



### 46 rail stations shut down for manpower crisis



### Ukraine arms spreading to Middle East



### NZ's equal pay deal an 'example'



### BB toughens rules to curb luxury import



Boats ferrying people at Fenchuganj Bazar in Sylhet district yesterday. The Kushiyara river swelled enough to inundate a large part of the upazila for over 20 days. Many flood victims are still in need of clean drinking water.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY SCAMS When trust takes a back seat

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Thirty years ago, the university was established as a non-profit with the vision to become a centre of excellence in higher education. But some of the trustees allegedly used the North South University to make a quick buck, tarnishing the image of one of the country's best seats of learning.

Misusing power, they allegedly raised their sitting allowance to up to 10 times the approved rate, and got themselves luxury cars at the expense of the students.

They had been facing these allegations for the past several years, but faced no action until the Anti-Corruption Commission sued them over land scams recently.

So far, five NSU trustees and a managing director of a developer company have been accused of misappropriation of about Tk 304 crore.

"The number of accused may increase," said ACC Deputy Director Farid Ahmed Patwary, who filed the case on May 5.

NSU, the first private university in Bangladesh, was established in 1992 as a charitable, non-profit, non-commercial and non-political organisation. It has about 24,600 students now, according to its website.

Its campus is located in the capital's Bashundhara.

### THE LAND SCAM

The ACC sued five members of the NSU board of trustees – Azim Uddin Ahmed, Mohammed Shajahan, Benajir Ahmed, MA Kashem and Rehana Rahman – and Ashalaya Housing Managing Director Amin Md Hilaly over laundering of about Tk 304 crore. All the five trustees are businesspeople.

Shajahan, Benajir, Kashem and Rehana had sought anticipatory bail from the High Court, but the court sent them to jail on May 22.

A Dhaka court on June 30 also rejected bail pleas of the four.

Patwary, the ACC DD who is investigating the case, interrogated the four suspects at jail gate in late May.

"They've given us some important information that will help prove the case," he said, without going into details.

"Azim Uddin and Hilaly are in hiding," Patwary said last month. The HC issued a travel ban so they cannot leave the country, he added.

Barrister Mizan Sayeed, who represented the four trustees at the High Court for the bail hearing, said the allegations against his clients were untrue and fabricated.

"They are victims of a conspiracy by a vested quarter," he said, but did not elaborate.

Investigators said they unearthed a nexus between Hilaly and some members of the trustee board.

"Without the consent of the university [NSU] syndicate, University Grants Commission and the education ministry, the board of trustees illegally paid an additional Tk 303.82 crore for the development of the campus on the 9,096.88 decimals of land," reads the case document.

The NSU and the developer company struck a primary deal on July 27, 2014, for buying land in Jangir, Gatiab and Pitalganj mouzas of Rugganj upazila of Narayanganj for campus development.

On the same day, Hilaly deposited Tk 9 crore into 13 separate FDR accounts of Benajir Ahmed in the same branch of a private bank.

Within 10 days, another Tk 11 crore was deposited in Benajir's FDR accounts. During April-August of 2016, his FDR accounts swelled by another Tk 8 crore, taking his total receipts from the developer before and after the land purchase to Tk 28 crore, investigators said.

Hilaly similarly gave Tk 29.5 crore to Hashem, Tk 14 crore to Azim, Tk 9 crore to MA Kashem and Tk 11 crore to Rehana in bribes, according to the case statement.

Twenty-one months after the primary deal, the developer sold

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Load shedding at specific times likely

### PM says she might ask for reduced power generation

UNB, Dhaka

The government is considering reducing electricity production to save the fuel for producing power, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday.

Besides, she is thinking of introducing area-based load shedding for a specific time each day, she added.

"Today, I think that I will tell [the authorities concerned] to reduce electricity production for some time [every day] to save the fuel that is used for power generation," she said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



## Now toiletries dearer too

### Prices steadily increase

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Amid rising prices of food essentials and other basic necessities, the recent hike in prices of toiletries and other homecare products has added a new burden for people.

In about six months, almost all soaps, shampoos, toothpastes, detergents, and toilet cleaners became pricier by 10 to 27 percent.

Manufacturers said rising costs of importing raw materials and the devaluation of the taka forced them to increase prices of the products.

As of yesterday, a bar of Lux, weighing 150 grams, rose to Tk 70 from Tk 55, an increase of 27 percent since December 2021, according to Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB).

Prices of detergent powder also increased. A kg of Wheel shot up to Tk 115 this month from Tk 100 just last month. Tibet washing powder now sells at Tk 110 per kg, up from Tk 100 in May.

Fahima Khatun, who came to Digubabu market in Narayanganj, said, "From soap, face wash, oil, powder to cosmetics products, prices have gone up in the blink of an eye." Asraful Islam, a shop owner in Narsingdi's Monipura Bazar, said, "We have nothing to do as we are buying detergent at Tk 10-15 per kg more and selling at the same rate."

At different retail markets in the capital, the correspondent met several sales representatives who warned of fresh hikes.

Mohammad Imon, a shopkeeper in Agargaon, said, "If we want to book toiletry product's orders, we have to pay much higher for the same amount."

Contacted, Golam Kibria Sarkar, senior vice-president (brand) of Kohinoor Chemical Company (Bangladesh) Limited, which owns Tibet, said, "We have had to hike the price gradually in the last five to six months due to the major increase in price of raw materials and packaging."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## ICT CASE

### Teacher sent to prison for eight years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court has awarded a schoolteacher with eight-year imprisonment for hurting religious sentiment.

Dabbrata Das alias Debu Das, 40, was sued under the ICT Act on November 1, 2017. SI Humayun Kabir lodged the case with Hatia Police Station.

According to the case statement, he posted derogatory remarks on Facebook that hurt religious sentiment.

Debu, a teacher of Chowmuhuny High School in Noakhali, was arrested on October 31, 2017.

Judge Mohammad Jahurul Kabir of Chattogram Divisional Cyber Tribunal delivered the verdict in the case on Monday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## Omicron's sub-type spreading fast

### Finds icddr,b study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

New versions of the Omicron variant of coronavirus, BA.4 and BA.5, are spreading rapidly in the country, causing the current surge in new cases, finds a study of the icddr,b.

Between May 14 and June 24, BA.5 was the most predominant subvariant, according to the findings published on icddr,b website yesterday.

During this period, researchers identified 51 instances of BA.5 and one instance of BA.2 subvariants through genome sequencing of 52 samples.

The first case of BA.5 was detected in Dhaka on May 19. Clinical data and vaccination history of 40 BA.5 patients were available.

Thirty-nine patients had mild to moderate symptoms, and one had none. At least 11 were infected for the second time and seven for the third time. Thirty-eight patients had at least one dose a vaccine. At least 16 had received a booster shot, 21 had two doses, and one had one shot.

None of the patients had any foreign travel history and only one was hospitalised for a day. The severity of the symptoms caused by BA.5 among the study population was low.

"The recent countrywide upsurge of Covid-19 cases as well as hospitalisation, however, warrants continuation of public health and social measures...", said icddr,b.

To stay safe, icddr,b recommended that people get vaccinated, keep wearing well-fitted facemasks, maintain physical distancing, and wash hands with soap and water frequently.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7



Though Eid-ul-Azha is just a few days away, the crowd at Kamalapur Railway Station in the capital was relatively thin yesterday. Usually, the place is teeming with holidaymakers waiting to head to their destinations. Many people from southwestern districts opted to travel by road this Eid so that they could cross the recently-inaugurated Padma Bridge.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## RMG worker dies after being 'denied sick leave'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A man died while working in a garments factory after the authorities allegedly did not allow him to take sick leave in Gazipur Sadar upazila yesterday.

Jahidul Islam, 27, a sewing operator of Golden Refit Garments, collapsed on the factory floor around 3:00pm on Monday.

Monayem Hossain, assistant superintendent of Gazipur Industrial Police, confirmed the incident.

The factory workers claimed Jahidul was ill for around the last five days. Despite repeated requests for leave, the factory's line chief Kamrul Islam did not grant him one as the administration had instructed not to allow anyone to take leave before the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha.

Though he was sick, Jahidul joined work on Monday, said his co-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

## PK HALDER QUIZZING Names of 3 Bangladeshi businessmen come up

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Delhi

The names of at least three influential Bangladeshi businessmen were mentioned during the interrogation of Proshanta Kumar Halder aka PK Halder, who is accused of embezzling Tk 3,000 crore.



The Daily Star could not have the names confirmed by the authorities or reliable sources.

Halder, who is being quizzed by India's Directorate of Enforcement (ED), also revealed names of some people in West Bengal who have links to ruling politicians in the state, sources said.

He had been on the run from facing money laundering charges since 2019 and was arrested in West Bengal on May 14.

The ED produced Halder and five of his associates before a special court yesterday and sought more days for custodial interrogation, which was granted.

The court then directed the ED to produce the six before it again on July 20.

The directorate is currently investigating how many properties Halder purchased in India.

ED sources said Halder's links with politicians in West Bengal are being probed because he could not have set up his network of contacts and real estates without local connections.

The ED has intensified its interrogation in order to prepare a charge sheet to be filed against Halder with the PMLA court, the sources said.

Halder was arrested after the directorate carried out searches out at the request of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The search operations led to the detection of a huge number of properties, including houses, and many important documents, including land deeds.

The ED said Halder had been posing himself as an Indian citizen called "Shibshankar Halder" after fraudulently obtaining various government identities like ration card from West Bengal, Indian Voter ID card, PAN and Aadhar card.

The ED has ascertained that he managed to float companies in India on the basis of fake identities and documents. He also purchased immovable properties at various places, including in plush localities of Kolkata.

Between 2009 and 2019, he and his associates allegedly swindled about Tk 10,000 crore from four non-banking financial institutions – Reliance Finance People's Leasing and Financial Services, FAS Finance and International Leasing, and Financial Services.



Fishermen catching fish near the Inani beach in Cox's Bazar recently, defying the government's 65-day ban on fishing. The restriction, to ensure smooth breeding of fish, was imposed from May 20 and will end on June 23.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Donetsk braces for brutal war

Ukraine forces gather for defence as Putin eyes entire Donbas; Finland, Sweden sign protocol to join Nato

AGENCIES

Fighting raged in and around Ukraine's eastern Donbas region yesterday as Russian troops tried to build on recent battlefield gains, while Nato pressed ahead with Finland and Sweden's momentous membership bids.

With the war well into its fifth month, Kyiv's allies yesterday committed to supporting Ukraine through what is likely to be a lengthy and expensive recovery, agreeing on the need for broad reforms to boost transparency and tackle corruption.

The two days of talks in the Swiss city of Lugano heard that rebuilding the war-ravaged country is estimated to cost at least \$750 billion.

But on the battlefield, the conflict continued to wreak devastation, with the Ukrainian president's office reporting Russian shelling and missile strikes in several regions overnight.

Russian forces set their sights on their next objectives in Ukraine's

eastern Donetsk province yesterday after President Vladimir Putin claimed victory in neighbouring Luhansk province.

"Military units, including the East group and the West group, must

**"I hope that everything will continue in their direction as has happened in Lugansk so far."**

— Putin

carry out their tasks according to previously approved plans," Putin said.

"I hope that everything will continue in their direction as has happened in Lugansk so far."

The capture of the city of Lysychansk on Sunday completed the Russian conquest of Luhansk, one of two regions in Donbas, the industrialised eastern region of Ukraine that has become the site of the biggest battle in Europe in generations.

Both sides have suffered heavy casualties in the fight for Luhansk, particularly during the siege of the twin cities of Lysychansk and Severodonetsk. Both cities have been left in ruins by relentless Russian bombardment.

Ukrainian forces yesterday took up new defensive lines in Donetsk, where they still control major cities.

Russian forces shelled the towns of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk overnight, according to Pavlo Kyrylenko, the governor of Donetsk.

"They are now also the main line of assault on the enemy," he said of the towns. "There is no safe place without shelling in Donetsk region."

Since the outset of the conflict, Russia has demanded that Ukraine hand both Luhansk and Donetsk to pro-Moscow separatists, which have declared independent statelets.

In Moscow, the defence ministry reported that Russian forces had targeted the city of Kharkiv with "high precision" weapons over the past 24 hours, killing up to 150 Ukrainian servicemen.

## Load shedding

FROM PAGE 1

The prime minister said this at a function at the PGR Headquarters in Dhaka Cantonment to mark the President's Guard Regiment's (PGR) founding anniversary.

She joined the programme from the Gono Bhaban.

She said that the country witnessed 8-10 hours of power cuts in the past from when her government, taking over office in 2009, increased the electricity generation ensuring an uninterrupted power supply in the country.

She mentioned that the government has accomplished the feat of reaching electricity to every house.

The PM said there won't be any indiscriminate load shedding. It will be announced earlier for a specific area and for a specific time, she added.

