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EXTERNAL DEBT SERVICING

Payment to peak at \$5.15b in 2030

Finds ERD in its projections

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's foreign loan servicing burden will peak in fiscal 2029-30 with repayment of \$5.15 billion, which experts deem to be very much within the safe territory – quelling fears that the country might become the next emerging economy after Sri Lanka and Pakistan to run into external debt distress.

The projection was made by the Economic Relations Division, which manages foreign debt repayment activities, in May-June as part of the government's updated medium-term debt strategy (MTDS).

This fiscal year, \$2.78 billion would be paid against foreign loans, up from \$2.45 billion last year. Repayment amounts would progressively increase and hit a peak in fiscal 2029-30.

After that, it would successively decline. For instance, in fiscal 2034-35, it would be \$4.45 billion.

Similarly, the country's external debt to GDP ratio would also be contracting.

For instance, it would be 13.4 percent in fiscal 2031-32, down from 18.1 percent in fiscal 2021-22, said the International Monetary Fund in its most recent Debt Sustainability Assessment that was published in March.

Historically, Bangladesh's average external debt to GDP ratio has been 18.7 percent. It is projected to come down to 15.1 percent, according to the IMF's DSA calculations.

"Bangladesh remains at a low risk of external and overall debt distress," the IMF said in the report.

External and domestic debt indicators are below their respective thresholds under the baseline and stress test scenarios, it added.

Subsequently, one of the four strategies earmarked in the government's MTDS, which was finalised this month, entails increasing external financing.

The strategy envisages meeting 36 percent of gross financing needs through external financing at concessional and semi-concessional interest rates.

Semi-concessional financing comes with floating interest rates and concessional financing has a fixed interest rate.

Another strategy entails doubling the share of semi-concessional loans from the current level while maintaining the share of traditional concessional financing.

The updated MTDS also ruled out the possibility of issuing any international bonds, which tipped Sri Lanka's debt burden over the hill.

The publication was presented to the IMF staff mission that concluded its nine-day tour of Bangladesh on July 21. The mission endorsed the strategy, it said in its concluding statement.

"Bangladesh's external debt-GDP ratio is so low that even if the cost of debt rises, the chances of the debt burden becoming unsustainable are minimum," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

However, there are tail risks, which are events with a small probability of happening.

Tail risks mostly come from endogenous factors such as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, which has sent the prices of commodities spiralling in the global market, causing a drain on Bangladesh's foreign currency reserves and widening the current account deficit.

"Such a situation cannot be written off," Hussain said.

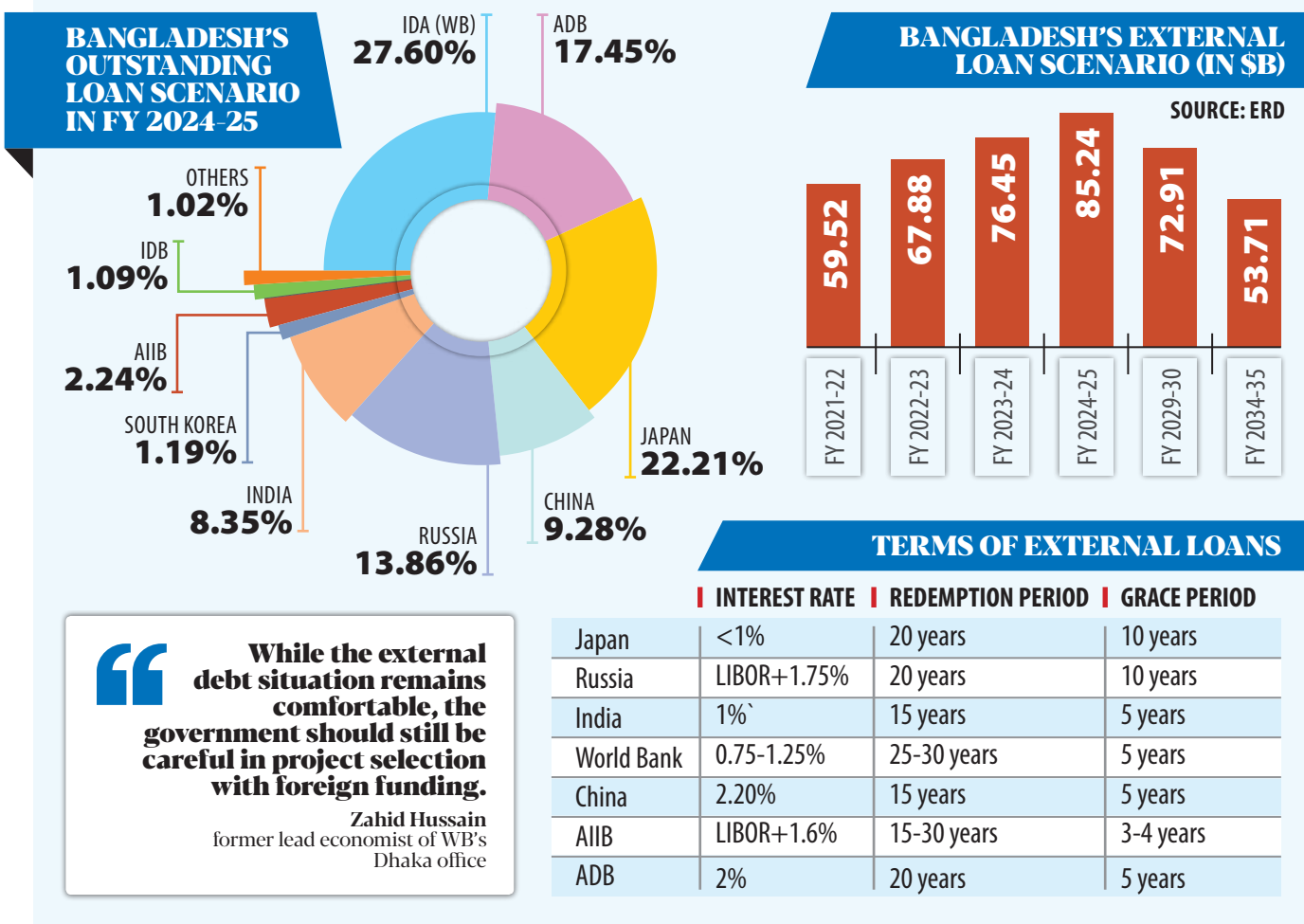
In future, if exports or remittance, the two main sources of foreign currency for Bangladesh, plummet or imports soar, there would be cash flow constraints on the government.

This would make it tricky to service debt on time.

"Austerity measures might be needed then to maintain debt repayment such that the country does not face any problem in getting loans in future," he said.

Since independence, Bangladesh has been able to repay its foreign loans on time and has never applied for rescheduling of instalments, according to the ERD.

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KERB MARKET

Dollar hits record high of Tk 112

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The exchange rate of the US dollar against the taka hit a record Tk 112 in the country's kerb market yesterday.

The previous day, each dollar sold for Tk 5 in the kerb market, an unregulated open market where people sell and buy foreign currencies.

The dollar-taka exchange rate in the kerb market has been on the rise from the beginning of the year in the face of greater demand for greenbacks, said a kerb market trader.

People purchased each dollar for less than Tk 100 before the Eid-ul-Azha (July 10).

"We usually purchase dollars from individuals and money exchange houses. But it is quite difficult for us to have the

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Trips only to waste taxpayers' money

Civil aviation officials visited abroad in FY2021-22 spending around Tk 1.5 crore despite govt restriction

RASHIDUL HASAN

At least 39 officials of the civil aviation ministry and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) made over 50 foreign trips in fiscal 2021-22 spending around Tk 1.5 crore of taxpayers' money despite a government restriction.

The officials include Civil Aviation Secretary Mokammel Hossain and CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman, according to a list placed by the ministry before a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee concerned on Monday.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the document, which says most of the trips were made to attend seminars, conferences, workshops and dialogues. Some were even to enjoy airshows or product demonstrations.

In the wake of the financial crisis stemming from the coronavirus outbreak, the government had ordered abandoning all routine foreign tours except for those involving emergencies.

On July 1 last year, the finance ministry issued a circular on this, suspending 50 percent allocation for tours, saying the money can only be spent for unavoidable purposes.

The government took the decision on travel allocations in the development and operating budget of all government, semi-government, autonomous and other organisations in the fiscal year to ensure the best use of limited wealth to tackle the Covid impacts.

Yet the officials made the trips, which apparently could have been avoided to save the public money.

For example, CAAB Chairman Mafidur Rahman, who ranked top among all the officials in terms of the number of trips, went to Dubai to enjoy an airshow in 2021. This year, he flew to attend the exhibition titled "Wings of India 2022."

He visited seven countries in total – Spain, France, the UAE, Sri Lanka, India, Saudi Arabia, and Canada – spending around Tk 27 lakh.

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Women outnumber men for first time

Finds latest population census

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

For the first time, a population census has found that there are more women than men in Bangladesh.

For every 100 females, there is currently around 99 males, according to a preliminary report of "Population and Housing Census 2022" which is the sixth census of the country. It will be officially unveiled in the capital today.

It found that the country has a population of around 16.5 crore, excluding the expatriates. This indicates that the population has grown by 2.1 crore since 2011 when the previous census was conducted.

The census supposed to be held in 2021 was delayed because of Covid-19 pandemic.

The gender ratio in the world in 2021 is 101.68 males per 100 females, according to the world population prospect of the UN.

In Bangladesh, the gender ratio was 100.3 in the previous census while it was 106.4 in the one released in 2001.

Experts said the continued rise in life expectancy of women could be a reason for males to have been outnumbered.

Professor Mohammad Mainul Islam, former chairman of Department of Population Sciences at Dhaka University, said people's migration out of the country could be another reason behind the new gender ratio.

However, the global female population is on the rise, he told The Daily Star.

Among the south Asian countries, females also outnumber males in Nepal where the gender ratio is 95.91.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Most serious crimes being committed in banking sector

Observes High Court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that the most serious crimes are being committed in the banking sector.

The court wondered if the country will be able to progress at all if the crimes continue to take place.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat made the observation while hearing a petition filed by four Islami Bank Limited officials, seeking anticipatory bail in a loan-related corruption case involving over Tk 2.3 lakh.

The accused bankers are Abu Bakar, Moniruzzaman Khan, Afjal Hossain and Monowara Khatun.

The court rejected the bail petition and told them that the court would have sent them to jail, but did not as the amount is small.

It further ordered the petitioners to surrender to the trial court concerned in four weeks. Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) lawyer Fowjia Akhter Popy told The Daily Star.

The ACC filed the case with its

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Ambulances parked right in front of the emergency section of Dhaka Medical College Hospital have left little room for vehicles arriving with new patients. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'Won't flip-flop on our promises'

Says CEC, asks parties to observe EC's actions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday said the commission will not "flip-flop" on the promises it is making now.



Habibul Awal

He urged political parties to keep faith in the Election Commission and be vigilant and check whether the EC is performing its duties properly.

"What we are promising should have some value. It's not that we're going to flip-flop. That's not supposed to happen," Awal said while meeting the leaders of Jamiat e Ulama e Islam Bangladesh at the EC office in the morning.

"Have confidence in us. And don't keep your eyes closed while keeping the faith in us. Be vigilant. Are we saints or are we dishonest? If you don't keep an eye on that, you are not doing your job properly," he added.

The commission met three political parties at its office yesterday.

Meanwhile, Islami Andolan Bangladesh has become the latest party to skip the dialogues with the EC.

The BNP, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD Rab), Bangladesh Kalyan Party,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Two sued for instigating 10th grader's suicide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A case was filed against two men yesterday for instigating the suicide of a 10th grader by mentally torturing her through a fake Facebook account.

The dead was identified as Upama Mistry, 15, a student of BK Secondary School in Morrelganj upazila.

Her father Subrata Mistry filed the case with Morrelganj Police Station, accusing Shishir Biswas, 23, son of Swapan Biswas, and Tamal Das, son of Swarup Das 22.

According to the family, Shishir and Tamal had been pressuring Upama for long to have physical relations with them.

As she continuously refused, they opened up a fake Facebook account using her picture about a few weeks ago and began making obscene posts about her.

Unable to handle the humiliation, Upama drank poison on July 18, her family said.

After her parents noticed that she fell ill, they rushed her to Kachua Upazila Health Complex. Due to her critical condition, she was being shifted to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital the next day. She died on the way there.

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Firefighters work at the site of a residential area damaged by a Russia missile strike, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in the settlement of Zatoka, Odesa region, Ukraine yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rahul Gandhi released six hours after detention

AGENCIES

Indian Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was released by the Delhi Police almost over six hours after he was detained during his party's march from Parliament to Rashtrapati Bhawan, officials said yesterday.

