happiness that was intended, but that of others – her husband, her children, and her in-laws. People nod in approval when they find such a selfless woman. In other words, a woman's selfhood must be sacrificed for the welfare of the society. The ideal existence society intends for her is one of self-abnegation.

When I was growing up, I heard people describe my maternal grandmother as a woman of great prowess. She had given birth to fourteen children, including two that died in infancy, and managed her huge household with capable hands. She rose early in the morning before anybody else, and was the last one to go to bed. As a child, I only saw her as a loving *nanu* who readily fulfilled my wishes. But now when I look back, I also see that she was a woman who was denied her own dreams. Married off at age 12 and unable to fulfil her own desire for higher education, she devoted herself to raising her children to be successful in life. That was the best that she could have.

Many would say that times have

changed now and women have become independent. As I look around, I see that things have become even more difficult when women are working and taking care of the household at the same time. She is continuously urged to be perfect, even more of a goddess than her mother and grandmother. If something goes wrong with her children, it is invariably her fault because she did not give them enough time. Few notice her financial

contribution to the family and even condemn her for buying sarees or personal items with her earnings. I have heard educated men make snide remarks like, "Women work because they are not happy with their husbands' earnings," or "Working women make bad mothers."

To be successful as a woman means withstanding societal pressure from all quarters, and having to brace themselves for each day as if nothing is wrong. Women are supposedly the weaker sex, but the reality is that to be independent and successful in a patriarchal setting, a woman has to be far stronger than her male counterparts. To establish herself, she has to encounter far more obstacles than a man.

A strong woman, then, is one who has endured extreme difficulty, even harassment or abuse, and learnt to live with it as best she can. Have you wondered why these women are sometimes referred to as crazy or eccentric? A sane man apparently cannot imagine leading the life of a woman because that life is too restrained and limited. And yet a woman is made to live such a life because she is not a man. By hailing these women as "strong" and worthy of admiration, society recognises their suffering with grudging respect, while also endorsing and perpetuating their ordeals: "She is a strong woman and she can bear anything." Just because women have bravely borne ill treatment doesn't mean that it is justified. It is high time to look upon a woman as a full human being, not just as somebody's mother, wife, sister, or daughter who will sacrifice her life and ambitions for the "greater good" of society.

MESSAGE FROM CUMILLA ELECTIONS

# Time for soul-searching



MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla  
is deputy chief reporter  
at The Daily Star.

FROM a small village-level local government election to the larger parliamentary polls, every election is a learning opportunity – that's the beauty of a working democracy. The recently concluded Cumilla City Corporation election was no different. Now, it's completely up to the stakeholders – the Election Commission (EC), the contending political parties, the voters, the observers, etc. – to decide what they are going to do with these "lessons", whether they're going to do anything differently the next time, or make the same mistakes again.

Interestingly, the only stakeholder that seems to be making decisions based on these lessons are the voters. In the last city corporation polls in Cumilla 10 years ago, over seven out of every 10 voters turned up to vote. This time, the turnout was less than 60 percent.

Although six out of 10 is still quite high in the national context, it is quite low for Cumilla. This decrease could be a reflection of the general voters' fast-depleting trust in the election process. It could be that they don't have confidence in the EC to ensure a level playing field for all the contestants or that their votes would make any difference in determining the final result.

In all fairness, the "rookie" commissioners assumed office at a time when the EC's credibility is in ruins. None of the ECs in the past decade has managed to hold free and fair elections, barring a few stray ones. With this massive baggage, the Cumilla city poll was truly the first real test of character for the EC.

The EC was turned into a laughing stock when the local ruling party



lawmaker blatantly ignored its order to stay out of the city before and during the election, and the EC did absolutely nothing to enforce it. So, we will have to wait and see what the EC does to recover from this embarrassment.

The Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said that the EC cannot do anything against a lawmaker if he "dishonours" the commission's directives. But that is not true. If the commission thinks that someone's interference can hamper the holding of a free and fair election, the commission can postpone it.

Former election commissioner Brigadier General (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain said that during the first election in Cumilla in 2012, when a minister went to the election area, the commission, through the returning officer, sent a message that if the minister did not leave the area within an hour, the election

▲ **In the last city corporation polls in Cumilla 10 years ago, over seven out of every 10 voters turned up to vote. This time, the turnout was less than 60 percent.**

PHOTO:  
RASHED SUMON

would be postponed. The minister then left the area.

The failure by this commission to take such a bold step raises the question: If the EC cannot control one lawmaker, how will it control 300 lawmakers in the next parliamentary polls? The last-minute drama over the announcement of the election result also raised questions over its competency to hold fair polls.

The Awami League and BNP also have major takeaways from the election. For the BNP, the lesson is crystal clear: The party cannot afford to lose elections by allowing its local level leaders to "cannibalise" each other. For the ruling AL, it's a major wakeup call ahead of next year's national elections. Although the AL barely escaped with a close victory in Cumilla this year because the opposition tent was not united, it's a clear indication that the anti-incumbency factor is very much in effect now.

Although the election was partisan in nature, the ruling AL candidate contested the election with the party symbol, while its main contender, expelled BNP leader Monirul Haque Sakkhu, contested it with the clock symbol. This gave Rifat an upper hand.

The AL candidate got around 38 percent of the total votes cast. Usually, it is estimated that AL has around 40 percent of votes in the country. In that sense, AL's vote bank remained almost intact even after staying in office for the last 13 years at a stretch. But the party could not bag the floating votes, and it is probably because of the anti-incumbency factor. So, AL needs to think about the floating votes if it really wants to compete in the upcoming national elections. Otherwise, it will face a serious setback in the next polls.

On the other hand, although BNP boycotted the election, two of its leaders contested the polls and together got around 80,000 votes. The BNP candidates lost as their votes were split. But they bagged around 60 percent of the votes. The BNP's vote bank is estimated to be less than 40 percent. So, the result showed that it got the votes of the floating voters.