"If we specify the time for load shedding for specific areas... If we take that step from now on... we will be able to save ourselves from the much harder days coming ahead," she said.

Talking about the recent economic turmoil across the globe due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, she said that the prices of fuel oil have soared.

As a result that there is a scarcity of power in many countries around the world, she said.

She said that the prices of electricity-producing like diesel, fuel oil, and LNG, have increased heavily.

Besides, transportation has been hampered due to the Russia-Ukraine war compounding the crisis, she said. She added that even

coal is not available.

Hasina reiterated her call to maintain austerity and increase savings which will be beneficial to face any type of crisis in the future.

"If every family resorts to pro-savings mentality and utilises their own lands for optimum productivity (of food grains), it will bring positive results," she said.

She reiterated her call not to leave a single inch of land uncultivated and make sure no water body remains unutilised.

"All empty places have to be utilised for production, whatever it is. We have to try to produce our own food to reduce pressure on the market and make a profit through selling the surplus foods," the premier said.

She said that every person, family and organisation have to take that step.

"I think, if we take this step then we will be able to save ourselves from the ongoing economic shock worldwide."

Hasina said that many countries including America and Britain facing higher inflation amid a scarcity of power.

## Teacher

FROM PAGE 1

The court also fined the teacher Tk 20,000, in default, to suffer six months more in jail, said public prosecutor Mezbah Uddin.

"The case was in Dhaka Cyber Tribunal, but it was forwarded to Chattogram for trial," he added.

Six witnesses testified in the case and police conducted a forensic test of his mobile phone. He also gave a confessional statement under section 164 of CrPC, said the lawyer Mezbah.

## When trust takes a back seat

FROM PAGE 1

about 8,250 decimals of land in the Rugganj mouzas on April 19, 2016. The NSU paid Tk 500 crore through pay orders and cheques before and after the land registration.

Between 2019 and 2021, the NSU bought another 846.88 decimals of land at Tk 35.19 crore from the developer company.

The ACC considered the price of adjacent land in the same mouza that were sold to others as the standard price, and found that the NSU paid an additional Tk 303.82 crore, reads the case statement.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Rafiqul Islam Hilaly, brother of accused Amin Md Hilaly, said "unidentified men" picked his brother up on Friday and recorded his statement about the case after taking his signature and fingerprints.

Rafiqul, a director of Ashalaya Housing and Development, claimed his brother was found blindfolded on Sunday in Hemayetpur, Savar.

Asked about his brother's involvement with the alleged bribery, he said "I can't say clearly about it. But from what I know, in such cases, there is involvement of a middleman who brings clients. The middleman is given commission."

Before the ACC sued them, two separate investigations by the University Grants Commission in 2016 and 2019 found alleged misappropriation of money by some trustees.

NSU Vice-Chancellor Prof Atiqul Islam declined to comment on the alleged misappropriation, saying, "The matter is under trial. We want the law to take its own course."

At least two UGC members confirmed to The Daily Star that their investigations in 2016 and 2019 found that NSU bought the land at prices much higher than the market rate.

One of the members said they found the NSU board of trustees pocketed more than Tk 300 crore.

Aziz Al Kaiser Tito, a businessperson who joined the NSU trustee board last year, declined to comment on the alleged corruption that he said took place about 10 years ago.

But he said it was a custom around the world that trustees are paid handsome allowances for attending meetings, which in NSU's case sometimes run for four to five hours.

**OTHER ANOMALIES**  
The accused trustees have also illegally taken large amounts of money in sitting allowance through attending various committee meetings, and enrolling students for unapproved courses, the UGC probes found.

One UGC member involved in both the UGC probes said many NSU trustees took Tk 50,000 to 1 lakh each for attending a single committee meeting.

A syndicate member can get a maximum of Tk 10,000 for attending any meeting and that is also applicable for board of trustee members, said a

senior UGC official.

The Private University Act allows a university to have nine committees on different matters. But the UGC found NSU had more than 20. Many of these committees were unnecessary and were formed simply to fatten the bank accounts of the trustees by giving them a high amount of sitting allowance, the UGC found.

Asked, NSU VC Atiqul said, "The board fixes the sitting allowance from time to time. It is a matter for the board."

When pointed out that he too sits on the board, he said, "I am an ex-officio member and I don't fix this [sitting allowance] on my own."

Education ministry sources said NSU purchased 10 luxury cars – eight Range Rovers, one Mercedes Benz and one Toyota Prado – for several trustees.

The cars were bought from January 2019 to January 2022 for Tk 26.95 crore, with each costing between Tk 1.1 crore and Tk 2.9 crore.

According to the Private University Act, private universities must have a general fund meant to be spent only on research and education development. But NSU spent the money on matters unrelated to education and research, said a secondary and higher education division order on May 17.

The same order asked the NSU authorities to sell cars through an open tender and deposit that

## 5 killed after truck hits easy bike in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Five people were killed and two more injured after a garbage truck hit an easy-bike in Rangpur city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Raza Mia, 46, Jannatul Mawa, 40, Gita Rani, 60, Shahjahan Mia, 55 – all passengers of the easy-bike.

The two injured are currently at Rangpur Medical College Hospital for treatment, police said. Masud Alam, senior station officer of Rangpur's Fire Service and Civil Defence, confirmed the incident in the afternoon.

Pirgachha police, quoting witnesses, said the easy-bike reached the city from Pirgachha upazila with around seven passengers.

As the vehicle arrived at Mahiganj (Shareyartal), the truck hit the easy-bike, leaving two people dead on the spot and injuring around five, said police.

Later, locals rescued the injured and took them to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, where three of them succumbed to their injuries immediately after being admitted.

Mostafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Mahiganj Police Station, said police seized the truck and were looking for the driver, who fled after the accident.

## All Bangladeshi pilgrims reached Saudi Arabia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the Bangladeshi pilgrims have reached Saudi Arabia, the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh said yesterday.

A total of 60,146 Bangladeshi pilgrims reached Saudi Arabia on 164 flights, it added.

Biman flew 30,363 of them on 87 flights while Saudia and Flynas carried the rest, CAAB said.

The hajj flights started on June 5. Post-hajj flight from Saudi Arabia will start on July 14.

In 2019, around 1.27 lakh Bangladeshis performed hajj. But the largest annual Muslim congregation is being held on a limited scale since 2020.

## Introduce biometric identification in prisons, police stations

HC directs home ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court directed the government to introduce biometric identification at police stations and prisons across the country to prevent instances of mistaken identity.

The court ordered the home secretary to have finger print, palm print and iris scanners alongside the existing crime data management system at the police stations.

The court said these in the full text of a verdict released recently.

The HC also asked the home ministry to include mugshots upon arresting a suspect with the current identification. The mugshots should be in an integrated database.

The petitioner's lawyer, Mohamamd Shishir Manir told this correspondent that the inclusion of biometric systems at prisons and police stations will reduce wrongful arrests and detentions.

## RMG worker

FROM PAGE 1

workers. He had asked for leave again while at work but was denied once again, they said.

After he collapsed, he was rushed to the factory's medical centre and was later shifted to Al Hera Hospital in Mawna union. The emergency doctor there declared him dead.

The Daily Star could not learn the cause of his death or the reason behind his illness yet.

Protesting Jahidul's death, the factory workers attempted to demonstrate on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway but were obstructed by police.

Arifur Rahman Rahat, the admin manager of the factory, admitted Jahidul was ill and possibly died due to "heart failure".

He, however, claimed he did not receive Jahidul's leave application.

## Ukraine accused of torturing war prisoners

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday said it was investigating the torture of Russian soldiers held prisoner in Ukraine and recently released as part of a prisoner swap with Kyiv in late June.

The Russian Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said in a statement that it was "verifying facts of inhuman treatment of Russia soldier prisoners in Ukraine".

## Omicron's

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Health Services yesterday reported 16.74 percent positivity rate, up from 16.51 percent the previous day.

Seven patients died and 1,998 new cases were detected, according to a press release from the directorate.



Confce on 'freedom of religion' in UK

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

An International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is being hosted by the British government in London on July 5 and 6.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Mohammed Faridul Haq Khan is attending the event.

Other Bangladeshi delegates include noted photographer Shahidul Alam; Father Tapan Rozario, associate professor, Department of World Religions and Culture at Dhaka University; and Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, according to a statement of the UK High Commission.

NIKO GRAFT CASE Hearing adjourned

till August 2

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned till August 2 the hearing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and eight others in Niko graft case.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman of Dhaka Special Judge's Court 9 passed the order, after a petition was filed on behalf of Khaleda, seeking adjournment of the hearing, said Advocate Zainal Abedin Meshbah, one of her lawyers.

10 held for cutting hill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A team of Department of Environment (DoE) and police on Monday arrested 10 people for cutting hill in the port city's Chawkbazar.

"Acting on a tip off, the team conducted the drive at Manila Hill around 6:00pm and arrested them," said Hasan Ahmmed, deputy director of DoE, Chattogram.

A case was filed with Chawkbazar Police Station against 11 persons.

Even 1,000 bridges will not work: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League government will not be able to earn people's confidence even if it builds 1,000 Padma bridges ignoring democracy, said BNP yesterday.

"Hold a credible election to see how much confidence people have in you [government]. Ayub Khan also carried out development activities during the Pakistan rule," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir during a press conference at its chairperson's Gulshan office.

The BNP leader said their party will participate in the next general election if it is held under a "neutral government", which is a must for a free and fair polls.

The government has completely failed to stand by the flood-hit people, said Fakhru following their standing committee meeting.

"There's no visible activity by the government for rehabilitating the flood victims," he said.

Talking about the population and housing census, he said collection of proper information is not possible under the current government as data collection is done as per its instructions. Turning to the sudden load-shedding, Fakhru said, "The frequent power cuts have proved that the government's cent percent electricity coverage claim is just rhetoric."

Who started the fire?

FROM PAGE 6

The committee made four recommendations, including the formulation of special regulations on the management of dangerous cargo to avert such incidents in future.

Expressing suspicion that the incident could have been a sabotage, the committee also recommended for investigation by intelligence agencies.

A fire and subsequent explosion at the depot on June 4 killed 48 people and injured over a hundred.

The following day, CPA formed a three-member probe body -- led by CPA Terminal Manager Qudrat-e-Khuda -- to investigate the incident.

Six separate probe bodies had been formed by other government offices to probe the incident, while

only the CPA-formed body has submitted its report so far.

The committee submitted its report last week. None of the committee members agreed to comment on their findings to this correspondent.

A reliable source confirmed that the committee in its report mentioned seven factors responsible for the incident.

According to the report, during the incident, there were 37 containers of hydrogen peroxide inside the depot sent by Al Razi Chemical Complex for export. They were being stored due to complexity in shipment.

The committee blamed Al Razi for not resending the containers to the factory timely, even after repeated requests from the shipping lines.

Better call

FROM PAGE 5

accounts, we found transaction details of Tk 46.51 lakh," said ADC Mohidul.

Galib's sources mainly brought different needy people to him, and for this, he often paid each source Tk 5,000 to 20,000 as commission, said detectives.

He used to ensure easy movement of several vehicles by pretending to be an AIG and talking to sergeants, they said.

"For the task, Galib used to take a hefty amount, he admitted during primary interrogation. We are now trying to check his bank account details using his NID to know how much money he collected," said Mohidul.

A case was filed against the arrestees with Sabujbagh Police Station on Monday.

According to the first information report (FIR), after going through Galib's phone, detectives found communication details involving different traffic inspectors and OCS.

Pornography charges were also brought against him, as police found a number of videos and pictures of women in compromising situations in his phone.

Railway's

FROM PAGE 6

of east zone, said the railway has started recruiting new assistant station masters. Once the new workforce is recruited, the stations will be opened gradually.

Md Mozammel Haque Chowdhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Passengers Welfare Association, said, "It is possible to travel through Dhaka-Chattogram in five hours with the current capacity. But railway authorities have decreased train speed on various pretexts. As a result, passengers are being deprived of proper services."

EVM not reliable

FROM PAGE 5

businessmen, while it was nearly 73 percent in the previous election.

Additionally, 5.56 percent are lawyers and 19.44 percent are homemakers.

In terms of assets, nearly 17 percent of local representatives have assets worth between Tk 1 crore to 5 crore, 36 percent have assets worth between Tk 5 lakh and 35 lakh and 30 percent have assets worth below Tk 5 lakh.

Of the 36 public

representatives elected in the polls, 26 have either past or present criminal cases against them, according to Shujan's report.

Three newly-elected ward councillors are currently in prison on charges of vandalising idols, arson and lynching. All of them took part in the polls while on bail and were later sent to jail as the court rejected their plea seeking a bail extension.

The report also stated that 30 percent of the

elected members are graduates, 28 percent studied up to HSC level and nearly 14 percent have educational qualifications up to SSC.