"They have been released," Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Amrutha Gugoth said while responding to a query about the Congress party leaders' detention.

The Congress MPs carried out a protest march from the Parliament House to Rashtrapati Bhawan in wake of questioning of Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate and no discussion on important issues like price rise in parliament.

However, as the parliamentarians moved forward to give a memorandum to President Droupadi Murmu, the Delhi Police stopped them midway near Vijay Chowk. Subsequently, the Congress parliamentarians, including Rahul Gandhi, sat in protest in front of the Vijay Chowk.



Russian strikes pummel Black sea coast

Says Ukraine; EU agrees on plan to ration gas use as Russia squeezes supply

AGENCIES

Ukraine said yesterday Russian forces had launched multiple missile strikes at targets on the Black Sea coast near the southern port city of Odessa and in Mykolaiv.

The attacks come days after Russian strikes hit the port of Odessa, calling into question a breakthrough deal to resume exports of grain from Ukraine, that have been disrupted by Moscow's invasion.

"A massive missile attack, with the use of aircraft, was launched from the Black Sea on the south of Ukraine," the country's southern military command said on Facebook.

Rescuers were working on the ground near Odessa where "residential buildings" near the coast were hit in the strikes, the military said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky published a video showing debris scattered around heavily damaged houses in Zatoka, a popular resort village to the west of Odessa.

"No military bases, no troops. Russian terrorists just wanted to shoot. They will be held accountable for all this," Zelensky said in an Instagram post.

The military said that "port infrastructure" was targeted in the neighbouring Mykolaiv region, which was also hit by S-300 missile systems deployed in the Russia-controlled Kherson region, reports AFP.

Governor Vitaliy Kim posted a video of the attack on the city of Mykolaiv, showing multiple explosions and clouds of black smoke rising from the ground.

"A critical infrastructure object and a motor vehicle business were damaged," Kim said on Telegram.

The mayor of Mikolaiv said the city's boiler facility had been damaged.

Kyiv said on Monday it was still pushing on with preparations to restart exports and hoped to send the first ships out from one of three ports in the Odessa region this week.

Meanwhile, European Union countries yesterday approved a weakened emergency plan to curb their gas demand, after striking compromise deals to limit the cuts for some countries, as they brace for further Russian reductions in supply.

Europe faces an increased gas squeeze from today, when Russian's Gazprom

GAZPMM has said it would cut flows through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Germany to a fifth of capacity.

With a dozen EU countries already facing reduced Russian supplies, Brussels is urging member states to save gas and store it for winter for fear Russia will completely cut off flows in retaliation for Western sanctions over its war with Ukraine.

Energy ministers approved a proposal for all EU countries to voluntarily cut gas use by 15 percent from August to March, reports Reuters.

The cuts could be made binding in a supply emergency, but countries agreed to exempt numerous countries and industries, after some governments had resisted the EU's original proposal to impose a binding 15 percent cut on every country.

German Economy Minister Robert Habeck said the agreement would show Russian President Vladimir Putin that Europe remained united in the face of Moscow's latest gas cuts. "You will not split us," Habeck said.

Hungary was the only country that opposed the deal, two EU officials said.

Murder accused beaten to death

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A suspected criminal was beaten to death at Badamtol Station in Pekua upazila of Cox's Bazar Monday night.

The dead is Zafar Alam, son of Najir Ahmed of the upazila.

Some seven to eight people waylaid Zafar on his way home from Chakaria court around 8:00pm, said Farhad Ali, officer-in-charge of Pekua Police Station.

Later, they beat him up mercilessly with sticks. He was rushed to Pekua Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, the policeman added.

Zafar was wanted in two murder cases including one over the murder of his daughter-in-law. He was also accused in some other cases including that of arms and robbery.

3 siblings killed in septic tank blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Three siblings, all day labourers by profession, were killed in a septic tank blast in Feni's Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead are Abdur Rahman Munshi, Moniruzzaman Munshi and Nurul Islam Munshi, of Bagerhat's Morolgonj upazila, said Mohammad Nizam Uddin, officer-in-charge of Feni Model Police Station.

All three siblings were working at an under construction building and living in temporary shelters. They were resting near the septic tank on the day of the blast, said firefighters.

Of the three, one died on the spot while the rest breathed their last at Feni Sadar Hospital while undergoing treatment.

Natore woman found dead at home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police recovered a female body from a house at Gopalpur municipality in Natore's Lalpur upazila yesterday.

Rasheda Begum, 45, of Bijoypur area in the municipality, was found dead at her home, said police.

On information from locals, police recovered the body around 8:00am yesterday, said Sharif Al Razib, additional superintendent of police (Baraigram circle).

Rashea was living there with her elderly mother as she was widow and her two sons lived aboard.

Police are investigating and a team of CID is also working to find out if it was a murder or suicide, he added.

Saudi prince heads to EU for first time since Khashoggi killing

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was set to embark on a visit to Greece and France yesterday, state media reported, his first Europe trip since the 2018 killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Khashoggi's killing and dismemberment by Saudi agents in the kingdom's Istanbul consulate in October 2018 brought the powerful crown prince international condemnation.

Payment

FROM PAGE 1

To prevent such a scenario, Hussain advised caution in project selection with foreign funding.

"If the mega projects are not commercially viable, they may end up being mega liabilities. We need to select projects that would have a visible contribution to the economy, which could be in production, export earnings or import cost savings. There must be a concrete contribution, there must be commercial viability."

The source of foreign funding must also be assessed carefully too such that the terms are favourable to the country.

"Are we ensuring all concessional facilities? Do the funds come with conditions that the procurement must be done from a select source, or do we have to make a high down payment? Do we have to take all our advice from them; do the contractor must come from them? These things must be considered."

Biden slams Trump for inaction over Capitol riot

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden slammed his predecessor Donald Trump Monday for watching his supporters riot for hours on January 6 while police at the US Capitol suffered through a "medieval hell."

"Brave law enforcement officers were subject to the medieval hell for three hours, dripping in blood, surrounded by carnage, face to face with the crazed mob that believed the lies of the defeated president," Biden told the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives Conference.

"For three hours, the defeated former president of the United States watched it all happen as he sat in the comfort of the private dining room next to the Oval Office," he said.

Trips only to waste taxpayers' money

FROM PAGE 1

The CAAB boss visited Spain twice – first on the occasion of the annual general meeting of the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO), a representative body of companies that provide air traffic control, and the second one for the World ATM Congress.

He went to France to attend a product demonstration and Sri Lanka for the South Asia Steering Committee meeting of Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programme (COSCAP).

He also visited Canada and Saudi Arabia for the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) election and Future Aviation Forum respectively.

Mokammel Hossain, secretary of the civil aviation ministry, made five trips to Canada, Spain, France and the UAE, spending at least Tk 24 lakh.

He visited the UAE on February 10 to 13 this year to attend a seminar on "Explore Mujib's Bangladesh: A hidden gem of tourism in South Asia" and side events. The secretary also travelled to Canada for the ICAO election.

On his Spain trip October 25 to 28, 2021, Mokammel attended the general meeting of CANSO and World ATM Conference.

From October 29 to November 2

'Won't flip-flop on our promises'

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Muslim League, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal and Liberal Democratic Party had earlier shunned the talks that began on July 17.

The EC has been holding the talks to seek recommendations on how to hold the next national polls in a free and fair manner. As of yesterday, it has met delegates from 21 parties.

Regarding the spending of large sums of money during elections, the chief election commissioner (CEC) yesterday said, "How do we deal with

the same year, he visited France to attend a product demonstration by Thales, a multinational company that designs, develops and manufactures electrical systems as well as devices and equipment for the aerospace, defence, transportation and security sectors.

He again visited France on November 9 to 12 as a member of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's entourage.

Sukesh Kumar Sarkar, additional secretary of the ministry, visited the UAE to attend a factory witness test. Details of this trip or cost were not mentioned in the paper.

On April 3, 2022, he visited the US to join Bangladesh-US partnership dialogue at a cost of Tk 76,1746.

Shyamoli Nobi, a deputy secretary, visited Barcelona in Spain from October 25 to 28, 2021, to attend "Future of Tourism World Summit".

Ahmed Jamil, another deputy secretary, flew to Ireland and England from March 10 to March 16 this year for a factory acceptance test of a certain equipment. The cost of his visit was not mentioned in the list.

Abdul Jalil, the personal secretary of the state minister for civil aviation, visited Belgium to attend a seminar on "Gastronomy Tourism." He made a nine day trip to India in April 2022 to attend an event of the commerce ministry at a cost of Tk 1.85 lakh.

State Minister M Mahub Ali and CAAB Chairman Mafidur Rahman

could not be reached over phones despite several attempts. There was also no response to text messages sent to get their versions on this issue.

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said these are examples of how the government officials holding responsible positions entrusted to implement government rules and regulations violate the same without any qualms.

"It not only shows their treatment of publicly funded foreign visits under whatever pretext as an opportunity more for private gain than to serve professional purposes, but also their lack of sense of responsibility for compliance," he also said.

"Such violations go on unabated and important government circulars like these are rendered useless because both the two categories of violators – those who manage to be beneficiaries as participants and those who approve such visits – are hardly ever held to account."

time non-partisan government and the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) should not be used in polls.

The party also recommended deployment of army with magistracy power during elections. Besides, the ministries of public administration and home should be under the EC during polls.

Bikalpadhara, on the other hand, expressed support for the use of EVM in the election and recommended that at least five army personnel be deployed at each polling station.

Dollar hits record high

FROM PAGE 1

required dollars to meet the demand of outbound travellers," the trader added.

The dollar taka exchange rate in the interbank platform is also on the rise.

Banks on Monday traded each dollar with their counterparts for Tk 94.70, up from Tk 94.45 fixed on July 21.

On July 26 last year, the greenback traded at Tk 84.80, meaning there has been an 11.67 per cent loss in the value of the local currency in a year.

The volatility in the country's foreign exchange market started early this year due to high import payments.

The disruption in the global supply chain stemming from the pandemic and then the Russia-Ukraine war is largely responsible for the ongoing instability in the foreign exchange market, said experts.

The price of commodities in the global market has increased to a large extent due to the disruption, forcing

Bangladeshi importers to count extra money to bring products and services from abroad.

The volatility later spilled over into the open market of the US dollar.

Kamrul Islam, who studies at an American university, said he is now facing a serious problem in obtaining the required dollars from the open market.

"I came home last month and will return to the US in the first week of next month. But I am now finding it very difficult to purchase dollars from the open market," he said.

There is a shortage of cash dollars in both the open market and bank, Kamrul said.

"I didn't purchase dollars today [yesterday] thinking that the exchange rate may fall soon. But I now doubt whether the greenback will depreciate at all."

He said when he flew to the US last year for his higher education, he bought greenbacks for Tk 88-89 a dollar.

Women outnumber

FROM PAGE 1

In India, the 5th National Family and Health Survey carried out between 2019 and 2021 found that there were 1,020 women against 1,000 men.

The latest census in Bangladesh also found that the country is no longer experiencing a population boom as the current population growth rate is below 1.3 percent, down from 1.47 percent found in the previous census.

According to the 2011 census, the total population of the country was around 14.40 crore which was around 1.8 crore higher than the number found in the 2001 census.

The sixth population census was conducted across the country with wide use of digital devices from June 15 to June 21.

The census will provide complete data on the overall population, its

composition, workforce, density, housing, and other socio-economic indicators that are vital for formulating proper economic and other policies.

Most serious crimes

FROM PAGE 1

Rajshahi office over allegations of an embezzlement of Tk 2.3 lakh from the Islami Bank's Shibganj branch in Chapainawabganj.

The petitioners' lawyer Mahub Morshed told this correspondent that Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder, senior judge of the HC bench, may have made the observation from his experience of dealing with money laundering cases.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the state during hearing.

RU ENTRY TEST

Teacher, two students jailed for taking proxy exam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four, including two students of Dhaka University, were sentenced to jail yesterday for taking the Rajshahi University (RU) admission test on behalf of candidates.

A lecturer of Khulna's Gazi Medical College, Dr Shamir Ray, was sentenced to a year's jail.

Ekhlashur Rahman, who was also jailed for a year, is a student of DU's music department and hails from Joypurhat's Panchbibi.

He is a resident of Hazi Muhammad Mohsin Hall and was a joint secretary of the hall unit of Chhatra League's former committee, said DU sources.

Jannatul Mehjabin of DU's public administration department was held from another room during the test. She was jailed for two years, as she did not cooperate with authorities after arrest. Jannatul is from Cumilla's Burichang.

The other person is Bayezid Khan, a former student of RU's folklore department.