The lesson for BNP is that if it can choose the proper candidates and remain on the field till the last minute of the polls, it has a good chance in the next elections. But again, a good election is not entirely dependent on the BNP. The election result also showed that AL's votes did not increase – rather its candidate won the polls by taking advantage of the vote split of the two expelled BNP candidates.

The most important factor that drew my attention was the lack of festivity and enthusiasm over voting. In recent times, almost all the local government elections were one-sided. And many of the times, those who were elected won the elections uncontested. Even in Cumilla polls, two ward councillors were elected uncontested. That is perhaps why people have lost trust in the electoral system.

# Stateless refugees and the calculus of human worth



NAUSHAD ALI HUSEIN

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WE depend on oversimplified narratives to help us come to terms with our existence. That we are the most developed living organism on Earth. That this is the result of a linear evolution from the simplest, insentient, single-cell amoeba to the intelligent and cultured beings we now are. That this linear progress continues as societies grow more advanced and sophisticated.

And we believe in our modern global political system of nation-states. But we pledge allegiance to our country, and we feel bound to be loyal to the squiggly lines that define them. We ignore how arbitrarily that border was drawn out.

Certainly, that border is an undeniable truth, an irreversible sleight of history. But this neat and simple narrative of belonging complicates our humanity grossly. It leaves long complex equations in a murky calculus determining which lives matter and how much.

It starts off simple enough: Our own above others'. Our state shall value its citizens, language, heritage, etc. above any other citizens, language or heritage. Each person's dignity and rights shall be protected by the state of which they are a citizen.

But no country is homogenous, and the nationalist sentiment has to make choices and compromises. The constitution privileges all citizens, regardless of the language they speak – but clearly positions Bangla as the state language, not Kokborok or Hajong ("Coke Studio Bangla" notwithstanding).

Then there are citizens whose ancestors are straight-up immigrants. Foreign people with a Bangladeshi passport. The worth of this breed is not dependent on any one variable. Melanin, for example, seems to be inversely related to worth. The level of exoticism of their origin is directly related to their worth. If they speak the "enemy language," Urdu, their worth is automatically negative.

Then there's religion. Islam has a special place in our state and constitution, and even that is a bit inconvenient to everybody who isn't a Muslim. But Muslims get plenty of flack elsewhere in

the world. You add a little on one side of the equation, subtract a little on the other, and it all balances out, no? Positive humanity versus negative humanity.

And let's not forget money and influence. These are the most important determinants of a person's worth.

Then there are... well, the aliens. The "forcibly displaced," rendered stateless by a genocidal regime, with no squiggly lines to safely call their own, therefore permanently seeking temporary refuge within ours. What value do we assign their lives, as opposed to our own? And how do we calculate this value? And who is responsible for appreciating it? Must it be the country of "first arrival"? But then what responsibility does the global community have?

Yes, the calculus of human worth gets super convoluted the moment we start talking about stateless refugees. Take the Rohingya people, whom Bangladesh has been absorbing for decades. Many Rohingya people who arrived as early as in the 1970s became naturalised. Then there were those who used to cross the border at will – after all, it's just a river that they had to cross – and never bothered to make the papers. So now we have more variables in our equation: Who arrived when, and who has what papers.

This year, for the first time in human history, there are more than 100 million people around the world forcibly displaced by war, persecution, and disaster. Of these, Russia's invasion of Ukraine accounts for 14 million.

The way the international community has responded to the Ukraine crisis proves beyond doubt that the people of this world have humanity and compassion in them. But this compassion is selective. On the Polish border, African students and non-white refugees reported being made to wait in freezing temperatures while busloads of white Ukrainians were let in ahead of them.

Ukrainian refugees who look like Ukrainians – to put it crassly – have been welcomed all over Europe and the developed world. The EU, which has spent decades trying to repel refugees from all over the world, often in inhuman and lethal ways, moved quickly to adopt a Temporary Protection Directive to allow Ukrainian refugees to access healthcare and jobs.

The UK launched the Homes for Ukraine scheme to settle Ukrainian refugees, while simultaneously making arrangements to ship all other asylum-seekers to offshore detention centres. The US is hand picking Ukrainians to



▲  
PHOTO:  
REUTERS

cross into its territory from Mexico, leaving behind the Mexicans trying to escape drug wars. It's also writing the EU a billion-dollar cheque to absorb Ukrainian refugees. (And let's not forget the weapons.)

There's a whole calculus about good refugees and bad refugees, and how many of which must be welcomed where. In 2015, with the ISIS crisis raging, it took the picture of a dead five-year-old washed up on a beach to provoke sympathy for Syrian refugees. That year, 1.3 million refugees entered the EU. In the past several years, hundreds of thousands have entered the EU, but with plenty of fuss.

In the last four months, six million Ukrainians have been accepted with open arms into Europe. There are reasons why other refugees are not accepted as openly.

Bangladeshis attempting to cross the Mediterranean into Italy weren't even considered refugees, because escaping hopelessness doesn't count as fleeing anything. Then the problem with these "economic" migrants is that they don't integrate or embrace the European lifestyle. It's rumoured they have plenty of children to maximise welfare payments. They lack sophistication. Let's be honest, we all use this variable in our human worth calculations.

When talking about progress, we like to think we have evolved. That, unlike times past, the modern world is one

where everyone agrees on and believes in the sanctity and dignity of human life, and all the leaders of the world have signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) to this effect:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

This is an incredibly radical statement, and I'm surprised so many important people agreed to it. There's nothing here that says our brotherhood should be reserved for our countrymen, or that the less sophisticated are less equal. There's nothing here about belonging to any arbitrarily drawn lines. "All human beings are born free and equal"? Lofty ideal.

