



Post-Eid cleaning done promptly



Srimangal's tourism takes hit due to floods



Trifecta of films, makers claim success



Rishi Sunak gets rival's backing to be next UK PM

CRISES IN SRI LANKA

President fails to flee

Seeks seaborne escape ahead of resignation today; protesters reject all-party govt

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka's president headed to a naval base yesterday with a view to fleeing his island by ship following a humiliating standoff at the airport, official sources said.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa has promised to resign today and clear the way for a "peaceful transition of power" following widespread protests against him over the country's worst economic crisis.

The 73-year-old leader fled his official residence in Colombo just before tens of thousands of protesters overran it on Saturday. He then wanted to fly to Dubai, officials said.

As president, Rajapaksa enjoys immunity from arrest, and he is believed to want to go abroad before stepping down to avoid the possibility of being detained.

But immigration staff at Bandaranaike International withdrew from VIP services on Monday and insisted that all passengers must go through public counters.

The presidential party was reluctant to go through regular channels fearing public reactions, a security official said, and as a result, missed four flights that could have taken them to the United Arab Emirates.

Attempts to arrange a military flight to a neighbouring country also failed as clearance to land was not immediately available, the official added. The president and his wife spent the night at a military airbase next to the airport.

A top defence source said the president's closest military aides were discussing the possibility of taking him and his entourage overseas aboard a naval patrol craft.

"The best option now is to take the sea exit," the defence official said. "He could go to the Maldives or India and get a flight to Dubai."

The group left the airbase yesterday afternoon in two Bell 412 helicopters, an airport source said, bound for the northeastern port of Trincomalee, site of the naval base where Rajapaksa initially took refuge after fleeing his palace on Saturday.

Another option was to fly from Hingurakgodia air base where the choppers stopped to refuel, an air force source said, adding it had a runway that could accommodate executive jets.

Rajapaksa's youngest brother Basil, who resigned in April as finance minister, missed his own Emirates flight to Dubai early yesterday after a tense standoff with airport staff.

Basil - who holds US citizenship in addition to Sri Lankan nationality - tried to use a paid concierge service for business travellers, but airport and immigration staff said they had withdrawn from the fast track service. "There were some other passengers who protested against Basil boarding their flight," an airport official told AFP. "It was a tense situation, so he hurriedly left the airport."

Basil had to obtain a new US passport after leaving his behind at the presidential palace when the Rajapaksas beat a hasty retreat to avoid mobs on Saturday, a diplomatic source said.

Official sources said a suitcase full of documents had also been left behind at the stately mansion along with 17.85 million rupees (about \$50,000) in cash, now in the custody of a Colombo court.

Tens of thousands of Sri Lankan protesters are occupying the President's House, the presidential secretariat, and the prime minister's official residence since Saturday in growing anger over the island nation's unprecedented economic crisis.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has also offered to quit once an interim all-party government being discussed among the political parties to resolve the crisis is formed.

However, protesters have rejected an all-party government and said they will not vacate the government buildings until the president and the prime minister officially resign.



A man waves Sri Lanka's national flag after climbing a tower near the presidential secretariat in Colombo yesterday after it was overrun by anti-government protesters.

PHOTO: AFP

Three new bridges usher in new hope

Construction close to completion; inauguration likely in months

TUHN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

After the grand opening of the Padma Bridge, the country is set to see the inauguration of three other major bridges in three to four months, which is expected to give a big boost to the internal communication and beyond.

The new bridges - Bekutia Bridge in Pirojpur, Kalna Bridge in Narail and 3rd Shitalakhya Bridge in Narayanganj - are being built under the network of Roads and Highways Department (RHD).

The Road Transport and Highways Division in its last monthly meeting on June 12 asked the RHD to take necessary steps for inauguration ceremonies as the construction of the bridges had neared completion.

The latest development is the construction of Bekutia Bridge, formally known as 8th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge, is done. The authorities have started preparation for inaugurating the bridge, which will establish direct road link between Barishal city and Pirojpur.

The construction of Kalna Bridge, the first six-lane bridge in the country, is expected to be completed next month. This aesthetically beautiful bridge, which will fill up the last missing link of Asian Highway-1 route, will be ready for

Infographic showing details of three bridges: Bekutia Bridge (1,493m long), Kalna Bridge (690m long), and Third Shitalakhya Bridge (1,234.5m long).

use in September.

The 3rd Shitalakhya Bridge, the long-delayed project, will establish direct road link between Narayanganj city and Bandar upazila. It is expected to be ready for use in October.

"Once the three bridges are opened to traffic, it will increase the efficiency of RHD's network further," said Shishir Kanti Routh, RHD's additional chief engineer responsible for the Bridge Management Wing.

He said the "continuous twin box girder" structure has been used for the Shitalakhya Bridge, for the first time in the country, while the Kalna Bridge is the longest "arch bridge" in Bangladesh.

"So, with the construction of the bridges, the RHD has gained

the experience of long-span bridge construction technology, which will have positive impacts on future projects," he told The Daily Star last week.

RHD is building the bridges with foreign loans and grants.

BEKUTIA BRIDGE RHD in October 2017 undertook the project to build the bridge over the Kacha river. Currently, people have to use ferries to cross the river.

The cost of the project is Tk 894 crore, of which China will provide Tk 654 crore as grant and thus the bridge is named 8th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge.

However, physical works of the project started in July 2018.

The main structure of the 1,493m

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

\$4.5B LOAN IMF team to arrive tomorrow

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

A delegation from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is set to arrive in Dhaka tomorrow on a nine-day trip to discuss the government's request for a \$4.5 billion loan in the form of budgetary support.

Rahul Anand, division chief in the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, will lead the team during talks with the senior officials of the finance ministry, the central bank, the National Board of Revenue and the Economic Relations Division.

If everything proceeds smoothly, the loan deal could be finalised by October this year, said an official of the finance ministry yesterday.

The request for budgetary support comes to shore up the precarious foreign currency reserves, which yesterday stood at \$39.8 billion - the lowest since October 14, 2020.

This is enough to cover about five months' import bills.

Typically, the World Bank and the IMF prescribe an import cover of three months, but in times of economic uncertainty, they advise keeping sufficient reserves to meet 8-9 months' imports.

Going forward, even though imports are slowly contracting, the elevated inflation levels around the world mean the odds of a slowdown in both remittance inflows and export orders, two sources

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

BUSINESS NOTICE

The business pages are not being published today and tomorrow as regular business activities are yet to resume after Eid-ul-Azha holidays. The business pages will be out as usual from Friday.

Journey to the edge of the universe

Lamiya shares experience as a member of the Webb telescope team

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Lamiya Ashraf Mowla, a Bangladeshi-born astrophysicist, is a proud part of NASA's James Webb Space Telescope team.

The telescope yesterday produced the deepest and sharpest image of the universe to date.

The image of far-flung galaxies as they were 13 billion years ago promises to reshape our understanding of the dawn of the universe.

US President Joe Biden, who unveiled the image at a White House event, called the moment "historic" and said it provided "a new window into the history of our universe".

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Webb telescope reveals mysteries of early universe

AFP, Washington

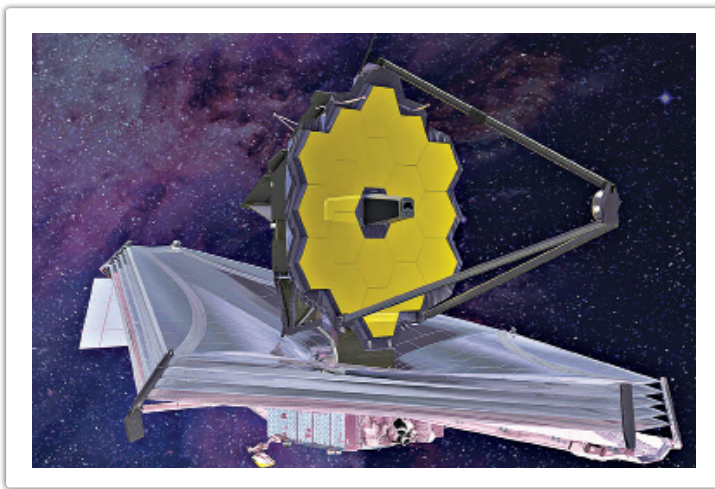
Humanity's view of the distant cosmos will never be the same.

The James Webb Space Telescope, the most powerful to be placed in orbit, has revealed the clearest image to date of the early universe, with light as old as 13 billion years, US space agency Nasa said Monday.

The stunning shot, released in a White House briefing by President Joe Biden, is overflowing with thousands of galaxies and features some of the faintest objects observed, colorized in blue, orange and white tones.

Known as Webb's First Deep Field, it shows the galaxy cluster SMACS 0723, which acts as a gravitational lens, bending light from

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Curbing inflation top priority

Says new BB governor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reining in inflation, stabilising the volatile exchange rate and shoring up the foreign currency reserves are among the major priorities for keeping the economy afloat, newly appointed Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder said yesterday.

Both the government and the central bank have already taken some measures to contain the soaring inflation, he told journalists at the central bank headquarters after joining office as the 12th BB governor.

Inflation has gone up recently due to high import payments and an increase in commodity prices in the global market, he mentioned.

Inflation surged to an eight-year high of 7.42 percent in May, according to data from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

"I'll go the extra mile to bring back stability in the exchange rate," he said.

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

"My third priority is to strengthen the foreign exchange reserves so that we have reserve assets enough to settle import bills for more than six months," he said.

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose to \$48 billion at the height of the coronavirus pandemic, he pointed out.

Rouf said the country had to spend an additional \$9 billion to import nine products, including petroleum,

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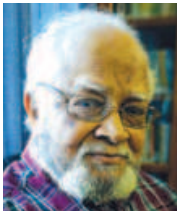


Abdur Rouf Talukder

Archaeologist Enamul Haque no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent archaeologist, historian and art expert Prof Enamul Haque died at his home in the capital on Sunday.



He was 85. He breathed his last in his sleep at 3:35pm, said research fellow SM Saiful Islam.

"Sir died of old age. Civic tributes will be paid to him on the National Museum premises on Thursday [tomorrow] morning before his first namaj-e-janaza to be held there. His body will be then taken to his village home in Bogura and a second janaza will be held there," Saiful told The Daily Star.

Haque, also a former director general of Bangladesh National Museum, will be buried at his family graveyard after a third janaza prayers.

His body was kept at the mortuary of Birdem General Hospital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid have expressed deep sorrow at the death of the famed archaeologist.

Haque completed his bachelor's degree in history and masters in archaeological history from Dhaka University. He later earned a PhD in South Asian Art from the University of Oxford. He also completed a post graduate diploma in museology from London.

The art expert joined Dhaka Museum (later Bangladesh National Museum) in 1962. He became the principal of the institution in 1965, director in 1969 and served as its director general from 1983-1991.

He had been the president of the International Council of Museums Asia-Pacific Organisation from 1983-86. He served as professor of national culture and heritage at the Independent University, Bangladesh. He was the president, chairman and academic director of the International Centre for Study of Bengal Art.

Haque, also a cultural and heritage activist, was awarded Ekushey Padak in 2014 and Independence Day Award in 2017.

He received many more accolades including the Bangladesh Shishu Academy Agrani Bank Literary Award (1986), Honorary International Council of the Asia Society of New York (1986-92), Ramaprasad Chanda Centenary Medal by the Asiatic Society of Calcutta (1993), DSc honoris causa by Open University of Alternative Medicines of India (1998), Rich Foundation Award (2012), and Padma Shri (2020), India's fourth highest civilian award.

During his studentship at Dhaka University, he was the founding editor of literature magazine "Uttaran".



A firefighter works at a site of a residential building damaged by a Russian military strike, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Mykolaiv, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Ukraine ramps up attacks on occupied south

'52 Russians killed' as rockets hit Kherson; Warring parties to hold Black Sea grain talks in Turkey

AGENCIES

Ukraine yesterday said it had launched artillery barrages that destroyed a Russian arms depot and carried out a "special operation" to free military captives in the Moscow-controlled Kherson region, a territory it eyes to retake in a counter-offensive.

The bombardments in the south came as Washington and the EU announced nearly \$3 billion combined for Ukraine and Turkey said delegations from Moscow and Kyiv would meet in Istanbul Wednesday to discuss restarting stalled grain deliveries across the Black Sea.

According to Ukraine, the strike hit an ammunition dump in the town of Nova Kakhovka in the Kherson region and killed 52 Russians. It came after Washington supplied Ukraine with HIMARS mobile artillery systems which Kyiv says its forces are starting to use with ever greater efficacy.

A Russian-installed official in Kherson gave a different version. He said at least seven people had been killed in the Ukrainian attack and that civilians and

civilian infrastructure had been hit.

The area Ukraine struck is one that Russian forces seized after launching on Feb. 24 what Moscow called "a special military operation" and is of strategic importance with Black Sea access, a once thriving agricultural industry, and a location just north of Russian-annexed Crimea.

Ukrainian government officials have spoken of efforts to marshal up to 1 million troops and of their aim to recapture southern parts of the country under Russian control which they have said are important for economic and political reasons.

"Based on the results of our rocket and artillery units, the enemy lost 52, an Msta-B howitzer, a mortar, and seven armoured and other vehicles, as well as an ammunition depot in Nova Kakhovka," Ukraine's southern military command said in statement.

Unverified videos posted on social media showed smoke and sparks, followed by an immense fireball erupting into the night sky. Pictures showed rubble strewn across streets and scorched buildings.

Images released by Russian state media showed a wasteland covered in rubble and the remains of buildings. Unverified reports on social media said the strike had killed several senior Russian military commanders.

Ukraine is itself bracing for what it expects will be a massive new Russian offensive in the east of the country where Moscow says it is determined to take control of all of the industrial Donbas region.

Russian forces have for weeks been shelling parts of the Donetsk region, which is part of Donbas, and are expected to launch an assault on the eastern city of Sloviansk.

After Russia failed to quickly take Ukraine's capital Kyiv, its forces turned to the Donbas, whose two provinces Donetsk and Luhansk have been partly controlled by Russian-backed separatists since 2014.

Russia now controls all of the Luhansk region and some of the Donetsk region. Russian President Vladimir Putin aims to hand control of the Donbas to the separatists whom Kyiv says are Russian-controlled puppets, a charge they deny.

BCL leader tortured over relationship

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A local Chhatra League leader was tied to a tree and tortured by a group of men over his relationship with a woman in Hatia Sunday evening.

Video footage of Riad Uddin Shakil, vice-president of BCL at Hatia Dwip Government College, being tortured went viral on social media the next day.

Police rescued him around 2:30am on Monday and arrested Nurul Amin, who is the father of the woman with whom Riad allegedly had a relationship, said Inspector Amir Hossain of Hatia Police Station.

Police are looking for the other suspects, he added.

9 die from Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health officials yesterday reported nine deaths from Covid and 656 new cases of the disease.

The current positivity rate is 13.78 percent, said the Directorate General of Health Services in a press release after testing 4,761 individuals.

The total number of confirmed cases rose to 19,91,031.

Henolux owners land in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Henolux Group Managing Director Nurul Amin and Director Fatema Amin were sent to jail on July 9 on charges of instigating the suicide of a businessman.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Debdash Chandra Adhikary passed the order after Gazi Salauddin, inspector of Detective Branch of police, produced them before the court on completion of a two-day remand.

The magistrate also directed the jail authorities to ensure better treatment for the couple.

Nurul and Fatema admitted to police that they took a large sum of money from the late businessman and did not return the money, said the inspector.

Earlier on that day, the brother of the victim Gazi Anisur Rahman, who on July 5 died of burn injuries, filed the case against the couple at Shahbagh Police Station.

Jubo Dal leader hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Jubo Dal leader was hacked to death allegedly by his business opponents in Jashore town yesterday.

Badiuzzaman Dhani, 48, who was the senior vice-president of Jashore District Jubo Dal, and his wife were standing next to their house in Shankarpur Chopdarpara area around 12:15pm when four or five men appeared at the scene and stabbed him multiple times.

He died at Jashore General Hospital around 2:15pm, said his younger brother Monir Hossain.

Tajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Jashore Kotwali Model Police Station, said police were looking for the attackers.

