

MONETARY POLICY FOR FY23

Key tools not there to rein in inflation

BB raises policy rate but keeps lending rate cap unchanged

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Bangladesh Bank yesterday attached the highest importance to curbing inflation in its monetary policy for fiscal 2022-23 but didn't deploy major tools needed to ride out the current economic challenges.

Though the BB hiked the policy rate by 50 basis points to 5.50 percent yesterday to reduce the money supply to the market, it didn't lift the lending rate cap.

Economists say the measure will not be effective enough to contain inflation. They have long been suggesting that the central bank withdraw the lending rate cap of 9 percent or make it flexible to check inflation and restore stability in the foreign exchange market.

BB Governor Fazle Kabir unveiled the monetary policy statement at the central bank headquarters in the capital.

"We will give all-out efforts to contain inflation and keep the foreign exchange reserves stable. The central bank will then give attention to GDP growth," he said.

Driven by a hike in food costs, inflation surged to an eight-year high of 7.42 percent in May.

Inflation averaged 5.99 percent between July last year and May this year against the government target of 5.7 percent.

The government has set an inflation target of 5.6 percent for FY23 starting today.

Economists say the increase in the policy rate is definitely good, but the economy will not reap the benefit immediately from the monetary policy.

The policy rate has been hiked twice within a month for the first time since its introduction in 2003. The BB raised it by 25 basis points on May 29 this year and by 50 basis points yesterday.

The policy rate is a pivotal benchmark interest rate that commercial banks follow for fixing interest rates on both loans and deposits. An increase in the rate makes loans more costly.

Quoting the policy rate, cash-strapped banks take short-term loans from the BB and disburse those to individual borrowers.

Talking to The Daily Star, Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, said the monetary programmes will not help contain inflation immediately for the absence of effective tools.

The increase in the policy rate will create liquidity pressure in the banking sector but it will take time to slow down the money supply, he pointed out.

Had the BB withdrawn the lending rate cap or made it flexible, inflation could have been managed efficiently within the quickest possible time, Ahsan said.

The BB has set a lower private sector credit growth target of 14.1 percent for FY23, compared to 14.80 percent in FY22.

As per the BB projection, the credit growth will be at 13.1 percent in the last fiscal year.

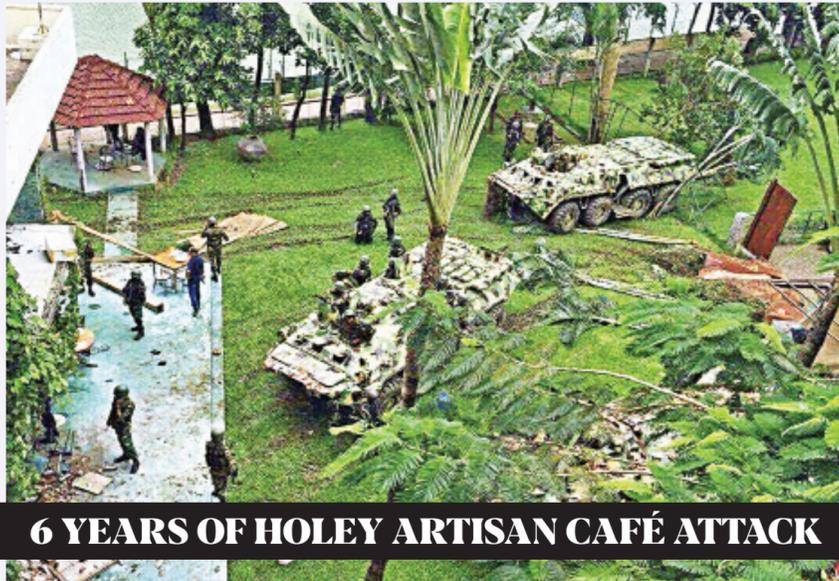
Md Habibur Rahman, chief economist of the central bank, said, "The central bank set a lower credit growth target to reduce the supply of money to the market."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



"The monetary programmes will not help contain inflation immediately for the absence of effective tools."

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.



6 YEARS OF HOLEY ARTISAN CAFÉ ATTACK

Neo JMB on the wane, some groups active online

SHARIFUL ISLAM and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Militant group Neo-JMB, which carried out a deadly attack at a Gulshan restaurant in 2016, currently has no strength to carry out another attack, but officers and security analysts see several other groups as threats.

Militant groups and extremists continue to be active online, they said, adding that individuals get motivated and radicalised by the large volume of extremist content available on the internet.

"Neo-JMB is now in an existential crisis. It has no activists or leaders," said Asaduzzaman, chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of police.

The banned outfit's chief Mehedy Hasan John is believed to be working from a hideout in Turkey, CTTC officers said.

But there is no room for complacency as other groups like Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT)

and Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT) are still active. The former is still a major concern because its top leaders Major (sacked) Syed Ziaul Haque and Akram Hussain are on the run, they added.

The group operates through what police say are the "sleepers

Online activities of militants and radicalisation of individuals increased amid the coronavirus restrictions, but they are now largely under control.

cells" in which the members do not know each other's identity and their leaders operate anonymously.

They use encrypted messaging apps to communicate and use unique codes as their virtual identity, said a CTTC officer. "Even if one of them gets arrested, law enforcers cannot

detect the others."

CTTC chief Asaduzzaman said ABT has been neutralised to some extent because its key operatives were arrested at different times.

Online activities of militants and radicalisation of individuals increased amid the coronavirus restrictions, but they are now largely under control, he said.

Banned outfit HuT's members, who are mostly students of well-off families, are now trying to get recruited in government and private jobs as part of their plan to establish a caliphate, said an officer with years of experience in tracking down militants.

Banned outfits Harkatul Jihad al Islam, Bangladesh (Huji-B) and Jam'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) have been inactive in the last few years, officials added. According to CTTC data, Huji'B killed 145 people in 16 attacks between 1999 and 2004. The JMB killed 70 in 23 attacks from 2002 to 2016.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Revisiting the HORROR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The evening of July 1, 2016, -- a Friday near the end of Ramadan -- had descended quietly on the Holey Artisan Bakery as the busy capital settled down after breaking the day's fast.

The upscale eatery on Road 79 in the posh Gulshan neighbourhood had a thin crowd. As the evening progressed, the Western-style café, a favourite for both expatriates and Bangladeshis, started getting busier.

Guests were ordering lime-glazed donuts, croissants, bagels, pizzas, pastries and coffee with

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

CTTC to start deradicalising militants in jail this month

SHARIFUL ISLAM and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit is going to start a long-overdue process of deradicalising militants inside prisons from this month.

Social, clinical and educational psychologists, religious clerics and counterterrorism experts are expected to start deradicalising jailed militants and also those on bail, said CTTC chief Md Asaduzzaman.

"The home ministry recently gave approval

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

In tears, we remember
SEE PAGE 9, 10

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
In the Name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

6th Death Anniversary of FARAAZ AYAAS HOSSAIN
April 15, 1996 - July 1, 2016

Six years have passed since you left us, and not a day has gone by that we haven't thought of you. Though you left us in grief when you chose to stand by your friends and sacrificed your life to protect them, we hold our heads high today knowing you were our own.

You make us immensely proud when we witness your powerful legacy of courage, friendship, and humanity for the world. You are no longer just our Chotoo, today you are Bangladesh's, and you are the world's.

You live on as a symbol of courage and continue to serve as our moral compass to this day.

Though you are no longer with us, your memory, and bravery live on to impact the world.

To all who have stood by us, we thank you for your love, and support. Please keep our beloved Faraaz in your prayers and may Allah (SWT) grant him the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus.

Shahnaz Rahman and Family

Northeast braces for another blow

DWOHA CHOWDHURY and MINTU DESHWARA

"How much more can we take?"

This is a question being asked by those in the country's Northeast, as the rivers there have been swelling for the second consecutive day yesterday, raising the chances of the region going underwater yet again.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre stated that the water levels in all rivers, except the Surma and the Kushiara, will rise in the 48 hours from yesterday morning.

Surma's water level at Chhatak upazila point was already flowing 99cm above the danger level yesterday.

The worst flood in the past 122 years has already affected 60 lakh people, destroyed one lakh homes, several thousands of kilometres of road systems, tens of thousands of latrines and water sources -- and may wreak more havoc.

The Sylhet divisional administration yesterday said that over 63 lakh people have been affected and at least half of them are from Sylhet district itself.

District officials confirmed it saying 30 lakh have been affected so far.

As many as 99,791 homes have been destroyed across the division, the administration said.

At least 1.3 lakh people are currently housed in about a thousand shelters there. The rest are boarding with relatives, renting homes or migrating to the slums.

Those who had returned home after the water began receding last week are in fear of having to evacuate again.

So far, the worst affected areas are Sunamganj's

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

FLOOD FALLOUT

- 63 lakh people -- at least half from Sylhet district -- affected in floods
- As many as 99,791 homes destroyed in Sylhet division
- At least 1.3 lakh people housed in different shelters across the division
- 8,033km of roads already destroyed
- So far, 92 dead due to floods

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
In the Name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

2nd Death Anniversary of LATIFUR RAHMAN
28 August 1945 - 1 July 2020

Two years since you left us, and you remain as our guiding light. Your strong values of ethics and integrity are still woven into every moment.

You were the pillar of our family and to all those around you. You remain a shining example of honesty, patriotism, and excellence in every sphere of life. We may miss your physical presence, but you live on in all our hearts.

You live on in all your strength and as a symbol of ethics.

Though you are no longer with us, your memory, and glorious legacy continues.

To all who have stood by us, we thank you for your love, and support. Please keep our beloved Latifur Rahman in your prayers and may Allah (SWT) grant him the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus.

Shahnaz Rahman and Family

Four more die from Covid

Positivity rate keeps rising

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four people died of coronavirus in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, reported the Directorate General of Health Services.

According to a DGHS press release, this was the highest number of daily deaths after March 11.

Of 13,905 samples, 2,183 people tested positive for the virus in those 24 hours, read the release.

The positivity rate now stands at 15.70 percent.

The total number of confirmed cases rose to 1,973,785, and the fatalities to 29,149 with the latest count.

After the positivity rate remained below one percent between March and May, the transmission of the virus started rising early this month.

The cabinet division on Tuesday instructed all officials concerned to enforce the "no mask, no service" policy and ensure everyone maintains health safety guidelines.

Meanwhile, health officials, including Health Minister Zahid Maleque, urged people to take their second and third doses of Covid-19 vaccines.

1971 WAR CRIMES

One to walk gallows, three jailed till death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced a man to death for committing war crimes in 1971.

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 handed down the verdict and sentenced three more men to jail for life for the same crimes.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Md Shahinur Islam, delivered the verdict.

Another accused was acquitted as the prosecution could not prove allegations against him, said prosecutor Rezia Sultana Chaman.

Among the convicts, Shafi Ahmed was awarded death penalty while Tajul Islam, Jahed Mia and Salek Mia were given jail until death.

Another accused, Sabbir Ahmed, has been acquitted.

Shafi and Sabbir are on the run while the three others are in jail, Rezia said.

All of them are from Habiganj's Lakhai upazila and were charged with abduction, torture and murders during the Liberation War.



A view shows a building of a car garage destroyed by a Russian missile strike, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Dnipro, Ukraine on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Russia pulls out troops from Snake Island

Terms the move 'goodwill gesture'; Moscow warns of new 'iron curtain'; Biden unveils new military aid for Kyiv

AGENCIES

Russian forces abandoned the strategic Black Sea outpost of Snake Island yesterday, in a major victory for Ukraine that could loosen the grip of Russia's blockade on Ukrainian ports.

The news from the Black Sea came as Nato leaders wrapped up their summit in Madrid, intent on demonstrating their unity and determination to back up Kyiv with advanced weapons in the face of Moscow's assault.

Snake Island became a symbol of Ukrainian resistance in the first days of the war, when the rocky outcrop's defenders told a Russian warship that called on them to surrender to "go f*** yourself," an incident that spurred a defiant memo.

It was also a strategic target, sitting aside shipping lanes near Ukraine's port of Odessa. Russia had attempted to install missile and air defence batteries while under fire from drones.

Now, however, Ukraine has begun to receive longer range missiles and military gear from its Western backers, and the Russian position on

Snake Island seems to have become untenable.

"In the end, it will prove impossible for (President Vladimir) Putin to hold down a country that will not accept his rule," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said, stressing that any eventual peace deal would be on Ukraine's terms.

"We've seen what Ukraine can do to drive the Russians back. We've seen what they did around Kyiv and Kharkiv, now on Snake Island."

The Russian defence ministry statement described the retreat as "a gesture of goodwill" meant to demonstrate that Moscow will not interfere with UN efforts to organise protected grain exports from Ukraine.

But Kyiv claimed it as a win. "They always downplay their defeats this way," Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on Twitter.

In peacetime, Ukraine is a major agricultural exporter, but Russia's invasion has damaged farmland and seen Ukraine's ports seized, razed or blockaded - threatening grain importers.

Western powers have accused Putin of using the trapped harvest as a weapon to increase pressure on the international community, and Russia has been accused of stealing grain.

The conflict in Ukraine has dominated the Nato summit in Madrid, where the leaders said Russia "is the most significant and direct threat to allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area".

This came as Nato officials invited Sweden and Finland to join the alliance, and US President Joe Biden announced new deployments of US troops, ships and planes to Europe. Biden yesterday announced \$800 million in new weapons for Ukraine and said the United States will support Kyiv "as long as it takes" in its war against Russian invasion.

Earlier, Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the alliance of seeking to assert its "supremacy", telling journalists in the Turkmenistan capital of Ashgabat that Ukraine and its people are "a means" for Nato to "defend their own interests."

Key tools not there

FROM PAGE 1

Fazle Kabir said the global economy is now facing an uncertainty due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, prompting the International Monetary Fund to cut the global growth projection.

The prices of major commodities, including petroleum, have been on the rise in the global market due to the war, he said.

Amid such a situation, the country's import payment has shot up in recent months.

Between July and April in FY22, imports went up by 41 percent to \$68.66 billion, bringing the reserves down to \$41.7 billion on June 28. The figure was \$46.15 billion on December 31 last year.