It's not a natural tendency for human beings to unconditionally love each other. "Love thy neighbour" was a radical message and not without reason. If we loved them all equally, we probably wouldn't survive long. But tying our identities and loyalties to the nation-state means that our love and respect for fellow humans (and other life forms) are subject to a complex calculus full of arbitrary variables – complexion, documentation, wealth, language, sophistication.

Love and respect for the entire human family, and for all life on the planet, is behaviour that must be learned. Can you imagine it as the next step in human progress?



People take part in a demonstration over the rising cost of living, in Brussels, Belgium yesterday. Belgian inflation hit 9 percent in June, mirroring sharp rises elsewhere driven primarily by the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on supply chains and energy and commodity prices.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## REVIVAL OF 2015 NUKE DEAL Iran blames US for stalled talks

AGENCIES

Iran said yesterday that Tehran is ready to reach a "good deal" with world powers, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh told a televised news conference, blaming the US for stalling talks to revive their 2015 nuclear pact.

"Even today, we are ready to return to Vienna to reach a good deal if Washington fulfills its commitments," Khatibzadeh said.

The nuclear pact seemed near revival in March but talks were thrown into disarray partly over whether the United States might remove the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which controls elite armed and intelligence forces that Washington accuses of a global terrorist campaign, from its Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list, reports Reuters.

The 2015 agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA, gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme to guarantee that Tehran could not develop a nuclear weapon – something it has always denied wanting to do.

But in 2018, the US withdrew from the accord under then-president Donald Trump and re-imposed heavy economic sanctions that prompted Iran to begin rolling back on its own commitments.

"We can certainly and quickly... finalise the agreement," Khatibzadeh said, if the US agrees to "put aside all the sanctions".

He also called on Washington to put an end to the so-called campaign of "maximum pressure" introduced by the Trump administration, reports AFP.

On June 8, the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors adopted a resolution censuring Iran for failing to adequately explain the previous discovery of traces of enriched uranium at three sites which Tehran had not declared as having hosted nuclear activities.

On the same day, Tehran said it disconnected a number of IAEA cameras that had been monitoring its nuclear sites.

"The US decided again to prolong and delay the agreement and went to the (IAEA) board of governors meeting with the delusion of using leverage," Khatibzadeh said Monday.

"Of course, the response by Iran was a proportionate and decisive one," he added.

As tensions have mounted over Tehran's nuclear programme, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and parts of Iraq have come under UAV or missile strikes that were claimed by or blamed on Iranian-backed militias.

## Crisis-hit Sri Lanka begins shutdown

Schools closed, all non-essential govt services halted; IMF opens talks with Colombo on possible bailout



AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka closed schools and halted all non-essential government services yesterday, beginning a two week shutdown to conserve fast-depleting fuel reserves as the International Monetary Fund opened talks with Colombo on a possible bailout.

The country of 22 million people is in the grip of its worst economic crisis after running out of dollars to finance even the most essential imports, including fuel.

Yesterday, schools were shut and state offices worked with skeleton staff as part of government plans to reduce commuting and save precious petrol and diesel. Hospitals and the main seaport in Colombo were still operating.

Hundreds of thousands of

motorists remained in miles-long queues for petrol and diesel even though the energy ministry announced they will not have fresh stocks of fuel for at least three more days.

The country defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and went cap in hand to the IMF.

The first in-person talks with the IMF on Sri Lanka's bailout request commenced in Colombo yesterday and will continue for 10 days, the lender and the government said in brief statements.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was also due to meet visiting Australian Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil to "deepen cooperation and assist Sri Lanka as the country faces very difficult economic times," Canberra said in a statement.

It said O'Neil will also discuss

strengthening engagement on transnational crime, including people-smuggling following a surge in would be illegal immigrants by boat in the past month.

Sri Lanka is facing record-high inflation and lengthy power blackouts, all of which have contributed to months of protests – sometimes violent – calling on President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to step down.

Police arrested 21 student activists who blocked all gates to the presidential secretariat building after declaring yesterday, Rajapaksa's 73rd birthday, a "day of mourning".

The shutdown order came last week as the United Nations launched its emergency response to feed thousands of pregnant women who were facing food shortages.

## Boy killed, 3 hurt in US shooting

AFP, Washington

A 15-year-old boy was killed and three other people, including a police officer, were wounded in a shooting after a concert in Washington Sunday night, the local police chief said.

The shooting was preceded by two other incidents which caused panic at the unpermitted "Moechella" concert celebrating Juneteenth, with several people injured while running away, DC police chief Robert Contee told reporters.

Police then shut down the sidewalk concert on safety grounds but shortly afterwards, despite a heavy police presence, the shooting occurred nearby in which the boy was killed, Contee said.

"Unfortunately things like this can happen when you have the wrong mix of people, or people who introduce firearms into a situation," he said.

The officer and two other wounded people were recovering in hospital, he added.

There was no exchange of fire and the gun used had not been recovered, Contee said.

It was not clear if the teenager was targeted but before the incident police had seized two illegal firearms nearby and were chasing another individual with an illegal firearm, the police chief said.

The United States is in the midst of a particularly gruesome chapter in its epidemic of gun violence.



Smoke rises over the city following recent shelling in the course of Ukraine-Russia conflict in Donetsk, Ukraine yesterday.

## China tests missile interception system

REUTERS, Shanghai

China has carried out a land-based missile interception test that "achieved its expected purpose", the Defence Ministry said, describing it as defensive and not aimed at any country.

China has been ramping up research into all sorts of missiles, from those that can destroy satellites in space to advanced nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles, as part of an ambitious modernisation scheme overseen by President Xi Jinping.

Beijing has tested missile interceptors before; the most recent previous public announcement of a test was in February 2021, and before that in 2018. State media has said China has conducted anti-missile system tests since at least 2010.