Shujan presented the report on 26 ward councillors, nine women councillors and one mayor elected in the elections. They did not present data on the councillor of ward-2 Gazi Golam Sarwar as they claimed to have not found his information on the commission's website.

বাংলাদেশ সমবায় ব্যাংক লিঃ
নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সংশোধনী
ক্র: নং, শিরোনাম, বিবরণ

জমি ক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি
সূত্র নং-বিবিবি/প্রশাসন/২০২২/৪৮৪
বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ড খেলার মাঠ ও অবকাঠামো নির্মানের লক্ষ্যে ঢাকা ও এর পার্শ্ববর্তী এলাকায় একসঙ্গে ন্যূনতম ৩০ বিঘা থেকে ৫০ বিঘা নিষ্কটক জমি ক্রয়ে অগ্রহী।

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০২/২০২২-২৩ (রেশন স্টোর)

BAF SHAHEEN ENGLISH MEDIUM COLLEGE (SEMC)
TEJGAON, DHAKA-1206
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
Table with 4 columns: Ser No, Designation, Total No, Qualification/Experience

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
e-Zone
E-Zone HRM Limited is a management consulting group providing one-stop HR solutions.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
কেন্দ্রীয় পুলিশ হাসপাতাল
বাজারবাগ, ঢাকা।
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
Table with 3 columns: ক্রমিক বিবরণ, সিভিল মূল্য, দরপত্র আদানত, কয়েক ঘণ্টা

## 8.58pc pass DU 'D' unit entry test

DU CORRESPONDENT

Only 8.58 percent students passed the Dhaka University "D" unit admission test under Social Science Faculty for 2021-22 academic year, according to the results published yesterday.

A total of 6,111 students amongst 71,262 aspirants passed the test, competing for 1,336 seats.

The test was held on June 11. The authorities have urged those who passed in the entry test to fill up the urgent choice form between July 7 to July 28 through the university's admission test website.

## Six students to attend Int'l Math Olympiad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Six Bangladeshi students will participate in the 63rd International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) to be held in Norway this year.

Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad Committee announced their names during a press conference in a Dhaka hotel yesterday. It will take place from July 10-16.

The participants are: Nuzhat Ahmed Disha from Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, SMA Nahian from Shamsul Hoque Khan School and College, Ashraful Islam Fahim and Tahmid Hamim Chowdhury from Notre Dame College, Fuad Al Alam from Dhaka Residential Model College, and Tahjib Hossain Khan from Ananda Mohan College, Mymensingh.

## Sultana, Naoki to get 'Bangabandhu Medal'

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT



Bangladesh Ambassador to Poland Sultana Laila Hossain and Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Ito Naoki will be conferred "Bangabandhu Medal for Diplomatic Excellence" for their significant contribution to diplomacy.

The awards will be given at the inaugural of the new building of the foreign ministry tomorrow.

Sultana has successfully handled exodus of hundreds of Bangladeshis in one of the largest migration crisis in Europe, following the Russian aggression in Ukraine in February. Naoki, meanwhile, has been playing an important role in boosting bilateral relationship.



Passengers sitting amidst huge piles of sand and bricks at a platform inside Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. To reduce accidents while people get on or off trains, the railway authorities have been increasing the height of the platform. However, in the process, they are leaving little to no room for passengers to move around, especially amid the Eid rush.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Better call Galib!

DB arrests fraudster who duped people in guise of police

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Galib is a problem solver of sorts. He deals with police-related issues, like releasing someone from custody and ensuring that an accused is not beaten while in remand.

For his "services", Tk 25,000 is deposited into his mobile financial service (MFS) accounts every day on average. How much he got through his bank accounts is still not known.

Besides these, he takes a hefty amount from several dozens of vehicles, to ensure that they can easily pass police check-posts.

For years, the 46-year-old Galib Chowdhury Khokon, using the fake identity of an assistant inspector general (AIG) of Police Headquarters, has been duping police and people in general.

To do this, he has maintained

area-based sources to get information and a bodyguard to do his personal work.

The bodyguard is paid a monthly salary of Tk 10,000 and accommodation.

The financial crime investigation team of cyber and special crime division of police's detective branch (DB) has come to know about all this after arresting Galib from the capital's Sabujbagh area on Monday.

Police also arrested his bodyguard Md Liaqat Ali (35) and one of his sources Saiful Chowdhury (37).

Mohidul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of the

division, said they got to know about Galib after he took around Tk 85,000 from the father of an accused. Galib had promised that the accused would not be placed in remand.

"He was involved in such frauds for the last several years. For different types of activities, he used to charge different amounts."



For instance, he took Tk 5,000 to release a document-less bike from police, and Tk 20,000 to call an officer-in-charge (OC) to arrest an accused who has a warrant against them.

"After analysing six months' statements of Galib's three MFS

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## EVM not reliable Says Shujan report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) is a shabby tool and it is depriving people of their voting rights, said Sushasoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar at a press conference yesterday.

"In the 2017 Cumilla City Corporation election, 64 percent of the votes were cast in the paper ballot. This time, 59 percent of the total votes were cast using EVM. When it comes to voting on EVM, many people went back after failing to cast their votes as their biometric impressions did not match. In such cases, EVMs have deprived people of the right to vote," said Badiul.

He said this during unveiling of a report on the newly-elected councillors and mayor of Cumilla City Corporation polls at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

He said in the 2018 general elections, around 81 percent of votes were cast in the 294 constituencies in which paper ballots were used. In the other six constituencies, where votes were cast using EVMs, 51 percent of votes were cast.

"That is a difference of 30 percent, which means that either there were manipulations using paper ballots or people were deprived of the right to vote where EVMs were used," said Badiul.

Speakers at the event also said it is not possible to hold the upcoming parliamentary polls in a participatory manner if the political parties' confidence in the EC is not restored.

In their report, Shujan mentioned that almost 62 percent of the elected in the polls are

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

**Sylhet City Corporation**  
 Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet  
 www.scc.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.07.0000.018.99.025.19.15 Date: 05/07/2022

**e-Tender Notice-01/2022-23**

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives.
2. Agency	Sylhet City Corporation.
3. Budget and source of funds	ADP/ADP (Special) Revenue fund of SCC.

Tender ID No.	Name of the work	Last date of tender submission
716046 (LTM)	Development of RCC Road at Danapara.	21/07/2022
716057 (OTM)	Supplying & Installation of Cats eye / Road stud.	21/07/2022
716121 (OTM)	Vertical extension of Bomomala School (3rd & 4th floor).	21/07/2022

4. Name, Designation & Address of PE  
 Engr. Md. Ali Akbar  
 Superintending Engineer  
 Sylhet City Corporation.  
 +8802 9966 40486

5. This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd

6. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.

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

Superintending Engineer  
 Sylhet City Corporation.

GD-1350

**Galib took Tk 5,000 to release a document-less bike from police, and Tk 20,000 to tell an OC to arrest an accused. The fraudster's sources mainly brought needy people to him, and for this, he often paid each source Tk 5,000 to 20,000 as commission.**

## 46 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 46 dengue patients were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours that ended at 8:00am yesterday.

With the 46 new cases (three from outside Dhaka) the total number of dengue patients rose to 1,284, according to DGHS. Among the patients, 152 are still undergoing treatment. A total of 1,131 patients have been released from hospitals and one patient has died so far.

## Govt sends aid for quake victims in Afghanistan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh yesterday sent emergency relief materials including biscuits, noodles, powdered milk, tents and medicines to the earthquake victims.

Over a thousand Afghans were killed, some 2,000 seriously injured and thousands of others became homeless with their houses completely destroyed in the earthquake in Afghanistan's eastern region on 22 June.

**National University**  
 GAZIPUR

Ref. No. ENGG17-0/00232/2021(11)/1/22 Dated: 04-Jul-2022

**e-Tender Notice**

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Package No., Ref No. & Date	Name of work	Publishing & last selling date	Closing and opening date & time
1	Tender ID: 715741 Package No: EGP-NU-2022-027 Ref No: ENGG17-0/00059/2015(16)/1/23 Date: 04-Jul-2022	Renovation works including Sanitary work for 1 <sup>st</sup> floor of city office at National University, Bangladesh	06-Jul-2022 & 19-Jul-2022	Date: 20-Jul-2022 Time: 14:00
2	Tender ID: 715740 Package No: EGP-NU-2022-024 Ref No: ENGG17-0/00053/2015(45)/1/24 Date: 04-Jul-2022	Supply of Digital Photocopy Machine for Various Departments at National University, Bangladesh	06-Jul-2022 & 20-Jul-2022	Date: 21-Jul-2022 Time: 14:00
3	Tender ID: 715739 Package No: EGP-NU-2022-025 Ref No: ENGG17-0/00092/2015(24)/1/25 Date: 04-Jul-2022	Supply of Laptop, Brand Computer, Printer, UPS and Others Equipment for Various Departments at National University, Bangladesh	06-Jul-2022 & 26-Jul-2022	Date: 27-Jul-2022 Time: 14:00
4	Tender ID: 715738 Package No: EGP-NU-2022-026 Ref No: ENGG17-0/00170/2016(25)/1/25 Date: 04-Jul-2022	Supply of Brand Computer, Laptop, Printer, Server, License and Related IT Equipment's for ICT Department at National University, Bangladesh	06-Jul-2022 & 27-Jul-2022	Date: 28-Jul-2022 Time: 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Md. Abu Hanif  
 Director (Additional Charge)  
 Engineering Department  
 National University, Gazipur  
 Phone: 02996691534

GD-1348

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
 বাংলাদেশ ভূতাত্ত্বিক জরিপ অধিদপ্তর  
 পাইওনিয়ার রোড, সেগুনবাগিচা  
 ঢাকা-১০০০।  
 নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ক্র. নং	স্বত্বাধার/বিভাগ	আলাদা ও খনিজ সম্পদ বিভাগ
১	একেশ্বরি	বাংলাদেশ ভূতাত্ত্বিক জরিপ অধিদপ্তর
৩	বিক্রয়কারীর নাম	মহাপরিচালক
৪	যে দরপত্রের অন্তর্ভুক্তি	অকেজো মোড়িত বিভিন্ন মডেলের ০৯ (নয়) টি গাড়ী এবং বিভিন্ন মাসামাল/স্পারিস নিলামে বিক্রি
৫	বিক্রয়ের সুর নং	২৮.০৫.০০০০.২০২১.০৭.২৫৭.২২.২২৭২
৬	তারিখ	০৪.০৭.২০২২
৭	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	০৪.০৭.২০২২
৮	দরপত্র বিক্রির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	২৬.০৭.২০২২
৯	দরপত্র বাতিলের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৭.০৭.২০২২
১০	দরপত্র উপস্থাপনের তারিখ ও সময়	২৭.০৭.২০২২
১১	দরপত্র দাখিল করে দেওয়ার জন্য টাকা জমা	রুম নং ২০৩/২০৪
১২	দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রয়	রুম নং ২৪২
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিল গ্রহণ	রুম নং ৩১৩
১৪	দরপত্র দাখিল উপস্থাপন	রুম নং ৩১৩
১৫	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা ও উপস্থাপনা	হাটনানাম ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট সার্টিফিকেট ও টিন সার্টিফিকেট
১৬	দরপত্র দাখিলের মূল্য (টাকা)	টাকা-৩,০০০.০০
১৭	পণ্যের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	অকেজো মোড়িত বিভিন্ন মডেলের ০৯ (নয়) টি গাড়ী এবং বিভিন্ন মাসামাল/স্পারিস
১৮	মাসামাল পরিদর্শনের জন্য যোগাযোগ	স্টোর অফিসার, রুম নং ১২০, সেকশন ২.০০ হতে বিকাল ০৫.০০ পর্যন্ত
১৯	লট নং	লটের শনাক্তকরণ
A	TRANSPORT (VEHICLES)	কিমেবি, টোকা এবং বস্তুকা অফিস।
B	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (General)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
C	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Bologna)	কিমেবি, বস্তুকা ক্যাম্প অফিস।
D	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Workshop)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
E	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Chemistry)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
F	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Geophysical Store)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
G	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Computer Cell)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
H	SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Pedman)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
I	Miscellaneous Item (Security)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
J	Vehicle Item ACCESSORIES & SPARES (Vehicles)	কিমেবি, ঢাকা অফিস।
২০	দরপত্র অর্জনকারী সকল দরপত্র বা দরপত্র প্রক্রিয়া বাতিল করিবার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।	

সহযোগে/মাসে সম্পন্ন করার সময় কাব্যদেশ গ্রহণের তারিখ হতে ০৭ (সাত) দিন।

মোঃ হাকিমুল ইসলাম হান্নান  
 সংগ্রহণ কর্মকর্তা  
 কিমেবি, ঢাকা  
 মহাপরিচালকের লক্ষে।

GD-1344

## SITAKUNDA BLAST

## Who started the fire?

CPA unable to find source, blasts depot authorities for negligence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The probe committee formed by Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) to investigate the devastating fire and explosion at Sitakunda's BM Container Depot last month could not ascertain the source or specific reason behind the fire.