Prof Pradip Kumar Panday, administrator of RU's public relations office, said invigilators in different rooms caught them when they were found to be taking the test as proxies.

They were later sentenced to jail by a mobile court. It was the second day of RU's admission tests.

LOAD SHEDDING

BNP to hold nationwide protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP will hold demonstrations across the country, protesting the ongoing load shedding and "mismanagement" in the energy sector.

The party will hold protests in all city corporations, including Dhaka north and south, and in all the district headquarters.

Party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhruul Islam Alamgir came up with the announcement at a press conference at the party chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday. He said the party's standing committee has decided that BNP's Dhaka north city unit will hold demonstration on July 29 and Dhaka south unit on July 30.

The party will hold demonstrations in the district headquarters on July 31. Fakhruul said a chaotic situation in the energy sector was created due to "blanket corruption" in the sector.

JINJIRA PALACE

a tale of treachery and negligence

HELEMUL ALAM

Its history is intertwined with melancholy and treachery.

After the fall of Sirajuddaula, the last independent nawab of Bengal, his grandmother Sharifunnessa (Alivardi's wife), aunts Ghaseti Begum and Amina Begum, wife Lutfunnisa Begum and her daughter Qudsia Begum alias Umme Zohra were sent to Jinjira palace, where

However, Jinjira palace, which has played an important role in the history of Bengal, lies neglected and forgotten at present.

According to Banglapedia, Jinjira Palace consisted of the palace edifice, two-storey rectangular extensive hammam (bathroom) complex, the two-storey gateway with provision for guard rooms and two octagonal side towers on the south.

hang at the sites, while its illegal occupants have started to claim ownership.

During a recent visit, this correspondent talked to Mohammad Alamgir (67), a local who has been living in the area since his childhood.

"We've heard from our elders that when the British government was there, the governing body of the palace sold the site to different people," said Alamgir.

"When we were young, we could get



The structure, having originally been built just on the riverbank in Keraniganj, is said to have been connected to Dhaka by a wooden bridge thrown across the river at Bara Katra point.

they were kept under close watch.

It is said that one Jamadar Bakr Khan put Ghaseti and Amina on a barge, on the pretext of taking them to safety in Murshidabad, and drowned them in a river in June 1760, under instructions of Mir Sadeq Ali Khan (Miran), son of Nawab Mir Jafar Ali Khan.

Mentionable, along with Mir Jafar and Miran, Ghaseti was also a part of the conspiracy against his nephew. But the two eventually betrayed her.

According to historians, Mughal

The rooms of the palace were rectangular with plastered walls and a vaulted roof.

However, it's impossible for a visitor to locate it without the help of a local.

It is mostly occupied by the area's residents. Locals call the place

the whole view of Dhaka from the palace-top."

"Since the 1970s, new buildings have been constructed here, and the palace started to disappear around the 1990s," claimed Alamgir.

Alamgir, however, claims the area to be "people's property". "But if the government instructs, we're bound to leave the place," he said.

"At least 200 buildings have already been constructed over the years, and if the residents are evicted, the question arises -- where will they go?" he added.

Golam Azam, owner of the adjoining land of one of the two remaining structures, said they've been living there since 1892. His grandfather, Haji Ojullah, purchased the land when it was empty.

The traces of the remaining structure of the palace can be found amidst the newly built buildings, he said.

Golam added that the small rooms in that part of the palace are in a dilapidated condition. No one lives there.

When asked, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid said the entire area was under Jinjira palace, but it has been occupied by encroachers.

Hamid, also Dhaka-3 (Keraniganj) lawmaker, said he had submitted a demi

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Subedar Ibrahim Khan II (1689-1697) built Jinjira palace to be his recreation resort. The palace used to be surrounded by rivers and had the natural characteristics of an island.

It was hence named "Qasr-i-Jazirah", meaning palace of the island.

The structure, having originally been built just on the riverbank in Keraniganj, is said to have been connected to Dhaka by a wooden bridge thrown across the river at Bara Katra point.

"hawli". The word originated from the Persian word "haveli", a generic term used for mansion.

The palace's view is now blocked by walls and newly built houses.

Only some parts of the palace remain -- one near the BNP office surrounded by new buildings, some old structures that are encroached and dilapidated, and another located near Pir Mohammad Pilot High School.

Two upazila administration signboards

This year's DSCC budget Tk 6,741cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday approved Tk 6,741.28-crore budget for 2022-23 fiscal.

The budget was approved at the 15th board meeting of DSCC, held at Nagar Bhaban.

"With the tireless efforts of our councillors and officers, we have been able to lay foundations of a better Dhaka in the last two years, to meet the expectations of

Dhaka residents," said DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh at the meeting.

He said they have earned a record Tk 879 crore revenue in 2021-22 fiscal. They have turned a fragile corporation

With the tireless efforts of our councillors and officers, we have been able to lay foundations of a better Dhaka in the last two years, to meet the expectations of Dhaka residents.

SHEIKH FAZLE NOOR TAPOSH
DSCC Mayor

into one trusted by the people of Dhaka in just two years, he added.

The mayor said revenue was only Tk 514 crore when he took charge as mayor. They managed to earn Tk 703 crore in 2020-21 fiscal and made Tk 176 crore more in the last fiscal.

In the meeting, chief state officer Rasel Sabrin was given the "Shuddhachar Puroshkar", and Ward-42 Councillor Mohammad Selim received the best councillor award.

Sabrin received one-month basic salary, a crest and certificate, while Selim received Tk 50,000, a crest and certificate.

Timely steps taken to face crisis: Quader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government has taken timely steps to face the fall-out of the ongoing global economic crisis.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said his party thinks that it would not be difficult to overcome any crisis if the people make a united effort.

Criticising BNP leaders for raising questions over the country's reserves of foreign currencies, the AL general secretary said the stock was never above US\$ 5 billion during their regime.

He said Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves hit the country's record highest of more than US\$ 48 billion due to the economic development and good governance. The export income of Bangladesh has exceeded US\$ 50 billion, he said.

Shohoz seeks HC stay on Tk 2 lakh fine

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shohoz.com has filed a petition with the High Court challenging the decision of the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection that fined the ticketing platform for its negligence in the process of selling tickets.

The platform submitted the petition to the HC on Monday, also seeking a stay on the decision, petitioner's lawyer KM Tanjib-Ul-Alam told The Daily Star yesterday.

The lawyer, however, refused to provide any details about the petition.

Bangladesh, a true champion

Says IOM deputy DG on migration management

UNB, Dhaka

International Organization for Migration (IOM) has appreciated Bangladesh's overall migration management and gradual prevention of irregular migration enabling regular migration.

"Bangladesh is a champion in this regard," said IOM Deputy Director General Ugochi Daniels while responding to a question from the news agency yesterday.

During a small group media briefing at a hotel in the capital, Daniels appreciated bilateral agreements on workers recruitment which will help prevent irregular migration.

She emphasised continued efforts to address the root causes -- access to education, healthcare and access to livelihoods -- and make people well-prepared

with adequate knowledge, skills and requirements before going abroad.

The IOM DDG said Bangladesh has sent more than 13 million Bangladeshi nationals overseas since 1976 to date who have contributed to the national economy through remittances and contribute to their host societies and countries.

Bangladesh sends the 6th most migrants of any country in the world and receives the 8th highest remittances.

Daniels stressed that IOM continues to support the government of Bangladesh to view migration as a positive and beneficial phenomenon, holistically and strategically and IOM is committed to assisting Bangladesh in that regard.

Responding to a question on the



Ugochi Daniels



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

As soon as vehicles near the exit of the neat and clean Sultana Kamal Bridge in Demra, they are greeted with a heap of garbage on the side of the road. This situation has persisted for almost a year now, as authorities responsible for cleaning up the trash fail to do their due diligence. This photo was taken yesterday.



Death toll 8

Total number of patients 2,305

301 still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients 1,996

99 more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 27

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4:20 12:45 5:00 6:50 8:15

JAMAAT 4:55 1:15 5:15 6:55 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Children of Bogura's Dharmakul village get up early in the morning to reach the nearby lotus pond and pick the flowers. They gather the flowers and take them back home to either prepare as meals or play around with them. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Flood death toll now 131

UNB, Dhaka
The death toll from floods in the country rose to 131 with two more deaths in Lalmonirhat district in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

The deaths were recorded from May 17 to July 26, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The latest victims drowned in floodwater, it added.

Of the deceased, 73 were from Sylhet, 43 from Mymensingh, 14 from Rangpur and one from Dhaka division.

One hundred and three people drowned in floodwaters, 16 died by lightning strikes, two from snake bites, one from diarrhoea, and nine due to other reasons.

One hundred and eighty-five upazilas were affected by floods, including 33 in Sylhet, three in Rangpur, seven in Mymensingh and one in Chattogram.

Sylhet, Sunamganj, Netrokona and Moulvibazar were the worst-hit districts, with 13, 11, seven and five upazilas affected by floods respectively.

REMARKS ON EVM AL issues show-cause notice to Jobaidul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Patuakhali District Awami League has issued a show cause notice to district leader Jobaidul Haque Russell, for making a "misleading" statement about the EVM machine.

The notice which was issued yesterday instructs the local leader to respond within three days on why disciplinary actions should not be taken against him for tarnishing the party's image.

Campaigning on behalf of the AL nominated chairman candidate for the

Nazirpur UP by-elections, Jobaidul on July 23 said, "Voting will be done in EVM but we will know who votes for whom. So there is no reason to fear, there is no tension."

The video of his speech soon went viral on Facebook.

On July 25, the Election Commission postponed the by-election until further notice after the speech grabbed headlines in national media.

Contacted, Jobaidul said he is yet to receive the notice. Upon receiving it, he will respond accordingly, he added.

Withdraw

FROM PAGE 5
abolishment of DSA.

Contacted, OC Anwar Hossain Talukdar of Mirzaganj Police Station said an investigation is currently ongoing in this regard.

"The case has been sent to Dhaka for experts' opinion," he added.

Badal could not be contacted for comments.

PUST entry test begins July 30

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST) admission test will be held on July 30, under the uniform admission test of 22 universities.

A total of 17,483 admission seekers will sit for the test in PUST in three phases.

Pabna University of Science and Technology Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hafiza Khatun said the university authority has taken necessary steps for holding the test in a peaceful manner.

In the first phase, "A" unit admission test will be held on July 30, "B" unit on August 13, "C" unit admission on August 20, according to a PUST press release.

Jinjira palace

FROM PAGE 3
official (DO) letter to the cultural ministry to take over the property for preservation. They've only put up a signboard there so far.

They didn't take any initiative to identify the property of the nawab by going through the records, nor have they taken any measures to evict the encroachers, he added.

Illegal occupants even used the palace's bricks to build their own houses, said the state minister.

A collective effort by relevant authorities, including Dhaka deputy commissioner and the cultural ministry, is needed to restore the palace, Hamid said.

Ratan Chandra Pandit, director general of Department of Archaeology, said most of the land by now is hawli residents' recorded property, which is a big problem.

"With local and administrative support, an intervention is required to restore it, but the matter

is very complex. Local lawmakers can play the leading role in this regard," he said.

"We'll provide all our support if the initiative is taken collectively, but locals do not want to leave the area and even create obstacles to enter the place," Pandit said.

Keraniganj UNO Md Mehedi Hasan said they've issued a letter to the Department of Archaeology to take necessary steps to protect the site.

"We didn't get any response so far, although we had issued the letter around two years back," he said. "Dhaka district administration is aware of this, and we're working following their direction."

"We will first go through the records and figure out the situation of ownership. Then we will take action against the occupiers," Hasan said.

The palace can be a tourism spot, and public representatives are very sincere about the issue, he assured.

Century-old market

FROM PAGE 5
running in such a way for a century.

"On various occasions, we have informed the MCC officials and administration to recover the footpaths, especially around the cattle market," he said.

"We also advocated for shifting kitchen markets to other areas to lessen pressure on the main road. But no initiative has been taken in this regard," he added.

Shahjahan Monir, local ward commissioner of MCC, said they've informed

the authorities on different occasions and they should take immediate steps to mitigate the decade-long sufferings.

"If the city corporation takes stern action to evict the illegal structures from the footpath, the city's people will have a huge relief," he said.

Khandaker Jahangir Alam, MCC market inspector, said they're working to reduce the public sufferings at Shambhuganj Bazar. A decision will be taken soon, he added.

Five of expat family

FROM PAGE 5
rented the house at Tazpur Bazar on July 18. Rafiqul's parents-in-law, brother-in-law and his wife were also residing at the house.

Farid Uddin, superintendent of Sylhet police, said, "Primarily, the admitted three are being treated for suspected poisoning, but the matter is under investigation."