President

FROM PAGE 1

There was no official word from the president's office about his whereabouts, but he remained commander-in-chief of the armed forces with military resources at his disposal.

Rajapaksa is accused of mismanaging the economy to a point where the country has run out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports, leading to severe hardships for the 22 million population.

If he steps down as promised, Wickremesinghe will automatically become acting president until parliament elects an MP to serve out the presidential term, which ends in November 2024.

According to the Sri Lankan constitution, if both the president and the prime minister resign, the parliament's speaker takes over the presidency. Current Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardene is a relative of the Rajapaksa.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and is in talks with the IMF for a possible bailout.

Pranay Verma

FROM PAGE 12

of new Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, who took charges in May succeeding Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

The Hindu newspaper reported that India's Ambassador to Bhutan Ruchira Khambhoj is taking over as the country's permanent representative to the UN.

Indian Ambassador to Japan Sanjay Kumar Verma is set to take over as the next high commissioner to Canada. Two senior officers, including one who has been dealing with Quad negotiations, and an ambassador in West Asia, are being considered for the ambassador to Tokyo.

Quad is a strategic security dialogue between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.

Three new bridges usher in new hope

FROM PAGE 1

bridge, with 495m viaduct, became fully visible in December last year.

"All works of the bridge are done now and it's ready for opening," Project Director Abdul Awal Molla told this newspaper on July 5.

First, the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka will hand over the bridge to the road authorities, which is expected to be done soon, he said. "We have also started the process for inauguration ceremony too."

The bridge will not only establish Projipur's direct connection with Barishal city, it will also connect Barishal with Khulna.

Mongla port and the under-construction Payra port would be

the cost of Tk 959.45 crore. "We hope the work would be completed within August and the bridge would be readied for opening in September," said Project Director Shyamal Kumar Bhattacharyya.

This is a Nielsen-Lohse arch type steel bridge, which is 27.10m wide, and the first six lane bridge of the country, he added.

The Asian Highway-1 route, connecting Assam with West Bengal of India via Sylhet-Dhaka-Narail-Jashore, earlier had two missing links: one is the Padma Bridge and another Kalna Bridge. The Padma Bridge was opened to traffic last month.

"With the opening of the Kalna

commuters will have to travel less than two kilometre to reach Narayanganj city from Bandar upazila.

RHD in November 2010 initiated the bridge project with Saudi Arabia's funding. But it took over seven years to hire consultants and contractors before the physical works started in late 2017.

All major works for the 1234.5m bridge with 834.5m viaduct were done and works for installing lights and building walkways were going on now, Project Director Shoab Ahmed said on July 5.

"The bridge would be readied for use at the first part of October," he told The Daily Star.



BEKUTIA BRIDGE



KALNA BRIDGE

also connected by the bridge, and the travel from Khulna and other western parts of the country to Kuakata, a top tourist destination, will be easier, he said.

KALNA BRIDGE

RHD in May 2016 took up a project titled Cross-Border Road Network Improvement Project with a soft loan from Japan.

The Kalna Bridge over the Madhumati river, which is among 17 bridges being constructed under the Tk 3,745.51-crore project, will cut short the travel time between Dhaka and Jashore.

People are now using ferries to cross the river at Kalna.

The physical work of the 690m bridge started in November 2018 at

Bridge, the last missing link will also be disappeared," he told The Daily Star on June 6.

He said the length of the route from Dhaka to Jashore via Gabtoli-Paturia-Daulatdia-Magura-Jashore is 218km. It will be only 160km via Jatrabari-Padma Bridge-Kalana Bridge.

3RD SHITALAKHYA BRIDGE
The Shitalakhya river separates Bandar upazila from the Narayanganj district headquarters.

The direct road connection is through the Kanchpur Bridge (Shitalakhya-1 Bridge), which currently requires nearly 30km of travel, according to RHD documents.

Once is the four-lane bridge with walkways is opened to public,

He said the bridge will not only connect Bandar upazila with Narayanganj Sadar but also would work as an alternative route to connect Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway (N-8) with Dhaka-Chatogram Highway (N-1), without touching the capital.

Currently, vehicles reach N-1 from N-8 through Jatrabari area in the capital.

But the bridge will connect N-1 with N-8 through Madangonj-Syedpur-Mukterpur-Munshigonj-Tongibari-Louhajang road.

The project director said the bridge also fill up the missing link of a proposed outer ring road around the capital.

[Photos: Sanad Saha/Collected]

IMF team to arrive tomorrow

FROM PAGE 1

of foreign currency for Bangladesh, are high.

The IMF officials will look into the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war and escalated global commodity prices on the Bangladesh economy, the status of recovery from the global coronavirus pandemic and the government's large subsidy programme.

They will see whether the subsidy spending is justified and compare it with the other countries. If it is deemed excessive, the IMF mission may suggest ways to trim it.

Subsidy spending in the just-concluded fiscal year is Tk 66,825 crore, 24.1 percent more than the original allocation thanks to the spiral in fuel and fertiliser prices in the global market.

In this fiscal year's budget, Tk 82,745 crore has been earmarked for subsidy.

But considering the price trend of oil, gas, and fertiliser in the international market, the estimated spending can be 15-20 per cent higher than the initial estimates, said Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal in his budget speech in June.

The Washington-based multilateral lender could tie in conditions for the loan package.

The conditions could include measures to increase revenue, lower subsidy expenditure, market-based exchange rate and lending rate, and reforms in the banking sector and tax administration, the finance ministry official said.

The government has already moved to tighten its belts though.

It has unveiled a relatively smaller budget for the current fiscal year, put on hold low-priority projects, suspended foreign tours of government officials, adjusted the prices of gas and diesel to some extent, and loosened the exchange rate policy.

The government has also signalled that it may raise the price of fuel oil and has proposed to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission to increase the electricity tariff to cut the subsidy burden.

Surjit Bhalla, executive director of the IMF for India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, who represented Bangladesh on the board of the Washington-based lender, is also set to visit Bangladesh separately.

Webb telescope reveals

FROM PAGE 1

more distant galaxies behind it towards the observatory, in a cosmic magnification effect.

Webb's primary imager NIRCam - which operates in the near infrared wavelength spectrum because light from the early universe has been stretched out by the time it reaches us - has brought these faint background galaxies into focus.

Webb compiled the composite shot in 12.5 hours, achieving well beyond what its predecessor the Hubble Space Telescope could in weeks.

"Fantastic - galaxies upon galaxies upon galaxies," Jonathan Lunine, chair of the astronomy department at Cornell University, told AFP, rejoicing with the rest of the global astronomy community.

"Even though this is by no means the farthest Webb can see, it's the deepest image ever taken, and shows the power of this remarkable telescope: tremendous sensitivity, a broad range of wavelengths, and sharp image clarity."

Avi Loeb, a professor of astronomy at Harvard, explained the reddish arcs are the ancient galaxies, while the light colored circles and ellipses belong to the younger galaxy cluster in the foreground.

He added he was "thrilled" about the idea of Webb looking even closer to the Big Bang, back some 13.8 billion years ago.

The Webb Space Telescope yesterday began releasing a new wave of cosmic images, heralding a new era of astronomy.

CUSTODIAL DEATH OF JONNY IN 2014

'We're still deprived of justice'

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Family members of Ishtiaque Hossain Jonny, who was brutally tortured to death in police custody in 2014, are yet to get final justice from the High Court, due to the lengthy legal tangles in disposing of related appeals.

Jonny's family members are suffering, emotionally and financially, but are yet to get any compensation, although the trial court had directed for it over 22 months back. All because the HC has stayed the order.

Besides, two fugitive convicts have not been brought to book, while appeals of three convicts, who are now in custody, have remained unsettled at the HC.

The two children of Jonny couldn't have gotten admitted to school this year if rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) hadn't come forward to financially help the family.

"We're still deprived of final justice. We've almost become destitute fighting the long legal battle," Jonny's brother Intiaz Hossain Rocky told The Daily Star.

Rocky has almost become physically disabled, as police tortured him alongside



Jonny, on February 8, 2014.

Rocky, now 32 years old, works at a car-workshop to support his six-member family, which include Jonny's widow and two children.

"Neither the government nor police has given us any financial assistance. They haven't even arrested the two convicts," Rocky said.

"I can't work regularly, as I become sick very often due to the torture. We now want the High Court to settle the case quickly and give the verdict," he said.

Rocky said rights organisation Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has been providing them with legal assistance, and ASK has given some financial support.

"With ASK's assistance, Jonny's son was admitted to sixth grade and daughter to fourth grade in separate local schools this year. We are grateful," he said.

According to the case statement, a group of 25 to 26 police officers -- including then sub-inspector of Pallabi Police Station Zahidur Rahman -- raided

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



A playful game of football goes on between two elephants in a ring at National Zoo in Mirpur to entertain the hundreds of visitors that thronged the place during Eid holidays. Elephant riders performed various stunts like these to entertain onlookers throughout the day. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Meat made affordable

Market of collected meat catering to lower-income groups

DIPAN NANDY

On the day of Eid-ul-Azha, there were small gatherings on the corners of Dhaka's empty streets. People from lower-income backgrounds were seen sitting on the roads, selling meat collected from households that performed the sacrifice.

The meat was being sold at a much lower price, catering to people from the same backgrounds.

Talking to vendors at various places in the capital, including Karwan Bazar rail gate intersection and Mohammadpur on Sunday, this correspondent found that many seasonal butchers were selling meat as well.

Sajib, who is a mason by profession, works as a butcher every year on Eid-ul-Azha. He was found selling meat at Karwan Bazar.

"This year, I slaughtered five cows in Moghbazar, and owners gave me a portion of the meat. That's what I'm selling," he said.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This photo was taken from Karwanbazar Rail Gate area.

Niyamat, another seasonal butcher, was seen with 15 kilos of meat.

"I slaughtered four cows from morning till noon and got a portion of the meat from the owners, which I'm selling for some extra money," he said.

Momin from Rayerbazar was spotted selling meat in front of Mohammadpur Krishi Market.

"Every year on Eid day, I work as a butcher, bring the meat I get from the owners here and sell it. I mainly make money from my work as a butcher, but selling the extra meat here earns me some extra money," he said.

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Capital cleaned up promptly



Conservancy workers of DSCC cleaning up waste near Green Life hospital. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The combined efforts of Dhaka's city corporations and residents managed to clean the capital within the three days after Eid.

Residents were encouraged to maintain proper disposal and clean surroundings with bleach, and they were seen following the instructions in many areas.

Besides, many were satisfied with the city corporations' prompt steps.

"After sacrificing our cattle, we cleaned the area and left the waste at the roadside, which was then collected by conservancy workers quickly," said Jahirul Islam, a resident of Gandaria.

"After the sacrifice, we personally cleaned the area. The city corporation also helped us clean the waste," said Shariat Ullah of Mohammadpur.

Earlier, the two mayors announced that they would ensure that the city would be completely cleaned in three days.

WASTE REMOVED

◆ DSCC 20,626.34 tonnes

◆ DNCC 19,223 tonnes

CONSERVANCY WORKERS DEPLOYED

◆ DSCC 9,950

◆ DNCC 9,090

SOURCE: DSCC, DNCC

while visiting different areas on Sunday, said they cleaned all animal waste on the first day of Eid.

Atiqul said around 10,000 conservancy workers were cleaning DNCC areas. Cleaning the city was possible due to the cooperation of city dwellers. He said they have distributed 6.5 lakh garbage bags, 53 tonnes of bleaching powder, and 866 5-litre-sized containers of disinfectant among residents.

Around 9,950 conservancy workers were cleaning DSCC areas, said its officials. They have distributed 28 tonnes of bleaching powder, 1.20 lakh garbage bags and 250 gallons of disinfectant.

Despite all the efforts, however, animal waste was still seen at some places on the third day of Eid.

The locations -- including Meradia and Dinanath Sen Road of Gendaria -- were still in bad condition, as cattle markets were set up on the roads, said locals. Bad smells emanating from the piles had spread throughout the area.

Argentina plans to open embassy in Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Argentina is actively considering to open its embassy in Bangladesh as the Latin American country is eager to strengthen economic and political relations with Bangladesh.

"We are actively considering opening of an embassy here next year. There are a lot of possibilities here. We want to have a mission as soon as possible. We think we must strengthen our commercial sector," said Claudio Javier Rozencwaig, undersecretary of Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

73 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 73 dengue patients were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours that ended 8:00am yesterday.

With the 73 new cases the total number of dengue patients rose to 1,477, according to DGHs.

Among the patients, 141 are still undergoing treatment. A total of 1,335 patients have been released from hospitals and one patient has died so far.

Flood death toll now 116

UNB, Dhaka

Three more deaths from flood were reported in Sunamganj and Moulvibazar districts in 24 hours till yesterday morning, taking the total fatalities to 116. The latest victims drowned in floodwater, according to DGHs. The total deaths were recorded between May 17 and July 12.

Among the deceased, 88 died by drowning in floodwater, 15 from lightning strikes, two from snake bites, one from diarrhoea and nine due to other reasons.

Over 99.50 lakh animals sacrificed

UNB, Dhaka

A total of 99,50,763 cattle have been sacrificed across the country on Eid-ul-Azha this year.

Fisheries and Livestock Ministry issued a press release in this regard on Monday.

More than 24.91 lakh cattle were sacrificed in Dhaka division and more than 21.28 lakh in Chattogram.

Besides, 19.98 lakh animals were sacrificed in Rajshahi, 11.38 lakh in Rangpur, 9.26 lakh in Khulna, 4.98 lakh in Barishal, 3.92 lakh in Sylhet and 3.75 lakh in Mymensingh. Last year, more than 90.93 lakh cattle were sacrificed.

Man stabbed to death in Jatrabari

UNB, Dhaka

An elderly man was stabbed to death allegedly by some local miscreants at Jatrabari wholesale fish market in Dhaka on Monday.

The deceased is Ashrafur Rahman, a resident of Bagicha in Jatrabari. Ashrafur's son Mehedi alleged that miscreants attacked Ashrafur as he stopped them from gambling on Monday afternoon.

He was rushed to DMCH where doctors declared him dead on arrival, said inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of the hospital police outpost. Police said they are looking into the incident.

Govt offices, banks reopen after Eid

UNB, Dhaka

Government offices reopened yesterday after Eid-ul-Azha holidays.

This year, government officials went on holidays from July 8 to July 11, with July 8 being a Friday.

However, the attendance of officials at the Secretariat in Dhaka was poor, with many people extending their vacation till July 14. Banks and financial institutions also resumed operations yesterday.



With frequent rain over the last month, the skies have cleared off the dust, rejuvenating nature in the process -- especially the Buriganga. This photo was taken from Babubazar bridge yesterday. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Driving, not a child's play

Minor auto-rickshaw drivers run the show in Moulvibazar's Kulaura

MINTU DESHWARA

Children and teenagers are driving battery-powered auto-rickshaws in Kulaura of Moulvibazar due to a lack of surveillance from the authorities.

Aged between eight and 14, most of these child drivers are running auto-rickshaws at reckless speeds on the major roads of the town.

At times, they even have their headphones on, listening to music or talking to friends. Locals alleged that even traffic police turn a blind eye to this situation.

Though there's no exact number, locals say the number of minor drivers could exceed 100.

Sajeb Ahmed, a 12-year-old auto-rickshaw driver, said, "I get Tk 100 for working 8-9 hours in a hotel. If I drive an auto-rickshaw, I can easily earn Tk 400 to 500 per day, after renting it for Tk 300."

"My father used to drive a rickshaw. But since he fell sick, I took up this job six months ago," said Jibon (13).

This correspondent also spoke to many of the parents of these child drivers. They said due to their financial limitations, they are in a way forced to let their children engage in such risky work.

Auto-rickshaw driver Mohan Mia said, "These children are too young to realise the consequence of their reckless driving. Sometimes, they



overtake vehicles without being aware of its dangers."

Rajat Kanti Bhattacharya, former professor of Yakub Tajul Women's College, said, "Even though it's illegal to drive a vehicle without a licence, these minors are driving these battery-powered vehicles in broad daylight. Their driving often leads to accidents."