The probe report, however, found negligence on the depot authority's end in handling and preserving dangerous cargo, and the absence of a proper fire-fighting system, which increased the casualties.

Containers carrying dangerous substance like hydrogen peroxide were not kept separately or remotely in the depot, rather those were kept alongside containers carrying other export materials like textile items, said the report.

Stating that if the depot authority had immediately removed the container where smoke was first seen, the incident might not have been so severe, the report held the depot officials responsible for this.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

**PRAYER TIMING**  
JULY 6

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-55	8-17
JAMAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



The century-old Barabakunda station in Chattogram was closed down in 2009, due to a station-master crisis, and now, the building remains deserted. Forty-six stations in Bangladesh Railway's east zone have met the same fate, all because there aren't enough staffers to keep them operational.

PHOTO: STAR

## Railway's east zone reels from manpower crisis

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Authorities of Bangladesh Railway's (BR) east zone have closed down 46 of the 228 railway stations due to severe workforce shortage. This has resulted in delays of over 30 minutes on different routes of the zone.

Apart from that, revenue collection has dropped significantly, as ticket counters of those stations are non-operational, BR officials said.

"Revenue collection of the railway has decreased. In addition, equipment and resources of the closed station are being wasted due to lack of maintenance," said Nazmul Hasan, chief commercial manager of east zone.

The Dhaka-Chattogram rail line, the most important corridor of the railway network, also constitutes a major part of

the Trans-Asian Railway.

BR officials said Subarna Express, which is supposed to take five hours for the Dhaka-Chattogram trip, takes around six due to the closed stations.

According to BR data, the workforce shortage has reached such a severe level that 10 of the active stations remain open for only eight hours a day. There are 350 station masters in the east zone, against a requirement of 667.

Omar Faruk, a loco-master, told The Daily Star, "We always run trains slowly while passing by the closed stations for safety, because there are no employees there to direct us. As a result, we usually take more time for a trip."

Although a train's normal speed should be 72 kilometres per hour, loco-masters have to decrease that to 48 kilometres

while passing by, Faruk said.

Not only Subarna Express but trains of east zone's different routes also take extra time.

Officials said 10 employees are needed for smooth functioning of any station, but several stations are running with only three or four employees, who are under huge workload.

In 2009, BR closed the century-old Barabakunda station in Chattogram, due to a station-master crisis.

Zakir Hossain, additional chief operating superintendent of east zone, told this newspaper, "Due to lack of staffers, we are not able to run uninterrupted trains. We need to make stations functional to ensure smooth movement."

Jahangir Hossain, general manager

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## Boy found dead in Ctg monastery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A boy was found dead in a Buddhist monastery in Abdullahpur South Baruapara in Chattogram yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shraman Tushi Mong Marma (10), son of Paichi Mong Marma from Kaukhali area in Rangamati, said police.

He was found hanging from a ceiling fan inside Abdullahpur Dhatuchait Bihar in Fatikchhari area around 7:00am. The body was sent to CMC morgue for autopsy. Fatikchhari Police Station Inspector (investigation) Md Shamsuddin, said they will talk to the monastery residents and visit the spot for investigation. No case was filed.

## Eid joy marred by tragedy

STAR REPORT

Ashikur Rahman (28) was returning home for Eid after taking treatment at a Dhaka hospital. But little did he know that he'll never reach his destination.

His bus, Selfie Paribahan collided head-on with a truck and at Tora under Manikganj Sadar upazila on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway yesterday morning, injuring 10 (including drivers and helpers of the vehicles) and leaving him dead in the process.

Ashikur hailed from Pachuria village under Manikganj's Sadar upazila. His parents who were also travelling with him were unhurt in the accident, but their lives have been scarred forever.

According to police, the bus left Dhaka's Gabtoli for Paturia Ghat in Manikganj yesterday morning.

The accident occurred when the bus collided head-on with a truck coming from the opposite direction around 10:30am, at the eastern end of Tora Bridge on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway.



## NEWS

### UGC clamps down

FROM PAGE 12  
restrictions on rag day celebrations as per an order of the High Court," UGC acting chairman Prof Dil Afroza Begum told The Daily Star yesterday.

She categorically said they were not banning the rag day celebrations.

"The authorities of universities will determine what are obscenity, nudity, DJ party, indecent and cruel behaviour," she added.

Prof Afroza said activities that are indecent in the eyes of the society should be termed indecent.

On April 17, the HC directed the authorities to stop DJ party, illegal and cruel activities and bullying in the name of rag day celebrations at educational institutions within 30 days.

The court also issued a rule asking the authorities to explain within four weeks why their inaction to stop such activities at the institutions should not be declared illegal.

Mohammad Kamrul Hasan, Supreme Court lawyer and the writ petitioner, told this paper yesterday that he filed the

petition as there were media reports about indecent activities and bullying during rag day celebrations at different educational institutions.

On June 30, Dhaka University syndicate decided that from now on, students will be able to celebrate the closing ceremony of education instead of rag day.

Department chairman or institute director and student advisers after having meetings with students will finalise the programme details.

### Digitalisation saved time, money

FROM PAGE 12  
education ministry, land ministry, medical education and family welfare division and health services division under the ministry of health and family welfare, and ministry of primary and mass education

After losing his educational certificates, Md Solayman Hossain, an employee of a private educational institute, applied to his respective

educational board online for a replacement. In just three days, he got copies of his certificates.

He needed to visit the board just once to collect the copies, which cost him Tk 558, according to the IMED report.

Previously, one needed to pay Tk 100-200 to just collect the form although it was supposed to be free.

To request the service, one needed to collect several documents like a general diary from

the police station, a certificate of studentship from the headmaster, and photocopies of the educational certificates.

One needed to visit the headmaster for the certificate several times, had to face hassle to match the past documents from the school and also had to stand in a long queue for paying bank fees.

The process took one to six months previously, cost more than Tk 5,000 and pay five to six visits to the

board, the report said.

Similarly, it now takes five days to amend the registration card and cost Tk 1,200. This previously cost Tk 3,000 and took 28 days.

Among the employees of the ministries and divisions, 30 percent said they could focus more at work for digitalisation, 11 percent said their lives have become simpler and 1 percent said they could find time for digitalisation.

The study also found

resistance among the senior officers in offering services digitally. And many are not comfortable with using the internet yet to offer and request services.

Slow internet was another impediment to popularising government services online.

The report recommended a separate unit in the ministries and divisions to facilitate the delivery of the services online.

### Henolux MD, wife held

FROM PAGE 12  
2020. On several occasions, they gave him some money as a share of profit. But at one point, the couple stopped providing the profit shares and started harassing him using their people.

Anisur had formed human chains in Kushtia

and Dhaka and held several press conferences. He also filed two cases against the duo with a Kushtia court, said his brother Nazrul, adding the cases are under trail now.

Nazrul said his brother had been depressed over his investment in the company.

Anisur was a contractor and had a business of used vehicles. But he was facing a financial crisis.

Anisur, a father of three, was the president of Kushtia Chhatra League in 1993. He was known as an honest student leader in the district.

### Poor planning jacked up cost by 47 percent

FROM PAGE 12  
began, its design had to be altered for a second time as the government decided to turn the Dhaka Bypass Road an access-controlled expressway.

According to the new plan, two flyovers were constructed -- a 1,239-meter-long flyover on

Dhaka Sylhet Highway and a 611-meter-long flyover on Dhaka Bypass Road.

The total cost of the project rose to Tk 353.36 crore and the deadline was extended to July 2020.

"It would have been possible to avoid increasing the time and cost of the

project implementation if the correct design and DPP had been prepared following a feasibility study," says the report.

"Preparation of DPP of the project on the basis of preliminary information without feasibility study has resulted in two changes in design

for construction of the functional flyovers," it added.

The report further says the completion of the project led to a reduction in traffic congestion, travel time and cost, the number of accidents and also contributed to the overall social and economic

development of people.

However, during project inspection, it was found that the flyovers were not properly maintained. Weeds had grown in several pipes of the flyovers and pipes for draining water were broken. Besides, lighting was inadequate, it added.

### Malaysian ACC starts probe

FROM PAGE 12  
froze the recruitment, citing the anomalies were resulting in human trafficking and forced labour.

Over three years later, Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur signed an MoU for recruiting workers from Bangladesh in December last year. Though more than six months have passed, the

recruitment is yet to start. After submitting the complaint to the MACC, PKR National Youth Legal Bureau Secretary Darwin Lim Chee Chien said they called for a thorough investigation, reports Malaysiakini, an online news portal based in Kuala Lumpur.

Lim said the complaint

emphasised allegations of monopoly in the recruitment process, the integrity of the companies involved in the process and allegations of corruption in the selection process of the companies.

Lim said 1,300 companies sought permits but only 25 companies were given the permissions to

hire workers.

The complaint also referred to an agency in Dhaka which claimed that Bestinet Sdn Bhd founder Mohd Amin Abdul Nor, a Bangladesh-origin Malaysian, had influenced the Malaysian government to limit the number of agencies supplying workers to 25 companies only.

### Now toiletries dearer too

FROM PAGE 1  
It's a fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war."

Kibria said there was a 5-10 percent reduction in demand for their products due to the price hike.

A spokesperson of

Unilever Bangladesh Ltd said in recent times, import and production costs have risen significantly mainly due to the rise in raw material prices in the global market, rise in shipping costs and depreciation of the taka

against the dollar.

"We have been navigating our business through unprecedented cost inflation, which required us to increase prices," he said, Jesmin Zaman, head of marketing at Square Toiletries, said

the company did not increase prices of those products, namely diapers and sanitary napkins, on which consumers are highly dependent. "We have hiked prices of those products, for which we could not bear the costs

at all. However, we have not increased prices in proportion to the increase in cost of raw materials."

She said prices of some raw materials and packaging materials are on the downturn and the company would reduce

prices.

Ghulam Rahman, president of the CAB, said, "But the high profiteering mentality of businesses keeps prices high at the retail stage. This ultimately affects low- and fixed-income consumers."

### Solar storms

FROM PAGE 12  
virtually diving. The sink rate between December and April has been 20 kilometres [12 miles] per year."

It's thought that the new solar cycle - which

started concurrently with these phenomena - could be responsible. More solar wind activity, as well as sunspots, solar flares, and coronal mass ejections, are being generated at an increasing rate.

Sydney floods force thousands more to flee

AFP, Sydney
Rain-swollen rivers spilled mud-brown waters across swathes of Sydney yesterday, swamping homes and roads while forcing thousands to flee.
The authorities have now instructed about 50,000 people to evacuate and another 28,000 to prepare to escape the rising waters in New South Wales (NSW), officials said.
Emergency workers carried out 142 flood rescues in NSW over 24 hours. The federal govt has declared a natural disaster in 23 flooded parts of New South Wales, unlocking relief payments to stricken residents.

Ukraine arms spreading to MidEast, black market

AFP, Moscow
Russia yesterday claimed that some of the weapons the West is sending to Ukraine are spreading across the Middle East and ending up on the black market.
Speaking in televised remarks, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said that Ukraine had received more than 28,000 tonnes of military cargo so far, and some of the Western weapons were appearing in the Middle East.
He did not provide any details to back up his claim.
"ln the hope of prolonging the conflict in Ukraine, the collective West is continuing large-scale arms supplies to the Kyiv regime," Shoigu said.

"According to information at our disposal, some of the foreign weapons supplied by the West to Ukraine are spreading across the Middle Eastern region and are also ending up on the black market."
President Vladimir Putin on Monday ordered Russian troops to press their offensive deeper into the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine after Moscow's forces seized the strategic city of Lysychansk.
Shoigu told Putin on Monday that Moscow's forces were now in full control of the Lugansk region.
On Tuesday, Shoigu said that Russia would continue what the Kremlin has termed a "special military operation" until the end.



See 'through the BJP's fake nationalism' Says Congress

NDTV ONLINE
The Congress yesterday targeted the BJP over its alleged links with an accused in the gruesome Udaipur murder and a captured Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist.
The party appealed to the people to see "through the BJP's fake nationalism and its disturbing willingness to flirt with anti-national forces".
This comes after it was found that a wanted Lashkar-e-Taiba, captured in Jammu and Kashmir Sunday, was an active member of BJP and the party's Minority Morcha social media in-charge in Jammu.
In the Udaipur case, the Congress had pointed to media reports and social media posts to allege that one of the main accused in the gruesome murder is a "BJP member".