The BB governor said, "The major challenge of the monetary policy is to contain inflation and keep the exchange rate stable."

The exchange rate of the taka stood at Tk 93.45 a dollar yesterday compared to Tk 84.80 a year ago.

Ahsan said that if the lending rate cap is withdrawn, the interest rate on import financing, now a maximum of 9 percent, will go up substantially, and this will help bring stability to the foreign exchange market.

He further said the latest monetary policy will not bring any good to depositors as inflation continues to rise.

Zahid Hussain, former

lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said the BB termed the monetary policy for FY23 "tight" and "cautious".

"The tightness can be found only in the increase in the policy rate by 50 basis points."

Zahid said some of the measures announced in the policy are, in fact, likely to be inflationary.

"Further increases in LC [letter of credit] margins on non-essential imports will push up prices even if they are effective in reducing the demand for foreign exchange."

He said the monetary policy includes some expansionary measures such as new refinancing scheme to boost production of import-substituting products and continued support for stimulus packages.

Monzur Hossain, research director at Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, said the monetary policy appeared to be cautionary and slightly contractionary.

However, the increase in policy rate will not help contain inflation as the lending rate cap remains unchanged, he pointed out.

"The big challenge for the policy is that the monetary instruments would not be effective if the government controls interest rates, ignoring the spirit of the interest rate deregulations."

This means the monetary policy's role in controlling inflation and stabilising volatile exchange rates would be limited, he said.

Fahmida Khatun, executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said it's fine that the BB reduced the credit growth target in private sector to contain inflation.

"It's an unusually stressful year. It's not expected that private investment will rise at a high rate," she said.

But the market will not function properly since the interest rate on lending has not been changed, she said.

"Interest rate should automatically adjust with supply and demand for funds in the market. In its absence, the whole mechanism will not function properly," she added.

Eid-ul-Azha

FROM PAGE 12

across the world slaughter sacrificial animals and draw inspiration from the unique example of sacrifice to please Allah.

On this occasion, the Muslims in Bangladesh will offer prayers in congregations and sacrifice animals to seek Allah's blessing.

They will offer munajat seeking divine blessings for peace, progress and prosperity of the country as well as for the welfare of the Muslim Ummah.

Neo JMB on the wane, some groups active online

FROM PAGE 1

Monirul Islam, former CTIC chief and current additional inspector general of the special branch of police, wrote in an article published in Counter Terrorism Journal last year that militants were using the cyber space to disseminate extremist messages and spread hatred toward their targets, make recruitment, collect funds, provide training to new members and prepare for terror attacks.

Just like many

countries, Bangladesh was seeing a rise in radicalisation. Counterterrorism is a complex and lengthy task that requires the involvement of the whole of society, he observed.

Security analyst Maj Gen ANM Muniruzzaman (ret'd) said the periodic arrest of suspects and recovery of arms and ammunition were an indication that the militants were active.

There should be a national counter militancy strategic policy in which

the government, police, and other stakeholders of the society will have specific roles to play, he said.

CTIC chief Asaduzzaman said police have been intervening in online activities of suspects, adding that it had become increasingly difficult for militants to make new recruits as people were more aware now.

HOLEY ARTISAN ATTACK AND NEO-JMB
Neo-JMB was formed after late Bangladeshi-Canadian Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury,

who was inspired by the global terror organisation Islamic State, came to Bangladesh in October 2013.

The group was behind the attack on Holey Artisan, killing 22 people, including 17 foreigners and two police officers, on July 1, 2016.

In 2016, Neo-JMB and Al Qaeda inspired Ansar Al Islam (AAI) killed a total of 60 people in 53 attacks. The following year, neo-JMB carried out an attack killing five people, including three police officers, in Sylhet.

After the Holey Artisan attack, the CTIC started countrywide intelligence operations and led preemptive operations.

Rab and different units of police also strengthened their efforts against terrorism.

Since the Holey Artisan attack, the CTIC has arrested 512 suspects. Law enforcers carried out 28 operations at militant dens where 79 militants were killed and large stashes of explosives were destroyed or seized.

Northeast braces for another blow

FROM PAGE 1

Chhatak, Dowarabazar, Tahirpur, Bishwambarpur and Sunamganj Sadar upazilas, including the district municipality.

Shafique Ali, a member of Chhatak's Islampur union parishad, said, "As it has been raining heavily, the water level has been rising and people are fearing yet another devastating flood."

Dowarabazar's Banglabazar union sits just downhill of the world's wettest place Mawsynram and the second wettest Cherrapunji of India's Meghalaya.

The rainwater from the hills enters Bangladesh through four transboundary rivers, which flow through the union and cause damage every time.

However, the people of the area have never seen a flood such as the one that began on June 15.

"The water rushing through the rivers has flooded all the villages in the upazila and affected 9,000 people so far. All roads have

also been damaged," said Mohammad Abul Kashem, chairman of the union.

"Since the flash floods began, we have been detached from the rest of the country."

The floods in Sylhet have by now already damaged 8,033km of roads in four districts.

Md Mahbub Alam, executive engineer of Sunamganj LGED, said, "We are experiencing massive destruction. Not a single road was spared and it will take us years to repair them."

In Sylhet, around 4,000km of roads under the LGED and 160km of roads under the RHD were damaged in the floods.

In Sunamganj, LGED roads spanning around 2,000km and RHD roads around 184km were destroyed.

Meanwhile, in Moulvibazar, 381km roads under the RHD and 93km under the LGED have been damaged. In Habiganj, around 186km of LGED roads and 29km of RHD

roads have been destroyed.

According to RHD and LGED officials, the monetary loss from the damages will be more than Tk 4,000 crore. This might increase after the final assessment of the flood fallout.

Md Mostafizur Rahman, executive engineer of Sylhet RHD, said, "All major roads, including highways, were affected and the loss is too huge to recover from soon."

These damages took place while both departments were planning the recovery from the May floods.

Meanwhile, the rising of floods threaten to cause further damage.

The Department of Public Health Engineering had initially assessed that 45,976 water points and 50,885 latrines have been damaged.

In a report published on Sunday, the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office's Humanitarian Coordination Task Team said at least \$8.5 million will be needed to provide hygiene, safe drinking water

PADMA BRIDGE

Another arrested for removing bolts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counterterrorism officials arrested another man, who was seen in a video removing nuts and bolts from the railing of Padma Bridge.

Mahdi Hasan, 27, was arrested from Laxmipur's Ramganj upazila, Asaduzzaman, chief of DMP's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit, told a press briefing yesterday.

Earlier, the CID arrested Bayezid Talha for also releasing a video of himself on TikTok showing he was removing nuts and bolts from the Bridge's railing.

Bayezid was put on a seven-day remand in a case filed with Padma Bridge North Police Station.

Bangladeshi finds money, returns it to fellow pilgrim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi haji is being lauded for finding and returning around seven lakh CFA francs to its owner -- a pilgrim from Burkina Faso -- in Saudi Arabia's Medina city.

The Bangladeshi was identified as Abdur Rahman Prodhon, from Dhaka's Demra.

In a Facebook post, he wrote that he found a bundle of foreign currency on Monday.

He hung a handwritten sign around his neck, saying "Some African France [franc] found", and searched for the owner near Al-Masjid an-Nabawi.

A citizen of Burkina Faso claimed it was his money, and gave proof in favour of his claim.

An official of Bangladesh Hajj Mission in Medina said that such a noble gesture by a Bangladeshi certainly brightens the country's image in Saudi Arabia.

"We are trying to locate the Bangladeshi haji to appreciate his great deed," he added.

Man dies after being hit by train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Police yesterday recovered the body of a man who was killed after being hit by a train in Shamshearnagar Keshuluti area of Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila yesterday morning.

The victim could not yet be identified. However, police are assuming he was around 45-years old, Mollah Selimuzzaman, OC of Srimangal Railway Police, told The Daily Star, adding that an unnatural death case was filed with the station in this regard.

SI Abdur Rahman, of Shamshearnagar police outpost, said the man died on the spot when the Dhaka Sylhet-bound intercity Kalni Express hit him at the Keshuluti railway crossing.

The body was sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

'Corruption, anarchy the new norm'

12 opposition MPs blast govt for sorry state of EC, education, law and order, health sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP, Jatiya Party and Gono Forum MPs at Jatiya Sangsad yesterday blasted the government for the sorry state of the Election Commission (EC), education system, law and order situation and widespread corruption in health sector.

A total of 12 lawmakers slammed Education Minister Dipu Moni, Law Minister Anisul Huq, who is in charge of the EC in parliamentary affairs, Health Minister Zahid Maleque and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan while participating in the discussion on passage of the proposed budget for 2022-23.

Jatiya Party, BNP, Gono Forum and independent MPs submitted 664 cut motions on 59 demands centring the proposed budget.

They were allowed to participate in the discussion on Election Commission Secretariat, Public Security Division, Health Services Division and Secondary and Higher Education Division.

The MPs are Jatiya Party's Kazi Firoz Rashid, Rustam Ali Farazi, Mujibur Huq Chunnun, Fakhrul Imam, Shamim Haider Patwari, Rawshan Ara Mannan and Ponir Uddin Ahmed; BNP's Harunur Rashid, Mosharraf Hossain and Rumeen Farhana; Gono Forum's Mokabbir Khan and independent MP Rezaul Karim Bablu.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



A mother holds her child tight while the rickshaw moves against the windy rain on Manik Mia Avenue yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Latifur Rahman's 2nd death anniv today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the second death anniversary of Latifur Rahman, founder chairman and CEO of Transcom Group, a well-known and highly respected business house in Bangladesh.

Soft-spoken and humble, the visionary and ethical businessman passed away in his sleep on this day at his paternal home in Cumilla after suffering from lung-related illness for a long time.

His passing coincided with the death anniversary of his grandson Faraz.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

So far so good Passengers with e-passports benefitting from e-gates, as process now efficient

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Around 11:00am yesterday, Sufia Begum, a resident of the capital's Dhanmondi area, went to Dhaka airport to fly to Bangkok for tourism purposes.

Collecting the boarding pass, she went for immigration around 11:30am to board the plane.

As an e-passport carrier, the immigration officials asked her to go through the e-gate. She first placed the passport for scanning at the e-gate, which took around four to five seconds.

Then Sufia entered through the gate, and an automated camera scanned her face, which took another 10 to 12 seconds.



Finally, she was asked to go to the immigration officer's desk, where officials just put a departure seal and check visa and boarding pass.

This process had taken less than a minute.

"I never thought that my immigration process would be done in less than two minutes, that too without standing in any queue. Earlier, we always had to spend at least ten to fifteen minutes for immigration," Sufia told this newspaper.

During a visit at the departure and arrival desk at HSA, this correspondent found no queue for e-passport holders.

For comparison, Zubair Ahmed reached HSA around 11:00am from Paris, and it took him less than a minute to complete the immigration process. His co-passengers who did not have e-passports had to stand in a long queue and spend a long time to complete the same process.

A total of 12 e-gates have been set up at arrival and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Dengue cases shot up in June

The month hasn't seen so many cases since 2019; experts call for immediate measures

HELEMUL ALAM

A total of 737 people were infected with dengue in June. In the past five years, June has not witnessed so many cases except in 2019, one of the worst years in regards to dengue infections.

This year, the number of cases was 163 in May, 23 in April, 20 in March and February, while it was 126 in January, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Experts urged authorities to take immediate measures to control infections by identifying hotspots.

They also underscored the need for building awareness among people, as Aedes mosquitoes, carriers of the dengue virus, breed in clean water.

According to DGHS, dengue cases in June were 267 in 2017, 295 in 2018, 1,884 in 2019, 20 in 2020, and 272 in 2021.

Normally, in the dengue season's first two or three months, cases start multiplying by three to four times. But after that, it increases by 10 times or more, and this trend continues for the next few months, said GM Saifur Rahman, an entomologist at Bangladesh National University.

From May to June this year, cases have increased by over four times, and it will start rising by 10 times, which will continue till September or October if proper measures are not taken, said Saifur.

DGHS data show that in 2019, the year when cases crossed one lakh, there were 1,884 infections in June, and that number rose to 16,253 in July and 52,636 in August.

Entomologists have repeatedly urged authorities to determine locations prone to dengue infection and let everyone know, so that people can be aware, arrange for personal protection, and take area-based measures. But local authorities often deny that cases are originating from their areas, he said.

There is a blame game going on between authorities concerned, which indicates their lack

of sincerity, Saifur said.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, entomologist of Jahangirnagar University, said addressing the source of infections is crucial to control Aedes mosquitoes, and for this, raising awareness among people is essential. Ward councillors can play a vital role, as they can conduct drives with locals in every house. So, every councillor will have to be proactive, as central administration will not be able to do this alone, he said.

Dr Md Ekramul Haque, deputy programme manager of malaria and AID control programme at DGHS, said to control Aedes mosquitoes, an integrated initiative, especially involving locals, is crucial.

“From May to June this year, cases have increased by over four times, and it will start rising by 10 times, which will continue till September or October if proper measures are not taken.”

GM SAIFUR RAHMAN
Entomologist at Bangladesh National University

"We have already directed to open 'dengue corners' at all district and upazila hospitals and special wards at medical college hospitals," he said.

He said they have a sufficient number of kits to identify dengue patients. "We have already trained both doctors and nurses to treat dengue."

Dhaka South City Corporation Chief Health Officer Dr Fazle Shamsul Kabir on Wednesday said apart from their regular anti-mosquito drive and awareness campaign, they are conducting drives inside the 300-yard radius of patients.

Apart from their regular drive, Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday inaugurated a two-day operation to find Aedes-mosquito breeding grounds on rooftops or in balconies using drones.

What steps taken for their birth certificates?

HC asks govt on street children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to submit in three months a report on the steps taken to issue birth certificates to all street children.

Secretaries at the ministries of women and children and home affairs, and office of the registrar general of birth and death registration have been made respondents to the rule, which is returnable in four weeks.

The bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Khizir Hayat delivered the order following a petition filed by Sports for Hope and Independence.

'Enough with mere formalities'

Speakers urge govt to take effective actions against corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers called for a well-governed democratic Bangladesh by controlling corruption effectively during the virtual annual meeting of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday.