Contacted, Enamul Haque, in charge of Kulaura traffic police, said, "I've been in Kulaura for a few days now. We'll take the necessary steps to get to the bottom of this."

Kulaura UNO ATM Farhad Chowdhury said child labour is a punishable offence and in a monthly meeting of the Law and Order Committee, discussions were held to take effective steps in this regard.

Regarding the financial constraints of the parents, the official said they will look into the issue.

Md Moshahid Bakth Chowdhury, labour officer at Moulvibazar, said the labour policy states no one under the age of 18 can drive. If any transport organisation hires underage drivers, it won't be allowed to register its vehicles.

Md Dalim Uddin, assistant director of the BRTA office in Moulvibazar, said, "We don't give driving licence to children. It is the responsibility of the traffic police to monitor who are driving the vehicles."

Hasan Mohammad Naser Rikabder, additional superintendent of police in Moulvibazar, said, "We're working on the issue."

Not even

FROM PAGE 5

rice was supplied from the district headquarters' warehouse before Eid," said Rafiqul Islam.

"The delay occurred due to the corruption of food warehouse officials," he alleged.

Ulipur Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Siraj Uddoula said the VGF rice was allotted five days before Eid.

"It was not possible to distribute the rice in some unions in time following some problems in the warehouse," said the PIO.

Ulipur food warehouse officer Shahinur Rahman declined to make any comments regarding the issue when this correspondent contacted him.

"Since Ulipur food warehouse had a rice shortage, we supplied rice from the district headquarters warehouse and the entire allocation was supplied on Saturday afternoon, a day before Eid," said Kurigram district food controller Abu Bakkar. He said allegations against warehouse officers are being investigated.

Argentina plans to open

FROM PAGE 3

Worship of Argentina. He led a four-member delegation to Bangladesh on a three-day visit and held meetings with the State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahrar Alam, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI).

During the visit, beginning Sunday, Bangladesh and Argentina signed a memorandum of understanding on the "Establishment of the Bilateral Consultations between Bangladesh and Argentina".

Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury, secretary (West) at the foreign ministry and Claudio Javier, undersecretary of Argentinian foreign ministry signed the MoU at the state guest house

Padma yesterday.

Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and Argentine Ambassador to Bangladesh (resident in New Delhi) Hugo Gobbi witnessed the MoU signing ceremony.

As Shahrar Alam emphasised on cooperation between the two countries in the field of agriculture, the Argentine undersecretary informed that Argentina is open to exporting soyabean, beef and fertiliser to Bangladesh.

Both the sides acknowledged that the current world-wide crisis in the supply of fertiliser and energy might hamper the agricultural production further.

The delegation also met Tapan Kanti Ghosh, senior secretary of the commerce ministry and additional secretary Ruhul

Amin Talukder from the agriculture ministry.

Javier also spoke of possibility of signing preferential trade agreement between Bangladesh and MERCOSUR or Southern Common Market a trade bloc of South America.

Claudio also said the two countries can have talks on football cooperation at technical levels as Bangladesh is a football enthusiast country.

Bangladesh's export to Argentina is about \$60 million, while import from Argentina is about \$700 million.

"As Bangladesh is graduating out of LDC, we are exploring our markets. We will need to further study the market as we go forward," Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

We're still deprived of justice

FROM PAGE 3

a house during a wedding ceremony in Pallabi's Irani camp area and picked up Rocky and Jonny, who was 28 years old, on February 8, 2014.

Police informants Sumon and Russell called police after Jonny slapped Sumon for harassing women at a programme. Police brutally tortured the brothers at the station.

After Jonny fell sick the next day, he was admitted to a local clinic. Later, he was transferred to Suhrawardy Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

On August 8, 2014, Rocky filed a case with Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka.

On September 9, 2020, Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the court sentenced three former officers of

Pallabi Police Station to life imprisonment and two others to seven years in jail.

The three officers are former sub-inspector Zahidur Rahman, and former assistant sub-inspectors Qamruzzaman Mintu and Rashedul Islam. The two other convicts Sumon and Russell.

Besides, the court asked each of the officers to pay Tk 2 lakh to the plaintiff as compensation.

This was first verdict under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013.

Mintu and Russell are on the run.

After the verdict, Zahidur, Rashedul and Sumon filed three separate appeals with the HC, challenging their conviction and sentences.

On November 14 last

year, the HC admitted Zahidur's appeal for hearing, and stayed the trial court's direction for compensation.

And so, the family still has not received any compensation, BLAST lawyer Md Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star.

Later, the HC admitted the appeals of Rashedul and Sumon for hearing. All three appeals are now pending with the HC.

Hearing will be held after the convicts' lawyers take initiative, Rezaul said.

Zahidur's lawyer Kondaker Gulzar Hossain earlier told this correspondent that they will not move the appeal before the HC after the "situation changes".

The lawyer refused to give any details about the issue.

Bagerhat welcomes Sreemangal's tourism

FROM PAGE 5

correspondent witnessed the presence of a large number of visitors.

Law enforcers were seen on alert to ensure security for visitors.

Although Shat Gambuj Mosque draws visitors throughout the year, the number of tourists increases during Eid. Many visited the site to hang out with their families.

Besides, people were also seen visiting Khanjel Dighi, Shrine of Mohammad Taher, Shrine of Zindapir, single gambuj mosque, Pocha dighi, Chukhola Mosque and Singra Mosque.

Ayodhya Math, Barakpur Sundarbans Resort, Bagerbazar municipality park, Chulkathi, and Chandramahal park were

also buzzing with visitors.

Aslam Sheikh, a teacher of the capital's Dhaka College, and Manirul Islam, a trader from Chattogram, said they came to Shat Gambuj Mosque with their families, as travelling has become easy following the inauguration of Padma Bridge.

Zakir Hossain, manager of Barakpur Sundarbans Resort, hoped to recoup a part of the losses the businesses suffered due to the pandemic in the last two years.

Zayed, a custodian of Bagerhat Museum, attributed the greater arrival of tourists to the newly opened Padma Bridge.

Over 4,000 people visited Shat Gambuj Mosque on Monday, the second day of Eid, he said.

FROM PAGE 5

Due to the floods, however, there were little to no tourists in these areas for the last three weeks.

Shamsul Haque, secretary of Sreemangal's Tourism Seba Sangstha, said every year, they wait for Eid holidays, as it is a profitable time for business.

"The ongoing floods have caused a lot of damage to tourism. For the last two years, our area's tourism has lagged behind due to the pandemic. And now, the floods have taken us further back," he said.

Tanvirul Arefin Lincoln, owner of Sreemangal Shantibari Eco Cottage, said most tourists queried when the flood waters would recede.

"No one wants to believe that Sreemangal hasn't been affected by the floods. Many cancelled their bookings, and my cottage has been empty for the last 20 days," he said.

Arman Khan, general manager of Grand Sultan Tea Resort and Golf, said, "There was no flood in Sreemangal, yet we're not getting any bookings. Sylhet doesn't mean

Sreemangal; it's a separate upazila."

Shahidul Islam, ranger of Moulvibazar Wildlife and Nature Conservation Department, said only 1,500 tourists have entered Lawachhara National Park in the last two days, whereas the numbers should've been around 7,000.

Selim Ahmed, owner of Grand Selim Resort, said there hadn't been a single booking for Eid so far.

Sreemangal Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ali Rajib Mahmud Mithun said there was no flood in Sreemangal. Tourists can come here and travel in comfort. Our upazila and police administration are ready for tourists' safety.

Moulvibazar Deputy Commissioner Mir Nahid Ahsan said Sreemangal is important for the country's tourism industry. The tourism hubs weren't flooded since they are in the highlands.

That is why there is no problem for tourists in those areas. But it is the tourists' misconception that has got them thinking that the entirety of Sylhet is flooded, he added.

Momen remembers

FROM PAGE 5

in memory of Abe.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at Abe's death.

People of Japan sincerely appreciated the condolence expressed by the government and people of Bangladesh, said the Japanese embassy in Dhaka.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Wage Earners' Welfare Board
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment
Probashi Kallyan Bhaban
71-72, Eskaton Garden, Ramna, Dhaka-1000

Memo No. 49.04.0000.009.14.001.22-246 Date: 07-07-2022

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works as mentioned in the following table:

Tender ID No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Tender closing date and time
717530	Sand filling in low land area of Bangabandhu Wage Earners' Center under The Wage Earners' Welfare Board at Lonjoni Para, Boura, Khilkhet, Dhaka.	25-07-2022 5:00pm	26-07-2022 11:30am

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

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

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

Musharrat Jebin
Director (Admin & Development)
Joint Secretary
Wage Earners' Welfare Board
E-mail: d.ad@wewb.gov.bd

GD-1369

RAK CERAMICS **RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited**
RAK Tower (7th, 8th & 9th Floor), Plot # 1/A, Jasimuddin Avenue, Sector # 3, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230

NOTICE OF THE 9TH EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 9th Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited will be held on Thursday, August 04, 2022 at 11:00 am (Bangladesh Time). Pursuant to the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission's Order No. SEC/SRMIC/94-231/91 dated 31 March 2021, the EGM will be held virtually by using digital platform through the following link <https://meetbd.live/RAKegm2022> to transact the following businesses:

AGENDA

- To consider purchase of land for establishing new plant(s) from (1) Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman, Managing Director, RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited, (2) Palli Properties Ltd. (in which Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman is a Director and member) and (3) Mashram Agro Ltd. (in which Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman is a Director and member).

Proposed Resolution:
"RESOLVED that the Company in order to establish new plant(s) shall purchase 33.91 acre (3391.32 decimals) of land at Bhutulia, District- Gazipur under Dhanua and Gazipur Mouja from (1) Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman, Managing Director, RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited, (2) Palli Properties Ltd. (in which Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman is a Director and member) and (3) Mashram Agro Ltd. (in which Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman is a Director and member) at the price of BDT 185,000/- per decimal totaling to BDT 627,394,200/- only (Taka Six Hundred Twenty Seven Million Three Hundred Ninety Four Thousand Two Hundred) (excluding registration and other expenses) and the Company shall execute all documents, including but not limited to Agreement for Sale, Saf-Kabla Deed etc., in this regard."

QR code for EGM link

By order of the Board of Directors
Sd/-
(Muhammad Shahidul Islam FCS)
Company Secretary

Place: Dhaka
Date: July 12, 2022

Notes:

- The Members whose name appeared in the Share/Depository Register as on the 'Record Date' (i.e. July 04, 2022), are eligible to attend and vote in the meeting.
- In order to comply with the BSEC notification No. BSEC/CMRRCD/2009-193/10/Admin/118 dated March 22, 2021, the Board of Directors has recommended to obtain approval of the Members in the General Meeting of the Company in order to purchase 33.91 acre (3391.32 decimals) of land at Bhutulia, District- Gazipur under Dhanua and Gazipur Mouja from Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman, (Managing Director of RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited), Palli Properties Ltd. and Mashram Agro Ltd. (Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman is a Director and Member of both the Companies) at the price of BDT 185,000/- per decimal totaling to BDT 627,394,200/- only (excluding registration and other expenses).
- A Members entitled to attend and vote at the EGM may appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his/her behalf (such a proxy shall be a shareholder of the Company). The Proxy Form, duly filled, signed and stamped of BDT 20 must be sent through email to the Company sharedepartment.bgd@rakceramics.com not later than 48 hours before the time fixed for the meeting.
- The Members will be able to submit their questions/comments and vote electronically 24 hours before commencement of the EGM and during the EGM. For logging in to the system, the shareholders need to put their 16 digit Beneficial Owner (BO) ID number and other credential as proof of their identity by visiting the link <https://meetbd.live/RAKegm2022>
- Members are requested to log in to the system prior to the meeting start time of 11:00 am (Bangladesh Time) on August 04, 2022. The webcast will start at 10:45 am on August 04, 2022. Please contact +8801730058055 and +8801730055355 for any technical difficulties in accessing the virtual meeting.
- Detail log in process has been sent through email to respective member's mail ID available in their BO Account maintained with the Depository. The detailed procedures to participate in the virtual meeting along with link are also available in the Company's website www.rakceramics.com/bangladesh
- In case of non-receipt of the Notice of the 9th Extraordinary General Meeting sent through courier, Members may collect the same from the Registered Office of the Company within 01 August 2022.

Youth stabbed to death in Chattogram

UNB, Ctg
A 23-year-old man was stabbed to death in Chawkbazar area of Chattogram city yesterday noon.

The deceased was identified as Sourav Khan Sohag, a cable operator of the area.

The family of the deceased family alleged that two people – Shafiq and his son Sakib – stabbed Sourav indiscriminately near Mousumi residential area at Chawkbazar around 12:00pm, following previous enmity over business.

Later, he was rushed to Chattogram Medical College and Hospital (CMCH), where doctors declared him dead, said Sadiqur Rahman, officer-in-charge (investigation) of the Panchlaish Police Station.

Asked about the allegations against Shafiq and his son, police said they are looking into the incident.



With water level in Dhaleshwari river rising, businesses by the river are concerned that the land might get inundated soon. This photo was taken from Kuchiamara in Munshiganj yesterday.
PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Two children drown after falling in canal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two children drowned in a canal in Kolpolok residential area of Chattogram city yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Md Shamim, 10, son of Monir Hossen, and Rabiul Islam, 7, son of Ayub Ali, of Kolpolok residential area.

The two went missing after falling into the canal around 1:00pm while they were playing next to it, said Sadekul Rahman, inspector of Panchlaish Police Station.

On information, a team of fire service rushed to spot, rescued the duo from the canal around 1:30pm, the official said.

They were sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital where doctors declared them dead, he added.

The bodies were sent to the CMCH morgue for autopsy, the police official also said. According to police, in the last six years, at least seven people, including two children, have died after falling into drains and canals in the port city.

On August 25, 2021, vegetable trader Saleh Ahmed went missing after falling into a drain in Muradpur area of the city. More than a year has passed but he has not yet been found.

Moreover, on June 30, an auto-rickshaw fell into the Chashma canal in Gate No 2 area of the city, killing two people.

In the last six years, at least seven people, including two children, have died after falling into drains and canals in the port city

‘Ensure impartial probe’

Demands CHTC on Khagrachhari arson attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous rights activists strongly condemned the recent arson attack on a jumma village in Khagrachhari, which burned down 37 jumma homes.

The attack occurred in Joysen Para of Maischari union, under Mahalchari Upazila.

It has been learnt that on July 5, 2022, a group of settlers numbering between 150 and 200 – led by a former union council member – attacked the jumma village to grab their land, said a statement sent by Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC).

The statement said four jumma persons were also injured in the attack, while two had to be hospitalised.

The statement said this is the second attack on jumma houses in Maischari union this year, the first being on March 14, where nine houses of Joysenpara were burnt down.

CHTC demanded an immediate, impartial investigation, compensation for the victims, and justice to prevent further recurrence of such attacks.

“The commission believes this attack and other previous such attacks on the jumma people are results of the government and security forces’ failure to provide security for the jumma people,” it said in the statement.

Due to the non-implementation of the CHT Accord, the inactiveness of the land commission, and the existing culture of impunity – attacks on the indigenous people by settlers in CHT is rapidly rising, the statement read.

The letter was signed by 25 eminent citizens, including advocate Sultana Kamal, former caretaker government adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury, cultural icon Ramendu Majumdar, advocate Rana Dasgupta, rights activist Khushi Kabir, development worker Rokeya Kabir, and Dhaka University professors MM Akash and Robaet Ferdous.

Port city in FESTIVE MOOD



Port city residents thronged Patenga sea beach on Monday afternoon.
PHOTO: COLLECTED

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Owing to the Eid holidays, residents of the port city snaggled the opportunity to visit recreational places around Chattogram.

Patenga sea beach was the most sought after destination as a huge number of holidaymakers were seen enjoying the afternoon during the Eid holidays.

Children took rides on horses, while many were seen taking a dip in the sea.

Newly married couple Ashit Barua and Suparna Barua came to Patenga beach on Monday. They said they had plans to visit Cox’s Bazar during Eid vacation but they postponed it and decided to enjoy the vacation with family members in the city instead.

Ariful Islam visited Patenga

beach on Monday with his wife. “Earlier I visited the beach with my friends but this time I’m spending time here with my better half,” he said smilingly.