US JULY 4 PARADE SHOOTING Suspect arrested

AFP, Highland Park
Police arrested a suspect after a mass shooting left six dead at a US Independence Day parade in a wealthy Chicago suburb. Robert Crimo, 22, was identified as a "person of interest" and became the target of a massive manhunt across the town of Highland Park in Illinois, where a rooftop gunman with a high-powered rifle turned a family-focused July 4 parade celebration into a scene of death and trauma.
Emergency officials said around two dozen people, including children, were treated for gunshot injuries, with some in critical condition. After a brief car chase, Crimo, who bills himself as a musician, was taken into custody "without incident," Highland Park police chief Lou Jogmen told reporters.
According to the Gun Violence Archive website, there have been 311 mass shootings carried out in the US so far in 2022 causing nearly 40,000 deaths.



Advertisement for Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BSBK) recruitment. Includes logo, title 'নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি', and detailed instructions in Bengali regarding application process, fees, and contact information.

# The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

## Loadshedding returns with a vengeance

### Govt should have expected gas price volatility and taken apt measures

IT is concerning to note that people across the country are having to endure long power cuts as electricity production is being hampered mainly because of a shortage of natural gas supply. Around 52 percent of the country's power is produced using gas, according to Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) data. And data from Petrobangla shows that the government has been injecting less LNG into the national gas supply grid, as it decided to not buy LNG from the international spot market for the time being due to its increased price. When the government last bought LNG from the spot market in May, the price of LNG was USD 26 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit. Now, it has shot up to USD 36 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit. According to the Petrobangla chairman, the government would only buy more LNG once the price comes down which, given the global circumstances, may take some time.

As the government lowered its gas supply for energy production, people across the country have been experiencing power outages multiple times a day, bringing back memories of days when "loadshedding" was a common phenomenon. At least 854 mmcfid (million cubic feet per day) of LNG was supplied to the national gas grid on June 29. That figure, however, dropped down to 507 mmcfid by July 4, according to Petrobangla data. Even though it is easy to accept that the government is in a tight spot in relation to gas supply because of external factors, what we cannot understand is why the government did not anticipate the ongoing supply crunch and take pre-emptive measures to prevent the present crisis.

The government itself has admitted that the main reason for the rise in gas price is the Russia-Ukraine war. But that war began on February 24. The government should have anticipated a rise in gas price in its immediate aftermath, and taken necessary steps to mitigate any potential crisis. In fact, experts have long warned of an impending crisis because of the government's overdependence on expensive LNG from abroad. Because the government failed to take into account these concerns, people across the country are now suffering – industries are having to endure higher production costs, and hospitals are suffering from power outages while doctors are in the middle of performing surgeries on their patients.

This cannot continue. The government cannot simply expect people to endure such hardship day in and day out. It needs to immediately come up with an alternative strategy, with a focus on renewable energy, and in the meanwhile, make sure that healthcare and other essential services are not hampered by this type of power outages. Additionally, it needs to return to focusing on local gas exploration and extraction instead of relying so heavily on its export, as experts have suggested for years.

## Wake up and smell the 4th Covid wave

### Virus transmission could go from bad to worse during Eid

AS experts have confirmed already, Bangladesh has entered its fourth wave of Covid infections within the last few weeks. In the 24 hours till 8am on Tuesday, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) reported 7 Covid deaths and 1,998 cases of infection. The day before, the country reported 12 Covid deaths – the highest after March 5 this year when 13 people had died. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the test positivity rate for the virus stood at 16.74 percent, which is a staggering difference from the 0.8 percent positivity rate at the end of May. While it was timely of the Cabinet Division to issue a mask mandate on June 28 to battle this rise in Covid cases, all institutions and individuals must come together to practice health safety rules vehemently – especially during the upcoming traditionally chaotic homegoing days of the Eid-ul-Adha.

In addition to a reluctance towards mask-wearing and social distancing, many of the population also seem to be in denial of the fact that the fourth Covid wave is in Bangladesh. Some think their fever may be due to dengue – which in itself is nothing to be brushed aside – or that their symptoms indicate only a seasonal flu. However, the data of recent weeks proves otherwise.

The only way for one to find out whether their symptoms are from the coronavirus or not would be to get tested. Given that many are intimidated by the costliness of laboratory tests, the government should subsidise such testing so that citizens are able to get reliable diagnoses early on and can seek proper treatment.

More worrying is the fact that Eid holidays are days away, during which thousands of people will be travelling between the capital and the rest of the country, packed into cars, buses, trains, and ferries. Experts rightly fear that this could result in a high surge in Covid cases post-Eid.

The coronavirus is something that is here to stay, and will only mutate to take different, often more dangerous, forms. To combat this, it is crucial that the population stays up-to-date on their Covid vaccines, as every dose eventually wears off – exposing a person to higher chances of being infected.

As such, only our vigilance (through daily health safety measures and receiving vaccines) can prevent the virus from devouring numerous lives and livelihoods, as it has done in the past. We urge the government to ensure that health and safety rules are strictly enforced at shopping malls, kitchen markets, and on public transport vehicles, and that a thorough and efficient vaccine drive is conducted to safeguard the population against this fourth wave of the Covid virus in Bangladesh.

# Vigilance, precaution and prevention



**A CLOSER LOOK**  
Tasneem Tayeb  
is a columnist for The Daily Star.  
Her Twitter handle is @tasneem\_tayeb

TASNEEM TAYEB

BA NGLADESH is seeing another rise of Covid-19 cases. In the first five days of July alone, 32 Covid-infected patients died, according to the health directorate. As of 6pm July 5, our total caseload stands at 1,982,972 since the pandemic broke out in the country on March 8, 2020.

This scenario once again reminds us of the fact that we are still in the midst of a pandemic, although at times – especially when Covid is less active – we seem to lose sight of it and take on a more complacent approach in our fight against the pandemic.

For some time now, Europe, the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean and Southeast Asia have been witnessing a rise in Covid, with Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 accounting for many of those cases. These two subvariants are highly contagious, classified as variants of concern by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and can easily navigate the immunity provided by previous infections and cause breakthrough infections.

Traces of BA.4 and BA.5 have also been found in Bangladesh. The Jashore University of Science and Technology was the first to report detection of the subvariants in June. And with the rising number of cases, the footprint of these subvariants has increased.

Under such circumstances, our immediate way forward is strictly reinforcing and adhering to safety guidelines. But even in this, there seems to be a reluctance on the government's part. In view of the deteriorating situation, the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) for Covid management in Bangladesh, during a meeting on June 14, recommended implementing six restrictions to curb the spread of the infection. However, it was not until June 28 – two weeks after the NTAC meeting – that the Cabinet Division issued a notification on the new restrictions. Given the urgency, why did it take two weeks for the authorities to issue the notification?

Similarly, people too seem reluctant to stay safe. They are hardly seen wearing masks out in public: on the roads, in public transport, inside shops, in the crammed lifts.

But then, masks are a luxury for some – especially for rickshaw-pullers, van-pullers, hawkers and day labourers, for whom meeting the daily basic needs is a challenge at present. And in the

reality of inflation, for most – even in the middle class – masks would likely be at the bottom of the monthly grocery list. One needs to note here that masks are no longer VAT-exempted, meaning their prices have increased. Why the authorities made such a decision is another question which with no logic one can answer. What is even more unfortunate

Bangladesh, the challenge would be to get the bivalent vaccines.

A two-pronged approach could cushion us from the shocks of the fourth wave of the pandemic. While complete lockdown is not a feasible solution, especially in view of the economic pressures we are already facing, we cannot also allow the situation to reach



▲ VISUAL: STAR

**In the reality of inflation, for most – even in the middle class – masks would likely be at the bottom of the monthly grocery list. One needs to note here that masks are no longer VAT-exempted, meaning their prices have increased.**

is the irresponsible behaviour of the people and institutions we consider responsible. Big, crowded events such as Eid fairs, weddings, parties and official programmes are going on in full swing. Now, with Eid-ul-Azha coming up, Covid cases are expected to increase, because as usual, public transports will be operating in overcapacity; buses, launches, trains and trawlers will be overcrowded with homeward-bound people, turning them into the ideal hotbeds for Covid breeding.

In view of this, our healthcare professionals need to brace themselves for a new onslaught of Covid cases. Although the government has done a commendable job of vaccinating more than 70.4 percent of the population with two full doses of the coronavirus vaccine, it won't be enough to stop the spread of the subvariants. A part of the solution could be in the bivalent vaccine, which is currently in development. Bivalent vaccine works by "stimulating an immune response against two different antigens, such as two different viruses or other microorganisms," according to the National Cancer Institute in the US.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has asked Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna to develop bivalent vaccines that could target both the original coronavirus strain, as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants, according to the FDA's top vaccine regulator, Dr Peter Marks. The FDA is planning this for the autumn boosters. However, for countries like

a point where the only solution is a hard lockdown. Therefore, at this point, what we need to focus on are strict implementation of social distancing and health safety protocols. Since the new variants are still active in small clusters, vigilant monitoring of cases, proactive contact tracing, immediate testing, and isolation where required would be key in preventing the new variants from spreading. At the same time, law enforcement officials need to strictly enforce social distancing guidelines. At the same time, VAT on masks should be withdrawn immediately. Rather, masks should be subsidised so that a greater number of our population can afford them.

Vaccination is the other component of this two-pronged solution. The government needs to ramp up efforts further to vaccinate the population with booster shots, and start immediate inoculation of children aged 5-12. Moreover, it should start working right away to secure the doses of bivalent vaccines, especially for the frontline workers and the elderly in order to provide them with the immunity required.

Comprehensive, combined and concerted efforts are our only weapons to overcome the fourth wave. With the holiday weekend coming up and then winter in a few months, vigilance, precaution and prevention should be our agenda to tackle the fourth wave of Covid infections.

## Muslims are not alone in being hounded in India



Jawed Naqvi is a New Delhi correspondent of Dawn.

JAWED NAQVI

THERE'S no denying that India's Muslims are a major target in the culture of hate being fomented across the country. It's equally true, however, that Muslims are not alone in being hunted and hounded by an increasingly wilful right-wing state.

Let's not ignore too the virtual absence of Muslims from struggles in India on issues that may not seem to involve them as a community per se, but in a wider shared sense of the fight for democracy do.

Seldom – if ever – has one seen the community taking to the streets on issues of education and health, or even jobs for their people or other Indians. There's an invisible obstacle, as it were, to a full-throated participation like, for example, the time when a controversial citizenship law is being imposed on the community or when majoritarian groups make offensive remarks about their religion. Let's see what so many non-Muslim activists are doing for the Muslims and for the country as a whole, of which the Muslims are such a large, if grudging, part. Is there a way to cut loose from the self-limiting worldview?

Let's begin with July 5, which marks a year since Father Stan Swamy died in a Mumbai prison.

Millions had celebrated the 84-year-old Jesuit priest as a selfless worker for the Dalit and tribal people of Jharkhand, and also for his commitment to the constitution's secular, democratic and socialist objectives.

Then one day Swamy became the

oldest member of a clutch of renowned public intellectuals who were thrown into prison under reason-defying anti-terror laws. Swamy died of Covid-related complications, a scourge his younger colleagues in prison somehow survived.

A gentleman to the core, Swamy knew he was innocent, though the charges did not surprise him. "What is happening to me is not something unique or happening to me alone; it is a broader process taking place all over the country. We all are aware how prominent intellectuals, lawyers, writers, poets, activists, student leaders are all put in jail because they have expressed their dissent or raised questions about the ruling powers of India," he told an interviewer.

Christophe Jaffrelot, in his book *Modi's India: Hindu Nationalism and the Rise of Ethnic Democracy*, discusses in detail the Bhima Koregaon case in which Swamy and some of India's most selfless rights activists stand targeted as "urban Naxals."

"The way the urban Naxals have been harassed and arrested in India before and after 2019 suggests that police forces reporting to BJP ministers have emulated the Hindu nationalist vigilantes to some extent, and appear to be translating into action the increasingly authoritarian strategy of the government, a trend that also manifested in the decline of freedom of expression..." says Jaffrelot.

Many eyebrows were raised recently when the Supreme Court gave a clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in cases pertaining to anti-Muslim pogroms during his tenure as the chief minister of Gujarat. What caused greater consternation was the court's censure of the petitioners and an unusual order that those who pursued the case for over 16 years be put in the dock.

Consequently, rights activist Teesta Setalvad and two former top cops were slapped with charges and jailed. All three

had stood shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim victims of the pogroms. But the debate over the shocking judgment hasn't significantly enthused major Muslim groups – barring some individual responses – that seem to confine their interest to religious disputes.

The Indian state has acquired additional features of a police state under the post-2019 BJP-led government. Immediately after Modi II was formed, recalls Jaffrelot, Indian parliament passed a law that empowered the state to designate individuals as terrorists. Previously, that was the case only for organisations.

Many were arrested since the law came into effect, all accused of conspiracy to overthrow the government and assassinate the prime minister. The Amnesty Tech (Amnesty International digital security team) later discovered that one of the seized computers contained malware allowing remote access, through which incriminating letters could have been planted. The idea that the letters had been manufactured was supported by the fact that Naxals' communication is heavily coded, says Jaffrelot.