The meeting was presided over by TIB life member Mohammad Shahjahan Siddiqui and moderated by TIB executive director Iftekharuzzaman. Forty-seven campaigners -- involved with the anti-corruption social movement -- participated in the meeting.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



A bus goes over the divider while trying to get ahead of the one behind it. Accidents are often the result of drivers doing such reckless manoeuvres. This picture was taken from the capital's Azimpur yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

101st birthday of DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) will celebrate its 101st founding anniversary today. Established in 1921, the country's oldest university started its academic activities the same year on July 1 with about 600 acres land, 3 faculties, 12 departments, 60 teachers, 877 students and 3 dormitories.

The university today consists of 13 faculties, 84 departments, 12 institutes, 58 research bureaus and centres, around 43,000 students, 2,200 teachers and 19 residential halls and now 275.083 acres of land.

To celebrate "Dhaka University Day", the authorities have chalked out various programmes. National and university flags will be hoisted and students, teachers and university staff will bring out colourful processions.

70 died in political clashes this year Says HRSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 70 people died in the political clashes across the country in the first half of the year 2022 while 3,770 were injured, according to the data of Human Rights Support Society.

Majority of the political clashes happened following internal conflicts of the ruling party between January and June, said an HRSS press release yesterday.

The release said 52 people were shot in the 419 political clashes while 1,271 from different parties were arrested. In the first half of the year, 728 women including 424 children were raped. Among them, 139 incidents were gang-raped and 24 were killed after rape, it added.

DHAKA AIRPORT

Passenger leaves behind Saudi riyal worth Tk 6cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs Intelligence and Customs House officials seized 22,99,500 Saudi riyal -- equivalent to Tk 6 crore -- at Dhaka airport on Wednesday night.

The officials found foreign currency inside a luggage while screening it at the airport.

As they could not locate the owner of the luggage, they opened it in presence of other agencies and found the currencies hidden inside 34 shirt boxes, said Ahmedur Reza Chowdhury, deputy director of Customs Intelligence.

With the help of tag attached to the luggage, the officials identified that it belonged to a passenger named Mamun Khan.

The passenger checked in to board a flight of Emirates, to go to Dubai, but fled from the airport during the seizure, he said.

ACC looking into procurement anomalies at BR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission is looking into violations of contract in the procurement of 10 locomotives for Bangladesh Railway.

A two-member team of ACC, consisting of Assistant Director Jasmin Aktar and Deputy Assistant Director Kamiab Aftahi-un-Nabi, yesterday conducted a drive at Rail Bhaban on the basis of allegations of corruption and irregularities in the procurement.

Examining documents, they found that there are differences in three capital components of engines, said an ACC source.

Latifur Rahman

FROM PAGE 3 Ayaz Hossain. Faraaz, a student of Emory University in Atlanta, US, was brutally killed by terrorists during the July 1 attack at the Holy Artisan Bakery in Gulshan in 2016. Latifur was the founding director of Mediaword, the company that owns The Daily Star, and chairman of Mediastar, the owning company of Prothom Alo. The newspapers are the leading English and Bangla dailies in the country. A respected figure in the global business community, he single-handedly built one of the biggest business conglomerates in the country with his hard work, perseverance, and entrepreneurial skills. Born in Jalpaiguri on August 28, 1945, he began his education at St Francis School and then went to St Edmund's School, Shillong, in 1956. He also studied at St Xavier's College in Calcutta (now Kolkata). After coming to Dhaka, he started as a trainee at his family-owned jute mills - W Rahman Jute Mills in Chandpur - in 1966. The jute mill was the first to be owned by a Bangalee in the erstwhile East Pakistan. He became an executive and worked there until 1971. But the government nationalised industries in 1972 and Latifur found himself in a very difficult situation. The family also owned some tea estates in north-eastern Bangladesh but after the independence the price of produce was less than production cost.

Corruption, anarchy

FROM PAGE 3 Chunu said teachers are being humiliated by their own students, as the environment at the country's education institutions has been ruined. The JP MP said there is no monitoring system of University Grants Commission for mismanagement and irregularities in private and public universities. Pointing to the killing of a college teacher in Savar and humiliation of a teacher in Narail, JP MP Kazi Firoz Rashid questioned, "What is happening in educational institutions today?" BNP MP Harunur Rashid said, "Quality of education has deteriorated, breaking all records." Harun said not a single university has been placed in the international ranking. All the opposition MPs blasted the government for insufficient allocation of the proposed budget for education sector. On behalf of the education minister, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque told the parliament that the present situation will not improve overnight. Harunur said in the last 10 years, people have lost confidence in the EC. Not the EC but police and the administration are holding elections at present. Another BNP MP Rumeen Farhana said the EC has been destroyed under the present government, and voting under the present EC cannot be free and fair. The law, home and health ministers refuted all the allegations of the opposition MPs.

So far so good

FROM PAGE 3 of HSLA, said they are working to complete the process within a year. Shahriar Alam, special superintendent of police's Special Branch, said full benefits of the gates will come when machine-readable passports are completely phased out. Shahriar said traffickers may try to misuse the system, especially when it comes to countries that do not require visas. "We remain alert to avert such activities." Chattoogram airport, and one each at Benapole and Banglabandha airport. Presently, the e-gates are being used for scanning passports and their carriers. But the authority is working to integrate other information, including boarding time, departure details, Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training details for expatriates, e-visa details and travel history. Group Captain Kamrul Islam, executive director

Worst sufferers as always

FROM PAGE 5 hardly any hygiene and sanitary products are being provided. As a result, many girls are facing trouble during their periods at the shelter. Sajan Mia of Tanguar Haor said since the floods, they can't focus on child development separately. "I'm not even able to pay attention to my pregnant wife properly." Sarada Biswas (45), a resident of Talimpur in Barlekha Upazila in Moulvibazar, said she and her family are currently living on the roadside bridge. "We have nothing to eat. I was only able to fetch a couple of clothes and my cattle. We had no other place to stay. I'm spending days in my torn, wet clothes." Popy Begum (18), who took shelter at a centre in Kulaura, said although relief is coming through,

directorate (Sylhet), said, "Most women and children feel uncomfortable voicing out what their major needs and concerns are. Hence, they need special attention during floods." Enough FROM PAGE 3 In a declaration paper, the participants mentioned that controlling corruption remains something on the papers only as most of the time people of political influence are found involved. "The issue becomes a mere formality. Relevant bodies, including the Anti-Corruption Commission, are also responsible," they said.

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH (IUB) VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT Senior Program Officer Number of position: 1 Senior Officer, Council Affairs Number of position: 1 Officer Number of positions: 4 Application deadline: July 21, 2022 To apply, please visit: http://www.iub.edu.bd/jobs or scan the QR code

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Biman BANGLADESH AIRLINES Request for Proposal Notice Ref No. 30.34.0000.054.099.008.22 Date: 29 June 2022 BIMAN BANGLADESH AIRLINES LIMITED Selection of agency for component support program of five DHC-8-Q402 (Dash-8-400) Aircraft

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer District: Netrokona www.lged.gov.bd e-Tender Notice No. 40/2021-2022

আন্তর্জাতিক মানের Architect-Interior Designer এর সাহায্য প্রয়োজন ধানমন্ডি গণস্বাস্থ্য নগর হাসপাতালের সৌন্দর্য বৃদ্ধি, অতিরিক্ত Dedicated লিফট বসানো এবং শিশু ও বয়স্কদের আলাদা দুটি Hydrotherapy Pool ও ক্যান্সার চিকিৎসায় Radiotherapy যন্ত্র স্থাপনের জন্য একজন আধুনিক আন্তর্জাতিক মানের Architect-Interior Designer এর Design ও টেকনিক্যাল পরামর্শ প্রয়োজন।

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL BANGLADESH ANTI-CORRUPTION CARTOON COMPETITION 2022 Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) is inviting new, original and creative cartoons from young cartoonists interested to participate in TIB's annual Anti-Corruption Cartoon Competition 2022. Topic: 'Corruption and Good Governance' Age Groups: 'KA' (13 - 18 Year) and 'KHA' (19 - 25 Year)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় (সওজ) মুন্সীগঞ্জ সড়ক বিভাগ, মশকানি, পঞ্চসার (মুক্তারপুর), মুন্সীগঞ্জ ফোন ও ফ্যাক্স নং-০২-৭৬১১২৫৯, E-mail: eemunrhd@gmail.com জরুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

HIRING OPEN POSITION: Special Assistant PROFESSIONAL SKILLS REQUIRED French/ Hindi/ Malay, Content Management, Event Coordination, Orchestra Management, Music Teaching, Music Distribution Writing, Interpersonal Communication Skills, Project Management

Table with 15 columns: Job Title, Education, Experience, Salary, etc. for various positions in the road division of the government.

Worst sufferers as always

Women, children take the hardest hit in Sylhet flood

MINTU DESHWARA

The flood situation in the Sylhet division has left a destructive effect on the lives of its residents. Women and children are the worst victims as of yet, with severe health complications, especially, malnutrition.

Tahmina Akhter (20), who took refuge in Hakaluki High school (at present a flood shelter) with her 15-month-old child, said, "My husband left me a month ago. I took shelter in my father's house with my child but now, it's flooded."

"I'm only eating food that's distributed to the shelter. But I can't feed my baby due to the lack of privacy. It worries me."

Bilasi Begum (40) at the same shelter said, "I've never seen such a flood in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



A girl looks into the distance, with her eyes searching a boat carrying her parents -- who had set off in the early hours to get food and relief. After losing their homes, many flood victims like her have forgotten the taste of a hot meal and spend time waiting long, unpredictable hours with hungry stomachs. This photo was taken from Gowainghat's Lengura union yesterday. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Attack on teachers protested

STAR REPORT

Students of different colleges in Rangpur formed human chains in the city yesterday, protesting the attack on and killing of teachers in Narail and Savar recently.

The human chains were formed in front of Rangpur Press Club and the premises of Charmichael College. Samajtantrik Chhatra Front organised the programmes.

Meanwhile, similar programmes were held in Savar yesterday where teachers, students and guardians demanded punishment for the perpetrators and urged the government to ensure justice for teachers.

On June 25, college teacher Utpal Kumar Sarkar was beaten by a student with a cricket stump in Ashulia, for protesting sexual harassment by the latter.

He died at Enam Medical College Hospital.

On June 18, there was another incident involving a teacher being assaulted in Narail over allegation of communal provocation.

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 1

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-30	5-00	6-55	8-17
JAMAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Only 1.5hrs rain inundates Khulna



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

DIPANKAR ROY

Moderate rain inundated around two thirds of Khulna city yesterday, causing immense sufferings to residents.

According to the met office, 39 mm rainfall was recorded in the city. Amirul Azad, senior meteorological officer, said the rain started at 12:30pm and ended at 2:00pm.

Locals and development activists said encroachment of waterbodies in and around the city and poor drainage system caused such waterlogging. Meanwhile, residents alleged that the sufferings of around 1.7 million people living in the 45.65 square-kilometre area, under 31 wards, are persisting due to indifference of the authorities concerned.

According to Khulna City Corporation, total length of the city's drainage network is 651.50 km. Of it, 291.23 km is made of concrete, 55 km half concrete and 305 km earthen.

While visiting many areas yesterday, including Daulatpur, Pabla, Boyra, Rupsha Stand Road, KDA Avenue, Iqbalnagar, Tutpara, Gallamari, Moilapota, Dakbangla, Santhidham Mor, Phulmarket and Press Club, this correspondent found most of the roads under ankle- to knee-deep water.

Slum dwellers and residents of low-lying Bastuhara, South Pabla, Dayana and Boyra areas were the worst sufferers. Many kitchen markets -- including Sheikhpara, Bastuhara and Boikali -- went under water.

Vehicles were found stranded on waterlogged roads. Habibur Rahman, a resident of Bastuhara, said, "Most of the drains in our area are not properly cleaned."

Imran Sheikh from Boyra residential area said their area got waterlogged just 10 to 15 minutes after the rain began.

Anisur Rahman, conservancy officer of KCC, said KCC regularly cleans drains to ensure proper water flow. The cleaning drive for all 2,187 drains is sometimes interrupted due to manpower shortage.

Sheikh Ashrafuzzaman, secretary general of Greater Khulna Unnayan Sangram Committee, said, "The drains and canals have lost navigability and water flow due to encroachment and garbage dumping."

Contacted, Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque said during high tides in Bhairab and Rupsha around the city, the sewers cannot properly drain water to the rivers. "We have taken steps to repair and construct drains and excavate 22 canals at a cost of Tk 823 crore," he said.

ENERGY TREATY

Bangladesh should not sign it: CAB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh should not sign the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), as the international agreement only serves the purposes of international businesses in the energy sector, not the country's national interest, said Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) at a dialogue with journalists yesterday.

At the programme held at Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, they said while many of the countries are trying to get out of this agreement, Bangladesh is preparing to sign it.

"The government is saying that it will need more foreign investment in the energy and power sector, and if it signs the agreement, it will ensure investment," said Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, professor of international relations at DU. He said some of the agreement's clauses state that the host country has no right to oblige foreign investors to use local products or to appoint local workers.

"On the other hand, the investors have all legal rights to take all the investments, interests, surplus money, officials' payments and gifts to their country," Prof Tanzimuddin said.

Bangladesh has been an observer of ECT since 2015, after signing declaration of the agreement.

'Wish you were here'

Family remembers AC Rabiul Karim, who died saving hostages in Holey Artisan attack

SHEIKH TAJUL ISLAM TAJ

Rabiul Karim was an assistant commissioner working at the Detective Branch (DB) of Police.

In the last quarters of 2015, he got to know that his wife was expecting again. His dream of being the father of a baby girl was about to get fulfilled.

The family was passing the best of their days just a month before their second child's arrival when Rabiul had to respond to the call of duty. He never returned.

Rabiul was killed during the 12-hour rescue operation on July 1, 2016, in Dhaka's Holey Artisan café, where terrorists kept many visitors hostage.

AC Rabiul could not see his daughter, Kamrun Nahar Raina, who is six years old never saw her father either.

Rabiul's wife Umme Salma is currently working as an administrative officer at Jahangirnagar University. She lives in Dhamrai



with her two children Sunny and Raina.