A good number of people were seen visiting Parki sea beach in Chattogram’s Anwara upazila as well while hundreds thronged Foy’s Lake Amusement Park.

Tasnuva Binte Karim, a fifth-grader, came to the park with her parents. She said she was enjoying the park’s rides.

Her father Abdul Karim said, “I promised my daughter that I’ll bring her here during Eid holidays.”

Contacted, Biswajit Ghosh, deputy manager (marketing) of Foy’s Lake Concord Amusement World, said around 12,000 people visited the establishment in the

last three days.

“If the weather’s favourable, we expect more crowd in the next seven days,” he said.

Swadhinata Complex, which is also known as Mini Bangladesh, also saw a huge turnout.

Mohammad Ali, the complex’s manager, said they were satisfied with the visitor turnout in the last three days. “The daily turnout in the park is around 2,000 during Eid holidays,” he said.

“The Chattogram Zoo also saw a good visitor turnout. Over 30,000 people visited the zoo during Eid,” said Shahadat Hossain Shuvo, the zoo’s deputy curator.

Besides, Naval Academy Road, Karnaphuli Park, Kazir Dewri Park and Butterfly Park were also crowded.

Momen remembers Shinzo Abe

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe had played a significant role in developing comprehensive relations between Bangladesh and Japan.

“We have developed a very warm relationship, which helped Japan to come forward in implementing mega projects in Bangladesh,” Momen said, recalling Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s visit to Japan and a return visit by Abe in Dhaka.

The foreign minister made the remarks after signing the condolence book at the Japanese embassy in Dhaka.

“It’s [the killing] unbelievable, especially in a country like Japan, where laws are followed strictly. We are deeply shocked,” he said.

Bangladesh on Saturday observed state mourning, showing deep respect to its friend and Japan’s longest-serving prime minister, who was shot dead on Friday while delivering a campaign speech.

All the government, semi-government, autonomous and private institutions, and Bangladesh missions abroad raised Bangladesh’s national flag at half mast

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



‘Not even a plate of rice this Eid’
Kurigram flood victims yet to receive VGF ration

S DILIP ROY

Rokeya Bewa (56), a flood victim from Hatia union of Kurigram’s Ulipur upazila, waited for the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) rice on Eid day. However, she did not get it and had to borrow half a kilo of rice to cook a meal.

Moksed Ali (62), another flood victim from Begumganj union, had to spend the Eid day without any rice being cooked in his house as he also did not get the VGF rice allotted before Eid.

Most of the flood victims in Ulipur are yet to receive their share of flood rations even though 863 tonnes of VGF rice was allotted for 86,315 poor families on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

Local representatives alleged that the allotted rice was not delivered in time due to irregularities and the corruption of warehouse officials.

“We got the VGF rice supply on Saturday afternoon, the day before Eid. A few VGF cardholders were able to get the rice but we could not distribute rice among most of the beneficiaries. I will distribute rice among all of them on Wednesday,” said Hatia Union Parishad Chair Shayekhul Islam.

Chairmen of Dhamshreni and Begumganj Union Parishads Rafiqul Islam and Bablu Mia echoed the same.

“The rice stored in Ulipur food warehouse was damaged, hence we could not distribute it. Later,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Sreemangal’s tourism takes a hit due to flood

Tourists’ misinformation on affected areas clog revenue

MINTU DESHWARA

Not only did the Sylhet flood cause devastating harm to the lives of residents there, it also put a massive dent in the tourism business of Moulvibazar’s Sreemangal upazila, but not in the way one might assume.

The floods did not actually touch Sreemangal, but even then, tourists were hard to find throughout the last month.

Many rooms booked in advance were cancelled, so most of the resorts, hotels and motels were empty during Eid time. As a result, people in the tourism business are facing great financial loss yet again.

Those who run such businesses claimed that crores are being lost as a result of the overarching flood situation. If Sreemangal is not branded separately in tourism sectors, it will be difficult to get back up.

Tour guide Saju Marshiang said, “This time, we have provided our services to very few tourists, which is quite strange, especially considering Eid vacations.”

Rajon Hazra, a tea trader, said usually, more than 50,000 people go to Sreemangal per day during Eid.



Sreemangal is usually full of tourists during the holidays. But as people are misinformed about which areas of the north-east are actually flooded, they have refrained from going to the upazila.
PHOTO: STAR

Bagerhat welcomes droves of tourists

UNB, Bagerhat

All tourist spots in Bagerhat, including Shat Gambuj Mosque, came alive with the footfalls of tourists and visitors during the Eid vacation.

Eid vacation was celebrated from Friday to Monday. But the holiday mood continued, as many extended their vacation.

People from all walks of life thronged the area’s heritage sites and enjoyed their scenic beauty. Children were enjoying the most in a number of recreation centres and amusement parks.

The authorities in charge of the recreation sites and amusement parks have embellished the places on the occasion of Eid.

During a recent visit to Shat Gambuj Mosque, Hazrat Pir Khanjahan Shrine, and Barakpur Sundarbans Resort on Tuesday, the UNB

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 13
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

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



(L) Roshan and Puja Chery, after a screening of "Psycho". (R) Barsha and Ananta Jalil -- the lead cast of "Din-The Day".

Trifecta of films, makers claim success

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Marking Eid-ul-Azha, 3 films released across the country – Ananta Jalil's "Din-The Day", Anonno Mamun's "Psycho" and Raihan Rafi's "Poran".

While it is difficult to say which came out ahead in only 2-3 days, the cast and crew of the film have said that they are happy with the turnout of their films.

"Poran", made on a budget of BDT 60 lakhs, only released in 11 halls across the country. The

Bidya Sinha Mim, Yash Rohan and Shariful Razz starrer has garnered a positive response from people around the country, owing to its star cast, direction and script.

The crew recently visited Mymensingh for their release there. "A houseful audience means the world to an actor," she said. "The people of Mymensingh are very welcoming and enthusiastic. Even when they badmouthed my character in the film, it felt great," laughed Mim.

"What makes our film different, is the fact

that the audience can walk out feeling that they have witnessed something substantial", said Yash Rohan.

Ananta Jalil was confident about his BDT 100 crore budget film. "Din-The Day" released in 117 halls across the country. "I myself have come to the halls after 8 years, and it feels fantastic. 'Din-The Day' is a film that everyone can watch with family. So far, everyone has given me positive feedback, and I am happy".

"I have personally supervised everything from the action to the script and choreography. People are getting their money's worth out of the film," he further said.

Puja Chery and Roshan starrer "Psycho" released in 17 halls. "I believe that this film is for those who like commercial cinema with good stories. The audience will watch the film with great joy. Though it will release in 17 theatres in the first week of Eid, I think it will be released in more theatres next week," said director Anonno Mamun to The Daily Star.

"Since it is Eid-ul-Azha, it is expected that people will be busy at work", said Puja. "However, the love that people have shown me – I am awestruck." The actress was also a part of two acclaimed films earlier this year, "Shaan" and "Golui".

While single-screen theatres are seeing some much-needed influx of people during this time, multiplexes like Star Cineplex and Jamuna's Blockbuster are reported to be doing exceptional business.

"Both 'Din-The Day' and 'Poran' are doing exceptionally in all branches of Star Cineplex", says Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, senior manager at the renowned multiplex chain. "It is a boon for Bangla cinema, and it proves that if you put out good content, people will show up and see your films."

Dhanush makes his Hollywood debut

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Tamil actor Dhanush will be making his Hollywood debut, starring alongside Chris Evans and Ryan Gosling, in Netflix's "The Gray Man" which is slated to be released on July 22.

Reviews from critics have started to roll in, with most of them giving a positive feedback to the film. "The Gray Man" is directed by the Russo Brothers, who took the world by storm with their work in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Monty Norman, composer of James Bond theme, dies

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Monty Norman, the composer of the iconic theme song for the "James Bond" franchise, passed away yesterday, July 11, at the age of 94.

Norman famously composed the soundtrack for "Dr No," the 1962 James Bond film which starred Sean Connery. The theme composed by Norman for the movie became the iconic James Bond theme-tune that we are all familiar with today.

Before working on films, Norman was a singer turned songwriter. He also enjoyed success in the West End with his hit "Irma La Douce". He is survived by his wife and a daughter.



Salman Khan breaks Eid tradition

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



On Sunday during the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, fans gathered near Salman Khan's residence, in hopes of catching a glimpse of the star. Public appearances by Salman during the occasion of Eid has been a tradition of the superstar for years now, but this time he strayed away from publicly greeting fans.

According to a report by ETimes, Salman avoided greeting fans due to security reasons. This is after the actor received death threats from gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. The report also stated that ten special force officers had been posted near the actor's residence.

“What makes our film different, is the fact that the audience can walk out feeling that they have witnessed something substantial.”

– Yash Rohan.



The stars of "Poran" -- Shariful Razz, Bidya Sinha Mim and Yash Rohan.



Martin Scorsese restores Malayalam film Kummatty

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Academy Award winning filmmaker Martin Scorsese announced on Monday, that his film foundation will be screening the restored version of the classic Malayalam film "Kummatty" at The Film Foundation Restoration Screening Room from July 11.

Scorsese announced this via Instagram. Several fans in the comments section thanked Scorsese for picking the film and called it a proud moment for Malayalam cinema.

Starting from April, Scorsese's The Film Foundation started their Restoration Screening Room project to showcase films restored by the foundation for free. The first movie restored and screened was the 1945 romance "I Know Where I'm Going!"

EID-UL-AZHA 2022

Divas of silver screen prefer ETHNIC WEAR

As the scorching heat surfaces all over the Eid festivities, celebrities opted for more somber and pastel colours to make their Eid look super comfortable and summer-friendly. The popular faces of TV, music, and movies posted beautiful pictures with their family and friends to make this Eid-ul-Azha oh so special.

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

The 'goddess' of Dhallywood and Tollywood, Jaya Ahsan looked ethereal and sophisticated in her maroon two-piece suit paired with Multani earrings. The actress kept her makeup subtle and simple with simple kohl-lined eyes and dark nude lipstick.

Azmeri Haque Badhan, on the other hand, opted for matching leaf patterns along with her mother and daughter. The look was appreciated highly among her fans, as social media fawned over the adorable pictures.

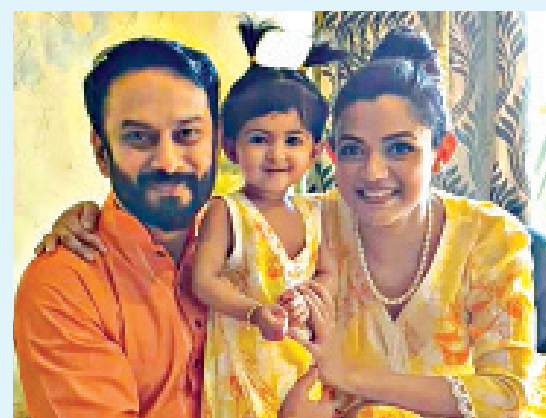
"Pataka" Nusraat Faria opted for a pastel pink saree and grey blouse. The actress kept her whole look simple and earthy with just simple jhumka's and light kohl-lined eyes and 'teep'.

Bhabna looked elegant in a coral Pakistani suit paired with a huge pearl ring on her fingers. The actress kept her hair open and opted for a nude lipstick for the daytime look.

"Aynabaji" actress Nabila posted a cute picture with her husband and adorable daughter on social media. The mother-daughter duo wore bright yellow dresses, while her husband Reem looked handsome in bright orange Punjabi.



(L) Azmeri Haque Badhan with her family. (R) Bhabna in her coral green Pakistani salwar suit.



(L) Nusraat Faria looked gorgeous in pastel pink saree. (M) Nabila with her family. (R) Jaya Ahsan celebrated Eid along with her family.

Sunak gets backing to be next UK PM

New PM to be announced on September 5

REUTERS, London

Ex-finance minister Rishi Sunak, the favourite to become Britain's next prime minister, kicked off his campaign yesterday promising "honesty", in an increasingly testy and divisive battle to succeed Boris Johnson.

An initial 11 candidates put their names forward to become leader of the governing Conservative Party and Britain's next premier after Johnson was forced to say he would step down when support drained from him over a series of scandals.

Only those who get nominations from 20 of their 358 Conservative colleagues in parliament will go forward to the first vote today. The field will be then be quickly whittled down a final two, with Conservative Party members making the final decision.

The winner, and Britain's new prime minister, would be announced on Sept. 5.

With most candidates saying they would cut taxes if they win, Sunak, the current bookmakers' favourite, has sought to portray himself as the serious candidate, promising "grown up"

honesty "not fairy tales".

"It is not credible to promise lots more spending and lower taxes," said Sunak.

He has the widest support among colleagues who have publicly expressed their view, including the backing of Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab.

Transport minister Grant Shapps became the first to end his bid, throwing his support behind Sunak.

Among the others to launch their campaigns yesterday were Tom Tugendhat, the chair of the foreign affairs committee, and Kemi Badenoch, a former junior minister who is scooping up some support on the right wing of the party.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss was also hoping to challenge those at the top of the leader board.

The main opposition Labour Party was to put forward a motion of no confidence in the government to try to force Johnson out of office straightaway. The vote will be held today and although some Conservatives have voiced concern at Johnson remaining as PM, they are very unlikely to support it.



People mourn for late former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe at Zojoji Temple in Tokyo, yesterday. Mourners lined the streets of central Tokyo yesterday to bid farewell to Shinzo Abe, as his hearse was driven past political landmarks after a private funeral. The country's longest-serving prime minister was gunned down on Friday while campaigning, in a crime that rattled Japan and prompted an outpouring of international condemnation and grief.

PHOTO: AFP

US drone strike kills IS Syria chief

AFP, Washington

The leader of the Islamic State militant group in Syria was killed in a US drone strike, the Pentagon said yesterday.

Maher al-Agal was killed while riding a motorcycle near Jindayris in Syria, and one of his top aides was seriously injured, Pentagon Central Command spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Dave Eastburn told AFP.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights confirmed that Agal was killed in a drone strike.

There was little information available about Agal.

The strike came five months after a nighttime US raid in the town of Atme in northern Syria led to the death of the overall Islamic State leader, Abu Ibrahim al-Qurashi.

How a band of activists helped bring down Rajapaksas

REUTERS, Colombo

In June, a few dozen activists started meeting regularly at a seaside tented camp in Colombo for hours-long sessions to think up ways to revive Sri Lanka's flagging protest movement.

The group, which included a Catholic priest, a digital strategist and a popular playwright, succeeded beyond their wildest hopes.

Within weeks, hundreds of thousands of people descended on Colombo. After initially clashing with police, protesters occupied key government buildings and residences, forcing President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his prime minister to promise to step down.

"I'm still trying to process it," said Chameera Dedduwage, a digital strategist at a major advertising firm who became part of the team that helped organise the uprising. "It was 50 percent premeditation and coordination, another 30 percent willingness of the people and 20 percent luck."

In interviews, veterans of those small meetings described how they agreed on a multi-pronged campaign to inject new life into the movement widely known as "Aragalaya", or "struggle" in Sinhala.



The movement had begun in March, when thousands took to the streets to vent their anger at lengthy power cuts and spiralling prices, and to call for the Rajapaksa family that had dominated the country's politics for much of the last 20 years to leave power.

On May 9, Rajapaksa's elder brother Mahinda - president from 2005-2015 and at that time serving as prime minister - had stepped down. On June 9, younger brother Basil had quit as a lawmaker.

So, the Aragalaya activists targeted July 9 as the day they hoped to unseat the president himself. A plan emerged to combine online agitation, meetings with political parties, labour unions and student groups and door-

to-door campaigning to get enough people back on the streets for a final push, according to the three attendees.

Riding on trains, buses, lorries and bicycles, or simply walking, huge crowds converged on Colombo on Saturday, outnumbering security forces deployed to protect government buildings and upending Sri Lankan politics.

They quickly broke into the president's colonial-era house, before storming a portion of the presidential office and entering the prime minister's official residence 2.5 km (1.6 miles) away.

Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe had been moved to undisclosed safe locations, and within hours they separately announced they would resign to allow an all-party interim government to take over.