Eminent historian Romila Thapar and other scholars filed a petition against the targeting of intellectuals, but lost the appeal. The dissenting judge, Justice DY Chandrachud, observed "that a clear-cut distinction has to be made between opposition to the government and attempts to overthrow the government by rising up in arms." For him, the Bhima Koregaon case was "an attempt by the state to muzzle dissent... Each of them is prosecuted for being a defender of persons subjected to human rights violations." Justice Chandrachud is expected to become chief justice in November 2022.

**This article was first published in Dawn, an ANN partner of The Daily Star, on July 5, 2022. Read the full version of this article on our website.**

**Many eyebrows were raised recently when the Supreme Court gave a clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in cases pertaining to anti-Muslim pogroms during his tenure as the chief minister of Gujarat.**

# The lucrative enterprise of grabbing



SHAHNOOR WAHID

Shahnoor Wahid is a senior journalist.

“NOTED physicist a victim of land grabbing,” screamed the headline on the City Page of *The Daily Star* on June 19. The story details how an old man ran from door to door to free his land from the ugly clutches of grabbers.

In another report in the *Daily Ittefaq*, we learnt how a woman grabbed all the properties of an expatriate man by forging his signature and personal information. She earned his confidence by doing some minor jobs for him, and when he trusted her with renewing his passport, she came up with her masterstroke. Collecting full information provided in his passport, she prepared some false documents and claimed ownership of most of his properties. A clever act of grabbing, indeed.

In this daily, we have also read a report on how there was an onslaught of grabbing on the Meghna River. The report elaborated on the fact that the river custodians turned a blind eye to “influential grabbers” filling up the Meghna foreshore. These are big grabbers in tuxedos who sit next to you in the club of elites.

Chatto gram used to boast of thousands of beautiful hills all over the district, but today hundreds of them are gone. In the name of numerous *prokolpos*, the hills have been levelled to the ground and occupied. If you look at the 100-year-old maps of the country, you will notice many small rivers and canals crisscrossing the landscape. Most of them have been devoured by the influential grabbers lurking under the shadow of the powers that be over the century.

Dhaka city once had about 10 major canals – all are gone now. The official

record says they have been grabbed by some influential people. We believe these influential people were and still are more powerful than the government. The cat-and-mouse game of grabbing the land on the two sides of Buriganga River has taken a legendary proportion by now.

One must recognise the fact that grabbers in Bangladesh have taken the

Analysing the success of these hard-working and innovative people, I strongly suggest that, instead of a BCS university, as suggested by an eminent teacher, someone open a university to impart theoretical knowledge as well as practical training on how to grab things: anything, from your mobile phone to 100 acres of government land, private land or a

prominent one among them. In both the urban and rural areas, life revolves around land. A man in love with his land would not hesitate to kill or die for it. In this connection, we may suggest including Leo Tolstoy’s short story “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” in the syllabus of the institute. Added to that should be the wisdom of Niccolo Machiavelli, who said, “But above all he must refrain from seizing the property of others, because a man is quicker to forget the death of his father than the loss of his patrimony.”

These enterprising humans are active in our rural areas, too, with a dredger to grab sand from the bottom of the river or earth-cutter to cut the top soil of agricultural land in broad daylight. You don’t care if in the process the land loses fertility and water gets stuck in the ditches. When you have cut the top soil of about 200 acres of land and sold it to the local brickfield owner, your attention turns towards the village road with four feet of elevation waiting to be devoured. Since it will be difficult to cut the entire road in daytime, you wait for midnight. Your attention will soon turn to the riverbanks.

When a nosy reporter goes to the local administration to collect information regarding the grabbing of a pond or a hill by the blessed ones, they usually say, “No, no, no, no. No such thing has come to our notice. How can anyone fill up an entire pond or cut down a hill when we are sitting here (read: sleeping)? We shall send someone to inspect. We shall definitely take stern action against anyone doing any mischief.” The reporter comes back knowing what to expect when he will visit the office next month.

What about the blessed ones who can vanish millions from the vaults of the banks like the mercurial Harry Houdini? When we are hounded by our banks for the monthly credit card instalment of Tk 600, lo and behold, the blessed ones will get another sanction of, say, Tk 15 crore, even though he has not paid a single instalment of interest on his first loan worth Tk 20 crore!



VISUAL: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

enterprise to the highest level of creativity and perfection. They began as small-time snatchers, but worked hard to become big-time grabbers. They have shown the world how to put paws on anything that is worth a dime. Therefore, the enterprise should be given due recognition and enlisted as a legitimate commercial activity. Since you cannot stop these highly enterprising people with laws, you’d better come to terms with them. Commercial banks should come forward to finance these “business activities” with loans to the tune of, say, Tk 4,000 crore. That’s peanuts to some.

house, a hill or even half of an entire river, graveyards, cremation sites, playgrounds, sand, earth, toilets, skeletons, ponds, canals, riverbanks, forests, migratory birds and wild animals. Enrolment should be good, and very soon students from abroad would come seeking admission.

As resource persons, we should invite successful grabbers from different countries to deliver lectures on the art of the business. They would talk about why the tendency of grabbing things that belong to others is one of the strongest characteristics in humans, and why the insatiable hunger for land is still the most

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh				
Office of the Project Director (ACE, RHD) Matarbari Port Development Project (RHD Component) 1st Floor, Foreign Aided Projects Office Building Road # 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213 E-mail: pdportrhd@gmail.com				
Tender for Works (Multiple Lots)				
Ref. No. PD/MPDP/916		Dated: 05/07/2022		
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>				
1	Procurement method/document	ICT Open (One Stage Two Envelope Method)		
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>				
2	Source of funds	Development Budget (Aid Grant/Credit) Sponsoring Ministry: Ministry of Shipping		
3	Development partner	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)		
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>				
4	Project/programme code			
5	Project/programme name	Matarbari Port Development Project		
6	Tender Package No.	MRDP/RHD/01/2022-2023		
7	Tender package name	Construction of Matarbari Port Access Road and Matarbari Port North South Connector Road		
8	Tender publication date	05/07/2022		
9	Tender last selling date	11/10/2022		
10	Tender closing date and time	12/10/2022 02:00pm		
11	Tender opening date and time	12/10/2022 03:00pm		
12	Name and address of the office(s)			
	-Selling tender document (principal)	Office of the Project Director, 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.		
	-Selling tender document (others)	Office of the Project Director, 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.		
	-Receiving tender document	Office of the Project Director, 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.		
	-Opening tender document	Office of the Project Director, 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.		
13	Place/date/time for pre-tender meeting	Office of the Project Director, 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh. 31/08/2022 02:00PM		
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>				
14	Eligibility of tenderer	Open to all bidders from JICA eligible source countries as defined in Bidding Document, provided that they are otherwise qualified as stipulated in the Bid Data Sheets and the Evaluation & Qualification Criteria. A joint Venture fulfilling all requirements as stated in the qualification criteria may participate in the Bid.		
15	Brief description of goods or works	Construction of 26.0km 2-lane Port Access Road including 14 bridges with a total length of 10,675.478m and 1.2 km 4-lane North South Connector Road □ Lot No. 1 (Civil Works Package No.		
16	Brief description of related services	Nil		
17	Tender document price	BDT 20,000.00 for each lot. A complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address above and will be made available upon payment of a non-refundable fee of BDT 20,000 in cash, or cashier’s check or courier at the Bidders’ own arrangement.		
17	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount in Taka
	1	CW-3a	Upazila: Moheshkhali / District: Cox’s Bazar	USD 5,500,000 or JPY 750,000,000 or BDT 500,000,000
	2	CW-3b	Upazila: Moheshkhali, Pekua, Chakaria / District: Cox’s Bazar	USD 5,500,000 or JPY 750,000,000 or BDT 500,000,000
	3	CW-3c	Upazila: Chakaria / District: Cox’s Bazar	USD 5,500,000 or JPY 750,000,000 or BDT 500,000,000
<b>COMPLETION TIME</b>				
				42 months
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>				
18	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Zakir Hossain		
19	Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director, (ACE), RHD		
20	Address of official inviting tender	Matarbari Port Development Project (RHD Component), 1st Floor, RHD Foreign Aided Projects Office Building, Road No. 27, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.		
21	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel. No: +880-1313-092-129 E-mail: pdportrhd@gmail.com		
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders				
 <b>Md. Zakir Hossain</b> ID No. 005168 Project Director (ACE), RHD Matarbari Port Development Project (RHD Component) E-mail: pdportrhd@gmail.com Phone: +88 01313 092 129				



## Cattle sales get momentum

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Cattle sales have started to gain momentum in the port city as Eid-ul-Azha inches closer. Although activities in seven cattle markets managed by Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) began in July 1, traders said sales would reach their peak after July 6.

There are three permanent cattle markets in the city -- Sagarika Cattle Market, Bibirhat Cattle Market and Postar Par Goat Market. In addition, there are four temporary cattle markets -- Karnafuli Cattle Market, the field adjacent to Saltgola Railway Crossing, Khejurtola field adjacent Patenga Link Road and the field adjacent to Butterfly Park in South Patenga.

Abdul Hannan came to Bibirhat Cattle Market with 20 oxen. He was demanding a price between Tk 1.5 lakh and Tk 4.5 lakh for each one. He said he has sold one ox in the last three days.

"Customers ask for the price but none seem interested to make their purchase at the moment," he said. "Usually, sales increase three or four days before Eid."



Rezaul Karim Liton, a representative of Bibirhat Cattle Market leasing company, said, "In cities, many don't have the space to accommodate sacrificial animals or the time to feed them, take care of them for

six to seven days. Thus, they prefer to purchase two to three days before Eid," he said.

Rozdar Mandal, a cattle trader, brought 15 oxen with him from Kushtia at the Karnafuli cattle market -- setting the price between Tk 2.5 lakh and 4.5 lakh for each.

One of his oxen, weighing 12 mounds and named "Lal Badsha" was priced at Tk 5 lakh. Many buyers and visitors were coming to the temporary cattle market to see the ox. Rozdar said, "I've taken care of them for the last one and a half years. Everyone's bargaining the price of 'Lal Badsha' but I won't sell it under Tk 5 lakh."

Meanwhile, Sagarika Cattle Market was abuzz with buyers and sales have already gained momentum there.

Ariful Islam, a representative of the market leasing company, said a total of 80 bulls and oxen and over a thousand goats have already been sold there till Sunday.

Meanwhile, sales in the small markets in the vicinities, lanes, and by-lanes have also been gaining crowd. One of these markets, set up on KB Aman Ali Road set up with around 80 cattle and was seen quite crowded with buyers.

# An Eid like no other Chattogram edition

**Hundreds of flatbreads are made in every house centring on Eid. Hosting guests with freshly cooked meat and hand-made bread is a must-have of Chatgaiya culture. It is also a traditional custom in Chattogram to distribute these hand-made flatbreads and cooked mezbani meat or kala bhuna to the homes of relatives.**

MD NAZRUL ISLAM

Eid is a celebration for Muslims across the world, a celebration that brings people together. However, different countries have different customs and cultures of celebrations, and even within the same countries, the celebrations take different faces in different regions.

This beautiful paradox is more prominent when it comes to Eid in Chattogram, which is somewhat different from all the other regions of the country. Considering the size and population of the district, Chattogram has more sacrificial animals than other districts.

Moslem Uddin, president of Chattogram Rawhide Traders Association, estimates almost four lakh animals will be sacrificed in Chattogram this Eid.

Given the context of the grandeur, one may wonder -- how an average Chittagonian celebrates Eid?

Let's start with the sacrificial rituals.

The people of Chattogram prefer to offer their sacrifice on the very first day of Eid-ul-Azha, however, in a few cases that may be an exception. Traditionally, they prefer a single animal's sacrifice, be it -- a cow, buffalo, or camel under the name of seven people. In the case of goats, sheep, and ewes, there is a religious provision for sacrificing under a

single name.

Individual family units prefer to sacrifice one cow. Some also prefer oxen, while others prefer bulls. In many remote regions of Chattogram, there's also a prevalence of conducting bull-fights. However, it's hard to convince any Chittagonian, who usually sacrifices oxen, to buy bulls.

Families engaged in business are more prevalent in Chattogram. This is why many families sacrifice more than one animal due to their affluence, breaking convention. Wealthy families tend to sacrifice large quantities of expensive animals. Whereas, lower-income residents prefer small-sized bulls. Although there are different breeds of bulls in the country -- "Red Chittagong Cattle" or RCC is more of a popular choice in Chattogram.

A prevalent custom in this subcontinent is to share the joy of any religious festivities among relatives. But when it comes to treating in-laws' families during Eid-ul-Azha, Chattogram can be a bit too extra.

Sending sacrificial animals to the daughter's in-law's house is an age-old custom in Chattogram. This practice still goes on in the region per the person's affordability.