"I have never seen my father, except in photos," said Raina, when asked about her father.

"I heard Abbu brought many toys for Sunny bhैया. When he tells Abbu's story, I imagine him still by our side. I like to think he would bring toys for me too if he were here."

"My children make my life now. I'm proud that my husband sacrificed his life for people and country," said Umme Salma.

Rabiul formed a school in his village for differently-abled children, where around 69 children are currently studying. For Rabiul, the school and the children were just like other family members.

AC Rabiul Karim was the elder son among the two in his family. His younger brother Shamsuzzaman Shams is a journalist at a Bangla daily.

"There is no one left now to call me and ask when I'll be going home on Eid vacations," said Shams, while reminiscing his brother's memory.

On July 1, 2016, armed militants stormed the Holey Artisan Bakery at the diplomatic zone in Dhaka's Gulshan area. Twenty-two gave their lives in the grisly terror attack. Two police officers, including Rabiul, were also killed during the 12-hour standoff that followed.

Newly-wed hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A newly-wed girl was killed in Sherpur's Nalitabari on Wednesday.

The deceased is Diti (21).

OC Basir Ahmed Badal of Nalitabari Police Station said Diti got married to one Khairul Islam on June 23. After marriage, Khairul went to Dhaka for work, leaving Diti at her parents' home.

On Wednesday night, her neighbour Ruhul Amin, who is helper of a trucker, entered the house, hacked her and fled the scene.

Police arrested him early yesterday.

During primary interrogation, Ruhul said he and Diti were in a relationship. He attacked her as she married someone else, said police.

6 cattle markets for port city this year

5pc tax on selling price; Covid precautions to be in place

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) has been allowed to set up just three temporary markets, although CCC sought permission to set up 10 for Eid-ul-Azha.

Chattogram District Administration has taken this decision. It also imposed 17 conditions, mostly related to following health guidelines, for setting up the markets, said sources.

Meanwhile, tax on buying sacrificial animals would remain the same for port city's cattle markets this year, just like the previous ones.

The tax would be five percent on the selling price, said Syed Shamsul Tabreej, revenue officer of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC). In addition to the temporary

markets, cattle would be available in the three permanent cattle markets of CCC. This means port city residents would be able to buy sacrificial animals from six markets this year.

Sources in CCC said the district administration did not permit setting up too many cattle markets in the past two years due to the pandemic. It approved only three temporary markets last year as well.

The markets will open to the public 10 days before Eid, said CCC Chief Revenue Officer Mohammad Nazrul Islam.

The three markets are at Nur Nagar Housing Estate field; the field adjacent to Saltgola Railway Crossing; and TK Group's vacant field, south of Butterfly Park in South Patenga, said CCC's Tabreej.

The permanent markets are at Sagarika Bazar, Bibirhat Bazar and Postarpar Goat Haat.

Dr Md Delwar Hossain, Chattogram district livestock officer, said 30 veterinary medical teams have been formed for the cattle markets. They would confirm the health condition of sacrificial animals for buyers.

Among the 17 conditions, some major ones are temporary markets should be set up at a convenient place; to prevent Covid-19 infections, hand sanitiser, soap and water should be provided at entrance and exit; elderly and children should be discouraged from entering the markets; presence of veterinarian surgeons must be ensured to verify health of animal; and CCTV should be installed by lessees.



Santal community yesterday observed the 167th anniversary of their historic rebellion, known as "Santal Hool", in Gaibandha. They brought out processions and paid homage to community members who sacrificed their lives in the Santal mutiny on June 30, 1855, and those killed in police firing at Shahebganj sugarcane farm on November 6, 2016.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Shakib Khan making a return

SHARMIN JOYA

Dhallywood "King" Shakib Khan has received a government grant of BDT 65 Lakhs for his co-produced film "Maya". The actor is residing in the USA, and has received a green card recently. The "Golui" actor will come to Bangladesh to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha with his family and peers.

In a candid conversation over Whatsapp, the actor shared about his upcoming projects, and thoughts about the Bangladeshi film fraternity.

Congratulations on receiving the government grant. How important is it for mainstream films to get funds?

Thank you! Government grants are indeed a great support for making big-budgeted films, and I am glad that "Maya", despite having a commercial script, was considered for the fund. I feel that those who are regularly making films should be provided support. It can help the industry produce quality commercial films. In order to revive the industry, we should make more films that are entertaining.

Tell us about "Maya".

"Maya" is one of my dream projects, I cannot disclose the details just yet. We are working on the pre-production, and plan to begin the shoots by the end of this year. Puja Chery will be in the lead cast with me. I can assure you that it will be a one-of-a-kind film.

When do you plan to come back to Bangladesh?

I will be here in a few days! Before I begin working on another film titled "Rajkumar", I need to recharge myself by eating Eid special 'deshi' food, and I will celebrate the festival with my

family.

If people thought I'll just sit in the USA, they have another thing coming. I am not retiring any time soon!

In the post-covid era, the film industry is struggling to revive. At the same time, hall owners are suffering from not being able to run shows due to lack of audience.

Films like "KGF2", "Pushpa", "Spiderman: No Way Home", and "No Time to Die" are all fully commercial movies. They are the greatest examples of how industries were revived in the post-pandemic world. I am not saying we are not making good films, but within our limitations we must try to focus on the audience's choices.

In two decades of your career, this is the first Eid without any of your films getting released. How are your fans reacting to that?

I will eventually return with something big; my fans have to wait for some time. Also, there are some wonderful films queued for release this year.

What is your take on the politics surrounding the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC)?

The BFDC is not a place for politics, we have a specialised field for politics. It is a place for creativity. You will never see the such laughable activities of associations in any other film industry in the world - where people see more drama in real life, than on the screens. No wonder that our artistes have moved on from the place, and shoot elsewhere.

You were also a part of the association at one point.

Yes, I was a two-time president. When I realised that these associations are not benefiting the fraternity in any way, I detached myself from all of these activities.



"Maya is one of my dream projects, I cannot disclose the details just yet. We are working on the pre-production, and plan to begin the shoots by the end of this year."



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

Cameron Diaz comes out of retirement for Netflix movie

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Cameron Diaz is finally coming out of retirement, after almost eight years, to star opposite Jamie Foxx in the Netflix action-comedy movie "Back in Action." Shooting for the film will begin in 2023.

The actress announced the news on her Instagram story, stating that Jamie Foxx had been the one to convince her to come out of retirement.

Both Foxx and Diaz have worked together in the past on movies such as "Any Given Sunday" and the remake of "Annie".



'Vikram' to hit OTT on July 8

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Kamal Haasan starrer "Vikram", which has grossed over Rs 400 crore at the box office, will be released on Disney+ Hotstar on July 8. This means that the hit movie will be coming to OTT after only 35 days of its theatrical release.

The film follows Vikram, played by Kamal Haasan, a former agent who is trying to avenge the death of his son - an undercover officer in the narcotics bureau. Many fans have called the movie a masterpiece, and have expressed disappointment that it will not get a longer theatre-only run.

'Some sick people are using my name to extort money': Shabnur

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Actress Shabnur recently took to Facebook to complain about the various fake profiles, pages and groups who have been asking for money using her name. These pages have been extorting money by asking her fans and followers to contribute to the flood victims in Sylhet and Sunamganj.

The "Chandni Ratey" actress posted a warning on her Facebook account, telling her fans to be careful about such scammers.



NEWS

CTTC to start deradicalising militants

FROM PAGE 1

to the CTTC to provide counselling to extremist prisoners in jails," he told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

The CTTC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police in August last year had applied to the ministry for the permission.

Initially, psychologists and religious clerics will be appointed at the Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj, Kashimpur High Security Jail, Chattogram Central Jail and two other prisons in the country's north, including one in Bogura, Asaduzzaman said.

He said the initiative has been taken in those jails where militants are imprisoned.

The initiative will be carried out under a Tk 350 crore project titled "Construction of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Prevention Centre of Bangladesh Police".

"We have taken the initiative so that militants already arrested never return to the path of militancy," said Md Mahfuzul Islam, deputy commissioner of the CTTC unit and also the deputy director of the project.

He said preparation of an action plan for appointment of experts is at final

stage. A team of teachers from the departments of psychology and international relations of Dhaka University are devising the action plan under the supervision of the Centre for Genocide Studies, he added.

Mahfuzul said this project will end in June 2024 and they may apply for an extension after assessing the results and militancy situation after two years.

Security analyst Maj Gen ANM Muniruzzaman (ret'd) sees the move as a good one. He, however, observed that deradicalisation of militants in jail is a complicated process.

Accommodation crisis remains a major problem as militants cannot be segregated from other inmates in overcrowded prisons.

"Also, deradicalised militants need to be rehabilitated. If that cannot be done properly, there may be a possibility of their relapse," Muniruzzaman told this newspaper on Tuesday.

The CTTC chief said under the project they will rehabilitate 20 militants this fiscal year, providing each of them Tk 1 lakh so that they can earn their living and get themselves reintegrated into society.

He said they will also monitor their activities.

Abdulla Al Noman, now in his mid-20s, can be a perfect example of how a less radicalised militant can become more radicalised in prison.

Noman, who used to share and "like" radical contents on social media, was arrested in 2018. During his 15 months behind bars, he met some militants who made him a key militant leader, said CTTC officials.

Coming out of jail on bail, he got in touch with the then Neo JMB chief Abu Mohammad. As per Abu's instructions, Noman learnt to make improvised explosive devices (IED) and also planted an IED in a police box in the capital's Paltan on July 24, 2020, officials added.

He was arrested again on November 5 last year.

PIECEMEAL INITIATIVES According to security experts, the authorities need to adopt a seamless "hard and soft" approach towards tackling militancy. Although hard response like intervention by law enforcers saw persistent success, soft response like socio-political campaigns against militancy was never pursued fully.

Such half-hearted anti-militancy socio-political

campaigns, initiatives to deradicalise militants and create awareness among people about militancy always left open scope for the rise of militancy, they added.

Over the last one-and-a-half decades, socio-political campaigns gained momentum after a major terrorist attack. But it fizzled out until another attack was perpetrated, experts said.

Maj Gen ANM Muniruzzaman (ret'd) said the country needs to adopt a national strategic policy on fighting militancy.

"To fight terrorism, we need to adopt a 'whole of society' approach," he said. Anti-militancy campaigns were conducted by different stakeholders since the Holey Artisan cafe attack, but those were never followed up later.

Take, for instance, CTTC training.

The CTTC unit under the project started providing training to different stakeholders, including police, Rab, Ansar, jail staffs, BGB, madrasas, security guards, students, teachers, duffadars, local elected representatives, journalists, civil society members, imams and muazzins.

The unit has so

far trained different stakeholders in 48 districts in the last two years.

After the training, the trainers were expected to deliver speeches and monitor whether the trainees learnt it. The imams and muazzins were supposed to deliver anti-militancy sermons during prayers.

But the CTTC officials never monitored whether the instructions were followed properly or not, said officials and trainees.

Asked about delivering sermons regularly from mosques, Md Bojlor Rashid, deputy director (administration) of Bangladesh Islamic Foundation, told The Daily Star yesterday that it might not be done regularly as devotees would not listen to similar sermons repeatedly.

About the initiatives, Bojlor said they have provided training to all mosque imams on extremism issues and asked them to deliver anti-militancy sermons.

He further claimed that they monitor whether such sermons are delivered from mosques.

However, visiting a number of mosques in the capital recently, these correspondents did not find any imam giving sermons on extremism issues.

Prime accused

FROM PAGE 12

unfolding at the same time as the World Bank was talking about stopping Padma Bridge funding over corruption allegations.

"Mixing these two independent stories into one story took it to a different path. Honourable PM is saying that the World Bank money was stopped because Professor Yunus was desperate to have his job back, and that he conspired with Hillary Clinton to put pressure on the World Bank."

Professor Yunus made his position clear when it was mentioned for the first time that he brought pressure on the World Bank to stop the Padma Bridge funding, according to the statement.

A few days before the

incident, Utpal warned Jitu about being intimate with a girl on the college compound. Jitu got angry over the warning and planned to attack him, said Rab.

Jitu then brought a cricket stump to the school on June 25 and attacked Utpal when he was standing in a corner of the playground during a cricket tournament, Rab added.

Yesterday, a Dhaka court placed Jitu on a five-day remand. No lawyer represented him at that time.

On Wednesday, his father Ujjal Hossain was also put on a five-day remand in the case.

Meanwhile, protests continued in Savar, demanding a quick trial of

Jitu to ensure justice for the victim.

Around 10:30am, hundreds of teachers and students from various institutions held a human chain near Savar Upazila Parishad Gate on Dhaka-Aricha Highway.

This paper had earlier refrained from naming the student as his age was mentioned as 16 in the first information report.

However, it is publishing his name and photo as his age was revealed to be over 19 on Wednesday.

At the press conference yesterday, Rab also cited his birth certificate and registration documents for the Junior Dakhil exam, saying Jitu was more than 19 years old.

Yunus Centre responds

FROM PAGE 12

mentions that the editor of a famous newspaper went all the way to meet the president of the World Bank to persuade him to stop the financing.

"The tough world of international decision-making does not depend on the whims of two friends or the visit of a newspaper editor."

"However 'important' a person Professor Yunus may be, whatever number of 'influential friends' he may have, a three-billion dollar project cannot be stopped just because he allegedly wants it cancelled."

The nine-page statement also refuted the allegation that Yunus wanted to remain as the managing director of Grameen Bank.

"The people of the country are overjoyed with the completion of the Padma Bridge today. I congratulate the prime minister and all the people of the country for this historic achievement," he was quoted as saying in the statement.

"This story propagates that Professor Yunus used his 'enormous influence' to stop the financing for Padma Bridge because he was holding a grudge against the prime minister, that maybe Professor Yunus did not pressurise the World Bank directly, but he did so through his friend Hillary Clinton. In other words, he must have some sort of connection with World Bank's cancellation of the agreement. PM also

the largest canyons in our solar system. The images were taken by the probe's orbiter, which circled Mars 1,344

Insecurity grips his family

FROM PAGE 12

when the incident occurred, adding that a probe is ongoing to identify those involved.