The ministry said in a brief statement late on Sunday that the "ground-based midcourse anti-missile intercept technology" test had been carried out that night.

"The test reached its expected goals," the ministry said. "This test was defensive and not aimed at any country."

It provided no other details.

China, along with its ally Russia, have repeatedly expressed opposition to the US deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile system in South Korea.

China argued the equipment's powerful radar could penetrate into its territory. China and Russia have also held simulated anti-missile drills.

## FRANCE VOTE UPSET Macron seeks to salvage power

AFP, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron and his allies were scrambling yesterday for a way out of political deadlock after losing their parliamentary majority in a stunning blow for the president and his reform plans.

Macron's Ensemble (Together) coalition emerged as the largest party in Sunday's National Assembly vote, but was dozens of seats short of keeping the parliamentary majority it had enjoyed for the last five years.

Surges on the left and the far-right destroyed the dominant position of Macron's deputies who, for the past five years, had backed the president's policies without fail.

Turnout was low, with the abstention rate recorded at 53.77 percent.

The left-leaning Liberation daily called the result a "slap in the face" for Macron, while the conservative Le Figaro said he was now "faced with an ungovernable France".

Macron's Together alliance won 244 seats, far short of the 289 needed for an overall majority.

The election saw the new left-wing alliance NUPES make gains to become the main opposition force along with its allies on 137 seats, according to the Interior Ministry.

But it is unclear if the coalition of Socialists, Communists, Greens and the hard-left France Unbowed will remain a united bloc in the National Assembly.

Meanwhile the far-right under Marine Le Pen posted the best legislative performance in its history, becoming the strongest single opposition party with 89 seats, up from eight in the outgoing chamber.

A confident Le Pen said her party would demand to chair the National Assembly's powerful finance commission, as is tradition for the biggest opposition party.

"The country is not ungovernable, but it's not going to be governed the way Emmanuel Macron wanted," Le Pen told reporters yesterday.

## Ex-rebel wins Colombian presidency

AFP, Bogota

Ex-guerrilla Gustavo Petro was elected the first ever left-wing president of Colombia on Sunday, after beating millionaire businessman Rodolfo Hernandez in a tense and unpredictable runoff election.

With all votes counted, Petro – the 62-year-old former mayor of Bogota – won with 50.4 percent to Hernandez's 47.3 percent.

"As of today, Colombia is changing, a real change that guides us to one of our aims: the politics of love... of understanding and dialogue," said Petro.

Hernandez, 77, accepted the result, in which he came up short by 700,000 votes. Speaking to supporters at party headquarters, Petro held out an olive branch to his opponents.

Now everything is a dead zone. We don't have any relations with the United States now. They are at zero on the Kelvin scale. There is no need to negotiate with them (on nuclear disarmament) yet. This is bad for Russia.

Dmitry Medvedev  
Former Russian president





## CholPori: Ensuring proper educational resources for children nationwide

**"Our animations and story books intend to present lessons in an enjoyable manner to allow naturalistic input in our users' minds, leaving them more prompt, creative and capable," asserts Zareen.**

AKHLAKUR RAHMAN

Zareen Mahmud Hosein, a chartered accountant by profession, founded CholPori, an e-learning platform for the children of primary school, in 2020. She aimed to enhance the grade competency of children through the platform using fun animations and illustrious content.

"The beginning of CholPori is connected with my project on women empowerment," said Zareen, who is also the founder of HerStory Foundation.

In 2016, Zareen organised an informal meeting inviting eighty female leaders and professionals from three generations just to hear their stories. "Aroma Dutta didi was there and the very next day she wrote to me suggesting the idea of designing a book," Zareen shared.

That same year, Zareen and her crew organised a competition on Mother's Day. About 200 girls, aged between 15 to 18 were asked to write about their role models.



**Zareen Mahmud Hosein, founder of CholPori.**

"Seventy percent of the participants chose their mothers as their role model and said that they wanted to be a 'sacrificing mother' just like theirs. However, I knew that there is more to a girl or woman's existence," added Zareen.

Addressing the lack of other role models and how it limited the children's visions of having dreams, or aspiring to be something more than 'sacrificing mother', Zareen launched the book, "Adventures of Supergirls" containing stories of twenty



aspiring women which received a great response in the 2017 Lit Fest.

The book garnered much attention from the attendees and soon went on to become a favourite among young readers. A couple of years later, Zareen and her team organised a fellowship programme 'Chol Pori HerStory'. The event featured training sessions where twenty students from University of Dhaka (DU) and Independent University Bangladesh (IUB) participated.

"The fellowship programme was the initial form of CholPori," mentioned Zareen. "It was a year-long programme where the participants from the training visited twenty underprivileged schools." The founder also informed that the students conducted small sessions on how they could increase their reading competency and in turn plan their future careers and life.

Due to the pandemic, CholPori soon had to transform their existence and go online. However, the schools offered very minimal resources and even the teachers were underequipped.

"The competency of these children was far off national or international standards as the students had very limited access to resources," added Zareen. "To address this problem, we initiated CholPori."

Alongside academics, CholPori also focuses on the emotional and individual growth for children.

"Our animations and story books intend to present lessons in an enjoyable manner to allow naturalistic input in our users' minds, leaving them more prompt, creative and capable," asserts Zareen.

"Through our cartoons and the narrations of illustrated storybooks in the classrooms, we try to instil good habits and qualities among the children."

Zareen believes that through this initiative, the children will be able to learn to respect others, be empathetic and leave behind any gender bias that might have entered their mind through social interactions.

CholPori currently provides content in both Bangla and English, in two categories - 'Pathshala' and 'Boighor'. While 'Pathshala' offers animation, narration, and delightful illustrations to aid practical learning, 'Boighor' presents illustrated, read-along and interactive books for children.