Bamboo platform

FROM PAGE 5
of Moulvibazar district land acquisition branch, said the initial work of land acquisition for the link road has been completed.

"A district Land Acquisition Committee meeting will be held in a few days. If the acquisition is approved in that meeting, the next process will start soon," he said.

engineer of RHD's Kulaura office, said 46 acres of land should be acquired for the connecting road. Due to the long process of land acquisition, the work of connecting road cannot begin, he added.

Contacted, Belayet Hossain, assistant commissioner (in charge)

Bangladesh, a true champion

FROM PAGE 3
Rohingya crisis, she hoped that all the global efforts on operational and political levels will help end all displacement crises, not just the Rohingya and Myanmar issues.

"There is a whole process in place looking at displacement and the requirements to end the crisis," said the IOM DDC, hoping that the global political leadership will take the necessary steps in this regard.

Asked about the flow of funds to the displaced Rohingya community amid crises in other parts of the world, she said, "Yes, the (funding) trend is downward, not specifically to the Rohingyas. Donors have placed their priority on responding to situations in Afghanistan and Ukraine."

Daniels thanked Bangladesh for its generosity in hosting over a million displaced members of the Rohingya community despite

multiple challenges. The protracted crisis is now entering its fifth year.

The IOM DDC said the government of Bangladesh, locals and the international community have been providing immediate humanitarian assistance from the onset. "The needs are immense and meeting them depends on continuous support until the Rohingya community can voluntarily return to Myanmar in a safe and dignified manner."

পাওয়ার গ্রিড কোম্পানি অফ বাংলাদেশ লিঃ
POWER GRID COMPANY OF BANGLADESH LTD.
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

PGCB Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 web: www.pgcb.gov.bd

INVITATION FOR TENDERS

PGCB Memo No.:	Date:
000308;	27.21.0000.101.07.416.22.4342; July 25, 2022
Project No. and Title:	000308; Southern Chattogram and Kaliakoir Transmission Infrastructure Development Project.
Contract No. and Title:	PGCB/AIIB/000308-BGQ/SS/Package-1 Construction of 230/132/33kV GIS Substation at Anwara, 230/33kV GIS Substation at Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City (Kaliakoir), 132/33kV GIS Substation at Cox'sbazar & Teknaf and 230kV GIS bay extension at existing Kaliakoir Substation (Package-1)
Deadline for Submission of Bids:	September 22, 2022, 11:00 Hours Local Time

- The People's Republic of Bangladesh has applied for financing from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) toward the cost of Southern Chattogram and Kaliakoir Transmission Infrastructure Development Project. Part of this financing will be used for payments under the contract named above. Tendering is open to Tenderers from eligible countries described in the Tendering Document.
- The Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited (PGCB), (the Employer) invites sealed tenders from eligible tenderers for the "Construction of 230/132/33kV GIS Substation at Anwara, 230/33kV GIS Substation at Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City (Kaliakoir), 132/33kV GIS Substation at Cox'sbazar & Teknaf and 230kV GIS bay extension at existing Kaliakoir Substation (Package-1)" (herein after referred to as "the Works"). The Works under this turnkey contract shall have to be completed within 36 (Thirty Six) months from the effective date.
- International Open Competitive Tendering (IOCT)** will be conducted in accordance with AIIB's Interim Operational Directive on Procurement Instructions for Recipients (June 2, 2016) (PIR) and is open to all prospective Tenderers from all eligible countries as described in the Tendering Document.
- Tenderers shall meet the following minimum requirements along with other requirements as mentioned in the tendering documents:
 - Tenderer must have Experience under contracts in the role of contractor, sub-contractor or management contractor in power sector for at least last 10(ten) years prior to the Tender submission deadline.
 - Participation as a contractor in at least three contracts that have been successfully completed within the last 10 (ten) years (counting backward from the tender submission deadline) and that are similar to the proposed contract, where the value of the Tenderer's (or JV partner) participation in one contract exceeds USD 41.0 million (USD forty one million) and with a total aggregated value of at least: USD 70.0 million (USD seventy million)

The similarity of the Tenderer's (or JV partner) participation shall be based on the physical size, nature of works, complexity, methods, technology or other characteristics as described in Employer's Requirements.

The scope of each contract must include design, supply, installation, testing & commissioning of new or extension/renovation of existing 220/X kV or above voltage AIS/GIS substation with at least three (3) bays of 220 kV or above voltage including one (1) power transformer 220/X kV voltage rating or above.

The above three contracts must meet the criteria mentioned below:

- At least one (1) of the above mentioned contracts shall be Construction of completely new GIS substation.
- At least one (1) of the above mentioned contracts shall be in successful operation for a minimum of three (3) years counting backward from the tender submission deadline.
- At least one (1) of the above mentioned contracts must be completed outside the Tenderer's own country or in Bangladesh.

Evidence of above experience shall be submitted in the tender. It shall be given on the user's letter-head, indicating address, telephone and fax numbers of the user. It shall include the name of the project, name of the employer, description of the work, commissioning date and contract amount.

The qualification criteria of the tenderers have been given very briefly above. The tenderers are advised to inspect the tendering document by visiting the PGCB website <http://www.pgcb.gov.bd>.

- Interested eligible tenderers may obtain further information and inspect the tendering documents at the office of the Company Secretary, Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd. (PGCB), Head Office (2nd Floor), Avenue-03, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh; Tel: +88 02 55046731-35, Fax: +88 02 55046722; Email: se.contract@pgcb.gov.bd, se.contract@pgcb.gov.bd. The complete tendering documents are also available for download from PGCB's website <http://www.pgcb.gov.bd/>. Eligible tenderers who download the tendering document from the PGCB's website shall inform PGCB in writing (and provide their contact details) at the address given above, failing which PGCB shall not be responsible if the tenderer does not receive clarifications and amendments, if any. **In case of any discrepancy between the documents downloaded by the prospective tenderer and the Tender Documents (hard copy) of PGCB, the latter shall prevail.**
- A complete set of tender documents in English language, may be purchased by interested tenderers upon submission of a written application to the Company Secretary, PGCB at the above address, from July 28, 2022 up to one day before the tender submission deadline and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of USD 400.00 (United States Dollar Four Hundred) or BDT 36,000.00 (Taka Thirty-Six Thousand only) in the form of **Pay Order/ Demand Draft** in favour of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited. The Tendering Document may be sent through a courier for an additional fee of BDT 10,000.00 (local delivery) or USD 120.00 (International delivery) in the form of **Pay Order/ Demand Draft** in favor of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited. No liability will be accepted for loss or late delivery of the Tendering Document.
- A Pre-Tender meeting will be held at **11:00 Hours Local Time on August 16, 2022** at the head office of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited (PGCB), Avenue-03, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.
- Deliver tenders:
 - to the address below: Company Secretary, Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd. (PGCB), Head Office, Avenue-03, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
 - on or before **11:00 Hours Local Time on September 22, 2022**
 - together with a Tender Security in the amount and form as described in the tendering document. Late tenders will be rejected.
- Technical tenders will be opened at **11:05 Hours Local Time on September 22, 2022** at the head office of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited (PGCB), Avenue-03, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh in the presence of Tenderers' representatives who choose to attend, whereas the Financial Tenders shall remain sealed and unopened and shall be placed locked. The Financial Tenders of only Technically Responsive and Qualified Tenderers shall be opened after Technical Tender Evaluation, whereas, the Financial Tenders of those Tenderers who's Technical Tenders are not responsive and qualified shall be returned unopened after the contract is awarded.
- When comparing bids, Domestic Preference Scheme will be applied in accordance with the provisions stipulated in the Tender Document.
- PGCB will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of tenders including costs and expenses related to participation in pre-tender meeting and site visit/s.

Md. Jahangir Azad
Company Secretary

30TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF MD. SALAHUDDIN FAROQUE

Today the 27th July is the 30th death anniversary of late **Md. Salahuddin Faroque** Managing Director of **Modhumita Group** and eldest son of late **Md. Sirajuddin** founder of Modhumita Group.

Though he is not in this world he lives in our hearts, in our minds and in our memory.

All friends relatives and well wishers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

All Members of Modhumita Family

তুলা সরবরাহের মাধ্যমে সূতা উৎপাদনে ব্যবসায়ি আবশ্যিক

একটি ইউরোপিয় মেশিনারী সম্পন্ন শতভাগ রপ্তানীযোগ্য স্পিনিং মিলে তুলা সরবরাহের মাধ্যমে ১২২/৩ টালা প্রতি কেজি সার্টিফ চার্জের বিনিময়ে মানসম্পন্ন সূতা (৫০^৪-৬০^৫) উৎপাদনের জন্য আত্মীয় সূতা ব্যবসায়ীদেরকে যোগাযোগের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

বিস্তারিত: (ওয়েবসাইট মিল কর্তৃপক্ষের, গ্যাস ও বিদ্যুৎ বিল বৃদ্ধি হলে সার্টিফ চার্জের সঙ্গে বৃদ্ধিকৃত বিল সমন্বয় হবে)

আফতাব গ্রুপ হেড অফিস: উত্তরা ব্যাংক ভবন, ৬ষ্ঠ তলা, ৪৭, শহীদ বীর উত্তম আশফাকুস সামাদ সড়ক (৯০ মতিঝিল বা/এ, ৬ষ্ঠ তলা, ঢাকা-১০০০)

ফ্যাক্টরী: অন্তরো, মৌচাক, কালিয়াকির, গাজীপুর।

০১৭১১-১৭৪৩৭৪, ০১৭১১-৪২৫৩৯৬, ০১৯১৮-৯৬৭৩২৫, ০১৬১৬-৮৫৯৬৯৬

০১৭১২-৭৪২০০৪, ০১৭১১-৬৮০৪৬৬, ০১৮১১-৫০৫০২০, ০১৭১১-৭৮৪০০৫

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Public Health Engineering
Office of the Executive Engineer
Sunamganj District, Sunamganj
E-mail: ee.sunamganj@dphe.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.03.9000.000.065.20-961 Date: 25.07.2022

Invitation for e-Tender Notice

1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division.
2	Implementing Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering
3	Project name	Project for Improvement of Sustainable Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene System in Haor areas.
4	e-Tender IDs	718617, 718618, 718619, 718620, 718621, 718622, 718623, 718624, 718741, 718742, 718743, 718744, 718745
5	Description of works	Installation of Water Point at Different Upazila in Sunamganj district.
6	This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	
7	Tel: (0871-63521 E-mail: ee.sunamganj@dphe.gov.bd)	

Md. Abul Kasham
Executive Engineer, DPHE
Sunamganj District

GD-1436

FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR SALE

2500 sft. Furnished apartment sale.
Apt. A-1, House-25, Road-96, Gulshan-2.
Please Buyers only Contact.

Mobile: 01711-988606, 01922-345821

Five of expat family found unconscious, two die later

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Sylhet

Police recovered the unconscious bodies of five family members from a room of their house at Tazpur Bazar in Sylhet's Osmaninagar upazila around 11:00am yesterday.

Of them, the father and one of his sons were declared dead after they were taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

The deceased are Rafiqul Islam and his son Maikul Islam.

Rafiqul's wife Samira Islam, daughter Hosna Ara Islam and another son Sadiqul Islam are undergoing treatment at the hospital.

A total of nine family members were staying at the house, with the five living in one room.

SM Mainul Islam, officer-in-charge of Osmaninagar Police Station, said after receiving a 999 call from

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Even though Rajapur bridge over the Manu river in Moulvibazar was built to ease locals' commuting hassle, in reality, it is far from serving that purpose. The connecting road required to make the bridge functional is yet to see the light of day. As a result, people are using steep bamboo platforms on both sides of the bridge, risking their lives just to get across.

PHOTO: STAR

'Withdraw DSA case against Titu'

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

Journalists in Patuakhali formed a human chain yesterday protesting the case filed under the Digital Security Act against Ekattor TV and Rising BD.com's Barguna correspondent Imran Hossain Titu.

The event was organised in front of Patuakhali Press Club.

The case was filed on March 1 against Titu after he reported on a local mazaar's fund collection process.

One Badal, who is in charge of the collection, filed the case, saying it was published without his permission.

At yesterday's event, speakers said they will organise stringent protests if the case against Titu is not withdrawn.

They also demanded the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Bamboo platform to use a Tk 99cr bridge!

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The construction of Rajapur bridge over the Manu river on the Kulaura-Prithimpasha-Hazipur-Sharifpur road in Moulvibazar was completed a year ago. But the connecting road is yet to be completed. Therefore, locals have installed a steep bamboo ladder on both sides of the bridge, risking their lives just to get across.

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) officials say there's a delay in the construction of the link road due to the "tedious" process in land acquisition.