SM Abu Tayyab, former first vice-president of BGMEA and former president of Chittagong Club, told this correspondent

that it is a traditional custom in Chattogram to send sacrificial animals to the house of the girl's father-in-law.

"However, this age-old practice at times creates pressure on the lower strata of the society," he said.

Then comes the food. If extravagance needs any other synonym, it should be Chittagonian food during festivals. Preparations start on the day of Eid with the preparations of flatbreads -- an essential Eid breakfast in Chattogram, like many other regions of the country.

However, the difference is in the numbers. Hundreds of flatbreads are made in every house centring on Eid. Hosting guests with freshly cooked meat and hand-made bread is a must-have of Chatgaiya culture. It is also a traditional custom in Chattogram to distribute these hand-made flatbreads and cooked mezbani meat or kala bhuna to the homes of relatives.

Manjurul Haque, managing director of Barcode Limited and former vice-president of Chittagong Club, said the prime delicacy of Chattogram on Eid-ul-Azha is freshly cooked meat with rice-flour flatbread.

Chittagonians who live abroad also takes rice husks with them so that they can also celebrate Eid-ul-Azha the traditional way in those countries.

## Spice prices going down as supply picks up ahead of Eid

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Prices of several spices have gone down in the port city's wholesale and retail markets, due to increased supply ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

Normally, prices of all kinds of spices go up ahead of such festivals. This year, however, traders had to reduce prices, as supply increased but the desired demand did not.

Prices of cumin, cinnamon, turmeric, clove, garlic, ginger and cardamom have dropped 3 to 20 percent in just a month. Many ambitious traders have suffered huge losses, as prices continue to fall.

Amidst all this, the price of onion has risen by Tk 10 during the period. It is being sold for Tk 50 to 60 per kilo at wholesale markets and Tk 55 to 65 at retail markets.



According to Chattogram Customs House, total imports of seven spices -- pepper, cinnamon, turmeric, cardamoms, cloves, cumin and garlic -- through Chattogram port from April to June stood at around 37 lakh tonnes, 7 lakh more than previous year's imports during the same period.

Sagir Ahmed, general secretary of Khatunganj Traders Association, told The Daily Star, "Traders imported and stocked more due to the Covid-19 situation, but the demand has decreased. If this continues, most importers and wholesalers will face losses."

On the bright side, people of Chattogram are happy with the prices.

Amirul Islam, former banker and resident of the city's GEC area, said, "The traders artificially increase prices every year, but that didn't happen this year."



## Tough time for RAWHIDE TRADERS

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Rawhide traders are facing a tough time with their business as 21 out of 22 tanneries in Chattogram have been shut down. They are now forced to sell hides at a cheaper rate due to the absence of a competitive market in the port city.

Every year during Eid-ul-Azha, rawhide is sold at a lower price than the price fixed by the government, which is decreasing the collection of rawhide, said traders.

They claimed there were at least 22 tanneries in the port city. Over the years since 1971, various reasons contributed to the factories shutting down. At present only one tannery has survived.

A total of 112 merchants operate under Chattogram Rawhide Warehouse Traders (CRWT) and another 150 operate outside the association in the port city. However only 55 merchants, out of 112, are running their businesses. The rest were forced to close shop in the last few years.

Merchants expect that they'll be able to collect at least four lakh pieces of rawhide including cow, goat and buffalo post Eid-ul-Azha. Although they collected 4.82 lakh pieces of rawhide in 2021, the numbers significantly decreased since 2018, when

about 5.75 lakh pieces were collected.

Moslem Uddin, president of CRWT, said, "This year, we have a target of procuring around 4 lakh pieces of rawhide (20% less than the previous year) due to a capital crisis and also since many merchants have closed their businesses."

"The port city tanneries, which used to only depend on cowhide collected across Chattogram region including the hill tracts got shut down over the years, increasing dependence on Dhaka markets."

He also said 20-30 thousand skins are wasted every year as they cannot be collected properly or sold by traders.

Khurshed Alam, an adviser to Chattogram Rawhide Traders Samaboy Samiti said, "Over the years most tanneries got shut down as the government enacted strict law against pollutant factories."

"At present the one factory that exists purchases 15-20 percent of the total collection of rawhide. The rest of us have to depend on Dhaka tanneries for business."

"The shutdown of Chattogram tanneries has been a great loss for us. We urge the government to bring back tanneries ensuring necessary precaution for environmental safety," Kader added.

## Blacksmiths: men of the hour

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

The blacksmiths in the port city have been passing busy days ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, making and sharpening tools for sacrificial animals.

Besides cattle markets, the people are approaching different blacksmiths shops to buy machetes, choppers, cleavers and different sizes of knives where workers are preparing iron-made tools to attract customers.

When visiting several blacksmith shops in Chattogram's Lal Dhigi's Jail Road, Choumuhuny, Riazuddin Bazar, Muradpur, Bakalia-Kalamia Bazar, Halishahar-Boropol and EPZ area, this correspondent found all of them extremely busy. Even at the last minute, a large number of people were seen thronging the shops to buy new, ready-made tools.

Sixty-year-old Ajoy Karmakar, whose shop is on Nayabazar's Dhaka Trunk Road of Nayabazar, told this correspondent that they have made different kinds and sizes of tools depending on the customers' demand.

"The prices of knives start from Tk 150 to Tk 350 per piece, while those of machetes start from Tk 350 to Tk 1200 depending on its size and iron quality," he added.

Siddiq Mia, a 65-year-old blacksmith in Halishahar's Boropol area, said, "Usually there is no rush before Eid-ul-Azha. This year, a month or so before Eid, the demand is growing high."

"As the time is running out fast, we are whetting the tools with electric machines," he added.

Besides blacksmiths' shops, hawkers who sell knives or sharpen sharp tools by visiting door to door are also on a busy schedule.

"The sharpening business will go on around the clock till Eid day. We earn Tk 800-1000 per job by removing rust from the tools," said Md Mozammel, a mobile vendor at Halishahar.

According to the data provided by livestock officials of Chattogram, around 8 lakh cattle are likely to be sacrificed this Eid.



## NZC decision shines a ray of hope

SPORTS REPORTER

Many probably did not notice, but the news was a huge step towards gender equality in sport, specifically in cricket, when New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and the players' association signed a five-year deal on Tuesday that will see male and female cricketers receive equal pay.

The agreement will see women at both international and domestic level receive the same match fee as men across all formats and competitions.

It was a step that broke the mould in women's cricket as NZC became the first board in international cricket to implement equal pay for males and females.

However, considering the current context of Bangladesh cricket, equal pay remains a distant reality despite a considerable improvement in narrowing the pay gap between men and women players in the national team.

The top centrally-contracted male cricketers like Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim receive a monthly salary of over Tk 4,00,000 while the lowest monthly salary is over 2,00,000.

Although there has been a significant improvement in their package, an A-grade Bangladesh national women's cricketer like Rumana Ahmed, Salma Khatun or Nigar Sultana receive a monthly salary of over Tk 70,000 per month. Meanwhile, females in the lower grades get around Tk 50,000 as monthly salary after the Bangladesh Cricket Board increased the salary up to 33 per cent in an attempt to encourage female cricketers.

In terms of match fees, male players reportedly earn Tk 6,00,000 (approximately USD 7,000) per Test, BDT 3,00,000 (approximately USD 3,500) per ODI, and BDT 2,00,000 (approximately USD 2,350) for each T20I. On the other hand, women cricketers earn USD 300 and USD 150 for ODIs and T20Is respectively.



"It wouldn't be right to compare (New Zealand Cricket's initiative) because it wouldn't match in many contexts. We are trying to improve when it comes to discrimination between male and female cricketers and we have plans," BCB's women's wing chairman and director Shafiqul Alam Chowdhury Nadel told The Daily Star. "But you also need to accept reality. What I can say is that it has changed a lot if you look at what it was in the past."

Despite the attempts to enhance women cricketers' pay in Bangladesh cricket, the picture in the rural and grassroots level remains disappointing. Many female cricketers don't even know what a match fee is. But there is a ray of hope, in that cricket can change the lives of these girls.

"Many girls who love this game and take it as a passion don't know what a match fee is. They only know that they have come from the village to Dhaka to play cricket and they dream of representing the Bangladesh team like Jahanara, Salma and others."

"However if we compare women's with men's, I believe that girls have shown great potential. If we can encourage our girls to play more cricket in rural areas, it will help us stop child marriage and parents will show more interest in allowing their girls to play this game," said former female cricketer Mishu Chowdhury.



Jonny Bairstow and Joe Root (inset) hit hundreds as England continued their resurgence with a record fourth-innings chase to beat India by seven wickets in the Covid-delayed fifth Test at Edgbaston yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'Teams will be better than us, but not braver than us'

AGENCIES

England came to Edgbaston having gunned down targets of 277, 299 and 296 in their last three Test matches. On Tuesday they made it four in a row, pulling off their highest successful chase in Test cricket as Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow completed sparkling unbeaten hundreds, making India's celebrated bowling attack look utterly bereft of ideas in near-perfect batting conditions.

Set 378 to win, England finished on 378-3, with former captain Root 142 not out and Bairstow 114 not out – his second hundred of the match after he made 106 in the hosts' first-innings 284.

Victory saw England level this five-match series at 2-2.

"We're trying to rewrite how Test cricket is being played in England," Ben Stokes said of the team's new approach since he assumed captaincy and Brendon

McCullum took over as the head coach.

"All the plans we've put together in the last 4-5 weeks we're going to try and carry forward."

"We know that we want to give some new life to Test cricket. The support we received has been fantastic in the short time that we've been around."

"Inspiring the next generation is what we want to do. We want to bring in new fans and want to leave a mark on Test cricket."

Few expected England to win so easily after conceding a first-innings lead of 132 and set a target they had never been able to achieve.

India stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah, leading the side in place of the Covid-hit Rohit Sharma, regretted how his side let the opposition take control of the game.

"Test cricket is never easy," said the fast bowler. "We had three good days and we were a

little short with the bat and we let the opposition in."

In chase of the record target, Alex Lees and Zak Crawley got them off to a flyer with a rapid century stand.

Even after they lost three quick wickets, centurions Root and Bairstow continued to play their shots.

Stokes said having clarity about individual roles was key to their stunning success.

"When you have clarity like we do at the moment in the dressing room, it makes totals like that and just the game itself a lot easier."

"(The target of 378) five-six weeks ago would have been scary, but it was good," said the all-rounder.

He quoted team mate Jack Leach to articulate the new team philosophy: "Some times, teams will be better than us, but no one will be braver than us, quote by Jack Leach."

## Will Riyadh meet Mominul's fate?

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Following the T20 World Cup debacle in the UAE last year, there were talks in the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) hierarchy about finding a new direction for the T20I team.

However, with two key series against Pakistan and Afghanistan so soon after that debacle, the BCB did not want to mess up the balance of the side and create further chaos.

But the series against Pakistan and Afghanistan saw similar performances when BCB did not want to rock the boat by relieving Mahmudullah Riyad of the captaincy even after insipid performances from the team. It was hoped that four months' break following the

Afghanistan series would see the skipper set a much more defined outline for the side but after the first two T20Is in the Caribbean, the team's tactical processes still appear half-cooked.

To make matters worse, Riyad's form with the bat did not inspire confidence in the side. Coming in at number five, Riyad's role is to give the team the momentum in the end overs by stepping on the power-hitting paddle. There have been many occasions in the past where Riyad has turned saviour by putting his skill-hitting ability to use.

That brings BCB to the current situation where the captain himself has not been amongst the runs. When he has wanted to accelerate in recent outings, it has only led to his dismissal, much in the same way he fell in the two T20Is in Dominica against West Indies.

READ FULL STORY ONLINE



## School chess returns with a new hope

ANISUR RAHMAN

Since the emergence of Enamul Hossain Razib as the country's fifth and last Grandmaster in 2008, no Bangladeshi chess player has won a single GM norm.

The sorry state of the game has apparently prompted Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) to revive school chess tournament, which had produced talented players such as former national women's champion Sharmin Sultana Shirin, WIM Shamima Akter Liza, IM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagor and IM Mohammad Fahad Rahman.

Standard Chartered Bank played a key role in the rise of talented players since 1999 to 2012 except for two years from 2009 to 2010, but the bank withdrew its sponsorship due to the organisers' failure in organising the final round in Dhaka in 2013.

The broken pipeline is now set to be revived through Marks Active School Chess Championship, a championship which will be held on home-and-away format. The inauguration of the championship was held at a hotel in Dhaka on Monday and the games will start on July 23 in 16 districts.

"We held the school tournament



twice in last six years with students only from Dhaka schools. However, our president IGP Benazir Ahmed has roped in Abul Khair Group to sponsor school chess across the country for the next five years," BCF general secretary Syed Shahabuddin Ahmed Shamim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Unlike previous occasions, this

time the participating schools are given importance with eight to 10 educational institutes competing on home-and-away format in each of 64 districts before the district champions move into divisional level and eight divisional champions play in the final round in Dhaka.