If he resigns today as promised, Rajapaksa, once a war hero who was both revered and feared, will become the first sitting Sri Lankan president to quit.

"There were so many elderly, teenagers, youth, women," recalled Jeevanth Peiris, a Catholic priest who is part of the activist group. "People didn't want to give up, didn't want to withdraw."

Myanmar junta chief visits Moscow

AFP, Moscow

Myanmar junta chief Min Aung Hlaing visited Moscow yesterday, Russian media reported, as the US vowed to put pressure on his military regime over a 2021 coup. Russia's embassy in Myanmar told the Interfax news agency that Hlaing was in Moscow on a "private" visit. The announcement of the visit comes two days after Secretary of State Antony Blinken vowed to keep pressuring Myanmar's junta as he met democracy activists on a visit to neighbouring Thailand.

EU freezes Russian assets worth \$13.8b

AFP, Prague

The European Union has frozen Russian assets worth \$13.8 billion since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, EU Justice Commissioner Didier Reynders said yesterday. "For the moment, we have frozen - coming from oligarchs and other entities - 13.8 billion euros (\$13.8 billion), so it's quite huge," Reynders told reporters in Prague. At the end of June, an international sanctions task force said its members had blocked \$30 billion in assets belonging to Russian oligarchs and officials.



This file handout photo made available by the Iranian Army office on January 5, 2021, shows drones on display prior to a military drone drill at an undisclosed location in central Iran.

Iran to supply Russians with combat drones: US

AFP, Washington

Iran is planning to supply hundreds of drones with combat weapon capabilities to Russia for use in Ukraine, a top US official said Monday.

Jake Sullivan, the White House national security advisor, said the information received by the United States supported views that the Russian military is facing challenges sustaining its weaponry after significant losses in Ukraine.

"The Iranian government is preparing to provide Russia with up to several hundred UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), including weapons capable UAVs, on an expedited timeline," Sullivan told reporters.

"Our information further indicates that Iran is preparing to train Russian forces to use these UAVs, with initial training sessions slated to begin as soon as early July," he said.

Iran responded yesterday by saying that "no special development" had taken

place in technological cooperation with Russia following its invasion of Ukraine in February.

Without specifically mentioning drones, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said cooperation with Russia "in the field of some modern technologies predates the war in Ukraine, and there has been no special development in that regard recently."

Tehran's position regarding the war "is quite clear and has been officially announced many times," he added.

Iran has maintained that it is against the war in Ukraine and called for a political solution, while blaming the roots of the crisis on the United States and Nato's expansion.

"The claim of the American official (Sullivan) comes as the US and the Europeans have for years turned the occupying and aggressor countries, including in the West Asia region, into a storehouse of their various deadly weapons," Kanani added.

Covid-19 pandemic is 'nowhere near over': WHO

AFP, Geneva

Fresh waves of Covid infections show the pandemic is "nowhere near over", the World Health Organization's chief warned yesterday, voicing concern the virus is "running freely".

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he was worried that case numbers were continuing to rise, putting further pressure on stretched health systems and workers.

"New waves of the virus demonstrate again that Covid-19 is nowhere near over," he told a news conference, adding: "As the virus pushes at us, we must push back."

As Covid-19 transmission and hospitalisations rise, governments must also deploy tried and tested measures like masking, improved ventilation and test and treat protocols," Tedros insisted.

The WHO's emergency committee on Covid-19 met on Friday and determined the pandemic remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern - the highest alarm the WHO can sound.

WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan told the meeting global Covid cases reported to the WHO increased by 30 percent in the last two weeks, largely driven by Omicron sub-variants BA.4, BA.5.

Official document from Bangladesh government regarding public procurement. Includes title 'গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার', date '১২/০৭/২০২২', and a table of procurement items with columns for item number, description, and price.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Can we get ourselves out of the energy crisis? Only if govt changes its destructive policies

WE are concerned on two fronts by the prime minister's energy advisor's assurance that there would be some relief from load-shedding from September. First, even though there are legitimate concerns regarding the global energy market, which have led to energy shocks in Bangladesh, the government's mismanagement and poor planning have also contributed to the crisis. And for people to have to suffer from load-shedding till September at least, as a result of that, is totally unacceptable. Secondly, it is doubtful that the crisis will get solved even around September, as experts have warned, should the government continue to make the same mistakes that it still refuses to acknowledge.

The government's claim that load-shedding will subside from September is based on the logic that three new coal-based power plants will start operating around that time. Given the government's woeful track record of getting any project finished on time, we cannot help but wonder if they would indeed be operational around September. And it is not just about having those power plants operational, but also about getting the necessary transmission lines in place. Already, the country's two running coal-fired power plants have the capacity to plug shortfalls in power generation. However, they are also suffering from a shortage of coal and lack of transmission lines. And given that the three new power plants will run on imported coal, and the country's forex reserves are dwindling, figuring out the full logistics of things will be no cakewalk.

Many of the country's power plants are currently not functioning because of a fuel shortage. And the government is apparently now trying to cut dependency on imported fuel and gas-based power plants and rely more on domestic gas production. But this transition should have happened before the crisis. The government's failure to prepare for such external shocks – which were perhaps inevitable – boils down to mismanagement and a lack of long-term planning. And that has also led to capacity charges skyrocketing. According to data from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), the government has paid a total of Tk 33,970 crore in "capacity payments" to the independent power producers, rental and quick rental power plants between 2017-18 and 2020-21. Instead of burning through so much cash for idle power plants, the government could have easily invested it on gas exploration, which would have provided some buffer to the country's strategic energy sector. The government should now urgently renegotiate those contracts to save some public funds at this time of crisis.

Austerity measures in regards to electricity usage is now clearly necessary. However, that alone cannot be the answer. The government needs to make long-term plans in consultation with experts, to avoid repeating its past mistakes, and to formulate new strategies to get us out of the pit that we have dug ourselves in.

Sri Lanka should put its people first

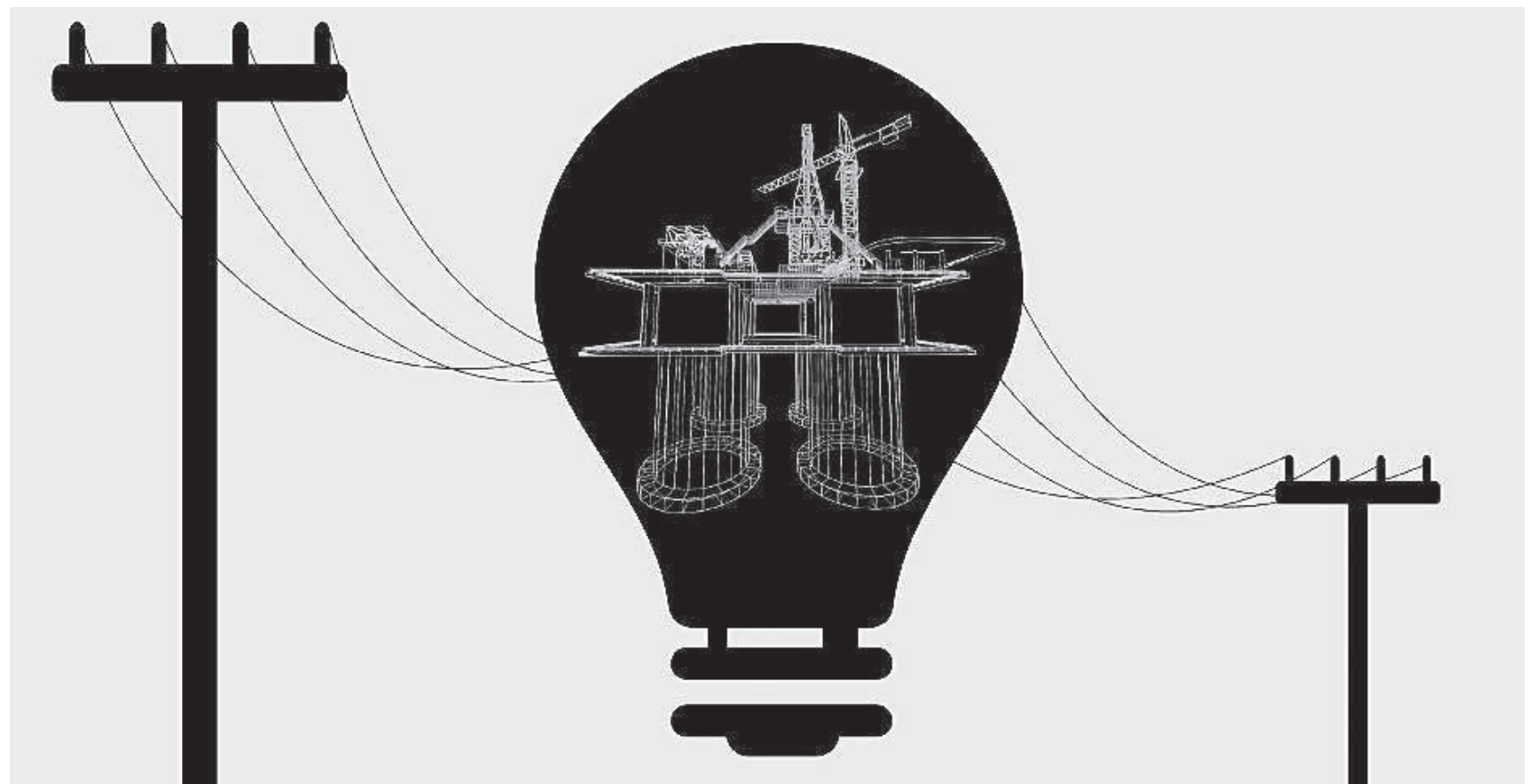
The new president must be one deemed capable by the public

WITH the resignation of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on July 11 (to be publicly announced by the Speaker in parliament on July 13), we see another curve in the road for the island nation – as nothing can be termed a light at the end of the tunnel yet. The political and economic situation in Sri Lanka came to its worst starting this year, when fuel prices began to rise steeply. Since then, the lives of Sri Lankans have deteriorated miserably in quality, as they experience 10-hour-long power cuts daily, a reduction of food intake, a severe scarcity of cash, inability to work even remotely, and an overall collapsed economy. In April, the country defaulted on its USD 51-billion foreign debt and now has very little foreign currency to even import essentials. In June, the country's inflation hit a record high for the ninth consecutive month, as per government data.

One need hardly wonder why, even after one Rajapaksa brother resigned from his post of prime minister, the protests by Sri Lankans are still going on. This was never about just fighting off the nepotism practiced by the Rajapaksa dynasty. Citizens protested for months, often at the face of disproportionate response from law enforcement (leading to quite a few protesting lives lost), because they had witnessed in real time how badly the irresponsibility of those in charge had turned their livelihoods upside-down. But while protestors finally seem to have the upper hand, especially since their takeover of the Presidential palace and the burning of PM Ranil Wickremesinghe's private residence, the political crisis is far from being over until those in charge can choose leaders to be elected who will acquire the public nod.

What the 22 million people of Sri Lanka are experiencing now is certainly the worst economic crisis the island has witnessed since its independence in 1948. However, the crisis is also a testament to what happens when politicians heading a country become self-serving or want to make a show of development, rather than serving the public. Starting from building infrastructure using borrowed foreign funds to political members of the Rajapaksa family allegedly laundering millions of Sri Lankan rupees, the wrath of the public against this family and their government has been building up for some years now.

We urge the international community to come to the aid of Sri Lankan citizens by providing anything from food, fuel, medication, etc. Though, given President Rajapaksa's resignation, PM Wickremesinghe is automatically made the country's acting president, it is imperative that the public is allowed to democratically elect a replacement. Most of all, we hope that peace and prosperity will finally prevail in Sri Lanka.



VISUAL: STAR

What has led us to the current energy crisis?



Dr M Tamim is a professor at the Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Engineering in Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

M TAMIM

THE world is going through one of the worst energy crises in recent times, even if we compare it to the situation that arose out of the 1973 Arab oil embargo. The 2008 economic meltdown and the consequent high oil and food prices were relatively short-lived. The Covid pandemic and then the Russia-Ukraine war have kept all energy prices very high for a long time. The world electricity demand in the second half of 2020 during the Covid lockdown period went down by three percent. Energy demand dipped drastically. In June 2020, the LNG spot price went down to USD 2.05/MMBtu, Newcastle coal was at USD 50/tonne, and oil price hit a negative value on April 20, 2020. As a result, a large number of energy supply operations, especially the small ones, shut down. The larger supply outlets also cut down operations. The world economy started recovering in early 2021 and the energy price rallied back. The economic rebound was sudden. Many of the supply operations in the coal, gas, and oil sectors could not recover at all or scale up to meet the demand. The gas sector was the worst hit and a serious supply shortage peaked the Asian spot LNG price at USD 35/MMBtu in October 2021. The high gas price put pressure on other fuels, especially coal for power production.

Newcastle thermal coal hit USD 266/tonne at the same time – a five-time increase. The crude price increase was moderate but product (gasoline, diesel) prices kept on going up due to refinery limitations. Amid this crisis, Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The Asian LNG spot price on February 22 was USD 28/MMBtu, coal on February 25 was USD 237/tonne and Brent on February 23 was USD 99.29/bbl – all of them were at a higher level than the previous five-year averages. The fear of Russian supply disruption saw a record high price of USD 70/MMBtu and USD 412/tonne of gas and coal price, respectively, in March 2022. Currently, the gas spot price is over USD 40/MMBtu, coal at about USD 160/tonne (some demand destruction took place) and Brent at USD 105/bbl.

How is the world facing this challenge?

This unprecedented long period of high energy prices and supply shortage are exerting tremendous pressure on all economies – developed, developing, and poor countries are facing a serious cost-of-living challenge. Even the US, which is relatively insulated from global energy prices, is experiencing record inflation. Food supply, shipping space/container shortage, and other supply chain issues along with the energy price are threatening recession in many countries. Russia provided 40 percent of Europe's gas. It also supplies 12 percent of world's crude oil, and half of that went to Europe. The war and the subsequent sanctions have created a partial supply shortage in most European countries. As a result, gas and electricity prices have gone up by 40 percent in Europe. France, Denmark, Germany, England, Spain, the Netherlands, and other countries are paying a direct subsidy to the poorer households. Some of them are putting a price cap on utilities, forcing them to bear the cost. Spain levied a windfall tax on energy companies that made record profits and planned to distribute 2.4 billion euros to the consumers out of that revenue.

The high European gas price is dictating prices all over the world. Even the US gas price, which is disconnected from the external

supply, is seeing a high price increase. The biggest challenge is faced by the import-dependent developing countries. China and India have reduced their LNG imports by 20 percent and 14 percent, respectively, in the first half of 2022, compared to the same period in 2021. Several provinces and cities in China are planning "orderly" electricity consumption. India suffered a widespread power outage and Coal India is going to import coal for the first time since 2015. Pakistan reduced its work days to five days a week and is restricting commercial power usage. Currently, it is generating 5,000MW less than its demand. The energy import burden of more than USD 6 billion is creating a crippling effect on its dwindling foreign currency reserves. Sri Lanka depends 60 percent on imported fuel (oil/coal) for its power production. Its mismanaged economy and almost empty foreign currency reserves have put the country into chaos.

Even the advanced Asia and Oceania countries are facing difficulties. Apart from rate adjustment, Singapore chartered floating vessels for LNG storage to ensure supply. Japan is going for major demand-side management by asking citizens not to use air conditioners. The Australian energy minister has requested the residents of New South Wales province not to use electricity for two hours in the evening. Apart from some oil/coal/gas producing countries, every country is scrambling for austerity measures.

Bangladesh's case

For not adding generation capacity, Bangladesh faced increasing power outages from 2000 onward. The BNP government came up with oil-based rental power plants to tackle the situation that was picked up by the caretaker government, and the first 10 rental power plants were awarded in 2008. Despite initial opposition, the Awami League government had to add more oil-based rental plants from 2010. There was no other alternative to addressing the severe load-shedding, which was hampering economic growth. In the meantime, the power sector problem shifted from a lack of generation capacity, to a shortage of primary energy. In 2007, the gas shortage started with a 300 mcm/d shortfall that could never be mitigated. Today, the gas deficit is estimated at 1,300 mcm/d. Both the Power System Master Plan (PSMP) 2010 and PSMP 2016 accepted this deficit and, instead of emphasising local exploration (although PSMP 2010 relied 30 percent on its future power generation plan from local coal, which was abandoned in the 2016 plan), depended heavily on imported fuel. Although the government did not follow these plans, fuel import dependency kept on increasing, putting the country at an international price and supply fluctuation risk. The legacy problem of generation got much more attention, putting the primary energy issue on the backburner. Every time the issue of high future energy import bill was raised, the growing economic strength was shown as a solution.