"CholPori's journey has just begun and we intend to bring these resources to every child in the nation because we believe it is their right," concludes Zareen.

## Handicrafts showcasing employment opportunities for gender-diverse individuals

FAHIN RAHMAN AUNGKITA

An initiative of TransEnd, a handicrafts fair was held on Friday afternoon, aiming to empower the marginalised transgender, hijra and gender-diverse community of Bangladesh.

The unique fair featured five stalls showcasing a wide range of products starting from colourful jewelries and dresses, tie dye and screen-printed t-shirts to tote bags, hand-poured candles, and jars of pickles, all of which were made by trained members of the gender-diverse community. The proud makers of the products were present to display their artisries to the invited guests and the intrigued crowd.

Under the "Improving Livelihood of the Transgender Community" project of Transend supported by Youth Co:Lab, 20 transgender



**"Due to the downpour, a few guests could not make it but the event was purposefully successful due to the presence of so many individuals from so many marginalized communities."**

individuals were provided with Handicrafts and Beautification training to help them seek employment or entrepreneurship opportunities.

In the presence of Daniel J. Buchman, Consular Officer, US Embassy Dhaka, transgender rights activist Shanjiboni; Mahmudul Hasan, Programme Officer and Youth Coordinator, UNDP; Mozammel Haque, Programme Analyst, UNDP Bangladesh; employers and beneficiaries of the training programs shared their experiences in a formal sessions.

"Due to the downpour, a few guests could not make it but the event was purposefully successful due to the presence of so many individuals from so many marginalized communities," remarked Lamea Tanjin Tanha, Founder & CEO of TransEnd.

Supported by UNDP, Youth Co:Lab and Citi Foundation, the fair took place at the Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium, Social Science Building, Dhaka University.



## Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2022

The story of Shuvo Rahman, founder of Alice Labs

LABIBA ANJUMI KABIR

Shuvo Rahman, the founder of Alice Labs, an AI-based multi-channel customer service platform for online businesses, was recently nominated for the Forbes 30 under 30, Asia Class of 2022. He made it to the list under the Enterprise Technology category.

The flagship product of Alice Labs is MyAlice, a SaaS product which allows eCommerce platforms to automate their customer service across different mediums.

Shuvo grew up in Dhaka and graduated from BUET in 2015, majoring in CSE. Following his graduation, he and his friends created MisFit Communications. However, the co-founders branched out soon, giving time to their own

ventures, while Shuvo focused on MyAlice, a product-driven SaaS startup.

While operating an online boutique store, Shuvo and his wife Anika realised that managing client data on social networking sites is difficult. This made them come up with the idea of creating a platform that will help eCommerce platforms convert the data at scale and accumulate the customer service across all the mediums. With this aim, Shuvo started using MyAlice with their own product service, marketing, and finance team. Even though MyAlice was

registered in 2018, the product really came into play in 2020. "The pandemic may have resulted in slow growth in many aspects, but it accelerated the eCommerce growth," mentions Shuvo.

As more and more people were habituated with buying products online, there was a huge shift in the ecosystem of eCommerce and these platforms were heavily relying on the correct understanding of customer behavior.

"Brands like Nike or Adidas do not have to worry about their products' sales as their production is in balance with their customer's

demand. However, it was specifically difficult for stores and eCommerce platforms in Bangladesh to keep up with the shift in ecosystem," mentions Shuvo. "That is why MyAlice had its own place in the market as it allows you to review all your customer concerns at one place."

MyAlice is working both locally and internationally, with FMCG, eCommerce companies and brands. Currently, 3500 companies, including Coca Cola, Nestle, Unilever, and Maybelline, from 100 countries are registered for MyAlice.

The startup recently closed a USD 500,000 seed round by Anchorless Bangladesh and HOF Capital.

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## Shoriful flies for 2nd Test

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm seamer Shoriful Islam left for St Lucia yesterday after being included in Bangladesh's squad for the second and final Test against the West Indies, starting from 24 June.

The 21 year-old, who fractured his right hand and was ruled out of the first Test against Sri Lanka in Chattogram last month, made a comeback after the visitors suffered a seven-wicket defeat in the first Test.

Shoriful was initially only named for the white-ball formats for the Caribbean tour and he revealed that Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan was the one who informed him of his inclusion.

"I am very excited because I was eager to play a Test in the West Indies. Let's see what happens, but I think I am in good shape. I learned about my inclusion yesterday [Sunday] night after [Nazmul Hassan] Papon sir called me. I was mentally prepared. Papon sir told me that I was in and I said I would go," Shoriful said before boarding his flight last night.

There was speculation that Shoriful may replace Mustafizur Rahman, who made a comeback to the longest format in the first Test in Antigua but picked up just one wicket.

"Shoriful has been a regular member of the



Former captain Mominul Haque will need to do something extraordinary, if he gets into the playing eleven against West Indies in the second Test, to keep hold of his place in the side in the long run.

PHOTO: AFP FILE

## More than rest, Mominul needs a solution

SPORTS REPORTER

Mominul Haque not finding runs has become a major issue for Bangladesh going forward as the St. Lucia Test looms on the horizon. His current stretch encompasses the longest period that the left-hander – hailed as arguably Bangladesh's best Test batter – has not hit a fifty. More to the point, Mominul's confidence in his abilities appears have hit an all-time low.

Since scoring 88 and then an unbeaten 13 in the Mount Maunganui Test in New Zealand this year, Mominul's run of knocks without a fifty has stretched to 11. Before this, a period in 2018 saw him go through eight innings without a fifty. Mominul, who has 11 tons – the most by a Bangladesh batsman in Tests – used to have his batting average in the high 40s, but currently averages just 37.54. He has not reached double digits in his last nine innings.

That lean patch of his has seen the Bangladesh batting line-up in a spot of bother, as evidenced by the many batting debacles that the Tigers have faced during this year.