Local resident Syed Ashfaq Tanvir said there was only a ferry on the banks of Manu river in Rajapur area of Prithimpasha union. It was used by residents of Hajipur and Sharifpur unions on the opposite side of the river on a daily basis.

But the travel was a huge hassle. Therefore, in view of their demands, RHD took the initiative to build a bridge over the river. In 2018, the construction of the 232-meter-long Rajapur bridge began, he added.

Partha Sarkar, sub-divisional engineer of

RHD's Kulaura office, said the joint contractor company of Sylhet - "Janmabhoomi-Wahiduzzaman-Nirmiti" - got the bridge and connecting road's construction work at a cost of about Tk 99.17 crore and the work was completed around June 2021.

Later, an initiative was taken to build 7.5km connecting road on both sides of the bridge. However, the fate of the connecting road is yet to be seen.

RHD sources said a Sylhet-based joint contractor named "Jamil-Iqbal" got the job of constructing the connecting road at a cost of about Tk 38 crore. Work orders dictated that the contractor started the work in 2020, aimed to be finished in April this year. However, this reality seems hardly attainable.

In order to connect the road, the height of the land needs to be raised to match the bridge's before any of the construction work

can begin. Since work has not progressed, people are having to work around the situation using the slanted bamboo walkway to get across, RHD sources said.

Visiting the site recently, this correspondent saw locals crossing the bridge using a 50 feet and 30 feet high wobbly ladders on the east and west side respectively, with great difficulty and caution.

Some of the bamboo of the ladder got rotten. Locals said accidents occur frequently and they hurt themselves at times while crossing the bridge. A vast marsh land was seen where the connecting road was supposed to be.

Khalilur Rahman, chairman of Sharifpur union parishad, said locals had long been demanding bridge but the lack of connecting road has worsened their woes.

Asked, Partha Sarkar, sub-divisional

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



3 killed, 35 hurt in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed and 35 injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents and a news agency.

In Bagerhat, two passengers were killed and at least 15 injured as a bus hit a roadside tree in Fakirhat.

The accident took place around 10:45am on Khulna-Mawa highway in Palerhat after driver of the bus of Meghna Classic Paribahan lost his control over the vehicle, said Fakirhat Model Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Alimuzzaman.

The deceased were identified as Moni Mallik (24) from Pirojpur and Anwara Begum (40) from Khagrachhari.

The injured were taken to the local health complex and clinic.

In Panchagarh, a stone trader was killed when a truck hit a motorbike he was riding on Tentulia-Banglabandha highway at Sardarpara village in Tentulia.

The victim - Raju Ahmed (35) from Dinajpur - was declared dead at Tentulia Upazila Health Complex, said police.

The trucker fled the scene with the vehicle soon after the incident.

In Munshiganj, 20 people were injured as a bus overturned near North Police Station of Padma Bridge at Mawa point, reports UNB.

The identities of the injured could not be known immediately.

The bus of Tungipara Paribahan overturned around 1:30pm after its driver lost control over the steering, said Mohammad Zia, traffic inspector of Mawa Police camp.

Of the injured, some were taken to a local hospital, he added.

3-year-old found dead at home

2 neighbours detained

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Police yesterday recovered the body of a three-year-old girl with her throat slit at Ashulia in Savar.

The child was identified as Eva, daughter of Shaheen Miah of Laxmipur, said Masud Munshi, sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station.

Both her parents are RMG workers. The body was recovered from the bathroom of their rented tin-shed house in Kundalbagh Ghoshbagh area around 5:30pm.

Meanwhile, a team of Rab detained two neighbours for interrogation. They are Al-Amin, 35, of Sirajganj, and a 16-year-old youth.

Police said every day, when the parents went to work, Eva and her seven-year-old brother used to play in front of their house with other children.

Neighbours usually looked after the children when the parents went to work, said police, quoting them.

Yesterday, when the area's children were playing, they noticed that Eva was missing. Later, they found Eva's body lying on the bathroom floor.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and informed Police Bureau of Investigation.

The SI said PBI recovered pieces of evidence from the spot, including blades.

The body was sent to a hospital morgue for autopsy.

SHAMBHUGANJ BAZAR Century-old market turns into a menace

AMINUL ISLAM, M'singh

The century-old Shambhuganj Bazar in Mymensingh bears all the characteristics of a village market.

Not only does it bring together buyers and sellers from Mymensingh city and adjacent areas, it also draws in huge customers, as fresh items can be purchased at a relatively cheaper price.

The bazar gets a festive look every Thursday and Sunday, when traders and customers from all corners of the district assemble there.

According to locals, Shambhuganj Bazar is one of oldest business centres of the country.

"I've been coming here since the Pakistan era. My father and grandfather used to come here too. It's been going on since the British period," Samesh Uddin (80) told this correspondent.

"It also hosts one of the biggest cattle markets in the Mymensingh region," he added.

However, at present the market has become a menace for commuters of the adjacent areas.

Small traders and hawkers occupy footpaths, and matters get even worse on Sundays and Thursdays. Even kitchen markets are set up on pavements, blocking the movement of pedestrians and causing traffic congestion, alleged locals.

These markets are set up illegally without the Mymensingh City Corporation's approval and set up just about anywhere - obstructing movement of people and vehicles.

But city dwellers alleged that powerful quarters and law enforcers are behind occupying the pavements, who collect a hefty sum from the hawkers of these footpath markets.

The market's leaseholders also collect toll from traders selling products on footpath shops, despite it being an illegal act.

"Almost all the shopkeepers have extended their shops up to the footpath for their personal benefit, ignoring the people's sufferings," said Abdur Rouf, a customer.

Contacted, leaseholder of the bazar Md Asaduzzaman Sohel said the market has been

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Small traders and hawkers occupy footpaths, and matters get even worse on Sundays and Thursdays. Even kitchen markets are set up on pavements, blocking the movement of pedestrians and causing traffic congestion.





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BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis

Bangladesh Institute of Governance and Management (BIGM), a premier knowledge hub in Dhaka which conducts academic, research, training and intellectual capacity building activities on broad areas of governance and public policy discourse, is inviting scholarly papers for its journal named 'BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis'. Manuscripts must be original and preferably, be of quantitative nature following interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches in areas of public policy, development, economics and adjacent fields. Papers that describe experimentation are earnestly encouraged.

All submitted papers will be considered based on the outcome of a double-blind peer review process. Aside from peer review, submitted manuscripts may undergo procedural review within the reviewer/ referee/ expert network of the Journal.

BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis follows the APA referencing style. The desired style of formatting is: Times New Roman font in 12 font sizes and 1.5-line spacing in A4 paper size. Only a soft copy of the article, both in word and pdf format, should be submitted by email at journal@bigm.edu.bd on or before **August 31, 2022**. Every submission must be accompanied by a cover letter and should include contact details, institutional affiliation of author/authors and other relevant information, such as, non-submission of the article in other journals, funding information (if any), and authors' contribution in case of multiple authors.


 Dr. Mohammad Tareque
 Director, BIGM
 and
 Editor-in-Chief,
 BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis

GD-1439



Chittagong Dry Dock Limited
Bangladesh Navy

East Patenga, Chattogram, Bangladesh
Phone: +88 02333301117, Mobile: +8801769744452
Fax: +88 02333301123, E-mail: drydock.bd@gmail.com, Website: www.cddl.gov.bd
2302.1565.341.53.006.22.252 Date: 25 July 2022

Invitation for Open Tender		
1.	Procuring entity name	Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd.
2.	Invitation for	Purchase of Fire Pump with associate accessories Note: Detail Technical Specifications Mentioned on Schedule
3.	Invitation Reference No.	2302.1565.341.53.006.22.252 Date: 25 July 2022
4.	Procurement method	Open Tender
5.	Submission of tender documents	02 (Two) envelopes submission to be followed. Financial documents in 01 (one) envelope and Technical documents in other envelope. Both the envelopes to be sealed in covering envelope.
6.	Budget & source of funds	Own Finance of Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd.
7.	Tender last selling date (office time only)	25 July 2022 to 07 September 2022 at 12:00pm.
8.	Tender closing date and time	07 September 2022 at 12:15pm
9.	Tender opening date & time	07 September 2022 at 12:30pm
10.	Name and address of the office(s) for selling, receiving and opening of tender documents	(1) Cash Section, Accounts Department, Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, East Patenga, Chattogram.
	a. Selling tender document	
	b. Receiving tender document	Purchase & Commerce Department, Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd.
	c. Opening tender document	(1) Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, East Patenga, Chattogram. (2) Tenderers' and their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.
11.	Price of tender document	2000 (two thousand) Tk (non-refundable)
12.	Contact details	Phone: +8802333301117, Mobile: +8801769744452 Fax: +8802333301123, E-mail: commerce@cddl.gov.bd
13.	Special instructions	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all or any tenders prior to acceptance without showing any reason.

Head of Commercial Department


 For Managing Director

GC-1438



unicef

সকল শিশুর জন্য



Co-funded by the European Union

The Daily Star

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and UNICEF, with the support of the European Union, jointly organised a roundtable titled 'Allocations for children in Bangladesh's public expenditure' on June 8, 2022. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.

Allocations for children in Bangladesh's public expenditure



Professor Mustafizur Rahman, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) (Keynote Presenter)

In FY2015-16, the government, for the first time, prepared a separate budget for children. This was a reflection of the government's commitment towards raising the welfare of Bangladesh's children.

Children, belonging to the 0-18 year age group, make up two-fifths of our population. Ensuring the well-being of children is a development issue and also a rights issue enshrined in our Constitution and embedded in various government policies.

Between 2013 and 2019, Bangladesh made commendable progress in several child indicators such as infant mortality rate and stunting. On the other hand, progress was stalled, and even reversed, in terms of several other indicators particularly because of Covid-induced shocks. A BIGD (2020) study revealed that about 59 percent of students had lower protein intake and 34 percent of the households were compelled to reduce food expenses for adolescents. These negative footprints will leave long-term implications for the subsequent growth of children if not addressed properly with targeted interventions. The key finding of these surveys is that children were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. If a certain group is disproportionately affected, you will have to give them disproportionate treatment in order to bring them to the same level as others. We need to keep this in mind when we discuss allocations for children.

Studies indicate that deprivations



amount of the child budget rose to Tk 90,868 crore from the previous Tk. 80,197 crore, a growth of 13.3 percent. However, the share of the child budget in total public expenditure indeed saw a slight decline (from 15.3 percent to 15.1 percent); the same was the case in view of the GDP (from 2.78 percent to 2.63 percent).

If we look at the sectoral distribution, we see that 6 percent of the child budget has gone to the education sector, 12 percent to children's health and 13 percent to various social safety net programmes. However, only about 1 percent has gone toward child protection. Since issues such as child labour, child marriage, learning losses and violence had acquired urgency during the pandemic, there is a need to allocate more resources in view of these emergent needs.

We also need to take note of not only monetary allocations but also issues such as timeliness and quality of implementation, effective management of the projects and overall good governance. To recall, average spending during the first 10 months of FY2021-22 by the 15 child budget concerned entities was only 49 percent. Thus, the share of implemented child budget was lower than that of allocation.

Based on the above study, we would like to put forward a number of suggestions. First, the child budget should be prepared and published on a regular basis. Second, efforts should be taken to meet the target of 20 percent of all public expenditures to be spent on children. Third, allocations in the child budget should be geared towards addressing current concerns and future needs of children. Fourth, targeted measures are needed to address Covid-induced challenges including compensating for learning losses, bringing dropped out children back to school, ensuring their access to essential health services, preventing child marriage and child labour and providing children with a safe environment to live and grow up in as productive adults. Fifth, social safety net programmes for children need to be expanded both horizontally and vertically with a special focus on early-year programmes (e.g., Universal Mother and Child Benefit Programme, for which we have already seen some improvements in the budget for FY2022-23). Sixth, child budget should be prepared considering the shifting demands of the children. Addressing Covid-induced adverse impacts should not only inform allocative priorities in the child budget of FY2022-23, but also the budgets to come in the next few years. Finally, implementation of child-centric measures in the budget should be reviewed on a regular basis with multi-stakeholder participation.

experienced by children at the early stage of development are difficult to adequately compensate for through interventions during subsequent stages. Any mitigating interventions at a later stage also prove to be highly costly. Consequently, investment in children is considered as an act of paying forward. It is important for Bangladesh to undertake and prioritise time-sensitive investments in today's children while the country's demographic window of opportunity is still open.

According to the Ministry of Finance estimates, allocation for children in FY2018-19 was found to be only about 14.1 percent of the national budget. The aspiration of raising this share to 20 percent by 2020 was mentioned in the budget speech of FY2018-19. However, this was estimated to be only 15.3 percent in FY2019-20. Regrettably, child budget reports for the next two fiscal years (FY2020-21 and FY2021-22) have not been prepared.