Some 20,000 students from 3500 schools across the country

are expected to be involved and the players will be given a week-long training before the kick-off at district level.

"We don't want to chase a sixth, seventh or eighth Grand Master, instead we want to produce at least 100 potential players, who will have rating between 2200 to 2400 and will have the ability to fight for GM norms, through this championship," said the BCF general secretary.

GM Razib has termed BCF's initiative and different format of the championship as an encouraging one.

"As schools will compete as teams, I think the new format will increase interest in schools, who earlier didn't show much interest in individual participants (students)," Razib said, adding that objective of the home-and-away format is to inspire schools to create chess clubs and a chess culture in every school across the country.

"We should set our target to spread chess across the country instead of targeting to get a sixth Grand Master. If we can do it through the school chess championship, we will get different kinds of talented players who will later be FM, IM and then GM will come automatically which is happening in India now," opined Razib.

## 'Healthy' Nadal eyes Wimbledon semis

AFP, London

Rafael Nadal has shrugged off fresh concerns over his fitness as he targets a place in the Wimbledon semi-finals on Wednesday.

The 36-year-old Spaniard played his last 16-clash at the All England Club on Monday against Botich van de Zandschulp with strapping across his abdomen.

Only last month, he won a 14th French Open with his troublesome left foot anaesthetised before undergoing career-saving treatment.

Nadal refused to discuss whether or not his latest physical concern is a worry.

"I'm a little bit tired to talk about my body, all the issues that I am having. I prefer to not talk about that now," said Nadal. "All respect for the rest of the opponents. For the moment I am healthy enough to keep going and fight for the things that I want."

Nadal is halfway to the first calendar Grand Slam by a man since Rod Laver in 1969.

After needing four sets in each of the first two rounds to progress, Nadal has since looked impressive, sweeping past Lorenzo Sonego and Van de Zandschulp to make the quarter-finals for an eighth time.

On Wednesday, he will seek to reach the semi-finals, also for the eighth time, when he faces in-form Taylor Fritz.

The American is in the last-eight of a Slam for the first time and has yet to drop a set. The 24-year-old defeated Nadal in the Indian Wells Masters final earlier this year when the Spaniard was suffering from a cracked rib.

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## Licence to be mandatory for bike registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

From September 14, the government will not register motorcycles unless their owners have a driving licence, the BRTA has said. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority sent a circular in this connection to all its field offices yesterday.

The vehicle regulatory body made the decision as the number of road crashes and deaths involving motorcycles saw a sharp rise in recent times.

Around three years ago, the BRTA had suggested making driving licence mandatory for buying bikes.

They, however, had to take a step back following strong opposition from motorcycle importers and manufacturers.

Citing safety concerns, the government has taken a series of measures against the two-wheelers over the last two weeks.

Bangladesh Bridge  
SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Motorcyclists in Khulna protesting the government's decision of banning motorcycles on highways during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays. They submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner yesterday after the protest.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## DEATH OF BUSINESSMAN Henolux MD, wife held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab last night arrested Henolux Group Managing Director Nurul Amin and Director Fatema Amin at a flat in the capital's Uttara on charges of instigating a businessman to die by suicide.

Earlier in the day, the brother of Gazi Anisur Rahman, who died yesterday morning of burn injuries, filed a case against the couple with Shahbagh Police Station.

The 50-year-old businessman from Kumarkhali, Kushtia, set himself on fire in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital Monday afternoon after losing the money he had invested in a company owned by Amin.

He died yesterday morning at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery where he was taken with 90 percent of his body burnt.

The complaint filed by Gazi Nazrul Islam mentioned that the accused took a large amount of money from Anisur but did not return the money, causing him to be utterly frustrated, said Sub-Inspector Golam Hossain of Shahbagh Police Station.

Nazrul said that his brother invested Tk 1.26 crore in the company of the accused.

On May 29, Anisur told a press conference at Jatiya Press Club that Nurul Amin and Fatema Amin got him to give them the money with promises of making him a business partner.

Anisur also said the couple promised that he would get Tk 3 crore with dividends in December

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

# Digitalisation saved time, money

## Finds IMED study

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and DWAIPIYAN BARUA

The digitalisation of 66 percent of the services offered by six ministries/divisions has saved both time and money of the ordinary people and also ensured service delivery, found a recent study by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division.

The study, which comprised of interviews with service recipients and providers, found that 92 percent saved money, 96 percent saved time and 70 percent were relieved of the hassle they faced at government offices for the digitalisation of the services.

One such beneficiary is Ramjan Ali, a farmer from Chuadanga.

The 70-year-old previously had the worst experience in land mutation as it took an inordinate amount of time, money, documents and hassle on his part.

But his quest to get the service became exponentially easier once the government digitalised the 10 services under five departments of the land ministry, according to the report, which was released last week.

Since July 1, 2019, e-mutation can be requested and in seven days land mutation can be obtained. Previously, it took at least 28 days.

At present, the services that can be requested online include e-mutation, mutated ledger, payment of land development tax, and collection of e-landlets.

So far more than 3 crore people got land registration by paying the land development tax online without spending additional money.

Half of the people surveyed by IMED said their sufferings have reduced for the digitalisation of the land ministry's services.

As many as 161 services out of the 244 provided by 28 agencies under six ministries and divisions have been digitalised.

The ministries and divisions are: the directorate of secondary and higher education and technical and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## BHULTA FLYOVER

# Poor planning jacked up cost by 47 percent

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

About nine years back, the government approved a project to build a 613-meter-long four-lane flyover at Bhulta on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway to reduce traffic congestion and road crashes.

The project at Bhulta where Dhaka-Sylhet Highway crosses Dhaka Bypass Road was supposed to be completed by June 2015 at a cost of Tk 239.7 crore.

When the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) moved to implement the project, it found that the flyover's length was too short to be effective enough to help reduce tailback. And the project was revised accordingly in November 2016.

But soon after the construction of the flyover started, the project was again revised in July 2018 as the RHD decided to construct another flyover on Dhaka Bypass Road for better traffic management.

When the project was completed in July 2020, the cost stood at Tk 353.36 crore.

"The project required 250 percent extra time and 47.36 percent additional funding to implement because the project was prepared on the basis of preliminary information, without feasibility study," reads a IMED report.

Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of Planning Ministry released the Impact Evaluation Study report recently.

Time and cost overrun of development projects have become a major concern in recent times, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on several occasions

giving directives to stop the malpractice.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) recently said the government is making significant investments in public infrastructure projects (PIPs), but a lack of good governance in project implementation undermines their efficiency.

The think tank identified weak feasibility studies, coordination failure, delays in land acquisition, and frequent changes of project directors as some of the key reasons behind the poor governance in PIPs implementation.

The Daily Star called RHD Chief AKM Manir Hossain Pathan over his mobile phone yesterday evening, but he didn't pick up.

Later, he sent a text message, saying he was sick.

**"It would have been possible to avoid increasing the time and cost of the project implementation if the correct design and DPP had been prepared following a feasibility study."**

Says IMED report.

also high, reads the IMED report.

Considering this, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) in October 2013 approved the project to build a four-lane flyover though no feasibility study on the project was carried out, it mentioned.

The Development Project Proposal (DPP) was prepared on the basis of "preliminary information" but it was later found that the design of 613-meter-long flyover would not fulfil the project's purpose. And the design was eventually changed.

But immediately after the flyover's construction

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Solar storms causing satellites to drop from orbits

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists believe that solar weather could be causing satellites to drop out of their orbits.



Over the past year, the European Space Agency's Swarm constellation – which measures magnetic fields around Earth – started dropping in the atmosphere ten times faster than before.

"In the last five, six years, the satellites were sinking about two and a half kilometres [1.5 miles] a year," Anja Stromme, ESA's Swarm mission manager, told Space.com.

"But since December last year, they have been

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

## UGC clamps down on rag day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Grants Commission put restrictions on celebrations of rag day, a day on which university students usually take last class and hold different programmes amid fanfare.

In letters to all the public and private universities, the commission asked the authorities concerned to stop all kinds of obscenity, nudity, DJ party, indecent and cruel behaviour, banned activities and bullying in the name of rag day celebrations.

\*We place some  
SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## RECRUITMENT OF BANGLADESHIS Malaysian ACC starts probe on 'syndication'

PORIMOL PALMA

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has started investigation into the allegations of syndication in the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers in the Southeast Asian country.

A source in Kuala Lumpur told The Daily Star yesterday that a MACC team visited the office of Bestinet, a Malaysian IT firm involved in the manpower recruitment process, and talked to its officials on the syndication.

The move comes a day after the youth wing of Malaysian political party, People's Justice Party (PKR), submitted a complaint to the MACC amid allegations that the Malaysian

government selected a syndicate of 25 Bangladeshi agencies for recruiting Bangladeshi workers.

Civil societies in Malaysia and Bangladesh and most of the recruiting agencies in Bangladesh have been opposing the idea of syndicated system for labour recruitment, arguing that it would increase the recruitment cost like that in 2016-18.

During that time, a syndicate of 10 recruiting agencies controlled the labour recruitment from Bangladesh, and the cost for a worker went up to Tk 4 lakh, which was initially set by the government at Tk 39,000 and then increased to Tk 160,000.

The then Malaysian government

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

শোক বার্তা

ROBINTEK

আমরা শোকাবত

দেউর মায়ার আত্মত্যাগের কোং পিন্ডিতে এর সোহানমান এবং বাহার বাংলাদেশ লিডিং এর পরিচালক মেজর (কর্প.) টি আই এম নূরুল নবী (বরিশা) এর বাসস্থান পরিচালক জনাব সাধাওয়ার মায়র বাহার মোহাম্মদ এর বড় ভাই। গত ০৬/০৭/২০২২ ইং তারিখ রোজ সোমবার চিকিৎসাধীন অবস্থায় ইজেরাল কামে। (ইদ্রা পিয়ারি ওয়া ইদ্রা ইলাহিই রাকিবুল)

বরিশা জেলার শিবগঞ্জ পঞ্চায়েত পঞ্চ থেকে মন্ত্রকের বিদেহী বাহার মাহদিয়াত কামলা করছি এবং তাঁর শোক-সম্বন্ধ পরিবারের সকলকে প্রতি সমবেদনা জ্ঞাপন করছি। মহান আল্লাহ রাসুল জাশামিন তাকে অল্লাহুল ফেরওয়াল মসির করুন, আমিন।

মহান্নের নামাজে জানাজা আজ ৬ জুলাই ২০২২ ইং তারিখ রোজ বুবার, বাস বাহার জলশান আজল মসজিদে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

**Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Ltd.**  
(A JOINT VENTURE OF BANGLADESH POWER DEVELOPMENT BOARD (BPDB), BANGLADESH, AND NTPC LIMITED, INDIA)

INVITATION FOR BID FOR PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY OF 8.0 MMT OF IMPORTED COAL AT PLANT JETTY (CDP) FOR 2X660MW MAITREE SUPER THERMAL POWER PROJECT AT RAMPAL, DISTRICT-BAGERHAT, KHULNA DIVISION, BANGLADESH (International Competitive Bidding)

IFB No.: BIFPCL/MSTPP/COAL/8.0MMT/886 DATED: 04.07.2022

Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Limited (BIFPCL) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders in Single Stage Two Envelopes (Envelope-1: Technical Proposal and Envelope-2: Financial Proposal) for Procurement and Delivery of 8.0 MMT of Imported Coal at Plant Jetty (CDP) for the aforementioned Project.

Bidding Document shall be available for sale and download from 06.07.2022, 10:00 Hrs. (BST) to 07.08.2022, 17:00 Hrs. (BST). Pre-Bid Meeting shall be held on 08.08.2022 commencing at 11:00 Hrs. (BST).

Last date for submission of Bids shall be 27.09.2022 upto 11:00 Hrs. (BST) and Technical Proposal shall be opened at 11:30 Hrs. (BST) on 27.09.2022.

Cost of bidding document is BDT 50,000 or USD 550 and shall be payable in the form of Demand Draft or Pay Order or through Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT).

For Qualifying Requirements, Scope of Work, availability of Bidding Document, and other details, please refer to detailed Invitation for Bid available at [www.bifpcl.com](http://www.bifpcl.com); [www.bpdb.gov.bd](http://www.bpdb.gov.bd); [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in); and [www.cptu.gov.bd](http://www.cptu.gov.bd) or may contact the office of the undersigned. For all other details, may please visit the website [www.bifpcl.com](http://www.bifpcl.com).

Tapas Kumar Mazumdar  
Chief Procurement Officer (CPO)-I/c, BIFPCL  
Unique Heights (Borak), Level-17, 117 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1000  
Tel. No.: +8802-49357956; Mob.: +88 01324249831; E-mail: [coabourcing@bifpcl.com](mailto:coabourcing@bifpcl.com)