On Sunday, Test skipper Shakib Al Hasan was asked following the first Test whether a rest would help Mominul overcome his barriers.

"It's difficult for me to say. I always talk to him and will talk again. If he thinks that he needs a break, it can happen. But at this moment it's not good to take a decision or think about something right after a match," Shakib said.

"You can't guarantee that a lot of changes [to the side] will bring a lot of good."

The manner of Mominul's dismissal in his latest outing, in the second innings at Antigua, was difficult to fathom. A straightforward delivery from Kyle Mayers came in at an angle, but Mominul missed the line completely, caught in his crease in front of his stumps.

The left-hander worked with Nazmul Abedeen Fahim before departing for West Indies tour. Asked about the situation right now, Fahim replied: "Difficult. The last two failures will definitely shake him. Maybe he wasn't thinking too much before but he might be after these two innings."

Asked whether the problem was technical or mental, Fahim said: "Technical

problems can stem from mental aspects. He looked good in the nets the last time I saw him. Maybe past dismissals create a disturbance during matches. He came across a lot and did not leave space to swing his bat during his last dismissal. It appeared indecisive. That delivery should not be difficult to deal with for an established batsman."

Fahim opined that rest was not the solution since batters could repeat flawed approaches even after rest.

"Rest will not do anything. He has to do the right things. He can repeat the same pattern after rest too. You have to make him do the right thing and the coaches who are watching him in a competitive environment can give Mominul proper feedback. They have to know what his mental situation is. You have to be very brave in such a situation and Mominul's advantage is that he knows his capabilities. Somehow he lost that connection. Confidence is naturally bad due to performance and since confidence is low, it can affect technique. But his return to form is very necessary for Bangladesh cricket. We will not get another batter like him out of the blue," Fahim said.

## Russian changes nationality to avoid Wimbledon ban

AFP, London



A Russian tennis player has avoided a Wimbledon ban on all competitors from her country by changing her nationality to Georgian, according to a report in The Times newspaper.

Natela Dzalamidze, a 29-year-old doubles player ranked No 44 in the world, will compete in the women's doubles with Serbia's Aleksandra Krunic when the tournament starts on June 27.

Wimbledon organisers the All England Club announced in April that players from Russia and Belarus would be barred from competing this year following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

But an All England Club spokesman told The Times they were powerless to interfere in Dzalamidze's change of nationality, as this was a matter for the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and the International Tennis Federation (ITF), and that she had satisfied the entry requirements.

"Player nationality, defined as the flag they play under at professional events, is an agreed process that is governed by tours and the ITF," the spokesman said.

Wimbledon's ban has ruled out a swathe of top players, including Daniil Medvedev, the men's world number one and the reigning US Open champion, as well as two-time major winner Victoria Azarenka.



## Fitzpatrick's sensational US Open win

AFP, Brookline

England's Matt Fitzpatrick captured his first major title on Sunday by winning the US Open in dramatic fashion, making spectacular shots as rivals crumbled under final-round pressure.

After a thrilling three-man fight down the back nine at The Country Club, Fitzpatrick fired a two-under-par 68 to finish on six-under-par 274 and defeat Americans Scottie Scheffler and Will Zalatoris by one stroke.

"I'm going to say it because I won but I hit some unbelievable shots coming down the stretch and that's what I work for," Fitzpatrick said.

With perseverance, Fitzpatrick delivered his first professional US victory for a long-sought major trophy.

"It's what you grow up dreaming of," Fitzpatrick said. "It's something I've worked so hard for for such a long time. There was a big monkey on my back trying to win over here and everyone, all they ever talked about was that. To do it as a major for my first win – there's nothing better."

## Coaches anxious as BPL resumes today

SPORTS REPORTER

With the Bangladesh Premier League set to resume today, top teams were wondering whether they would be able to maintain the form they showed before the league was put on hiatus five weeks ago due to AFC Cup and Asian Cup Qualifiers engagements.

Clubs stopped training to give players a break and only restarted their camps about two weeks ago, leaving coaches anxious about displaying consistency in the coming days, especially with heavy rainy muddy grounds.

League leaders Bashundhara Kings and fourth-placed Saif Sporting Club were in fantastic form before the break, posting four straight wins after the mid-season transfer window, while top teams such as Abahani and Sheikh Jamal had also been in fine form, only dropping points in one game each in that time.

"The break hurt us a lot because we had found our rhythm. Then, not only did we have five players leave for national team duties, we were not even able to play friendly matches," Saif SC's Argentinian coach Diego Andres Cruciani told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bashundhara Kings coach Oscar Bruzon was concerned about another issue ahead of his side's game against Rahmatganj in Munshiganj today, emphasising that



Robson Robinho would like to power Bashundhara Kings to victory when they take on Rahmatganj today as the Bangladesh Premier League resumes following a five-week break. (R) Two Sheikh Jamal players take a tumble at the club training ground during a training session yesterday on the eve of their match against Sheikh Russel.

## What to WATCH

T SPORTS  
BPL (Football)  
Bashundhara Kings  
vs Rahmatganj  
4th ODI  
Live from 04:00 pm

SONY SIX  
Sri Lanka vs  
Australia  
4th ODI  
Live from 03:00 pm

pitches in Bangladesh were not equipped to deal with heavy rain.

"Football pitches in Bangladesh lack drainage and appropriate soil so games

often become physical battles [when it rains heavily]. The abilities of creative and talented players are neutralised," the Spaniard told The Daily Star. "In

my opinion, the rainy season should be excluded to make a more attractive league. Or at least have pitches that allow play in rainy weather."

On the other hand, Abahani coach Mario Lemos was focused squarely on his team's performances. "It was a long break and of course it's not easy to play in rainy conditions. But we are ready to try to win every game," Lemos told The Daily Star.