CPD in partnership with UNICEF, as part of the EU-UNICEF Public Finance Facility for Children project supported by the European Union, undertook an exercise to estimate the child budget figures for FY2021-22. The objective was to highlight the need to increase the share of child budget in public expenditure, and enhance allocative efficiency by drawing attention to the specific needs of Covid-affected children.

The study found that while the budget of the selected 15 ministries/divisions in FY2021-22 has increased by 15.8 percent compared to the pre-Covid FY2019-20 budget, the share of child budget in total public expenditure had remained more or less the same. Over this period, the

demographic dividend which makes investment in children crucially important. Can we invest in programmes that are targeted to bring those children back to school who had dropped out during the pandemic? This is the time to invest in nutrition, health, and water and sanitation to ensure that every child gets the opportunity to grow up to attain their full potential. We also hope that the new budget will address harmful practices such as child marriage and violence against children. We have to keep in mind that investing USD 1 in children today is going to give us USD 13 in return in future.



Shaheen Anam, Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation

Children are not a homogenous group. There are many different groups within children – those from impoverished households, children from remote and hard-to-reach areas, and those with disabilities. Our budget must address the needs of all these different groups of children, particularly the vulnerable and marginalised children. It is unfortunate that the social welfare ministry, the key ministry tasked with ensuring protection of children, receives one of the lowest budgetary allocations.

We always talk about allocation, but we don't pay adequate attention to the monitoring and implementation of these funds. We, civil society organisations, are not able to monitor how the allocated funds are being used and to what extent the children are benefiting from these funds. Some key indicators to look at in this regard are the health condition of children, their education, and child marriage. All our social safety net allocations go to the family since the family is supposed to take care of the children. However, our study shows that many incidents of child abuse and neglect happen within families. We need to think about how we can provide support to families so that children are protected.



Kashfia Feroz, Director-Girls Rights, Plan International Bangladesh

The national plan of action to end child marriage is the key tool to monitor and measure our progress in terms of child marriage. I urge the government to allocate necessary funds for the effective implementation of this action plan.

In the first four months of this year, 366 cases of violence against children were filed (ASK data) which shows the enormity of the problem. I strongly recommend raising the child protection budget from 1 percent to 10 percent of child budget.



Dr. Eiko Narita, Country Representative, UNFPA

One of the key investment areas is education, particularly adolescent girls' education. We have to make sure that girls stay in school throughout the secondary school period.

Girls generally start skipping school when they experience menstruation. It is also a cultural symbol that the girl is ready for marriage. There is a clear link between menstruation, school dropout and child marriage. We have to look at this linkage when we

allocate budgets for adolescent girls.



Rasheda K Choudhury, Executive Director, CAMPE

We see negative growth in the allocation for children in the budget of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. This is unacceptable since the honourable Prime Minister has repeatedly highlighted the importance of creating a progressive cultural environment for children.

The mid-day meal programme was supposed to be an incentive to bring children back to school and better their nutritional status. The prime minister also pledged that by 2024 we would have universal mid-day meal coverage. The programme, affected by the pandemic, should be restarted in all earnest to reach the target on time.

The Bangkok Statement, adopted in the recently concluded 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Minister's Conference, focuses on return, retain and catch-up. As a signatory to this statement, Bangladesh should keep in mind these three commitments when it makes budgetary allocations for children. At the conference, delegations from India and Pakistan submitted citizen budgets. We can also undertake a similar initiative.



Maurizio Cian, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh

In the coming years, money from development partners will reduce; also various trade preferences will no longer be available. However, it needs to be recognised that Bangladesh has the strength, both in terms of human capital and financial resources, to graduate and walk on its own.

The social protection budget for children focuses mainly on early childhood development. There are various national and international initiatives to support this phase of childhood. We should also allocate resources for other stages of children's lives including the adolescence period.

Different organisations have different types of data on children. This data needs to be shared among relevant stakeholders.



Khan Md. Nurul Amin NDC, Chief (Additional Secretary), General Economics Division (GED), Ministry of Planning

We must ensure food, shelter, health, nutrition, education, and decent living conditions for every child. Our national planning document clearly mentions how to achieve this goal: "More investment for children will be a priority of the Government during 8FYP. Following strategic actions will be undertaken: (a) evidences are generated to advocate for greater and better public investments for children by way of analysing child focused budgeting including preparation of budget brief, pursuing fiscal space analysis including institutional investment plans for children, pursuing public expenditure review for children, pursuing cost-benefit analysis of selected interventions for children, (b) capacity of duty bearers enhanced in child focused budgeting process, (c) involvement of citizens (including children) to empower them to participate in budgeting process to improve transparency and accountability" (8th Five-Year Plan, pg. 18).

The document further mentions, "Child focused budget gradually

needs increasing allocation for effective coverage. The incidence of child malnutrition has reduced significantly. However, progress in the area of children's nutrition requires additional effort. The incidence of child poverty is high, and the implementation of the consolidated Child Benefits Program recommended by the NSSS needs to be fast-tracked. Implementation capacity for enforcement of the Children Act 2013 also needs strengthening and needs deployment of a dedicated social service workforce for children including children with disabilities" (pg. 15).

We have clear policy guidelines regarding child welfare. We need to enhance our capacity to implement these programmes and mobilise local resources towards this.



Dr. Shamim Jahan, Acting Country Director, Save the Children in Bangladesh

A separate directorate should be established to strengthen the focus on children. There should be strong coordination among different government departments and ministries regarding the allocation of budget for children and proper implementation of child welfare programmes.

Data validation is critically important. We need to involve the private sector in child welfare programmes.



Mahfuz Anam, Editor & Publisher, The Daily Star

Budgetary allocation and expenditure for children is a topic that deserves adequate media attention. Collaborative efforts are key to pursuing these issues. I want to highlight one sentence from Dr. Mustafizur Rahman's presentation which says, "We need to talk about not only monetary allocation but also the timeliness and quality of implementation, effective management and overall governance of the process." The Daily Star would like to cover all these aspects. Please help us with your knowledge and resources in this regard.



Aroma Dutta, MP, Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Social Welfare

We need to focus on tracking and monitoring. It would help us know where and how to make investments. We need to have more interaction with the concerned ministries including Planning, Finance, Education, and Women and Children Affairs.

Our schools should have two curriculums so that students can gain more technical knowledge. Bangladesh is earning a significant amount of foreign exchange by sending her human capital abroad, but its children are not getting enough opportunities. These gaps need to be addressed. We also need a separate ministry for the children.



MA Mannan MP, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Planning

We are fighting on many fronts including poverty reduction, food security and creating employment. Children are the weakest link in the development chain. They need special care and attention. Despite many limitations, we want our children to have the best education. This is a huge battle and the government is keen to pursue this. We would like to pay more attention and allocate more funds for Bangladesh's children. I fully endorse the idea of a citizens' budget for children.

There has been a significant rise in the incidence of child marriage during the pandemic. If these girls come back to school, they should be given not only a stipend but also other benefits in appreciation of their long journey back to school.

We must stop the wastage of government funds. Our honourable Prime Minister has called on everyone to prevent wastage and make the best use of funds. I am earnestly seeking the media's help in this regard.

INTERNATIONAL

EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

Myanmar defiant as condemnation grows

Asean slams junta's 'gross lack of will' towards peace

REUTERS

Myanmar's ruling military yesterday defended its execution of four democracy activists as "justice for the people", brushing off a deluge of international condemnation including from its closest neighbours.

The military, which seized power in a coup last year, announced on Monday it had executed the activists

for aiding "terror acts" by a civilian resistance movement, Myanmar's first executions in decades.

Junta spokesperson Zaw Min Tun said the men were given due process and insisted those executed were not democracy activists, but killers deserving of their punishment.

"This was justice for the people. These criminals were given the chance to defend themselves," he told a regular televised news briefing.

News of the executions triggered international outrage, with the United States, Britain, Australia, the European Union and United Nations leading a chorus of condemnation accusing the

junta of cruelty. Read full story

Myanmar's neighbours issued a rare, stinging rebuke of the military yesterday, calling the executions "highly reprehensible" and destructive to regional efforts to de-escalate the crisis.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in a statement from chair Cambodia said it was "extremely troubled and deeply saddened by the executions", as well as by their timing.

"The implementation of the death sentences just a week before the 55th Asean ministerial meeting is highly reprehensible," it said, adding it showed the junta's "gross lack of will" to support Asean's UN-backed peace plan.

The executed men were among more than 100 people whom activists say have been sentenced to death in secretive trials by military-run courts since the coup.

Malaysia's Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah said on Tuesday that his country viewed the executions as a crime against humanity.



Smoldering trunks that were once a living forest are all that remain after the destructive Oak Fire near Mariposa, California, USA, on Monday. The Oak Fire in central California comes as parts of the United States remain in the grip of a sweltering heat wave.

PHOTO: AFP

Russia to quit International Space Station 'after 2024'

AFP, Moscow

Russia has decided to quit the International Space Station "after 2024", the newly appointed chief of Moscow's space agency told President Vladimir Putin yesterday.

Until now space exploration was one of the few areas where cooperation between Russia and the United States and its allies had not been wrecked by tensions over Ukraine and elsewhere.

"Of course, we will fulfil all our obligations to our partners, but the decision to leave this station after 2024 has been made," Yuri Borisov, who was appointed Roscosmos chief in mid-July, told Putin.

"I think that by this time we will start putting together a Russian orbital station," Borisov added, calling it the space programme's main "priority".

"Good," Putin replied in comments released by the Kremlin.

TORY LEADERSHIP RACE IN UK

Rivals spar over tax, China in first TV debate

AFP, London

Britain's two prime ministerial contenders have clashed fiercely over tax, China and character in their first head-to-head televised debate, as Rishi Sunak seeks to peg back the frontrunner Liz Truss.

The primetime debate kicked off a crucial 12-day period featuring three such live TV duels and four hustling events in front of Conservative party members who will decide the contest and begin receiving their postal votes next week.

The weeks old Tory leadership contest to replace outgoing prime minister Boris Johnson has turned increasingly bitter, with both camps fiercely briefing against each other.

Monday's BBC debate showcased that acrimony, with former finance minister Sunak savaging Foreign Secretary Truss' plans to slash taxes immediately — a key dividing line between the pair.

"I don't think that's right, I don't think it's responsible and it's certainly not Conservative," he interjected as she detailed her proposals.



"If we follow Rishi's plans, we are headed for a recession," Truss replied, accusing him of raising taxes "to the highest rate for 70 years".

A snap poll showed Conservative voters thought Truss edged Monday's debate, by 47 to 38 percent.

Opinion polls put Truss well ahead among the Tories' roughly 200,000 members, after she and Sunak emerged as the run-off candidates in a series of votes by Tory MPs.

The winner will be announced on September 5.

Over the weekend, Sunak announced plans to crack down on China's influence, calling it the "number-one threat" to domestic and global security. He vowed to "face down China" if elected, including by shuttering Beijing-funded Confucius Institutes in the UK.

That followed Truss accusing him of being soft on UK adversaries when he was finance minister.

"I'm delighted that you've come around to my way of thinking," she told Sunak as the issue featured at the debate.

Beijing took notice of the debate and yesterday urged candidates vying to be Britain's next prime minister to refrain from "hyping up the so-called 'China threat'".

"I want to make it clear to certain British politicians that making irresponsible remarks about China, including hyping up the so-called 'China threat,' cannot solve one's own problems," Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Monday, when asked in a regular news briefing about comments made by Sunak.

CHURCH SCHOOL ABUSES

Pope 'begs forgiveness' in Canada

REUTERS, Maskwacis

Pope Francis apologized on Monday to Canada's native people on their land for the Church's role in schools where indigenous children were abused, calling their forced cultural assimilation a "deplorable evil" and "disastrous error."

"With shame and unambiguously, I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the indigenous peoples," said Francis.

The address to the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people was the first apology on Canadian soil by the pope as a part of tour to heal deep wounds that rose to the fore after the discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools last year.

Between 1881 and 1996 more than 150,000 indigenous children were separated from their families and brought to residential schools. Many children were starved, beaten for speaking their native languages, and sexually abused in a system that Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission called "cultural genocide." Most of the schools were run for the government by Roman Catholic religious orders of priests and nuns.

5 BCL men

FROM PAGE 12

Haque Rubel.

Meanwhile, National University has expelled Masud Rana and Nur Hossain Shawon from Hathazari College over the incident, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a syndicate meeting held on Monday night, chaired by Prof Dr Md Mashur Rahman, vice-chancellor of the university.

"The expulsion is temporary. The students have been asked to show cause, within 10 days, why it should not be made permanent," said Md Aatur Rahman, director of the university's public relations office.