The Bapex-only local exploration policy resulted in only one drilling a year in the last 20 years, and despite settling the maritime boundary in 2014, offshore activity was questionable and half-hearted. Petrobangla miserably failed to maintain the production plateau reached during 2016-17. Any hope of local coal development was shut down in 2012. Bangladesh started to move away from energy independence at a much faster rate than was needed in the absence of local exploration and exploitation. For fuel and source diversification, and hence better energy security, the import of LNG and coal was needed and should have been started earlier. Our lack of experience in international energy trading was exposed when we opted for a four-tonne long-term contract for the 7.2-tonne LNG capacity.

A large option spot portfolio is never recommended in a perpetual supply deficit situation.

The overcapacity dilemma is a trap created by the government. Out of 25,500MW of electricity generation capacity, 3,500MW is off-grid (solar home and captive), while 4,000MW cannot be operational because of forced/unforced shutdown and fuel shortage. Including derated capacity and plant availability, the true grid capacity is about 16,000MW. Unless the government decommissions the idle 3,000MW capacity it is carrying on paper, the overcapacity question will not go away. The other question of capacity payment is more complex. Every power plant is paid a capacity cost varying between Tk 1.25-2.4/kWh. This is part of the generation cost allowing investors to get their money back during the project period. The older long-term projects have a lower charge. If an HFO plant generation cost is Tk 15/kWh, Tk 2 would be the capacity cost and Tk 13 the fuel cost. Similarly, an old CCGT gas generation IPP cost is Tk 3.5/kWh, and Tk 1.25 would be the capacity cost.

During the entire winter season, almost all oil-based power plants are kept on standby, receiving capacity cost. During peak summer, when peak demand increases by 5,000MW now, the majority of them are used. Is there a scope of corruption here? Some corruption definitely happens, but the vast majority of the capacity payment for oil-based plants that is being questioned is the payment during their idle period. Several unnecessary standby capacities are hardly used. They must be scrapped first, but oil-based capacity cannot be discarded entirely now until the larger coal-based base load plants come online.

We are paying for our past mistakes. We could easily get a six-tonne long-term LNG contract; we should have parallelly given much more attention to local gas development along with import. We were slow in bringing in the large coal-fired power plants (Rampal is taking almost 12 years from inception) extending the life of the oil plants, etc. One can find many more problems. We made some policy mistakes as well as execution delays/mistakes. None of those can be reversed immediately, but a course correction is essential. All avenues for immediate exploration of both onshore and offshore gas prospects must be undertaken, the land-based LNG regasification plant with assured gas sourcing is needed, and a serious impartial examination of local coal development by a third party is needed before we make a final decision.

To secure a more certain supply of power in the immediate future, the government must ensure timely completion of all ongoing coal-based power plants, their coal supply and import infrastructure, and the completion of the necessary transmission lines for power evacuation. We are paying over Tk 100 crore capacity charges per month for over 1.5 years for one unit from the Payra power plant, because the transmission lines are still incomplete. We simply cannot afford to do that for other power plants – especially our only nuclear power plant.

Our current energy crisis is unique. The planned load-shedding is perhaps the best way of keeping the tariff at its current level. It will also ease the foreign currency demand, which is the other reason for this measure. Special care should be taken for the most productive sector (industry/agriculture) in allocating both gas and power. Every bit of renewable energy, including rooftop, household, irrigation, streetlights, etc, must be supported through policy and finance. It is expected that due to demand destruction and probable recession in some countries, energy prices will come down soon (except gas). Along with forced saving, citizens need to conserve energy as much as possible.

The overcapacity dilemma is a trap created by the government. Out of 25,500MW of electricity generation capacity, 3,500MW is off-grid (solar home and captive), while 4,000MW cannot be operational because of forced/unforced shutdown and fuel shortage. Including derated capacity and plant availability, the true grid capacity is about 16,000MW. Unless the government decommissions the idle 3,000MW capacity it is carrying on paper, the overcapacity question will not go away.

Is It Sri Lanka's 'Arab Spring' Moment?



SMRUTI S PATTANAİK

Smruti S Pattanaik is a research fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDS) in New Delhi, India.

Two dates – May 9 and July 9 – will remain significant for the Rajapaksa brothers in Sri Lanka. It was on May 9 that Mahinda Rajapaksa, who enjoyed majority in parliament, resigned as the prime minister of Sri Lanka after his supporters clashed with anti-government protesters in the Galle Face Green, resulting in the death of two protesters. Exactly two months later, on July 9, the protesters, who had gathered from all over the country, forced Mahinda's brother and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the presidential house and took it over, in the culmination of what is described as "aragalaya" or struggle of the masses against a powerful regime.

Once the most powerful political family enjoying popular support and winning accolades for bringing peace by eliminating the LTTE, the Rajapaksas are now facing people's ire for corruption, maladministration and what people perceived to be a sense of entitlement – the manner in which the Rajapaksa family exercised power and enjoyed it with impunity. What started as the Mirihana protest on March 31, with police action against the protesters and later the student protest at Nugegoda and other parts of the country, was only the beginning of the end. Not to be browbeaten by the state power that Rajapaksas wielded, the crowd continued to gather at the Galle Face Green and engaged in peaceful protest with the slogan "GoGotaGama." This slogan captured youth imagination as students, activists, youths and the general public from all walks of life, overcoming the ethnic and religious divide, joined in large numbers spontaneously. Finally, they succeeded in unravelling the unpopular regime.

Now, the question is: What's next for the aragalaya? Both the political and economic roadmaps of Sri Lanka are bumpy. The opposition remains divided, and a consensual candidate to take over and form an interim government is not going to be smooth as the ruling party continues to enjoy a majority. Political instability is going to impact Sri Lanka's negotiation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the release of

much-needed funds.

The movement started in April against the unfolding economic crisis in Sri Lanka as the island nation defaulted in its debt repayment. Economic distress was apparent with the fuel crisis, mounting inflation that led to the devaluation of Sri Lankan rupees. Food inflation increased to 80.1 percent in June 2022 from 57.4

accentuated the crisis. Remittances also declined as the construction and service industries in the Middle East were affected by the pandemic. According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL), in 2021, the total external debt service payments as a percentage of the export of goods and services increased from 13.2 percent in 2011 to 30 percent in 10 years, consuming

to introduce organic farming to save foreign currency resulted in a food crisis. Production of rice, the main staple, reduced by 20 percent. Production of tea, which fetches USD 3 billion annually, and rubber, another important item in the export basket, was affected. Businesses were unable to open a letter of credit due to scarcity of foreign currency. Inevitably, the government announced that it cannot service its USD 52 billion in debt. It started rationing fuel, resorted to load shedding, announced "work from home" for its employees, and advised schools to hold online classes. All this mounted political disaffection. Already categorised as a "defaulter," the country would be moved to the D category if debts remain unpaid after the grace period.

Sri Lanka's economic fate still hangs in the balance. Political instability may be addressed with an all-party interim government and the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa today. It is unlikely that the future government would be in a position to provide economic relief. The process of economic recovery will be long and arduous. Debt restructuring would be an important component of economic reforms. While the conclusion of the ongoing negotiation with the IMF would be an important first step, reforms are going to be unpopular and hurt the people who are still struggling. Taxes have to be imposed and unnecessary expenditure has to be curtailed. These were part of the IMF's USD 1.5 billion bailout package in 2016. Will there be another aragalaya against economic difficulties that the Lankans have to endure to put their economy back on track?

Sri Lanka's crisis has important lessons for the region. It is politically instructive to note that a powerful regime headed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, wielding far-reaching executive powers, who was popularly elected only three years back, was shown the door by the people. It is evident that populist agenda cannot sustain regimes. Mismanagement of the economy, high-level corruption, and short-sighted economic policies steered by regime cronies rather than professional economists are a recipe for political disaster. South Asia has seen many instances of popular uprising against authoritarian and unpopular regimes; however, the Sri Lankan situation remains unparalleled in recent history as it was the economic crisis that underpinned what many describe as the Bastille moment, or its "Arab Spring," that jostled a political awakening.



▲ Demonstrators celebrate after entering the Presidential Secretariat during a protest, after President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled, amid the country's economic crisis, in Colombo, Sri Lanka on July 9, 2022.

PHOTO: REUTERS

percent in May 2022, while non-food inflation increased to 42.4 percent in June 2022 from 30.6 percent in May 2022. Hospitals announced that they did not have the essential medicines to carry out life-saving procedures.

This crisis has been in the making for the past few years. Sources of revenue were drying up due to a series of populist measures that the government adopted. For example, VAT was reduced to eight percent from 15 percent, tax-free threshold for turnover for VAT was raised from one million rupees to 25 million rupees. The government also abolished debit tax imposed on banks, capital gains tax, Pay as You Earn tax and debt services tax, while also withholding tax on interests and reducing income tax on the construction industry by half. The tourism industry had already shown signs of distress after the Easter bombing; the pandemic only

one-third of the foreign currency earned. Moreover, 80 percent of the foreign debt was government debts. There was 33 percent depreciation of the Sri Lankan rupee against the US dollar this March, making the import-dependent country more vulnerable. Remittance flow reduced due to the depreciation of the Sri Lankan rupee.

The CBSL also admitted that the International Sovereign Bonds (ISBs), which Sri Lanka issued to raise finance, were priced at relatively high interest rates compared to the development assistance finances that the country received at concessional rates. The government's decision to finance large infrastructure projects with non-concessional and commercial borrowings resulted in the rise of the debt-to-GDP ratio of more than 60 percent.

Last year, the government's decision

The 'original pandemic' of violence against women continues unabated

GWYN LEWIS, KRISTINE BLOKHUS, and GITANJALI SINGH

Gwyn Lewis is the UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh.
Kristine Blokhus is country representative of UNFPA Bangladesh.
Gitanjali Singh is country representative of UN Women Bangladesh.

Almost every morning, as we open the newspaper, we are met with deeply disturbing stories of sexual violence committed against Bangladeshi women. A report issued by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad last week outlines the brutal reality: almost 300 women reported different types of abuse just in the last six months. Some 77 women, the majority of them under the age of 18, reported rape. Murder, suicide, trafficking, and acid attacks are all mentioned as part of the horrific violence that is detailed. Sadly, violence against women is far too common, and the impunity of the perpetrators all too often continues.

The data on violence against women clearly tells us that those women who report their experiences to the police are in the minority. The vast majority suffers in silence. As such, we must assume that horrific as these figures are, they are just the tip of the iceberg. With

Covid-19 restrictions, we have witnessed a resurgence in violence against women/girls, including a dramatic increase in online abuse and harassment.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has clearly outlined her commitment to eliminating this scourge of violence against the women of Bangladesh. Nothing hurts her more, she has said, than violence against women. Her government has enacted several strong policies and action plans to promote gender equality and address violence against women, including the Domestic Violence Protection and Preservation Act, 2010, National Women Development Policy, 2011, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012, and the Child Marriage Prevention Act, 2017, which clearly demonstrate the will to make changes. As the honourable prime minister herself has expressed, however, laws and policies are not sufficient. It is essential to change the mindset of men, and of the society as a whole. Indeed, despite policies and laws, women continue to be terrorised by violence, and by fear of violence.

The United Nations also believes that real change requires a whole-of-society approach.

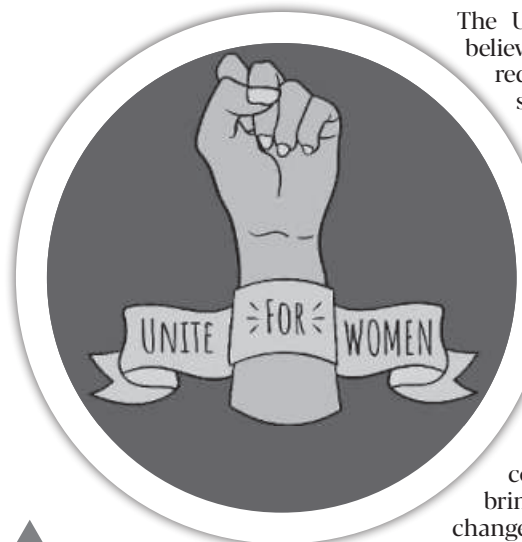
Bangladesh is blessed with a strong and vibrant women's movement and an opportunity for a demographic dividend. Both will be instrumental in harnessing the power of communities to bring about real change. Young people can help to break the cycle of intergenerational discriminatory socialisation patterns.

It is imperative to break the silence and defeat the stigma which surrounds the issue of sexual violence. Genuine reflection about power imbalances, harmful gender

norms and practices, and the negative impact of all of the oppression on women is needed. Awareness raising and education of boys and girls is also essential. Legal and policy frameworks and accountability need further strengthening in order to address structural and underlying causes and risk factors aimed to prevent violence against women and girls. As part of the response, strengthening multisectoral services, programmes, and responses to violence against women and girls and increasing the amount of available data will help to ensure that core issues are being addressed.

The United Nations in Bangladesh lists ending violence against women and promoting women's empowerment among its primary objectives. The UN agencies stand ready to continue to support the Government of Bangladesh, the civil society organisations, and society as a whole on their path to bring an end to the culture of violence which oppresses one half of the population.

Everyone has a role to play – no one can remain a bystander.



▲ VISUAL: STAR

Opinion

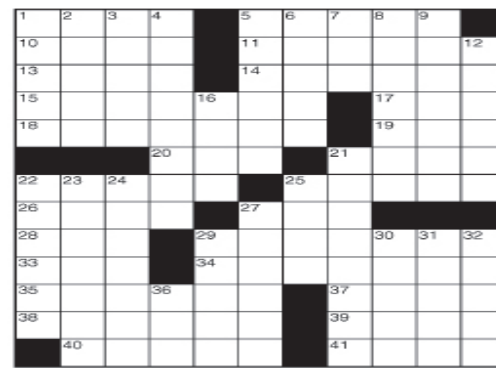
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CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Football play start
 - 5 Said further
 - 10 Zilch
 - 11 Chauffeur
 - 13 Lab assistant of film
 - 14 Italian cheese
 - 15 Umbrella look alike
 - 17 Jack of "Barney Miller"
 - 18 Lettering aid
 - 19 "— your loss!"
 - 20 Ump's call
 - 21 Verse writer
 - 22 Translucent theater drop
 - 25 Ranch workers
 - 26 — the line (obeyed)
 - 27 Combat
 - 28 Sounds of contentment
 - 29 Model of perfection
 - 33 Got together
 - 34 Showy flower
 - 35 Business gain
 - 37 Feedbag fill
 - 38 Peaceful
 - 39 Get — the crack of dawn
 - 40 Stretched
 - 41 Workout count
- DOWN**
- 1 Uses shears
 - 2 Bother
 - 3 Find darling
 - 4 Unduly suspicious
 - 5 Skilled
 - 6 Comical
 - 7 Poorly lit
 - 8 Vague answer
 - 9 Signified
 - 12 Perches
 - 16 Soap residue
 - 21 Lover
 - 22 Post office buy
 - 23 Sticks together
 - 24 Make good as new
 - 25 Tortoise's rival
 - 27 Desired
 - 29. "Common Sense" writer
 - 30 Get excited
 - 31 Like bar beer
 - 32 Bird abodes
 - 36 Three or four



SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

GRAMMY HUTS
RESCUE UNIT
ATTEST MICA
PIONS COCKY
HERR CAROLE
OARS RED
THEWEEKND
COOFERN
HEMSUP EGOS
ONEAL PERIL
PAILEL CALLED
ALES MOPEDS

BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



Two kids drown in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Two children died in separate incidents of drowning in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram on Monday.