Habibur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Narail, and Prabir Kumar Roy, superintendent of police, were reportedly present during the incident.

Contacted, they both said they "did not see whether the garland of shoes was put around the teacher's neck and just wanted to avoid any

violence".

Some left-leaning political parties yesterday met the Narail DC office and demanded a judicial investigation.

Locals and police said Rahul Dev Roy, a student of Mirzapur United Degree College, made a Facebook post praising Nupur Sharma, BJP's suspended spokesperson who made remarks hurting "religious sentiments".

When he went to the

college on June 18, other students and locals started verbally attacking him.

At one stage, he took shelter in teacher Swapan's room. The demonstrators then alleged Swapan was trying to protect Rahul.

Later, a team of Narail Sadar police rushed to the spot to take Rahul to the station. But the protesters demanded immediate punishment.

At one stage, they clashed with police,

injuring at least 10.

In the afternoon, the DC and the SP went there to quell the chaos.

When police, along with Rahul and Swapan, were heading towards the police station, the protesters intercepted them and put garlands of shoes around Rahul and Swapan, said locals.

In another development, rights body ARTICLE 19 expressed deep shock and concern over the murder of

a Savar college teacher and the humiliation of Swapan.

Utpal Kumar Sarkar, 35, a lecturer of Haji Yunus Ali School and College in Savar, was beaten to death by a student recently.

In Rangpur city, students of different colleges yesterday formed human chains to protest the attacks against the teachers.

(Our Dinajpur correspondent contributed to this report.)

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Another spell of flooding can upend life in north

Govt must reduce present and future sufferings in the region

WE'RE worried about the possibility of a second spell of flooding in northern and northeastern districts within less than a month of the first, which itself came on the heels of a flash flood in May. The possibility has been raised with floodwater in the haor region not receding as expected, and major rivers swelling again amid torrential rain and onrush of water from the upstream. A number of low-lying villages have been inundated again. This has dashed hopes of an early recovery. More worryingly, survivors now have to brace for another cold, lonely fight even while going through the painful aftermath of what has been the most devastating flood in recent years.

The frightening regularity and intensity with which we're being hit by floods should worry the policymakers. There are short-term challenges and long-term needs, both of which need to be handled with care. In the short term, they will have to deal with the shortage of food and relief. According to the local office of the United Nations, as much as Tk 545 crore will be needed to provide humanitarian support including relief and rehabilitation for flood victims. By contrast, the government's own response has been shockingly inadequate, having mobilised only Tk 4.67 crore and 3,720 tonnes of rice as of June 26, according to another estimate. This calls for a major shakeup of its policies.

Apart from access to food, drinking water and medicine, the fallout from floods has also been felt in the provision of utilities, in health, education as well as major income-generating sectors, with vast areas of arable land and fisheries damaged. Across the country, it has been felt in the kitchen markets. All this requires urgent attention, too.

The long-term priority, no less urgent, is to address continued flooding. Experts have identified three major reasons for it: 1) construction of unplanned infrastructure including roads, sluice gates, and dams; 2) loss of river navigability; and 3) filling-up of haor areas. Floods brought on by heavy rains and onrush of water from the upstream cannot subsist because of these barriers, which calls for a major rethinking of haor management. Without improving the water retention capacity of haors and the navigability of connecting rivers, we cannot prevent a recurrence of what one expert rightly termed "waterlogged flooding".

Although the government has sounded no alarm yet over the possibility of another flood, residents are already feeling the brunt of it. So far, the government's response to the flood indicated no sense of urgency, even after the massive suffering caused and the deaths of so many. This is really unfortunate. We urge the authorities to do everything necessary to reduce present and future suffering from the floods.

How long will poor execution of projects be tolerated?

Such projects are enabling corruption and incompetence

COST overruns and delays in implementing projects go hand in hand in Bangladesh. We seem to have become quite adept at putting obstacles in the way of public projects, and then coming up with all sorts of excuses to justify it. There is already a rich legacy of such projects going back and forth on the drawing board for multiple revisions. So when the minister of planning laments that a lack of good governance is undermining the potential of public infrastructure projects (PIPs), despite huge investments made in them by the government, we are not taken by surprise.

The government is clearly placing high priority on the development of infrastructure in the country. But it will not deliver expected outcomes if project planners, directors and other stakeholders do not come out of this culture of time and cost overruns. Often, it is seen that a project starts to flounder right from the start, with inaccurate plans and designs, triggering a chain of disruptive sequences that continue until the very end. Such poor management of PIPs is frequently by design, enabling corruption, and frequently because of incompetence. Projects executed in such a way are more likely to negatively affect the expected results as well as the return on investment.

The continuation of this situation is unfortunate, to say the least. A negative return on investment is not the only casualty of such a situation. It is also draining Bangladesh of valuable local and foreign currency. There are bigger concerns as well. As an expert rightly pointed out at the event, physical, social and digital infrastructures will play a critical role in facilitating Bangladesh's graduation from a Least Developed Country to a Developing Country. Infrastructure is related, in varying degrees, to 72 percent of all the targets in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It's also related to the targets of our 8th Five-Year Plan and Vision 2041. As such, how we perform in executing our infrastructure projects will hugely impact our future trajectory as a nation.

This is why good governance in PIP implementation is so essential. It will not only accelerate growth and help meet those targets, but will also reduce the cost of public service and maximise productive use of our limited resources. The prime minister, on several occasions, expressed her dissatisfaction over the current state of affairs. It's time the authorities translated expressed urgency into actual, systemic reforms that will hugely benefit the nation.

What made the dollar crisis worse?



OPEN SKY
Dr Birupaksha Paul is a professor of economics at the State University of New York at Cortland in the US and former chief economist of Bangladesh Bank.

BIRUPAKSHA PAUL

ONE dollar now costs almost Tk 100. The taka has been losing its value against the US dollar for months, with no signs of it changing. The collapse of the value of the taka or the exchange rate, which tells us the amount of US dollar one unit of taka can buy, has been causing further panic in the foreign currency market. When the price of the dollar increases, taka becomes cheaper, making import payments greater than before, and leading to inflation through the import channel. It signals macro instability.

Though exports and remittances are encouraged by a weaker taka, it doesn't necessarily mean they will rise enough to offset the increase in import bills. And that has been happening in Bangladesh in recent months, making current account deficits worse than before. It will eventually erode foreign reserves, which has already decreased by USD 7 billion since August 2021, giving rise to the possibility of a financial crisis if the trend continues.

To understand how to prevent the dollar drain from Bangladesh, we need to first understand what caused the price hike of the dollar in the first place. Defective policymaking is at the root of it. And the taka will collapse further, either now or in the immediate future, unless the faulty method of fixing the exchange rate by the central bank is corrected or disbanded for good. Even after committing to a floating exchange rate since 2003, Bangladesh Bank (BB) kept on heavily fixing the exchange rate. This decision was taken not because of any research findings, but because of political preferences. That is not how economics works.

A simple regression over 2003-2013 would suggest a Tk 2 increase in the dollar's value every year, making the dollar's price Tk 98 or so – which is close to the current market price. Had BB followed an econometric model to make the change monthly, we wouldn't have faced this sudden shock and the ensuing volatility in the whole financial market.

The question may arise: Why do we need to devalue the taka every year against the dollar? It is in our best interest to do so because we need to

maintain a steady path of the real exchange rate index, so we don't lose export competitiveness and remittance inflow through the banking channel. Since Bangladesh's inflation is at least 3-5 percentage points higher than US inflation, the taka must lose its value against the dollar accordingly to do justice to exporters, remitters, the country's

policies from BB and the finance ministry.

That said, other reasons have also contributed to the dollar crisis. Illicit financial transfers amounting to almost USD 8 billion per year, as the World Bank estimates, are destabilising the market. Over-invoicing by importers and under-invoicing by exporters seem to be rampant – even though the official data



▲ VISUALS: STAR

balance of payment, and finally, its foreign reserves.

The index of the real effective exchange rate was 100 in 2016, and it tiptoed up to 115 by October 2020. That wouldn't have happened had BB paid attention to the math. BB kept taka's value artificially high for six years, hurting exports and remittances. The finance ministry stepped in to fight the disease of anaemic performance in remittance and invented a vitamin tablet in the form of "incentives". However, a correct exchange rate doesn't require any frills. These patchy solutions ignore demand and supply forces.

Both BB and the finance ministry were wrong in predicting the exchange rate and kept dollar's value forcibly depressed. Remittances and exports performed worse than imports. The current account balance, which was in an impressive position for 14 years since the early 2000s, started declining since FY2016, proving that giving incentives was not the right solution. Foreign reserves remained in the doldrums for three years since 2016. Thus, BB got enough signals to correct the exchange rate by devaluing the taka, but it didn't. The recent volatility and dollar crisis are nothing but the results of wrong

are hard to collect.

The recent move by the finance minister to validate laundered money has not only placed a stain on the budget, but has also emboldened the asset traffickers more than ever before. Money that has landed overseas won't come back. Rather, new launderers will join the queue. They will find it rewarding to hoard more dollars and smuggle them overseas whenever possible.

The finance minister also predicted that capital flight will get reversed just because foreign inflation is high. That's incorrect. Foreign inflation figures, such as US inflation of 8.5 percent, may look higher than Bangladesh's 6 percent – but Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) figures are particularly inaccurate for inflation and unemployment.

Despite facing the great financial crisis of 2008-2009, the US experienced a huge inflow of foreign funds, which Ben Bernanke, the Fed chair, termed as the "saving glut". The Fed is raising policy rates desperately to curb inflation, and it will make the dollar stronger globally. If BB fails to grasp this new development in determining the exchange rate, the dollar crisis will move from bad to worse.

A simple regression over 2003-2013 would suggest a Tk 2 increase in the dollar's value every year, making the dollar's price Tk 98 or so – which is close to the current market price.

Exposing disinformation is a crime in Modi's India



Qadaruddin Shishir is a fact-checker based in Dhaka.

QADARUDDIN SHISHIR

IN early 2017, when I was mulling over launching BD FactCheck – the first fact-checking initiative in Bangladesh – we looked for who else in the region was already working in this field. We came to know about two people: Pratik Sinha and Mohammed Zubair. They co-founded Alt News, one of the first ventures in South Asia that dedicates itself to countering disinformation and exposing the actors behind it. Since then, the fact-checking organisation's relentless fight against political misinformation never ceased to amaze me and many others. Zubair and Pratik's dedication inspired many fact-checkers in and outside India to carry on with the thankless job.

On June 27, we woke up to the news that Mohammed Zubair had been arrested by Delhi police based on a complaint from a Twitter user claiming that one of Zubair's tweets had hurt their Hindu religious sentiments, an accusation that was termed as "trumped-up" by critics.

The arrest of Alt News' co-founder earned sharp responses from different quarters in India and around the world. Pointing towards the divisive politics of the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Editors Guild of India (EGI) said in a statement that it was "apparent that Alt News's alert vigilance was resented by those who use disinformation as a tool to polarise the society and rake nationalist sentiments."

Rahul Gandhi, former president of opposition party the Indian National Congress, said that Mohammed Zubair

had been targeted for his role in exposing the BJP's hate, bigotry and lies. "Arresting one voice of truth will only give rise to a thousand more. The truth always triumphs over tyranny," he tweeted.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' spokesman Stephane Dujarric responded to Zubair's arrest by saying, "Journalists should not be jailed for what they write, tweet and say."

Looking at the recent years' record in the world's largest democracy, the move to arrest Zubair should not come as a surprise at all. Alongside India's gradual shift towards right-wing populism, the space for free speech has been shrinking for about a decade in the country that is being ruled by Narendra Modi, a permanent member of the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) since 2014.

Newsman across India have been increasingly targeted in different forms for what they do. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), 2021 was one of the deadliest years for Indian journalists in the past decade, with six killed between 2021 and 2022.

The Global Press Freedom Index, which is published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), ranked India 150th among 180 countries. The organisation has cited "violence against journalists" in India as one of the reasons for the declining press freedom in the country.

In March this year, Rana Ayyub, one of the most prominent faces of India's journalism industry and a Modi critic, was barred from leaving the country as she was flying to Europe to speak about the intimidation and repression that Indian journalists faced. Multiple cases were filed against Ayyub to prevent her from speaking out.

In such an adverse situation, Mohammed Zubair was committed to exercising his right as a journalist and as a citizen, and kept exposing the actors who regularly spread hate and misinformation targeting the minority communities in

India, especially the Muslims.

Alongside fact-checking, Zubair also monitored hate speech against the minorities in the Hindu-majority nation. One of his recent tweets highlighting the controversial remarks made by Nupur Sharma, a spokesperson for the governing BJP, about Prophet Muhammad during a televised debate, was widely shared and led several Muslim countries to lodge strong protests with India. The BJP had to suspend Sharma from her post to appease some of India's Muslim allies in the Gulf. Later, during an interview with a right-leaning news outlet, Sharma herself held Zubair responsible for what happened to her.

For the BJP, that was enough of a blow from a journalist they had to encounter almost regularly. A barrage of hate and threats were unleashed against Zubair by an IT cell that boasts of having hundreds of thousands of online trolls and activists. A number of cases were also filed against him, and ultimately, he was arrested to stop what he does – exposing the campaigns of hatred and disinformation targeting the minorities led by actors close to the ruling party.

On June 13, India signed a joint statement at the G7 Summit to protect "freedom of expression, both online and offline, as a freedom that safeguards democracy and helps people live free from fear and oppression." But Zubair's arrest and the record of previous years tell a different story. In Modi's India, exercising one's freedom of speech to criticise the ruling elites and exposing the disinformation propagated by the right-wing demagogues are deemed as crimes. Suppressing the fact-checkers will only help to deteriorate the already polluted online information ecosystem in a polarised nation like India, and that will bring more chaos. The only way out of this is for the sane voices within the country to step forward to push back against their government's reckless actions.

During an interview with a right-leaning news outlet, Sharma herself held Zubair responsible for what happened to her. For the BJP, that was enough of a blow from a journalist they had to encounter almost regularly.