The meeting also decided to form a committee to probe the incident.

Hathazari Government College is affiliated with National University.

On July 17, the female student was physically assaulted by five youths while she was going to Botanical Garden from Pritilata Hall on the CU campus with her friend.

Two sued

FROM PAGE 2

"My daughter was a very talented girl. She could not take their [Shishir and Tamal's] various forms of mental torture. They even used to call her over phone to pressurise her... I want justice."

Saidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the station, said Shishir and Tamal have been absconding since the incident. "However, we are conducting drives to arrest them."

No fertiliser

FROM PAGE 12

the country's largest urea fertiliser producer, Jamuna Fertiliser Company Ltd, suspended production this month due to shortage of gas.

Natural gas is used as a raw material to produce ammonia, a source of nitrogen essential for plants. Then, ammonia is processed and combined with other nutrients, including phosphorus and potassium which are essential for plants' growth, to produce different types of fertilisers.

A crucial question

FROM PAGE 12

routine work when they were supposed to hold a hearing on the petition.

"I will take an initiative for holding a hearing on the rule after the next annual vacation of the High Court of September as I am now busy with other urgent cases," he told this newspaper yesterday.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin recently told The Daily Star that he could not make any comment on the issue as he was not aware of the writ petition and the related HC rule.

A senior government official, who had performed duties as an executive magistrate, told this correspondent that executive magistrates were given the powers in order to take preventive actions before offences take place.

The trial of a case starts after a judicial magistrate takes cognisance

of an offence, he said, adding that the previous functions in a case are carried out by executive officials from the BCS administration cadre.

Criminal law expert advocate Khurshid Alam Khan said the authority and jurisdiction of the executive magistrates over performing judicial functions as per the relevant provisions of the CrPC are under challenge in the HC after it issued the rule.

Providing powers to the executive magistrates to run judicial functions is not lawful under the constitution and also as per the apex court verdict in the judiciary separation case, he said, adding that the HC will finally determine whether the empowerment of executive magistrates to perform judicial functions is lawful.

"The state should take an initiative for quick disposal of the High Court rule," he observed.

Pakistan raises power prices amid energy crisis despite rampant inflation

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan yesterday raised electricity prices to match rising generation costs amid a global energy crisis and a heatwave, even as the country grapples with its highest inflation in over a decade, the power minister said.

Inflation last month reached 21.3%, driven mainly by rising food costs, and the country also faces fast-depleting foreign reserves, a depreciating currency and widening current account deficit.

"Cabinet has approved an increase in electricity tariffs but lifeline (poor) consumers will not be affected," Power Minister Khurram Dastagir Khan told reporters in Islamabad, adding that the increase would not

apply to them.

Pakistan's monthly fuel oil imports are set to hit a four-year high in June, Refinitiv data shows, as the country struggles to buy liquefied natural gas for power generation amid a heatwave that is driving demand. Read full story

Higher energy imports have hit the economy as the country struggles to boost foreign exchange. The rupee has lost 20% of its value in 2022. Read full story Reserves have fallen to as low as \$9.3 billion, hardly enough to pay for 45 days of imports.

Pakistan this month reached a staff-level agreement with the IMF for \$1.17 billion in critical funding under a resumed bailout package. Read full story

Supercharged

FROM PAGE 12

both consumers and regulators in recent years.

Pushback has begun to soften, however, amid growing food insecurity that could see millions of people face shortages and even famine this year.

A recent assessment by Intergovernmental Authority on Development found that more than 50 million people across East Africa will be impacted by the region's food crisis, while three million people face "emergency and catastrophic levels of hunger, risking death".

1.93cr shots

FROM PAGE 12

The vaccination campaign for children aged between five and 11 will begin in August.

"For this, the registration process has started. At least 4.20 crore children will get vaccines," he added.

Meanwhile, the health directorate yesterday reported 621 Covid-19 cases and four more deaths caused by the viral infection.

The positivity rate was 6.14 percent.

With the latest count, Covid-19 claimed 29,275 lives in the country so far.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

October, and comprise 10 teams playing 23 matches.

The sub continent as a whole will enjoy more events. A year later, the action will move to India for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025, which will feature eight teams.

Sri Lanka will host the inaugural edition of the T20 Women's ICC Champions Trophy — if they secure qualification — in February, 2026.

In June of the same year, England will host the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. It will be the nation's first time hosting the event and the number of teams will also increase from 10 to 12.

Three held over killing

FROM PAGE 12

Around 7:45 on Monday, the body of third-year student Bulbul Ahmed was found with stab wounds near Gazi Kalur Tila on the campus.

He had gone there earlier with a friend.

Bulbul was first taken to the university's medical centre, which referred him to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. On duty doctors declared him dead.

SUST registrar Mohd Ishfaqul Hussain filed a murder case with Jalalabad Police Station accusing several unnamed people.

Speaking to The Daily Star, several students who were at Gazi Kalur Tila and adjacent areas said they heard a scream around 7:30pm.

They rushed to the spot and found Bulbul with stab wounds. His friend was there, they said.

The acquaintance was also admitted to a local private hospital due to trauma.

Upon interrogation, the friend said they saw the killer but was unable to go into details. Law enforcers then decided to continue the quizzing later, the source added.

However, the person later left the hospital around 4:00pm yesterday

without informing anyone.

Two hours later, the friend was traced inside the campus and the university's proctorial body took them into custody.

Police said they will continue interrogating the friend soon as they are the prime witness.

PROTESTS RAGE ON
Students protesting the murder yesterday organised a human chain in front of the campus's central library of the campus around 11:00am.

They later brought out a procession on the campus with a four-point demand, including the arrest of the killers within 24 hours and ensuring their maximum punishment.

Other demands include providing compensation to the victim family, ensuring maximum security inside the campus and renaming the area where Bulbul was killed to "Bulbul Chatter".

Contacted, SUST proctor Ishrat Ibne Ismail said, "We are cooperating law enforcers to find the killers. Other logical demands of the students will be met in phases."

Meanwhile, SUST authorities have formed a five-member probe body in this regard.

Tunisia president hails vote set to bolster rule

AFP, Tunis

President Kais Saied said yesterday that Tunisia was moving "from despair to hope" after a referendum almost certain to approve a new constitution that concentrates nearly all powers in his office.

But his rivals accused the Saied-controlled ISIE electoral board of "fraud" and said his referendum — which was marked by a turnout of little more than a quarter of the 9.3 million electorate — had "failed".

Monday's vote came a year to the day after Saied sacked the government

and suspended parliament in a dramatic blow to the only democracy to have emerged from the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

For some Tunisians, his moves sparked fears of a return to autocracy, but they were welcomed by others, fed up with high inflation and unemployment, political corruption and a system they felt had brought few improvements.

There had been little doubt the "Yes" campaign would win, and an exit poll suggested that votes cast were overwhelmingly in favour.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Welcome changes in Evidence Act

It's high time to end harassment in the name of character evidence

THE so-called "immoral" character of survivors of sexual violence can no longer be brought into question, digital evidence can be produced in courts, and questions on the character of witnesses in general can be raised only with the permission of the court. These proposed amendments to the Evidence Act have been approved by the Cabinet and will now be placed in parliament. While long overdue, this move deserves our highest praise and has been welcomed by rights activists who had been campaigning for these amendments.

A culture of victim-blaming has permeated the system that is meant to give justice to survivors. It is difficult to forget the controversial comments of a Dhaka Tribunal judge last year about giving rape survivors a 72-hour window only to report cases - a recommendation that was later removed from the full verdict after widespread condemnation, including from the law minister. Activists have long argued that defence lawyers attacking survivors with demeaning and obscene questions during cross-examinations is a huge deterrent in the process of justice that has only contributed to normalising sexual violence. Against this backdrop, the protection now given to survivors in court is a milestone to be celebrated.

However, this is only the first step towards tackling a deeper issue - the lack of sensitivity shown to survivors of violence in courts. To this date, there are no proper protocols or guidelines on protections that should be afforded to survivors in court in order to preserve their dignity and avoid re-traumatisation. The idea that a woman of "bad character" cannot be raped is the very pinnacle of patriarchal and gender-biased thought, and it has been part and parcel of our justice system for a long time. While removing it from the law is a huge step forward, more needs to be done to make these spaces safer for women who are already struggling with social stigma and the trauma of violence. It should be noted that the amended version of Section 146(3) still allows for the moral character of witnesses to be questioned if the court permits. It is now up to the judges to ensure that this is done only when absolutely necessary and is not allowed to become a regular line of cross-examination.

Precautions should also be taken with regard to digital evidence. In a world where almost everything is digitised, it is critical to allow it in courts, but the collection of such evidence must be done through transparent means. As we know all too well from the Digital Security Act, it is not difficult to misuse and abuse digital information. While digital evidence can be a crucial part of the process of justice, it must not be used as an excuse to ignore growing concerns over data protection and privacy.

A matter of life and death

Govt should fast-track its drowning prevention programme

IT is heart-breaking to note that as many as 38 children die every day in Bangladesh due to drowning. According to the World Health Organization and Unicef Bangladesh, that brings the total to around 14,000 deaths among children every year, making it the second leading cause of child (under five) mortality in the country. Unfortunately, Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of under-five drowning in the world. Despite these alarming statistics, the fact that we as a nation have failed to do anything about it over the years is extremely disappointing.

Globally, drowning claims the lives of over 2,30,000 people every year. In order to bring global attention to it, the UN declared second World Drowning Prevention Day was observed on July 25, 2022. The majority of deaths by drowning, however, occur in low- and middle-income countries. In a country like Bangladesh, where large areas of land remain submerged due to yearly floods, the absence of awareness among people as well as lack of swimming skills can prove to be lethal, especially since children in rural areas living near water bodies are exposed daily to the risk of drowning.

According to a report earlier in the year by the Society for Media and Suitable Human-communication Techniques (SoMaSHTe), 80 percent of the under-five victims drowned within 20 metres from their homes. What is deeply concerning is that people are also still largely unaware to this threat due to inadequate reporting of such incidents in the media and elsewhere.

Given that death by drowning is preventable through low-cost solutions, according to the WHO and Unicef, there really is no excuse for us to continue ignoring this issue and not implementing these solutions. The government, in partnership with other organisations - like the media, NGOs, and others - needs to urgently increase awareness about it among families and communities. Providing swimming skills among children and adolescents would also go a long way in preventing such unnecessary deaths. Since a lack of supervision of children while their guardians are busy with other work is what often leads to such tragic deaths, ensuring childcare facilities for pre-school children can make a significant difference.

Reportedly, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has developed a detailed, pro-forma project, which will enable institutional supervision of children under five through 8,000 community-based day care centres. This project should urgently be fast-tracked, as it literally concerns a matter of life and death, particularly for children.

The root cause of our power sector's ills



Dr Ijaz Hossain is the dean of the Faculty of Engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

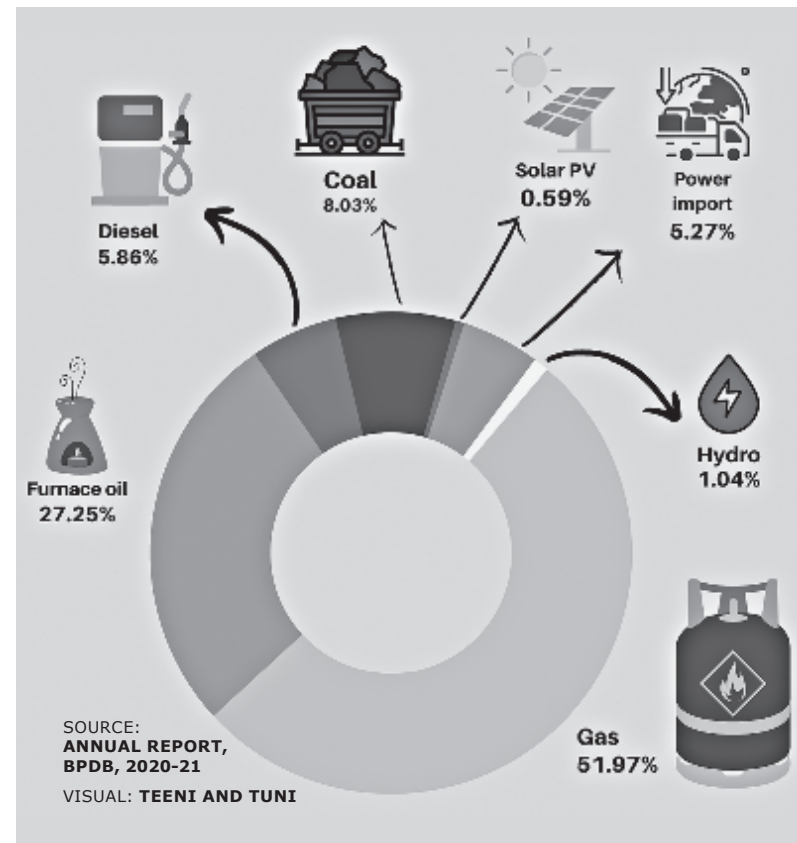
IJAZ HOSSAIN

UNTIL recently, load-shedding was something that people in Bangladesh had forgotten - at least in Dhaka. Why, then, are we facing the present power crisis, and why should it hit us so hard? Simply put, we ignored the issue of fuel supply for the power plants. There are grid-connected power plants with more than 22,000MW generation capacity, but our consistent electricity production is less than 17,000MW even from our oil-fired power plants, because we haven't planned for sufficient gas supply.