Kings lead the way, six points ahead of second-placed Abahani with seven games remaining, and are taking it match-by-match as they chase a hattrick of league titles.

"Honestly, we are not thinking of the bigger picture, but preparing the team to compete at our maximum level game by game can ensure the title," added Oscar, who has the edge over other contenders as all of his players – including the four Bangladeshi players that could not represent the national team after picking up injuries – are available for selection.

Lemos, whose side will be boosted by the return of the Brazilian duo of forward Dorielton Gomes and midfielder Raphael Augusto, opined that it would be tough to catch Kings so they were focused on themselves.

"It's difficult. Six points is a big margin. But we have to believe and try to get the most points. Hopefully, our opponents will drop points."

The relegation battle is also heating up, with Swadhinata KS, Muktijoddha, Rahmatganj and Uttar Baridhara battling for survival.



To prevent corrosion of rods in water reservoirs, use corrosion-resistant steel  
**BSRM Centura**  
 Fusion Bonded Epoxy Coated Rebar



**PADMA BRIDGE**  
 Proud Construction Partner  
**SHAH CEMENT**

Driver knifed to death for not letting bikes overtake

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
 Dinajpur

His only fault was that he failed to give motorcyclists room to overtake.

The motorcyclists stabbed a lorry driver to death in Pipolla village of Dinajpur's Biral upazila yesterday afternoon.

Victim Golam Mostafa, 35, was the son of Mokaddesh Hossain of Tangail's Dhombari upazila.

According to Aminul Islam, helper of the lorry driver, Mostafa was heading to Dinajpur town after delivery of goods of a company in Bochaganj. After the vehicle passed Dhukurjhari village in Biral upazila, eight people on three motorcycles gave signal asking for room to overtake the lorry.

But the driver was not in a position to do so as Bochaganj-Dinajpur road is quite narrow, said the helper.

As the driver let the bikers overtake in Pipolla village, they stopped

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Pedestrians struggle to walk on a pavement mostly occupied by parked cycle-vans in the capital's Karwan Bazar. Sidewalks across the city are often used for parking such vehicles or are sometimes even illegally occupied by hawkers, rendering them useless for their actual purpose. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**HIKING FUEL PRICES**  
**Without public hearing, it's 'illegal': CAB**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Consumers Association of Bangladesh has said the process of fixing fuel prices without holding any public hearings is "illegal".

Only the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has the jurisdiction to fix fuel prices, not the government, CAB leaders said at a virtual press conference yesterday.

Last week, two ministers hinted at raising fuel prices amid the price hike of crude oil and diesel in the international market.

Speaking at the press conference, CAB Vice President Prof M Shamsul Alam said the government is again trying to increase fuel prices, which were hiked last November.

"They [the government] want to cut the subsidies by Tk 90 crore a day. But if the fuel prices are increased, the consumers' living costs, including transportation costs, will go up by hundreds of crores of taka."

Citing the BERC Act, Shamsul said the commission has all the jurisdictions to set prices of petroleum products after holding "public hearings", according to clauses 22

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



A covered van collided with a Dhaka bound passenger bus on the Jamurki bridge in Tangail's Mirzapur upazila yesterday morning, leaving several people injured. However, the bus luckily escaped falling into the river even though the accident caused the bridge's railing to break.

PHOTO: STAR

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## La Nina behind floods in Bangladesh

Climatologist Rashed Chowdhury tells Star

PINAKI ROY



La Nina is moderately active in the Pacific Ocean this year. This would cause more rains across the Ganges and Brahmaputra basins ultimately leading to more floods, said Dr Rashed Chowdhury in an interview with The Daily Star.

Adjunct faculty at the School of Sustainable Engineering and the Built Environment in Arizona State University, he said there was a direct link between La Nina being active and floods in Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi born Rashed, who had also worked as a principal scientific officer at Pacific Climate centre, said La Nina was active in the Pacific even during earlier floods in Bangladesh like in 1954, 1955 1968, 1974, 1987, 1988, 1998, 2004, 2007, and recent ones in 2017 in 2019.

"It means, if there is active La Nina, there is high probability of flood in Bangladesh."

La Nina is a climate pattern that describes the cooling of surface ocean waters along the tropical

west coast of South America.

Saying that predictions are never 100 percent accurate, he said, "The connection between La Nina and floods in the country, however, is very clear."

"The severity is not clear. It could be catastrophic or could be normal. But those who work on atmosphere and oceanic dynamics have been discussing the possibility of floods this year."

"I have written about it for a newspaper in April and have been writing about it on social media ... It is not sudden and I am not at all surprised by it."

About is the La Nina phenomenon, Dr Rashed said it is very hard to explain briefly.

"We can say it is an interaction between the ocean and the atmosphere. Sometimes, the sea surface temperature of a certain place – what we call Nino 3 or 4 – in the eastern Pacific Ocean either increases or decreases."

"Now the temperature is colder than normal."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

## PADMA BRIDGE Envoys laud Sheikh Hasina

STAR REPORT

Three foreign envoys in Dhaka have lauded Bangladesh for constructing the Padma Bridge.

Envoy of European Union, China, Saudi Arabia and the Russian embassy yesterday congratulated Bangladesh for the bridge to be inaugurated on June 25, reports UNB.

The Saudi ambassador said the Padma Bridge will help open up the eyes of international investors, including Saudi companies, to give a serious look at Bangladesh.

"I admire Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for taking the revolutionary step of self financing to build the Padma Bridge," Ambassador Essa Yousef Essa Al Duhailan told reporters at the Saudi embassy.

On behalf of the custodians of the two holy mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the ambassador congratulated President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her government as well as the people of Bangladesh.

Duhailan said Saudi companies are increasingly looking at Bangladesh.

He said the Padma Bridge will help Bangladesh build more infrastructures in future.