The deceased are Abdur Rahman, 7, son of Shafiqul Islam of Ramna village in Kurigram's Chilmari upazila, and Nirmal Chandra, 4, son of Khitish Chandra of Bhatibari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Quoting the deceased's family members, police said, Rahman, a Class I student at Ramna Govt Primary School, drowned while he was fishing in a waterbody (Beel) nearby his house.

Meanwhile, Nirmal died when he fell into the water while playing beside a pond adjacent to his house.

Hearing screams, villagers rescued the boy and took him to the hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Natore UP member found dead, wife injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police recovered the body of a local union parishad (UP) member from his second wife's house at Joanpur in Naldanga upazila early yesterday.

The deceased, Abdul Alim, 40, a member of Ward No 1 under Madhanagar UP, was son of late Ashraful Islam of West Madhanagar village in the upazila.

The law enforcers also rescued Alim's second wife Rima Begum, who sustained stab injuries, and admitted her to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Madhanagar UP Chairman Abdul Jabbar said Alim went to his second wife Rima's house on Monday evening.

After having their dinner, the couple locked in a quarrel over different family issues at the dead of night.

Later, hearing Rima's screams, her mother Eleka Begum entered the room and found the duo lying in the floor unconscious and informed the police, he said.

Being informed, Naldanga police recovered Alim's body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Deceased's younger brother Ashiq Ali alleged that his brother was killed in a planned manner and demanded proper investigation in this regard.

Officer in Charge of Naldanga Police Station Shafiqul Islam said the reason behind the death will be clear once the autopsy is done.



Defying the law, a local influential man has been constructing these shops taking lease of a rural market in Tangail's Ghatail upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

ILLEGAL POND

A threat to surrounding cropland

Ruling party leader did the dishonest act failing to purchase adjacent farmland, locals alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A local Awami League (AL) leader has dug a pond illegally posing threats to the surrounding cropland and homesteads. An act that he has done after failing to buy the villagers' land at a cheap rate, locals said.

Aminul Islam is the general secretary of Durgapur union unit of AL in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

Union Assistant Land Officer Abdul Hamid has filed a case against Aminul with Aditmari Police Station under the Sand Mahal and Land Management Act 2010.

According to what could be known, Aminul wanted to buy cultivable land and homesteads of eight villagers at a cheap rate. However, as the villagers refused his offer, he started digging a pond on his eight bighas of land illegally posing threats to surrounding cropland and homesteads, inhabitants of Dwardkuti village said.

Around one kilometre stretch of the dirt road in the village is now in an impassable state due to transporting earth and sand from the pond. The village graveyard lying on the bank of the pond is also at the risk of being devoured.

Mostafa Ali, 55, a farmer

Around 1 kilometre stretch of a dirt road is now in an impassable state, while the village graveyard on the bank of the pond is also at risk of being devoured.

from Dwardkuti village, said his farmland was being devoured by the illegally excavated pond and his homestead was also under threat.

"AL man Aminul Islam proposed me that I sell my land to him and move to somewhere

else. But I didn't agree to it. Now, I am losing my arable land and homestead," he said.

Contacted, Aminul Islam said that he was digging a pond on his own land and it matters little to him whose land and homesteads being devoured.

However, he denied the allegations that he had offered to buy land at low prices.

Rafiqul Alam, general secretary of Aditmari upazila AL, said Aminul deserves to be punished. Aditmari Upazila Nirbahi Officer GR Sarwar said according to the law, no one can dig a pond and extract sand without permission. A case has been filed against Aminul Islam.

Permanent shops on leased land!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Violating rules and without taking permission from the authorities concerned a local influential man has been constructing permanent shops after taking lease of a rural market at Dhalapara in Ghatail upazila.

Moreover, the lease holder evicted the former traders, who had been running their business for long, and allocating the newly-constructed shops to others in exchange of huge money, evicted traders alleged.

The influential leaseholder, backed by powerful political quarters and a section of local public representatives, allegedly realizing Tk 5 to Tk 6 lakh for allocating each shop to the other people, they said.

As a result, nearly 300 small traders, who had been holding business on the rural market, became unemployed.

Finding no other alternative, the aggrieved traders submitted a written complaint to the local upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) recently, but yet to get any solution in this regard.

Shafiqul Islam, who was the previous lease holder, took lease of the traditional Dhalapara market this year at a cost of Tk 20.71 lakh.

But surprisingly, soon after taking lease of the market this year, Shafiqul evicted the former traders from their allocated places, saying some new shops will be constructed in front of the market.

Usually, a small space (viti) of the rural market is allocate to traders in exchange of a small amount of revenue every year, but the scenario is different this year, traders alleged.

They said leaseholder Shafiqul has already constructed a number of permanent shops, including 48 in front of the playground of a local school and a pond, on the leased market.



PHOTO: STAR

He later started allocating those shops to other traders in exchange of huge money, depriving the previous small traders, they further said.

Asked about the matter, Abdul Awal, a land official (Nayeb) at Dhalapara Union Land Office, said Shafiqul got the lease of the market for one year and he didn't know anything about construction of any shops there.

Contacted, Shafiqul said after getting lease of the market this year he has constructed some new shops there.

In an interview with a private TV channel, Tangail Deputy Commissioner Dr Ataul Gani said construction of permanent structures or shops on any leased rural market is a complete violation of rules.

After investigation, necessary steps will be taken in this regard, he added.

Tigers eye series

FROM PAGE 12

two of their premier players in Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim -- the first time since their debuts that both of these players are missing an ODI series -- but left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed seemed to have adapted to the ODI role nicely after making an impressive debut in the first ODI.

The Tigers will crave a better performance from their batting department but will still be happy to dish out more of the same in the second ODI while the hosts would need to come with a much more commanding batting approach if they are to turn things around.

Rawhide market

FROM PAGE 12

cost of processing the skins and transportation and labour costs. They bought cowhides at Tk 300-550, depending on the size.

Chattoogram-based traders bought skins at Tk 400-700, up about 20 percent from last year.

Traders in the port city have set a target to procure about 3.5 lakh pieces of rawhides, down 15 percent year-on-year. They collected 1.5 lakh pieces of rawhides.

Seasonal traders have 2 lakh pieces under their disposal and the skins would start to come to markets within a few days, according to Moslem Uddin, president of the Chattogram Rawhide Warehouse Traders.

"The price of rawhides at the grass-root level is a bit lower. As a result, seasonal traders will get better prices when they sell the salted hides to wholesalers and merchants," said Ghosh.

The tannery owners in Dhaka have cleared dues, according to Shahidul Islam, general secretary of the Natore Leather Traders' Association.

Our correspondents from Chattogram, Natore and Narayanganj contributed to this report

Curbing inflation

FROM PAGE 1

wheat and fertilisers, last fiscal year due to the price hike of the items in the international market.

The reserves dropped to \$39.80 billion yesterday for the first time in nearly two years. It stood at \$46.15 billion in December last year, shows BB data.

The new governor's another priority is to keep the financial sector stable.

"The banking sector has performed well enough. One or two banks might have been in trouble," he said.

The central bank will put emphasis on reducing defaulted loans, and efforts will be made to enhance the capital base of banks, said the new BB governor.

About non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs), he said the majority of them are doing well, but a few might have been facing problems, which is why common people have a negative impression about them as a whole.

"We will work to win back people's trust in the NBFIs sector."

The central bank will try to

increase the credit flow to the private sector so that new jobs can be created, Rouf said.

Asked whether the BB would withdraw the 9-percent interest rate cap on lending to contain inflation, he said no commercial bank faced any loss so far due to the ceiling.

The country earlier had maintained a high interest rate on lending, which is rare in the world, he noted.

"Many economists have frequently criticised the initiatives taken by the central bank and the finance ministry ... We know which measure is good for the economy."

Responding to another query, he said the BB will reduce its intervention in the foreign exchange rate but it will use the required tools to control the rate.

Rouf replaced Fazle Kabir whose six-year tenure ended earlier this month.

He holds an MSc in Development Management from the University of Birmingham, and an MBA from the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University.

Unfit vehicles, crashes

FROM PAGE 12

But people's journey to the hometowns before that Eid was smoother as they got a nine-day vacation. But people got a four-day vacation this time.

Besides, thousands of people left Dhaka on motorcycles before Eid-ul-Fitr. But this time, the authorities imposed a ban on bikes for seven days from July 7.

"As a result, a large number of sub-standard vehicles without fitness clearances hit the highways while the authorities did not enforce the law properly," said an official from a control room of the Road Transport and Highway Division to monitor the roads during Eid.

Prominent transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said the road

and transportation system was not capable to cope with the pressure of holidaymakers ahead of Eids.

The authorities' only emphasis is on the construction and maintenance of highways, not on operation, which is crucial for optimum use of highways, he said.

People got the benefit of access-controlled Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga expressway and the toll collection must be automated to let people get its full benefit, he added.

The authorities should make other major highways access-controlled to prevent indiscipline, he said.

Buses that operate on the major corridors should be brought under some particular companies to prevent unhealthy competition.

22 die on roads

FROM PAGE 12

when a bus hit a CNG-run three-wheeler carrying the four on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Tangail's Rabna Bypass area around 2:00pm.

The dead were identified as Riya Moni of Jamalpur's Dewanganj and her aunt Mousumi Akter, 35, of Natore's Noldonga.

The injured were undergoing treatment at Tangail General Hospital as of yesterday afternoon, said hospital sources.

On Monday, a 12-year-old boy was killed and 12 other people injured in a road accident in Porabari area of Tangail's Ghatail upazila.

The dead, Sourav, was a resident of Brahmanbari village in Tangail's Modhupur upazila.

The accident occurred when a pick-up carrying passengers hit a roadside electricity pole along the Tangail-Mymensingh highway after the driver lost control.

On Saturday, two people were killed in as many accidents in Nalya area of Tangail Jamalpur highway in Dhanbari upazila and Siguria area of Elega-Bhuanpur regional highway in Ghatail upazila.

The same day, an unidentified man died after being run over by a bus on Bangabandhu Bridge east link road in Char Vabla area of Tangail's Kalihati upazila.

On Friday, two motorcyclists were killed when a truck hit their bike on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Mirzapur upazila's Jamurki area. Two more unidentified people were killed and six others wounded in separate road accidents in Tangail the same day.

In Dinajpur, a pedestrian was killed yesterday after a speeding truck ran him over in Gopalganj area of the district.

The dead, Nur Alam, 28, was from Ramjibanpur village in the same upazila.

In Rangpur, a student of Gangachara Government College was killed when a speeding microbus hit his motorcycle on Rangpur-Gangachara road in Buraburi area of Gangachara upazila on Sunday.

The dead was identified as Mahmudul Hasan, 23.

Journey to the edge

FROM PAGE 1

Lamiya is one of the over 1,000 astronomers working with the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) project.

"This joy is incomparable and I cannot be happier. We will now start analysing the data to find more details of the galaxies as more pictures will be released soon," she told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

Lamiya has been working with the Canadian team on the JWST since 2020.

"I have developed the analysis pipeline to study the structures of the galaxies," she said while explaining her role in the project.

A graduate in astrophysics from Wellesley College, Lamiya completed her PhD from Yale University before working with Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics in Canada as a fellow in 2020.

The young scientist said she initially planned a different career path for herself, but everything changed with one single telescope.

"I was admitted to Wellesley College and in the very first semester, I found a telescope on campus. The moment I put my eye on that telescope, [I knew] my destiny changed forever."

Lamiya completed her O and A level exams from Willes Little Flower School and College. She then flew to the USA to major in neuroscience.

"I wanted to study neuroscience because I was curious to know how the brain works," she said.

"[But] I always looked for logic, and physics is all about logic."

Asked whether other Bangladeshis

3 accused

FROM PAGE 12

pharmacy for treatment."

On June 30, she reported her rape to Khagrachhari district hospital, and filed the case on July 2.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Mohammed Rashid,

are involved in the team, she said, "In the 15-member Canadian team, I am the only Bangladeshi. But some 1,000 astronomers [from different countries] are working on the project. I would be surprised if I don't find any other Bangladeshi."

As a scientist, she said Bangladeshi students should give more emphasis on research and practical knowledge.

"We stress on learning by rote, which is dangerous. We have to come out of this practice. Universities should stress on research and the government must come forward to create scope for it."

She further said students should be encouraged to ask questions. "The more questions they ask, the more they will learn."

Lamiya said she had been trying to bring some small telescopes to a private university in Bangladesh but could not due to "red tape".

"The government should create an environment so that this sort of assistance can be easily accessible in Bangladesh. If the government creates an environment that promotes research, students would not leave the country."

Regarding women in science, she said Bangladeshi female students are ready to take up the challenge.

"I am very proud of female students of the country. What our country needs is an environment conducive enough for them to flourish."

She credited her mother for her long journey.

"My mother is my inspiration and nothing could have been achieved without her support."

officer-in-charge of Khagrachhari Police Station, however, said they have not been able to arrest the accused as they are in hiding. "We have heard that the men are from an armed political groups, but we are still investigating."

'I still can't believe what's happening'

AFP, Nur Sultan

Newly-crowned Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina on Tuesday dismissed Russian claims that she was its "product" as she received a hero's welcome in Kazakhstan, which she represented at the tournament.

Russian and Belarusian players were banned from Wimbledon this year after Russia sent troops to Ukraine but Moscow-born Rybakina was able to play as she had switched her allegiance to Kazakhstan in 2018.

At the weekend Russia appeared to claim her Grand Slam success when Russian tennis chief Shamil Tarpishev described Rybakina as "our product". "The transition from a junior to a professional career is very difficult," Rybakina, 23, told journalists in Kazakhstan when asked to comment on the "product" tag. "So I am of course not really in agreement with that phrasing."

"I always feel the support of our compatriots. Yesterday, upon arrival in Kazakhstan, I saw how many people came to meet me. I still can't believe what's happening," Rybakina said during a meeting with Kazakh Prime Minister Alikhan Smailov on Tuesday.



Novak Djokovic and Elena Rybakina hold their trophies at the Wimbledon champions dinner on Monday. Djokovic won a seventh Wimbledon title and 21st Grand Slam crown on Sunday with a four-set triumph over Nick Kyrgios while Rybakina powered back from a set down against Ons Jabeur to win her maiden Grand Slam title on Saturday. PHOTO: TWITTER

Kyrgios 'needs Sigmund Freud', says McEnroe

AFP, London

Three-time Wimbledon champion John McEnroe said Tuesday that controversial Australian Nick Kyrgios "needs Sigmund Freud" to sort out the "demons" in his game.

Kyrgios carved a sometimes thrilling, often controversial path to the final at the All England Club where he lost in four sets on Sunday to Novak Djokovic.

A series of outbursts saw the 27-year-old fined and he was described as "evil" and "a bully" by third round opponent Stefanos Tsitsipas.

But there was some impressive and inventive hitting, not least in the final, where he cluttered 30 aces and 62 winners in total. "The guy is a genius out there the way he plays," McEnroe told the BBC, adding that Kyrgios needed some advice from the father of psychoanalysis.

"He needs Sigmund Freud to come out of the grave and somehow figure out a way to keep this guy going for a couple of years because we could use him."

"It's unbelievable, he moves the needle for us in tennis. We need this big time but we don't need him to try half the time."

Off court the world number 45, who has admitted to 'tanking' during matches, also faces a court hearing in Canberra next month in relation to an allegation of common assault.

Bowlers key in Tigers' ODI success

SPORTS REPORTER

Even though Bangladesh are struggling to adapt to the longest and the shortest formats of the game, the Tigers continue to impress in the ODI format with a set template that has brought them success over the years.

Tamim Iqbal's side already lead their ongoing three-match series 1-0 after their comfortable six-wicket win over West Indies in the first ODI. And the visitors will be eyeing yet another ODI series win over the Windies when they meet in the second ODI in Guyana today.

A calculative approach in the format has made the ODIs the most preferred format for the Tigers over the years.

While a settled batting department might be pointed out as the secret behind the Tigers' success in the format, it, in fact, is their bowling unit that has often laid the platform for Bangladesh in ODIs.

It was left-arm seamer Shoriful Islam who led from the front in the first ODI, picking up four wickets as he unsettled the Windies' batting order with two double-wicket overs. Off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz also remained instrumental, bagging three wickets, as the Tigers eventually restricted West Indies to a small total.