REMEMBERING LATIFUR RAHMAN

A fighter for independent journalism



THE THIRD VIEW

MAHFUZ ANAM

Mahfuz Anam is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

I cannot yet fully reconcile with the fact that Latifur Rahman, Shamim Bhai to us all, is no longer among us. He seemed so much in the driving seat of his affairs just prior to his illness – so aware of what was going on, so surefooted about the plans he was making, and so acutely conscious of the implications of the changes that were engulfing the world. Above everything else, he was so proud of the strides that Bangladesh was making, and confident about its bright future. He used to say to me, “As Bangladesh advances and its economy becomes stronger and bigger, the future of *The Daily Star* would also grow and expand. Just make sure that you hold your position as the biggest and most trusted newspaper. The country will always need a quality English language daily. If you can maintain your quality and increase the paper’s credibility, then your future is assured.” His belief encouraged us all, especially me, and doubled my energy to drive on.

Clear thinking about *The Daily Star*, unshakable faith in our economic growth, and supreme pride about his country were the hallmarks of Latifur Rahman, our founder director. He was boastful of the fact that he never invested even one taka abroad and that everything he did was in Bangladesh and for Bangladesh. He would never tire of saying that all of his children had studied abroad, but none of them stayed back and tried to become the citizen of another country. He would also refer to his grandchildren who were studying in the US at that time and say, “I am sure they would all return to serve the country”. Little did he know that his favourite one – Faraaz – would serve his country in the most unique but tragic way, bringing pride to him, to his family, and to the people of this country with his courage and sacrifice in standing up to the most brutal of killers. Though his pride for Faraaz’s action knew no bounds, yet the pain of the latter becoming a victim of a most vicious act of terrorism was too much for him to bear as a loving and doting grandfather.

Though he tried to carry on with a brave face, he was gradually being eaten away from the inside by this grief, which to most of us seemed insurmountable. Yet he carried on, too proud to show his wound, too committed to work to take time off, and too devoted to his family to show any sign of weakness, lest the rest of the family feel weakened. He had to be the source of courage and strength not only for his family, but for everyone who worked with him – alas, at a great emotional cost to himself.

The more I think of him, the more I realise how fundamental were his contributions to this paper. In a country of family-owned newspapers and in a tradition of the owners running their paper like personal fiefdoms, *The Daily*

Star was the first to introduce a corporate culture in running a newspaper. The existence of a Board of Directors was unknown in the newspaper world, and if known, it was most likely only on paper. Ours was a functional board, led by our founding chair, Azimur Rahman, from the very start – strict on finances, and hands off on journalism. In the last 29 years of this paper (the period of my editorship), I never received a single phone call or faced any question in the board meetings as to why, as the editor, I took a particular editorial position on any issue, however sensitive or politically volatile. This was *The Daily Star*’s board, of which Latifur Rahman was the most active, lively, knowledgeable, and passionate guide. Once a close friend of his complained about the paper not taking any strong editorial position against the government of the day. His reply was, “I trust the editor fully. When the time comes, he will take the most appropriate position.” As and when the paper did, Latifur Rahman called him and reminded him of their earlier conversation. I was told this by the friend concerned. That was the respect, trust, and dignity with which he and the whole board dealt with the editor of the paper.

To me, Latifur Rahman was the most ardent and active supporter of the concept of press freedom. Though a lifelong businessman, he had an intuitive understanding of the value of “freedom of expression”, “multiplicity of views”, and “independent journalism” in ensuring good governance, transparency, accountability, and above all, in establishing democracy and people’s rights.

For him, “debates” were at the centre of the intellectual development of a nation, and he wanted very much for *The Daily Star* to be the “debating” platform for all sorts of ideas and programmes on social and political issues. In-depth analysis of policies and threadbare discussion on them were fundamental responsibilities of newspapers, he used to say.

One idea he was firmly and consistently averse to was military dictatorship or its involvement in the running of the government. He thought Pakistan’s plight was singularly due to its military’s role, and he was determined that the same shouldn’t happen in independent Bangladesh.

On his second death anniversary, we in *The Daily Star* remember him for his contribution in establishing this newspaper, for his uncompromising stance on the freedom of the press, and for his firm conviction that democracy, with all its flaws, was the best form of government for this country. But above all, we remember him for his faith in Bangladesh, and his personal and institutional contribution towards its prosperity.

To us, he exemplified patriotism.



SYED MANZUR ELAHI

Syed Manzur Elahi is Chairman of Apex Group, and former president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and Bangladesh Employers Federation.

MY connection with Latifur Rahman (Shamim) goes back to pre-partition times when both our families lived in Calcutta (Kolkata), though we never actually met then. It was after the Liberation War that I first met Shamim and in the 80s became close when we worked together as members of the executive committee of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI). I found him to be very sincere and serious, always immaculately dressed. He never lost his temper, even during heated arguments in meetings,

Bangladesh. In conversations regarding Bangladesh, he passionately defended his country.

He was reasonable and always used logic in his arguments – he never tried to force his ideas on anyone. When it came to business policies, especially after the budget announcements when the chamber executive committee would meet, his inputs were very clear and practical. Whenever we represented the Chamber to the government, he made it a point not to talk about issues affecting his own business. Some people would do that but Shamim always brought forward issues that affected the industry as a whole. This was the correct attitude to have. He never took advantage of his position. In short, he was always fair in his dealings with everybody.

We also used to go on medical trips together to Singapore where he introduced me to some of his doctors. On those trips, I saw how much the doctors respected him.



Latifur Rahman

which was truly impressive.

We also started to meet socially at each other’s houses and though he was around three years younger, we became the best of friends.

His wife Joyu and my wife Niloufer also became very close. We became

closer during our official foreign trips mainly on MCCI and International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) delegations together – at least three times a year. During those trips to cities like London, after our work was done, we would go to the theatre and eat at restaurants.

Often, Mahbubur Rahman would be with us. Shamim’s giving nature would come out during those trips and he would never let anyone else foot the bill. He knew

which were my favourite restaurants and would take me there, going so far as to go there personally beforehand to make a reservation. What really struck me about Shamim was the courage of his convictions. He would steadfastly defend the principles and values he believed in. His patriotism was deep-rooted – he truly believed in

In fact, wherever he went, he commanded a lot of respect from people. People immediately took to him; they liked him.

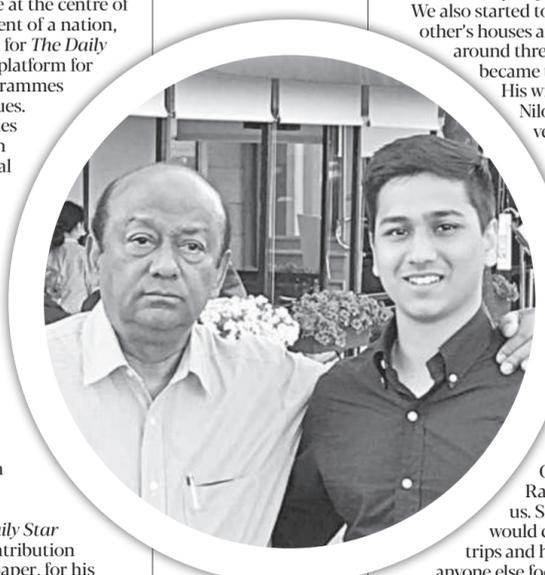
Of course, he was great company, fun-loving, and such a good sport. We engaged in a lot of leg-pulling – all in good fun. We accepted each other for what we were; there were no inhibitions. It’s difficult to find a friend so sincere, one who doesn’t expect anything from you but loves to give so generously.

He was also a good father and I could see how his children and grandchildren doted on him as he, too, doted on them.

The tragedies he faced were immense. He suffered acutely when he lost his daughter and later his grandson but there was very little public display of grief. His stoicism and mental strength were admirable.

Another great trait of Latifur Rahman was his honesty – he was always very diligent about paying taxes and VAT; he set very high standards not only for his personal life but for his companies. He was an ethical businessman. As a leader he took charge but also believed in consensus. He was a great listener and did not browbeat anyone to make them agree to his point of view. Instead, he would hear out their views patiently and then present his counterargument.

It pains me that I could not see him during his last days. He had gone to his ancestral home and it was during the Covid pandemic so I couldn’t go. I miss his company – he was such a good man and a precious friend. It’s very hard to find anyone equal to his level.



Latifur Rahman with his grandson Faraaz.

A legacy of integrity



PARVEEN MAHMUD

Parveen Mahmud is Chairperson, Under Privileged Children’s Educational Programs (UCEP), Bangladesh.

TWO years ago today, we lost Mr Latifur Rahman. He was a man of immense integrity and determination. He was an ethical entrepreneur, a champion of the free media, and a family man.

An entrepreneur is someone who has a vision for something and who wants to create. Mr Rahman was a great example of that. He lost everything in 1971, but built up the Transcom Group from scratch, and took it to the pinnacle of success. He was a true leader who set a new standard for businesses. He received the “Oslo Business for Peace Award” from the Business for Peace Foundation, Oslo, in 2012, as a mark of distinction for his outstanding contribution to business ethics and social responsibility.

I consider myself privileged to have had the opportunity to work with Mr Rahman, and to have served with him on a few boards: Linde Bangladesh, ICC

Bangladesh, Brac, and Syeda Anjuman Ara Girl’s School, Chaudhagram, Cumilla. I had seen him in Brac when Sir Fazle Abed was thinking of its governance structure and succession – in spite of his ill-health, he tried to do his best. He was a trusted friend and contributed immensely to Brac.

There was so much one could learn from him. He never spoke ill of others. He had a firm and positive mind, and a caring nature that made him into an icon in the business world. His personal traits made him a great person. I always appreciated his mental strength, of how he managed to deal with the challenges of business, and how he faced the tragedies of life with dignity and fortitude. He remained strong through the harrowing experience of losing his youngest daughter Shazneen in 1998, and then his grandson Faraaz in the Holy Artisan terrorists attack in 2016, whose death anniversary coincides with his own.

He has set a remarkable standard for all media owners and for the entire business community. He carried his remarkable achievements with a great degree of anonymity and modesty in a world full of arrogance. He was a very special human being, who left an extremely challenging legacy for his heirs – a legacy of integrity. Today, we remember him with pride.

A true patriot



MAHBUBUR RAHMAN

Mahbub ur Rahman is CEO, HSBC Bangladesh

LATIFUR Rahman, or “Shamim bhai” as we knew him, is no longer with us today. In his absence, the business community in Bangladesh will never be the same again. His guidance and cool temperament will be greatly missed.

It is obvious that such a personality would leave a legacy – a legacy of establishing a world class business, of endurance, and of doing the right thing. Besides being a successful businessperson, he was a man whom I grew to admire for the remarkable human being that he was – strong in his leadership, unwavering in his values, and above all, gracious, respectful, and inclusive of everyone.

Despite his vast contribution to the business community in Bangladesh, he was always an internationalist to the core. He started his business selling tea to European traders, became the sole importer and distributor of a Global FMCG, and drove the first Bangladeshi

acquisition of a multinational company when he established Eskayef. He was deeply focused on establishing corporate governance, maintaining financial control, and empowering people to take decisions. His thought process was always ahead of his time.

I was fortunate to be present at the Taj Lands End in Mumbai when he became the first non-Indian to receive the “SAARC Outstanding Leader” award.

He had a profound sense of patriotism and a strong commitment to the country. He always believed in the growth story of Bangladesh and its immense economic potential. He was a realist in many sense, but an optimist when it came to Bangladesh. His exemplary business conduct has been a recipe for success for many successful business houses in Bangladesh.

The last time I spoke to him over the phone was on the day of the announcement of my appointment as the Chief Executive Officer of HSBC, Bangladesh. He was genuinely delighted and wished me the very best for the future. To this day, I am grateful for the affection he showered me with over the years.

His nickname, Shamim, means “fragrance”. And just like fragrance, he left a pleasant trail wherever he went.

Faraaz's message to the world

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

Stumbling across a post on the meaning of "Faraaz", I was taken aback by the qualities attributed to this name – "someone full of love", one who "creates balance and harmony for anyone lucky enough to be called his friend". The website further informs those with this name: "people around you feel safe because you give them joy. Giving joy to the world is one of your greatest gifts." In Persian, Faraaz means "exalted" and "elevating".

It was as if his destiny was already reflected through his name.

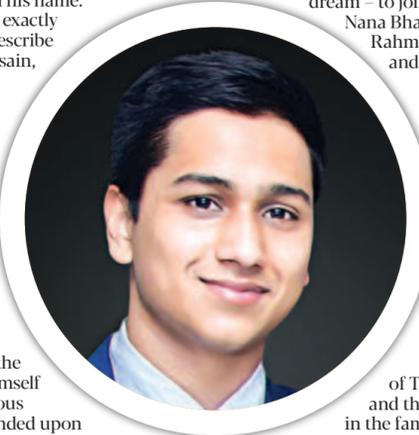
Because that's exactly how one would describe Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, the 20-year-old young man who became famous on July 1, 2016 – not through his brutal death along with 22 others in a terror attack in Holy Artisan Bakery, but by an act of remarkable loyalty and courage. He had the chance to save himself from the murderous group that descended upon innocents that night. All he had to do was walk away. But it meant abandoning his two childhood friends Abinta Kabir and Tarishi Jain, promising young university students with dreams to bring about change in society. And that was not who Faraaz was. He decided to stay and accept his fate which was certain death. In that moment, this slight young man, lovingly called "Chotoo" (little one), who loved to play pranks on his brother, cousins and friends, showed the world what loyalty, friendship, and integrity could look like in the face of terror.

All throughout his brief, precious life, Faraaz was known for going out of his way to help a friend. He had a natural flair for leadership and was elected president of his school's student council. He lived a life of privilege yet was full of humility. He was class valedictorian

when graduating from high school. An all-rounder, he was a straight A student while excelling in athletics and volleyball. He was an ace student at Emory University in Atlanta, US. His grieving mother Simeen Rahman (now CEO of Transcom Group) stated, after he was so cruelly snatched from her: "He really was such a good child. I honestly couldn't find any flaw in him."