The envoy said Hasina has proven repeatedly that she is the daughter of Bangabandhu whose visionary idea had boosted the country's economy to new heights.

"Her capacity to make swift decisions on keeping the country's economy on track is marvelous despite the fact that many big nations have struggled under similar circumstances," said Duhailan.

ঢাকা পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডিপিডিসি)

বিনোদ ভবন, ১ আনন্দ পার্ক রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০

সম্মিলিত গ্রাহক, দেশের বৃহত্তর স্থার্থে এবং বিনোদ ও জ্বালানি সার্কের লক্ষ্যে আসুন আমরা রাত ৮ টার পর দোকান, শপিংমল, মার্কেট ও কাঁচাবাজার বক্স রাখতে সচেষ্ট হই

তাঙ্গড়া, নিম্নোক্ত ব্যবহারে প্রতিপাদন করিঃ

- ❖ "আমার কাছের সুইচ অন্নি নিজেই বক্স করি – মানুষীয় প্রাধান্যসূচীর এ আহরণ মেনে চলি এবং অবিদ্যাতের জন্য বিনোদ অপচয় বক্স করি।
- ❖ বিনোদ সার্কীয় LED ব্লকসহ অন্যান্য সার্কীয় বৈদ্যুতিক সরঞ্জাম ব্যবহার করি।
- ❖ প্রি-পেইড মিটার ব্যবহার করি ও সার্কীয় হই এবং বিনোদ বিলের বামেলা থেকে স্মৃত থাকি।
- ❖ প্রাকৃতিক আলো ব্যবহার করি উন্নত প্রাকৃতিক বিনোদ ব্যবহারে সঞ্চিত বিনোদের মাধ্যমে আগামী দিনকে উজ্জ্বল করে তুলি।
- ❖ বাসা-বাড়ির পরিবেশ বাক্স করিয়ে সচল রাখি এবং নেট মিটারিং এর মাধ্যমে তা থেকে বিনোদ উৎপাদন করি।
- ❖ বিনোদ ব্যবহারে সার্কীয় হই এবং নবায়নযোগ্য জ্বালানি ব্যবহার করি, পরিবেশ বরদায় এগিয়ে আসি।
- ❖ আমাদের বৈদ্যুতিক সরঞ্জাম এবং ফিল্চারগুলি নিয়মিত ব্যবহারের প্রক্রিয়া করি।
- ❖ অপ্রয়োজনে লাইট, ফ্যান, এসি ইত্যাদি ব্যবহারে বিবরণ থাকি। এসির তাপমাত্রা ২৫ ডিগ্রি সেলসিয়াসে সীমিত রাখি এবং কম থেকে প্রচলনের সময় এসি বক্স হয়েছে কি না নিশ্চিত করি।
- ❖ ফ্যানের জন্য সাধারণ রেজিস্ট্রেটরের পরিবর্তে ইলেক্ট্রনিক রেজিস্ট্রেটর ব্যবহার করি।
- ❖ গিয়ার থার্মোসেট সর্বিন্দু পর্যায়ে রাখি।
- ❖ নির্ধারিত লোডসীমার বেশি ওয়াশিং মেশিন ভর্তি না করে কাপড় পরিষ্কার করি।
- ❖ সার্ভিসের গ্রাটিপূর্ণ সংযোগ এড়িয়ে চলি। বৈদ্যুতিক মটরের সাথে ক্যাপাসিটর ব্যবহার করি।
- ❖ বৈদ্যুতিক দুর্ঘটনা হতে রক্ষার জন্য সকল বৈদ্যুতিক সরঞ্জামের যথাযথ সুরক্ষা বজায় রেখে নিরাপদ বৈদ্যুতিক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করি।

যে কোনো প্রয়োজনে ডিপিডিসির কল সেন্টার ১৬১১৬ নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন

-ডিপিডিসি কর্তৃপক্ষ

First Covid death after 20 days  
 Positivity rate jumps to 10.87 percent

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh registered one Covid-related death with 873 fresh cases in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

This is the first death from the virus in the current month. The previous death was recorded on May 30.

The daily positivity rate jumped to 10.87 percent from Sunday's 7.38 percent as 8,028 samples were tested during the 24-hour period.

The country's total caseload rose to 1,957,200 while the total fatalities reached 29,132 with the new numbers, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

On Sunday, the country logged 596 cases with zero deaths.

The mortality rate remained unchanged at 1.49 percent. The recovery rate declined to 97.38 percent from Sunday's 97.42 percent as 92 patients recovered during the same 24 hours.

Last month, the country reported only four Covid-related deaths and 816 new cases, while 7,356 patients recovered from the disease, according to DGHS data.

Among the four deaths, one was vaccinated with single dose of Covid vaccine while the three others were vaccinated with two doses.

The country reported its first zero Covid death in a single day on November 20 last year along with 178 cases. The pandemic broke out here in March 2020.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

Singles charmed by Japan letter-writing scheme

AFP, Tokyo



Sick of swiping and tired of Tinder? Old-fashioned love letters may be the answer, says one Japanese city whose unusual matchmaking scheme has been a surprising success.

Singles in southern Japan's Miyazaki are being encouraged to put pen to paper in a low-tech search for their soulmate, an effort to boost low birth rate. Compared to online dating, "it takes longer, and inspires you to imagine the person you're in communication with," said Rie Miyata, a consultant to run the scheme.

"It's less about how good your penmanship is," she told AFP, "and more the fact that you write every single character sincerely and with care, thinking deeply about the person you're writing to."



A covered van collided with a Dhaka bound passenger bus on the Jamurki bridge in Tangail's Mirzapur upazila yesterday morning, leaving several people injured. However, the bus luckily escaped falling into the river even though the accident caused the bridge's railing to break.

PHOTO: STAR

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