While Shoriful and Miraz were rewarded for their efforts with wickets, the likes of Nasum Ahmed and Taskin Ahmed did their part silently. Nasum, on his debut, conceded only 16 in his eight overs that included three maidens as the left-arm spinner played a major role in keeping things tight.

Like Nasum, right-arm quick Taskin also remained wicketless but still managed



to impress. However, the only blemish in the bowling department was Mustafizur Rahman, who was unable to contribute according to his potential.

Despite being the most experienced bowler in the Tigers' lineup, Mustafizur hasn't been able to live up to expectations in recent times. The ace left-arm paceman could blame his luck as his figures of 34 for one in eight overs would have looked much better had he not seen two catches dropped off his bowling.

The team management will surely be expecting a lot more from Mustafizur in the coming days and the 'cutter master' would definitely want to reassume the leading role in the Tigers' pace unit.

Going back to the topic of bowling being the mantra for success for Bangladesh in

ODIs, it is the way the Tigers have managed to control the middle overs of an innings that gave them edge over the opponents in recent years.

In fact, among the Test-playing nations, Bangladesh remain on top when it comes to economy rates in the middle overs in recent times. The Tigers maintained an economy rate of 4.57 from overs between 11 to 40 since 2019.

Even in the first ODI against the Windies, Bangladesh conceded just 84 runs from overs 8 to 33. They also managed to pick six wickets during this period while bowling as many as 161 dots in a 41-over contest.

With the chance to seal the series, the Tigers' bowlers will once again be looking to lay the platform for the win in Guyana today.

Australia lose top Test championship spot

AFP, Galle

Australia lost their top World Test Championship position to South Africa Tuesday after they were defeated by Sri Lanka in the second match of their series.

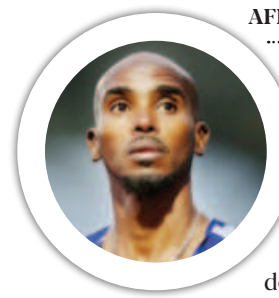
The island nation completed a stunning innings and 39-run victory over captain Pat Cummins' Australia in Galle on Monday to end the two-match series level at 1-1. The result shook up the championship table with Sri Lanka climbing to third as the race to make the final heats up.

Australia's next Test outing is at home against West Indies in November, while Sri Lanka host Pakistan for a two-match series starting Saturday.

Kane Williamson's New Zealand won the inaugural Test championship final last year, beating India in Southampton.

'The truth is I'm not who you think I am'

AFP, London



Olympic great Mo Farah won praise from across Britain's political spectrum Tuesday after the shock revelation that he was illegally trafficked as a child to the country and forced to work in domestic servitude.

The 39-year-old distance runner, one of Britain's best-loved and most successful athletes, told a BBC documentary that his real name is Hussein Abdi Kahin.

Rather than moving to the UK as a refugee from Somalia with his parents as previously claimed, Farah said he came from Djibouti aged eight or nine with a woman he had never met, was given a false identity, and then made to look after another family's children.

In fact, he said, his father was killed in civil unrest in Somalia when Farah was aged four and his mother, Aisha, and two brothers live in the breakaway state of Somaliland.

"The truth is I'm not who you think I am," Farah said in the documentary, explaining that his mother wanted him far removed from Somalia's civil wars.

The admission could have raised questions about Farah's UK citizenship, but the interior ministry said he was in the clear.

'Changing coach every year is hard'

REUTERS

French midfielder Paul Pogba conceded the volume of different coaches he played under at Manchester United hindered his chances of success in England, while he also insisted he is pleased to be "home" at Juventus.

Speaking at a news conference on Tuesday, he said: "I'm happy with the choices I've made in my life. Sometimes you make choices that don't go your way but I'm happy with the years in Manchester. I grew up, I learned, I became a man."

"Changing (United) coach every year is hard - this was a difficult aspect for me. Then there were a few injuries, but I think it was also a mental thing - playing and not playing makes you lose pace. There is a bit of everything: coach, team, position. All this has blocked me a bit."



Manchester United striker Anthony Martial celebrates his goal with Bruno Fernandes during his side's 4-0 win in a friendly match against Liverpool at the Rajamangala National Stadium in Bangkok yesterday. Tens of thousands of jersey-wearing fans surged into the stadium to witness pre-season clash of the Premier League titans. PHOTO: AFP

Bumrah six-for crushes England

AFP, London

Jasprit Bumrah took career-best one-day international figures of 6-19 as India dismissed 50-over world champions England for just 110 at the Oval on Tuesday.

Fast bowler Bumrah produced an opening burst of 4-9 in five overs against an England side featuring arguably their strongest batting line-up at this level since their 2019 World Cup final triumph.

England avoided the embarrassment of being dismissed for less than their record low completed ODI score of 86 all out against Australia at Manchester's Old Trafford in 2001.

An innings featuring four ducks in the top six - Jason Roy, Joe Root, Ben Stokes and Liam Livingstone were all out for nought - ended with England bowled out with nearly half of their 50 overs remaining.

The game is the first of a three-match series between England against 2023 50-over World Cup hosts India.

Bumrah, 28, returned to clean up Brydon Carse and David Willey to surpass his only other five-wicket haul of his 71 match ODI career - 5-27 against Sri Lanka at Pallekelle five years ago. Mohammed Shami, Bumrah's new-ball partner, took 3-31 in seven overs as he became the fastest Indian and joint-third fastest to 150 ODI wickets in matches played in his 80th appearance.

England's innings boasted just four double-figure contributions. Captain Jos Buttler top-scored with 30 and Willey managed 21.

Overcast skies and a well grassed pitch favoured the faster bowlers, but it was still a superb display by India after captain Rohit Sharma called correctly at the toss.

The tone was set when Roy, on his Surrey home ground, played on for nought attempting a booming drive to Bumrah's fourth ball of the day.

Two balls later, Joe Root - the world's top-ranked Test batsman - was undone by a Bumrah delivery that lifted off a good length.



And in the next over Test captain Ben Stokes fell for a golden duck when he inside-edged an intended drive off Shami and was brilliantly caught by diving wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant.

Jonny Bairstow, fresh from two hundreds in England's seven-wicket win in the Covid-delayed fifth Test against India at Edgbaston, then fell for seven, edging an excellent Bumrah delivery to Pant, who held a diving right-handed catch. Bairstow, Root and Stokes all missed the recent T20 series which India won 2-1.

This was the first time the star trio had played a 50-over international together since England's 2019 World Cup final win over New Zealand at Lord's.

They managed just seven runs between them. England were 26-5 in the eighth over when Livingstone, walking across his crease, was clean bowled leg-stump by Bumrah. Buttler tried to turn the tide, hitting six fours in 32 balls faced, only to hoist Shami to deep square leg, where Suryakumar Yadav held a well-judged catch just inside the rope.

No II Reece Topley hit England's first, and only, six with a well-struck drive off leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal in the 25th over. But two balls later the innings was over when Willey, trying to scoop, was bowled by a thunderbolt Bumrah yorker.

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EID JOURNEYS

Unfit vehicles, crashes caused the most pain

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The comparatively short Eid vacation and the ban on motorcycles on the highways resulted in high demand for public transport before Eid.

Taking advantage of the demand and lax law enforcement, many unfit vehicles and buses without route permits carried people across the country.

Many of the unfit vehicles broke down in the middle of the road causing congestion. The journey towards northwestern districts was particularly miserable.

At least 53 incidents of broken vehicles, crashes and engines stalling after running out of fuel were reported from Bangabandhu bridge and its approach roads from July 7-9, said an officials at the Bangladesh Bridge Authority.

About 90 percent of the incidents occurred on the bridge on the Jamuna, causing long tailbacks on Dhaka-Tangail-Rangpur highway.

It takes between 15 and 20 minutes to tow away a vehicle from the bridge, and only one lane remains usable during the time, he said, adding that this causes long tailbacks on the link roads.

The congestion on the highway prompted thousands of people to choose railways and the train schedules fell apart due to the unexpected pressure of

passengers. Some travellers had to wait for about 12 hours for their trains while thousands climbed to the rooftop of carriages.

At times on Friday, there were congestions on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Madanpur, Dhaka-Sylhet highway between Kanchpur and Bhulta, and Dhaka-Mawa Bhangha expressway near the toll plazas.

Transport companies charged the travellers two or three times the usual fare, according to Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

Officials, bus operators, holidaymakers and experts contacted by this newspaper corroborated the account.

But no visible action was taken to check it.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said "flawed management and lack of coordination" were to blame for the tailbacks ahead of Eid.

UNFIT VEHICLES

According to data from January, over 5 lakh registered vehicles were on the road without a fitness certificate mainly due to poor monitoring by the authorities.

The unfit vehicles play a major role in creating congestions and crashes on highways, officials said.



People queue up near a TCB truck in the capital's Merul Badda yesterday -- the first day the vehicle arrived there to sell essentials at reasonable prices after the Eid-ul-Azha holidays. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Pranay Verma likely to be new Indian envoy



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Pranay Kumar Verma, currently the Indian envoy to Vietnam, will be the next Indian high commissioner in Dhaka, a diplomatic source has confirmed The Daily Star.

Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, the incumbent Indian envoy, will be appointed as the country's high commissioner to the UK, reported Indian media outlet WION yesterday.

Verma may take up his new assignment after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India, scheduled for September 5-7, the source said.

Verma served as the director-general of the East Asia Division at the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. He was also the director-general for external relations at the Department of Atomic Energy.

Rawhide market on road to recovery

Higher demand and prices prevented throwing away of animal skins

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA And SUKANTA HALDER

Bangladesh's rawhide market appears to have made a comeback this Eid-ul-Azha on the back of higher demand, better prices and a bar on rawhides arriving in Dhaka.

The government has fixed the price of salted cowhide at Tk 47-52 per square foot in Dhaka and Tk 40-44 in other parts of the country, up from Tk 40-45 and Tk 33-37 last year.

The price of male goat hide has been set at Tk 18-20 per sft from Tk 15-17 in 2021.

Furthermore, the government has put a bar on the arrival of rawhides in Dhaka in the week after Eid to prevent over-supply in the capital's market.

Zahurul Islam, owner of Sirajganj Traders in Savar Harindhara Bazar, one of the trading hubs for rawhides, has targeted to buy 5,000 pieces of rawhide and as of yesterday, was able to purchase about 1,000 pieces of skins.

A total of 99,50,763 animals were sacrificed this Eid, according to the fisheries and livestock ministry, up 9.4 percent year-on-year.

The price was slightly higher since the supply was low, according to Islam.

So much that there were no incidents of rawhide being -- which was a common occurrence in the past three years -- according to Tapan Kanti Ghosh, senior secretary to the commerce ministry.

On the day of Eid, which was Sunday, a piece of medium-sized cowhide sold for Tk 600 to Tk 750

and a large-sized cowhide at Tk 800-1,150 in Dhaka's Posta, the largest hub in Bangladesh.

This was in line with the government-fixed price, said Aftab Khan, president of the Bangladesh Hide and Skin Merchants Association, adding that the business was better than last year.

Seasonal traders, madrasas and orphanages, which collected animals' skins across the country, have all been able to sell rawhide at good prices.

"Hopefully, tanners will buy the salted hides at the same rate fixed by the government. If not, the traders will incur losses," Khan said.

Md Shakawat Ullah, general secretary of the Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA), assured that tanners would buy rawhides at the price fixed by the government.

Tanners collected 360,000 pieces of rawhides as of yesterday and would start buying salted hides after a week.

"Hopefully the business will be better this year than last year," he added.

Tanners received Tk 170 crore from four state-run banks to clear dues that paved the way for fresh purchases, said Shahin Ahmed, president of the BTA.

Eid-ul-Azha accounts for nearly half of the rawhide needed by Bangladesh's \$1.24-billion export-earning leather and leather goods industry.

MIXED SCENARIO OUTSIDE OF DHAKA

In Narayanganj, traders did not buy rawhides at higher prices due to the increased price of salts and higher



SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Tigers eye series victory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will be the favourites to seal the three-match series when they take on hosts West Indies in the second ODI at the Providence Stadium in Guyana today.

The match is scheduled to begin at 7:30 pm [BST].

Recent history and stats speak heavily in favour of the Tamim Iqbal-led side as clinching a win today would see the Tigers extend their hot streak to 10 wins in a row over the Windies in the format. It will also see Bangladesh seal their fourth bilateral series in a row against the Caribbean side.

Unlike how things panned out in the preceding Test and T20I series, both of which Bangladesh lost by the margin of 2-0, the Tigers looked confident and on top of their game in their preferred format as they romped to a comfortable six-wicket win in the first ODI at the same ground three days ago.

The fact that West Indies are still finding their feet in the format under the new leadership of Nicholas Pooran only ought to work in the Tigers' favour.

Bangladesh are missing

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

KHAGRACHHARI RAPE
3 accused still not arrested
Case filed on July 2; police say they are in hiding

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three rape accused in Khagrachhari have still not been arrested, even though a case was filed in this regard around 11 days ago.

The Hill Women's Federation, a representative organisation of the Jumma women in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, on July 4 issued a statement saying, "There have been no steps from the administration to arrest the rapists while they are moving freely in the neighbourhood."

In the case filed by the victim, she said she was raped by three men in Khagrachhari's Bhaibanchara union on June 26.

According to the first information report, the 42-year-old jewellery seller, from Panchhari upazila, had gone to a village in Sadar upazila to sell products.

As it had gotten too late for her to return home, which was over an hour away, she decided to stay at her friend's house for the night.

Around 7:00pm, two men -- Pintu Chakma and Shadhu Chakma -- went to the friend's house, trashed the place and took the woman to a clubhouse in the neighbourhood.

"Inside the clubhouse, they verbally abused me. Before I could understand what was happening, they had pulled my scarf and Shadhu Chakma ordered me to comply with them," the FIR said.

When she refused, Pintu and Shadhu raped her, after which another man named Jackson Chakma attempted to rape her as well and then beat her up with a cane.

"After about an hour, I lost consciousness. Locals then rescued me and took me to a nearby

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

22 die on roads in five days

STAR REPORT

At least 22 people were killed and 30 injured in road crashes in four districts during the Eid rush between Friday and yesterday.

In Chattogram, a bus rammed into a CNG-run auto-rickshaw on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway in Bhayar Dighir Par of Patiya upazila around 8:30pm on Monday, killing six people and injuring 10 others.

After hitting the auto-rickshaw, the bus veered off the highway and fell into a roadside paddy field, said SM Rashidul Haque, superintendent of police in Chattogram.

The dead, all passengers of the auto-rickshaw, were identified as Biswajit Sen, 45, his wife Rupna Sen, 40, residents of Mohammadpur village in Chattogram's Chandnaish upazila, Shubha Dhar, 27, of Gachabaria Banik Para in the same upazila, Sabbir Hossain, 28, of Rashidabad village in Patiya, Rezaul Karim Rafiq, 45, of Kamalmunsir Hat in Patiya, and auto-rickshaw driver Md Ismail, 50, of Hulaine village in Patiya.

The injured were admitted to Patiya Upazila Health Complex.

Another road accident in Chattogram's Banshkhalhi upazila on Monday morning claimed the life of the acting principal of Shekharkhil Daruchchalam Ardash Alim Madrasa, Morshedul Haque.

The accident took place when a bus collided head-on with a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, said Banskhalhi Police Station OC Kamal Uddin.

Police later seized the two vehicles.

In Tangail, at least 13 people, including three children, were killed and 20 wounded in eight road crashes in the last five days, police said.

Of them, 12 were killed in seven accidents on Dhaka-Tangail, Tangail-Bangabandhu Bridge, Tangail-Jamalpur and Tangail-Mymensingh highways.

Defying ban, a large number of three-wheelers plied the Dhaka-Tangail-Bangabandhu Bridge highway, locals said.

Yesterday, a five-year-old girl and her aunt were killed and two others injured

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



A mangled CNG-run three-wheeler in Rabna Bypass area on the Dhaka-Sirajganj highway in Tangail yesterday after it collided with a bus. Two people, including a child, were killed. Three-wheelers are illegal on highways. PHOTO: STAR

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