His best friend was his older brother Zaraq, with whom he shared a special bond. They were only a year and 10 months apart, going to the same university and sharing the same dream – to join their Nana Bhai (Latifur Rahman, founder and chairman

in their twisted minds, had decided to mercilessly kill anyone they considered the enemy of their religion. Among the slain foreigners were seven Japanese, nine Italians, and one Indian (Tarishi). Ishrat Akhond, a young Bangladeshi woman who defied the terrorists, was also murdered. Faraaz, a devoted believer of Islam, who prayed and fasted and had performed Umrah many times, who celebrated pluralism, cultural diversity, saw women as equals and embraced inclusiveness with open arms, just did not fit the stereotype of the violent, inflexible, backward face of Islam that dominates the mainstream Western narrative. Instead, he represented a progressive, accepting, and peaceful face of Islam. As the news of Faraaz's act of



Young people especially have been inspired by Faraaz. One hopes that his example has provoked individuals misguided and swayed by militant groups to rethink, and perhaps even shun, their allegiance to an ideology that promotes violence, misogyny, and blind hatred for anyone considered an outsider.

of Transcom) and their mother in the family business. In fact, he was always very categorical about who he wanted to be like – his Nana Bhai, who doted on him and by strange coincidence, left the world the very day Faraaz died, four years later. Both brothers were very close to their maternal grandparents. To their maternal cousins Zoheb and Mikhail, they were buddies and big brothers. Very often people thought they were four siblings.

While family was a priority for Faraaz, so were his friendships, and this he proved in the most profound way, moments before death.

But that was not all he did when he sacrificed his life for others – two women, one from another faith. He provided a counter narrative to the ruthless, radicalised, sadistic youths who called themselves saviours of Islam and who,

courage spread, people around the world applauded him with the loftiest tributes – the Mother Teresa International Award (2016), recognition by the Garden of the Righteous Worldwide, and the Faraaz Courage Award 2016 to recognise exceptional acts of courage to encourage empathy and the spirit of bravery among young Bangladeshis.

Young people especially have been inspired by Faraaz. One hopes that his example has provoked individuals misguided and swayed by militant groups to rethink, and perhaps even shun, their allegiance to an ideology that promotes violence, misogyny, and blind hatred for anyone considered an outsider. The story of Faraaz must be told to our present and future generations to remind them of the noblest standards of humanity: friendship and acceptance of "the other".

Aasha Mehreen Amin is the joint editor of The Daily Star.

The visionary and the hero



ZARAIF AYAAT HOSSAIN

July 1 for many reasons could have been a day of mourning, but as I look back at the past six years I see instead, a day of immense significance. The fact that both Faraaz and Nana Bhai left us on the exact same day, just four years apart, continues to baffle me; but I guess that's what makes July 1 even more important for us. Not a day goes by without thinking of Chotoo or Nana Bhai, and somehow over the past few years we are marvelously reminded of their presence in even the most unexpected moments.

Both Mr. Latifur Rahman and Faraaz have turned from loved ones whose loss we suffer, to beacons of values that act as our moral compass. Our symbol of ethics and our symbol of courage. Two years since Nana bhai left us, and six years since Chotoo, we expected that we'd need more time to move on yet today we move forward with them in our hearts. Even after they have left us, we witness the impact they've left behind.

Nana bhai continues to leave us awestruck. I can oversimplify how we, his family, remember him every day through a question I find myself asking ever so often: "How did you build this Nana bhai?" His legacy of Transcom and business built with uncompromising ethics, is a legacy we have the pleasure of witnessing every day. His dream, of his legacy outlasting his lifetime really did come true and it grows stronger every day. The leaders and luminaries who I hear calling Nana bhai their mentor or their dear friend sheds light on how he wasn't just building a business; he made sure he took everyone around him ahead as well. But when I find myself looking up and asking how he built "this", it is far from just his business, instead it is his life. We continue to feel how he was the one who held our family together, and kept everyone around him feeling optimistic about the future. We feel his presence in the actions taken by those in the Transcom family every day, and it continues to astound me how each and every person has internalised the code of ethics he instilled in his life's foundation. We realise every

moment how Mr. Latifur Rahman truly led his company and his family - by example.

Faraaz too, never fails to make us proud. I find myself asking my brother: "How did you find the strength to stay back for your friends? It amazes me to see how, even after six years, not a person around us has forgotten Faraaz, and to see how they still speak about him with such admiration. Be it a personal setting or even professional, Faraaz somehow invariably comes up in discussions. Faraaz's courage is not simply an inspiration for us but rather an example to take our minds to during the darkest moments. The answer to "what would Faraaz do?" continues to be the light at the end of every tunnel. What strikes me about Faraaz's example is not just the mental strength he inculcates, but how he continues to spur us all into action. Be it through the activities of the Faraaz Hossain Foundation or simply standing by our loved ones. What we continue to understand is that what we do in Faraaz's name is only but a fraction of what he means to those around us, and that his own legacy continues as the boy who did not back down. A legacy not only in our minds, but in the lives Faraaz has touched, for those he never met but did not fail to inspire.

On July 1, 2016 and 2020, we feared that one day we'd move past our precious Latifur Rahman and Faraaz, a fear that they'd be forgotten someday. However, what these last six years have taught us is that both of their lives continue beyond their presence in this world. They prove to us every year, every July 1, and in fact every day that they live on in us.

It's almost poetic for Nana bhai and Faraaz to have both left us on July 1, I'm sure neither of them would have had it any other way. They had a special bond between them which is hard to explain in words, so I'll share a story that sums it all up.

When Faraaz was six years old, and I was eight, we were asked the typical question of what we wanted to be when we grew up. I, of course, probably said something you'd expect a typical young boy to say. Faraaz simply said "I want to be Nana bhai". When asked "okay, so what does Nana bhai do? What does that mean?" He simply said "I don't know, but I just want to be Nana bhai when I grow up."

Nana bhai was his hero, not the businessman but the human being. Little did he know that after July 1, 2016, he would become Nana bhai's hero and that one day they'd be together again after leaving this world on the same day.

The writer is the grandson of Latifur Rahman and elder brother of Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain

HOLEY ARTISAN ATTACK VICTIMS

BANGLADESHIS



FARAAZ AYAAZ HOSSAIN, 20

He was the grandson of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Group and Shahnaz Rahman, and son of Simeen Hossain, managing director, Eskayef Bangladesh Limited, and Muhammad Waqer Bin Hossain. He was completing his undergraduate studies at the Emory University in Atlanta, USA, and came to Dhaka on May 18 to spend his summer holidays.



ISHRAT AKHOND, 45

She worked as a human resources director at ZXY International FZCO and Arts Provocateur at Institute of Asian Creatives, Dhaka. According to her relatives and friends, she was always jolly, cheerful and loving. On June 26, 2016, Ishrat updated her Facebook status: "Key to happiness is to stay away from negative people, even if you know them for long. Stay blessed."



ABINTA KABIR, 19

A US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, she was a student of Oxford College of Emory University in the US. She came to Dhaka on June 27 to visit her family and friends on summer vacation. She is the daughter of the chairperson of Elegant Group that owns Lavender Superstore in Gulshan.



RABIUL KARIM, 34

Rabiul Karim, assistant commissioner, DB, is one of the two officers who got killed as they responded to the hostage crisis immediately. He established a kindergarten named "Kabi Nazrul Bidyasiri" and a school named "Blooms" for physically-challenged children at his village. He used to bear all the cost of the schools. Splinters hit him in his chest during the attack.



SALAUDDIN KHAN, 49

The officer-in-charge of Banani Police Station suffered splinter wounds in his throat. He bled excessively, which led to his death. He left behind his wife Remkim, two children and a host of well-wishers. Born in Bankpara village of Gopalganj Sadar in 1967, Salauddin joined the police as a sub-inspector in August 1991. He was posted to Banani Police Station in 2015.

INDIAN



TARISHI JAIN, 19

She was an Indian citizen in Bangladesh. She was studying Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. She was in Dhaka on summer vacation and was among those trapped inside the café.



MARCO TONDAT, 39

He was a young businessman in textile sector of Cordovado (Pordenone) and worked for StudioTex Ltd. He was the father of a six-year-old daughter.



VINCENZO D'ALLESTRO, 46

A native of Caserta, Piedimonte Matese, he moved to Acerra (Naples) in October 2015. He was born in Wetzikon, Switzerland.



NADIA BENEDETTI, 52

Benedetti, managing director of StudioTex, a company with headquarters in London and a branch office in Dhaka, had been living in Bangladesh for 25 years. She had previously lived in Italy and Kenya.



MARIA RIVOLI, 33

Rivoli of Lombard lived in Solza with her husband and three-year-old daughter. She worked in textile sector and was on a business trip. She was in Bangladesh for several months before the attack.

ITALIANS



ADELE PUGLISI, 50

Adele, from Catania worked at Artsana as the quality control manager. She was planning to travel back home on July 2 (the day after the attack).



CLAUDIO CAPPELLI, 45

For over five years, Italian worked in Bangladesh with his textile company, which produced T-shirts, clothing and bedding. He lived in Vedano al Lambro in the province of Monza.



CRISTIAN ROSSI, 47

The Italian lived in Bangladesh for 15 years before going back to Italy. He was on one of his occasional business trips. He had intended to return home the day before the attack, but had to delay his departure to finalise a business contract.



CLAUDIA MARIA D'ANTONA, 56

She was the managing director of Fedo Trading Ltd, an Italian textile company operating in Bangladesh. She lived in Dhaka for over 20 years with her husband, Gian Galeazzo Boschetti, the sole Italian survivor of the attack.



SIMONA MONTI, 33

Monti, who worked in a textile firm, was seven months pregnant. She was supposed to return home soon from a long vacation. She lived in the town of Magliano Sabino in Rome.



KOYO OGASAWARA, 56

Ogasawara of Katakira & Engineers International was an environmental impact assessment expert. He was scheduled to return home on July 5.



MAKOTO OKAMURA, 32

He was a transportation systems expert. He worked for ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.



YUKO SAKAI, 42

The Japanese was an engineer of ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.



RUI SHIMODAIRA, 27

He was an engineer of ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.



NOBUHIRO KUROSAKI, 48

He used to work for Oriental Consultants Global, a Tokyo-based construction consulting company.

HIROSHI TANAKA, 80

He worked for Oriental Consultants Global. He was a former research engineer for the Japan National Railways. He was in Dhaka to do a traffic congestion survey.

HIDEKI HASHIMOTO, 65

He used to work at a Tokyo-based construction consulting company.

[The seven Japanese were involved in the work to improve the traffic situation in Dhaka, according to NHK, Japan's national public broadcasting organisation]

JULY 1

Five terrorists storm the Holey Artisan café at 8:45pm
19 hostages, including 16 foreigners, killed within 30 minutes
One more foreigner killed a couple of hours later
31 police officials injured in grenade attacks around 10:30pm
Rab DG urges TV channels

to stop live coverage at 11:20pm

JULY 2
Banani OC Salauddin declared dead at 12:14am
DB AC Robiul Islam pronounced dead at 1:08am
SITE Intelligence reports at 1:26am that IS claimed responsibility
Meeting held at the Gono Bhaban among the PM,

chiefs of the three services and top officials of law enforcement agencies around 3:00am

Army, navy, police, BGB, Rab and SWAT prepare for commando operation around 5:00am
Army-led "Operation Thunderbolt" begins at 7:40am
The operation ends at 8:30am; 5 militants, one chef killed



TIMELINE



A culture of theatrics

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh have quickly shifted focus to the three-match T20I series against the West Indies, starting from July 2 in Dominica, after an embarrassing 2-0 defeat in the Test series.

Test skipper Shakib Al Hasan and batting coach Jamie Siddons already expressed their optimism about Bangladesh's chances to win the T20I series. And we all know that one win may help them sweep all ongoing debates under the carpet.

Amid all this, there is a big chance that one may forget that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to form a working group in order to find ways to improve the structure of domestic first-class cricket.

The same way a fuss over the need to improve the poor state of affairs in longer-version cricket ensues every Test debacle, a higgledy-piggledy mess surrounding Shakib's availability for any series has become standard practice for the BCB.

The all-rounder made a sarcastic remark after the end of Bangladesh's Test against Sri Lanka last month, saying he was available for all three formats in the West Indies since he was named in all three squads for the tour.



On Wednesday, BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon informed that Shakib had asked for a leave from the ODI series ahead of the tour to the Caribbean.

According to sources, the team management had drafted up plans to combat his absence well before the team left for the Caribbean. The management was considering spinner Nasum Ahmed as a potential replacement for the ODIs because they have faith in the former's late-order batting. Somehow, Shakib was still named in the ODI side.

There has been a lot of talk about the lack of a cricketing culture and system but, in recent times, the Shakib saga may have volumes to speak about such issues.



England captain Ben Stokes arrives for a net session at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Thursday ahead of the fifth and final Test against India which starts today. Following a 3-0 whitewash of New Zealand, the new England skipper will want to extend the winning run by beating India in the final Test, with the visitors leading the series 2-1 from last year.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'Only players can make Test cricket beautiful'

SPORTS REPORTER

Roquibul Hassan, the first captain of the national cricket team, believes that cricketers have to illustrate the beauty of Test cricket in order to attract fans.

While raising questions about a lack of Test culture following a humiliating defeat 2-0 series defeat to the West Indies, Test captain Shakib Al Hasan pointed out that there was a lack of interest among fans in longer-version cricket in Bangladesh.

Roquibul admitted that Bangladesh were yet to make strides in terms of organising competitive first-class competitions. But he admitted that, despite all the shortcomings, players like Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal could not defend the Test team's poor recent performances.

"People worship beauty and that applies to cricket as well. Unfortunately, our demonstration of cricket is very ugly. Why would I go to the field to watch an ugly display of cricket? When you play well, win games regularly, fight in tough situations, only then will there be spectators.

"I know we have lot of limitations in terms of first-class infrastructure, it's especially frustrating that we are yet to form regional cricket associations. But you have to keep in mind that players are the main stakeholders of the game and they have to take the responsibility to make Test cricket beautiful. Only players can make Tests or longer-version cricket beautiful,"

Roquibul said.

He added that after 22 years of Test cricket, we cannot only blame infrastructure because there are numerous instances in sporting history of players overcoming adversities and becoming world-class athletes.

"The way Tamim [Iqbal] and Shakib [Al Hasan] played some of the shots that got them out, sometimes I wonder how they have scored 5,000 runs," the former skipper questioned.

"Not many are interested in Test cricket in our country, but in other countries they have many fans. Why? Because if I go to watch our games, I know the result already. Bangladesh will lose anyway. So why should I go and watch that game?" he said.

He also questioned the logic of the recent discussions about the lack of Test culture in the country.

"I am unable to understand what those who talk about cricket culture actually mean. If they are trying to say that it's due to a lack of participation Tests and that's why they are unable to perform well, that's different. But the way people are talking about the absence of spectators in the longer-version leading to this scenario, I disagree. Our players do not have the skills, temperament or patience to ensure the presence of the crowd," he explained. "I think it was better not to drag this issue after 20 years," he added.

However, Roquibul agreed with what

Shakib said about creating a system. He believes there is no alternative to making a competitive first-class competition in order to get skillful Test players.

"Back in our days, when we started to play regularly after Independence, all of our games were longer-versions. If you talk about the culture of longer-version cricket, I will say that there is a huge gap here and it's not the way it once was, that's the first thing.

"Then you have to make it competitive. You can't play just for the sake of playing. We've been hearing for many years about 'regional cricket associations'. They sat for meetings, but the outcome is unknown. To make these tournaments competitive, you have to rely on them [regional bodies]. Unfortunately, reality is different. Teams are organised centrally from Dhaka and there is a practice of nepotism.

"We can make longer-version cricket with top Premier Division Cricket League teams because top players play there. We must think 'outside the box'. We don't have time for cliched traditional words," he continued.

Roquibul also thought it was suicidal to complete a national league tournament inside a month.

"There have been huge technological advancements in cricket. You cannot hide and there is no scope for mercy now. So, you have to be smart enough to deal with modern cricket. You cannot stick to cliches of 'we have no culture,' he ended.

Bumrah to lead India in Edgbaston

REUTERS, BIRMINGHAM

India captain Rohit Sharma has been ruled out of the rescheduled fifth Test against England beginning on Friday and seamer Jasprit Bumrah will lead the side instead, the touring team said on Thursday.

Rohit was doubtful for the clash since he tested positive for COVID-19 during a warm-up match in Leicester last week.

He had a Rapid Antigen Test on Thursday and returned a positive result, which snuffed out his chances of playing in the match at Edgbaston.



India faced a leadership crisis with vice-captain KL Rahul also missing the match to have surgery for a sports hernia in Germany.

Bumrah will lead the side with wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant as his deputy, the team said in a statement.

Mayank Agarwal has joined the squad as cover but India have yet to decide who will be Shubman Gill's opening partner in Rohit's absence.

Coach Rahul Dravid has said they have two more options in stumper batsman KS Bharat and top order batsman Cheteshwar Pujara.

India are 2-1 up in the series which could not be completed last year because of COVID-19 cases in the India camp ahead of the final match at Old Trafford.

Green, Khawaja put Aus on top

AFP, GALLE

Cameron Green and Usman Khawaja hit half-centuries to put Australia ahead by 101 runs against Sri Lanka after abysmal weather set back the second day of the opening Test on Thursday.

The tourists reached 313 for eight when bad light stopped play in Galle after storms and ferocious winds that collapsed a spectator stand and delayed the start of play until the afternoon.

Skipper Pat Cummins, on 26, and Nathan Lyon, on eight, were batting at close of play after the tourists dominated the two sessions.

The left-handed Khawaja made 71 before Green, who top-scored with 77, was involved in an attacking stand of 84 with wicketkeeper-batsman Alex Carey.

Ramesh Mendis soon removed Carey at 45 to break the stand and claimed his fourth wicket of the innings when he trapped Green lbw.

Mitchell Starc fell next to debutant leg-spinner Jeffrey Vandersay, who took two wickets, but Cummins smashed the bowlers around in his 16-ball blitz that included one four and three sixes.



KYRGIOS BEHAVES TO REACH LAST 32

Nick Kyrgios buried the rage he showed in his Wimbledon opener to ease into the third round on Thursday and warned: "I just wanted to remind everyone that I'm pretty good." The volatile Australian pulled off an impressive 6-2, 6-3, 6-1 win over Serbian 26th seed Filip Krajinovic to make the last 32 for the sixth time. Kyrgios fired 24 aces and a total of 50 winners past Krajinovic, who made the final on grass at Queen's in the run-up to Wimbledon.

PHOTO: REUTERS

"Me and Harmony have talked and figured out all misunderstandings. She made me clear about her injury now and we already apologised to each other. I will delete my previous post regarding this situation. And I will ask (you) not to write bad comments to her, don't want that she get insults! Hope for your understanding!"

Tamara Korpatsch about her doubles partner Harmony Tan



বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা-২০২২

সূত্র নং-বিসিবি / এজিএম-২০২২ / ৪৭৭ তারিখ ৩০শে জুন, ২০২২

বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ডের বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা-২০২২ নিম্নে উল্লেখিত তারিখ, সময় ও স্থানে অনুষ্ঠিত হইবে :

দিন ও তারিখ	৪ মঙ্গলবার, ১৯শে জুলাই, ২০২২ইং।
সময়	৪ দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
স্থান	৪ এ্যাড বন্দরম, পান প্যাসিফিক সোনারগাঁও ডাকা, ০৭ কালী নজরুল ইসলাম সরণি, ডাকা ১২১৫।

সাধারণ পরিষদের সকল সম্মানিত কাউন্সিলরবৃন্দকে বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ডের বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে।

পরিচালনা পরিষদের নির্দেশক্রমে -
প্রধান নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা
বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ড

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Cost will be realised in 18-20 years

PM tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told a parliament session that the construction cost of Padma Bridge would be realised through toll collection in just 18 to 20 years, which is a much shorter period than anticipated earlier.

Referring to allegations that the construction cost was too high, she said the cost was reasonable when compared to the cost of bridges built in contemporary times.

"There was no chance for corruption here," she said in her speech.

It was earlier thought that realising the cost would take 25 years, Hasina said in her nearly 45-minute speech, which was mostly about the government's success in constructing the 6.15km bridge, defying all

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



Fishing boats lie at anchor on Chila canal near the Sundarbans, as a 65-day fishing ban has been in force since May 20 to ensure smooth breeding of fish. Meanwhile, the fishermen of the area have been on the hunt for other jobs to feed their families. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Eid-ul-Azha on July 10

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The holy Eid-ul-Azha, the second largest religious festival of the Muslims, will be celebrated across the country on July 10 with due solemnity and religious fervour.

The National Moon Sighting Committee came up with the decision at a meeting at the Baitul Mukarram national mosque as the moon of the holy month of Zilhaj was sighted in the sky of Bangladesh yesterday.

The Eid-ul-Azha is celebrated on the 10th of Zilhaj as Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), on this day some 4,500 years ago, offered to sacrifice his beloved son Hazrat Ismail (AS), who willingly submitted to the will of his father, to please Almighty Allah.

But the Almighty in His benign mercy spared Hazrat Ismail (AS) and instead sent a ram to be sacrificed.

To commemorate this historic event, Muslims

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Five killed as lorry ploughs into crowd



A CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Five vegetable traders were killed and four others injured as a lorry driver lost control of the vehicle and ploughed into a crowd in Narsingdi's Raipura upazila yesterday.

Quoting locals, Azizul Hoque, in charge of Bhairab fire service station, said the Sylhet-bound lorry lost control and hit nine people while trying to overtake another lorry in Mahmudabad Bazar along the Dhaka-Sylhet highway around 8:00am.

On information, police and fire service officials rushed to the spot and rescued them.

Two of them died on the spot and three while being taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, he added.

The injured were undergoing treatment at Narsingdi Sadar Hospital, and the bodies of the deceased were sent to the hospital morgue for autopsies.

The deceased are Faruk Mia, Md Masakin, Ripon Mia, Shah Jahan Mia and Bacchu Mia. They are aged between 30 and 65 and residents of Mirzapur union of Raipura upazila.

Sub-inspector Mozammel Hossain, in-charge of Bhairab highway police, said both the lorries were seized, but the drivers managed to flee.

Bus fares rise on 15 southwestern routes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) yesterday raised the bus fare for 15 routes via the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway as part of the government's plan to monetise the country's first expressway.

From today, the road authority will impose a toll on vehicles for using the 55-kilometre-long expressway, formally known as Jatir Pita Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Highway.

For 40-seater buses, the fare, which will come into action from today, has been increased by Tk 31 to Tk 66.

The fare has also been refixed for 51-seater buses, but the rate could not be known immediately. The total fare for a 51-seater bus would be relatively lower than the 40-seater bus.

This will be the second time in a month that the authorities have increased the bus fare.

Earlier on June 8, the BRTA raised the bus fare on 13 routes by Tk 10-11 to incorporate the toll for Padma bridge, which opened to traffic on June 26. Later, the authorities reset the fare for two more routes.

Of the 15 routes whose fare rates were re-set yesterday, 12 are from Dhaka's Sayedabad to different southwest destinations while three are from Chattogram and Cox's Bazar via Dhaka, according to BRTA officials.

As per the new rate, the fare for a 40-seater bus travelling from Dhaka to Barishal via Bhanga would be Tk 454, which is Tk 33 more than the

previous rate.

The highest increase was seen on the Dhaka-Kuakata route via Barishal, Patuakhali: by Tk 66 to Tk 767.

The bus fare from Dhaka to Gopalganj would be Tk 423; from Dhaka to Khulna via Gopalganj would be Tk 575; from Dhaka to Shariatpur via Janjira would Tk 257; from Dhaka to Pirojpur via Barishal Tk 580; from Dhaka to Pirojpur via Gopalganj, Bagerhat Tk 619.

The bus fare from Dhaka to Patuakhali via Barishal would be Tk 561; from Dhaka to Madaripur Tk 344; from Dhaka to Satkhira via Gopalganj, Khulna Tk 689; from Dhaka to Faridpur via Bhanga Tk 323; from Dhaka to Shariatpur via Buriganga second bridge Tk 257.

The bus fare from Cox's Bazar to Barishal via Chattogram, Dhaka's Postagola Bridge, Bhanga, Madaripur would be Tk 1,388; from Chattogram to Khulna via Dhaka's Postagola bridge, Bhanga Tk 1,192;

and from Chattogram to Barguna via Dhaka's Postagola bridge, Barishal, Patuakhali Tk 1,282. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the expressway in March 2020.

From today, to use the expressway, the toll for a medium-sized truck would be Tk 550, for a bus Tk 495, for a car Tk 140 and for a motorcycle Tk 30, according to the notice issued on Wednesday.

The vehicle has to pay a separate toll for the Padma bridge. To cross the Padma river through the 6.15km bridge, a medium-sized truck has to pay Tk 2,100 as toll, a bus Tk 2,400, a car Tk 750 and a motorcycle Tk 100.

Fares have been hiked to monetise Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway from today

TEACHER'S HUMILIATION Insecurity grips his family

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Narail college teacher, who was publicly humiliated by being forced to wear a garland of shoes around his neck on June 18, has been away from home since the incident.

Meanwhile, his wife and three daughters are spending their days in fear, even though police have been deployed at his Borokula village home of Narail Sadar upazila.

"We are scared that agitators might attack our house, which is why my father has taken shelter elsewhere," said Shyama Biswas, the eldest daughter of Swapan Kumar Biswas, acting principal of Mirzapur United Degree College.

"I'm not going to college and my two younger sisters have also stopped attending school. We too are feeling insulted," she told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

Meanwhile, four people have been arrested after a case was filed in connection with the incident.

The arrestees are: Shawon, 26, and Rahmat Ullah, 22, workers of mobile servicing shops, Rimon, 20, an auto-rickshaw driver, and Monirul Islam, 25, a madrasa teacher.

Some locals said the teacher did not commit any offence, but was a victim of an internal feud between the college teachers.

On June 27, the district administration held a meeting with locals, law enforcers and other stakeholders to discuss the issue. At the meeting, some raised the issue of the feud, sources said.

Achin Chakraborty, president of the college governing body, yesterday said he was in Dhaka

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Yunus Centre responds to allegations by PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus considers the Padma Bridge a long-cherished dream of all Bangladeshis, and there was no question of his getting in the way of realising that dream.

Yunus said he never made any complaint to the World Bank or any other organisation or individual about the Padma Bridge.

"So, the matter is purely imaginary," said a Yunus Centre statement issued on Wednesday night in response to allegations made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recently.

The removal of Yunus from the position of managing director of Grameen Bank is an independent story

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6



THE GENTLE GIBBON

A male Hoolock Gibbon hangs merrily from a tree branch in the Rajkandi Protected Forest in Moulvibazar. According to wildlife researchers, even four decades ago, there were at least 3,000 of these animals scattered across forests in the country. However, due to destruction of habitats, their number has declined to just a few hundred. The animals usually feast on small insects, fruits, flowers and bird eggs, and are usually distinguished by the white stripes above their eyes. They prefer to stay in groups with no more than five members.

PHOTO: TIMU HOSSAIN

TEACHER MURDER Prime accused led teen gang in his locality Says Rab at briefing

STAR REPORT

The prime accused in the Ashulia teacher murder case, Ashraf Al Moin, was the leader of a local teen gang, said Rab.

If anyone complained against him to his family, he would threaten, intimidate, or attack the complainant.

Besides, Jitu, known as "Jitu Dada" to his gang members, used to arrange showdowns in his locality to create panic.

Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director (legal and media wing) of Rab, shared this at a press conference yesterday



SEE PAGE 7 COL 6

China's Mars probe photographs the entire red planet

CNN ONLINE

After more than a year on the surface of Mars, China's Tianwen-1 probe has taken images covering the entire red planet, the country's space agency announced Wednesday.

Tianwen-1, which means "quest for heavenly truth," was launched in 2020 and landed on Mars last May, when the Zhurong rover on board started its mission of patrolling and exploring the planet while the orbiter spun overhead.

In a statement, China's National Space Agency (CNSA) said the probe has now completed all its assigned tasks, including taking medium-resolution images covering the entire planet.

The images, posted by the space agency on social media, show the Martian landscape's rugged terrain: dusty red dunes, shield volcanoes,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6