Power is measured with megawatt (MW), but electricity is measured with megawatt-hour (MWh). We have had growth in power, but not in electricity generation. To generate electricity, one needs fuel - and we have failed in planning for fuel supply for our power plants. If said fuel is imported, supply disruption must be integrated into that planning.

According to Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) data on the production of natural gas and the import of LNG in Bangladesh since 2008-09, gas production peaked in 2015-16, and then started to decline. LNG import started in 2018-19, and has been increasing every year. The need to manage the declining gas production and increasing LNG import is of utmost importance. We are now alert to the dangerous situation that started developing at least five years back. Our daily production is 2,300 mmcf, and in the best possible scenario, on an average, we can import, gasify and supply 1,000 mmcf of regasified LNG daily. That makes a total of 3,300 mmcf of gas per day, but our daily demand is more than 3,800 mmcf; some believe it is more than 4,500 mmcf per day if unsatisfied and suppressed demands are fully met.

The figure here shows the power plants in Bangladesh as of 2020-21, disaggregated on the basis of the fuel



they use. The heavy reliance on natural gas is clearly evident (52 percent). With gas production declining, the continued high dependency on gas in the power sector is a serious mistake. Approximately, 42 percent of the total gas supply goes into grid power generation.

For a long time, the BPDB has been relying on oil-fired power plants to meet the demand. Using oil-fired power plants means that the cost of electricity will go up. In the least-cost principle of electricity generation, planning oil-fired power plants should not enter the energy mix. If there is no other option, then roughly 20 percent of the power

plants and 10 percent of generation can be from oil-fired power plants to essentially meet the peak demand. But in Bangladesh, we have been using oil-fired power plants for over 10 years for baseload power. This clearly shows that the government has not been able to build a sustainable power sector where uninterrupted electricity is available at affordable prices.

power sector is that the BPDB has rarely ever consulted Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation, also known as Petrobangla, before setting up a gas-fueled power plant. In many instances, despite Petrobangla's warning that they may not be able to ensure gas supply, the BPDB went ahead and allowed private companies to build power plants. This is highly irregular, because without primary fuel guarantee, it is not possible to get financing. The guarantee for fuel was given by the BPDB even though gas supply was Petrobangla's responsibility.

After the discovery of the Bibiyana gas field, less than three trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of gas has been added to the 2P (proven+probable) reserves, but more than 10 Tcf of gas has been consumed. In the last five years, less than 0.5 Tcf of gas has been added to the reserves, but more than 3.5 Tcf has been consumed. Clearly, if we are to depend on gas as our main fuel, emphasis must be given on finding new reserves. Unfortunately, instead of emphasising on that, the domestic production of natural gas has been neglected. Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd (Bapex) was not provided with sufficient funding to increase gas exploration.

More disturbing is the fact that almost nothing has been achieved on the deep offshore front. Of course, the offshore is an unknown region, but the government should have initiated a survey followed by drilling. But none of that has been done in the deep offshore region we won from Myanmar and India. All these point towards one thing: the government is more eager to import LNG than to find gas at home, which requires high-risk capital. Undoubtedly, the need for vigorous exploration is of paramount importance to avert a situation like the one we are in, or at least to lessen the impacts of supply disruption and price volatility.

Natural gas resource studies conducted by two reputed organisations from the US and Norway have indicated that there is a 50 percent probability of finding 32-40 Tcf of gas in Bangladesh - excluding the deep-sea region. We have found around five Tcf since the study was completed. Therefore, there are still good chances of finding more gas in the country. How then did Petrobangla come to the conclusion that there is no more gas in Bangladesh?

Time to pay more attention to climate displacement



POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Dr Saleemul Huq is director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB).

SALEEMUL HUQ

THE issue of human displacement due to the adverse impacts of human-induced climate change used to be a topic of anticipatory actions, but it has become an active problem here and now. This is because the world has now entered the new era of losses and damages that are attributable to the fact that global temperature has already risen over one degree Celsius due to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Although the Paris Agreement was put into effect to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius, this target is rapidly becoming impossible to meet - unless all countries enhance their respective pledges to reduce their emissions even

Just this week, our foreign ministry, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), held a successful high-level policy dialogue on the topic, which needs to be followed up by our missions in key developed countries such as the US, the European Union, the UK, and France.

faster than before. Unfortunately, this seems unlikely to happen.

Thus, it is now a high priority for all countries, especially Bangladesh, to take serious measures to deal with such loss and damage, and in particular with the issue of potential displacement of



According to experts, internal displacement due to climate change will increase significantly in Bangladesh by 2050. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

people due to climate change impacts, such as the recent floods in the northeastern part of Bangladesh. The most vulnerable parts of the country are the low-lying coastal zones, which are already suffering from salinity intrusion as well as coastal erosion and cyclones. While Bangladesh has been successful in reducing the loss of lives from cyclones and floods, we have not yet been able to help the victims recover their livelihoods once the calamities are over.

Hence, it's high time for Bangladesh to take this issue seriously both nationally and internationally.

Let me start with the process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where this issue falls under

the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), which has set up a task force on displacement due to climate change, which has produced its reports with recommendations for actions to "avert, minimise and address" loss and damage. This needs to be a priority in the upcoming 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27). At COP26 held last year, Bangladesh

held a successful high-level policy dialogue on the topic, which needs to be followed up by our missions in key developed countries such as the US, the European Union, the UK, and France. Such high-level policy dialogues can be jointly organised by the Bangladesh mission in each country together with the IOM.

Another arena where Bangladesh can play a proactive role under the leadership of the environment, forests and climate change ministry is to propose a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its upcoming seventh IPCC cycle. Such a special report can be done by the IPCC in just two years, and we have a good example of the highly influential IPCC special report on 1.5-degree temperature rise, which was proposed some years ago by the CVF member countries.

Finally, we need to be taking the issue of human displacement due to climate change seriously at home in terms of developing some high-level framework to enable the many separate, but relevant initiatives by different government ministries and agencies to bring some synergy to these disparate efforts to ensure a whole-of-government approach to the issue of human mobility and climate change. Indeed, we can go a step further and promote a whole-of-society approach which includes private sector, civil society, academics and researchers as well as media to make Bangladesh a pioneer in taking up the issue of human mobility under climate change as it has already become a global role model on adaptation to climate change.

The issue of forced displacement due to climate change impacts is one that can be turned from a challenge into an opportunity if we take the right kinds of anticipatory actions to minimise the adverse impacts and enhance the positive opportunities for potential future climate migrants.

(Not My) Home: Musings of a Reluctant Immigrant

Despite all her flaws and problems, Dhaka still smells like home

SARA RASHID

Sara Rashid, based in New York, is interested in how religion and politics shape art in South Asia.

EVERY morning, as the first streaks of red and yellow bleed into the sky, as young lovers end late night phone calls, and as the muazzin silently calls the azaan from a decrepit Brooklyn mosque, my anxiety wakes up. And every morning, without exception or consideration, it wakes me up. In a place between sleep and awake, I feel my intestines tear from being snaked into their neighbouring organs, the pain then travels into my stomach, expanding and threatening to break open my ribcage. It shoots through my lungs, finally lodging itself into the base of my throat, without any possibility of escape. The only way the pain will leave is through my eyes, once I open them and orient myself to my surroundings, my reality.

A childhood companion by now, the temperament of my anxiety has evolved with the seasons of my life. It has grown from a light quiver in my stomach to heart palpitations that reverberate through my extremities. More recently, it has metastasised from the physical to the psychological, cropping up imprisoning thoughts of despair and dread along the way. Over the years, I've become grudgingly familiar with the anarchy within me, watching its shades turn as the reasons for my anxiety jump from work, to marriage, health, finances, in-laws, and family. Today, these reasons have become background characters as the underdog of my anxiety finally claims its rightful place at centre stage: home. I want to go home to Dhaka.

For me, home has always been a place, and the emotions that place stirred. Home is my mother's lap, the corridors where my father ran with bowls of lychees and mangoes after me, the rooftop on which my dadima sun-dried her aam shotto and the streets my husband and I went on walks as teenagers.

In a month, I'll have lived in the US for 11 years. Eleven out of the 29 years of my life. And with every year, it gets harder to stay, but even harder to leave. In 2011, I moved to a sleepy small town in Massachusetts to attend an all-women's liberal arts college. Everything about it was new to me: the quiet, the small town, the all-women's community. Unlike most others who moved with me, I didn't come with

dreams of building a life here after graduation. In fact, I was absolutely certain of the journey I'd make back home in only four years' time, giddy at the thought of returning to a city whose streets called out my name, and whose smells still lingered on my clothes in this quaint New England town.

Today, I'm still here – 157 miles away from my old-world college town, but nowhere closer to home, to Dhaka. Over the last 11 years, I made a choice every day; I chose pragmatism over my dreams, independence over interference, the financial stability

yearning for home.

They say your home is in people; I've never fully understood or experienced that. For me, home has always been a place, and the emotions that place stirred. Home is my mother's lap, the corridors where my father ran with bowls of lychees and mangoes after me, the rooftop on which my dadima sun-dried her aam shotto and the streets my husband and I went on walks as teenagers. All this happened in Dhaka. Now when I look back, I realise why these places felt like home to me: it's because they invoked a feeling of hope, safety, fulfilment, and joy at even the

showers, the unforgettable smell of tuberose wafting off of her promises, the kindness of her passers-by who are ready to help strangers in every street corner, the feeling she evokes of belonging, one that generously allows others to claim, with haq, that she is yours.

I've desperately searched for but failed to find and feel the same in other parts of the world. Maybe I couldn't feel the same anywhere else because of the helplessness with which I looked for it, or maybe because it simply doesn't exist elsewhere. Either way, I've learnt that the harder you try to hold

and ingratitude, embracing me with abandon just as I come.

The last 11 years have been a long streak of indecision, a circuitous back and forth of whether I want to be in Dhaka or New York City. But what happens when you make countless promises to yourself and to your home that your time in this suitable but unknown, foreign land is up, and you will make your way back – but you never follow through? Despite all these promises, you're stuck in quicksand, going deeper in as time passes, and losing with it your resilience, patience and, most importantly, hope.

Now, when I go back to visit, Dhaka mocks me for all the unkept promises. I've failed to keep up with the alarmingly fast pace at which the city has evolved, and with every return there's less I recognise about the city that raised me. The city's temperament and ambience feel different: it's more magnetic, electrifying, with a sense of urgency and possibility that I hadn't witnessed before. But the city has also held on to her heritage and values, weaved her history and legacy into the present narrative, and raised her youth to be fierce yet sensitive, ambitious yet grounded. And it's this blend that makes me certain of why I belong there and why I will ultimately find my way back.

In Persian poetry, the word *ghurbat* refers to the state of being away from one's own land. It means a type of exile from one's home that leaves you destitute. My *ghurbat* has left me in a state of barrenness, and often brings me back to this translated poem:

*Even in exile
Our hearts dwell at home
Think of us as being there
The home where our hearts live*

All things said, I'm aware of how much I romanticise this city, one that has predominantly lived within me, but I've lived very little in over the last 11 years. And I know, when I finally go back, be it in months or years, there will be so much that's messy, frustrating, disappointing. The city will make me overwhelmed and deflated simultaneously; she will take until I have nothing left to give, and peel my layers to an extent that I don't recognise who I am anymore.

As much as I know all of this, what I believe with even more conviction is that in the grander scheme of things, none of this will matter. It won't matter because I'll finally be in the only place where I've felt complete, a city that is unlike any other, too beautiful for her own good, all emotion, strength, love and heart. I'll be in a place that's mine, one that claimed me decades ago. And how unbelievable that would be, because where else can you find a city, whose eyes are so full of dreams, whose birds sing you to sleep, whose sun shines on everyone and whose melodies bring generations together – *emon deshti kothao khuje pabe nako tumi*. Until then, Dhaka, I'll hang on to my hope for our reunion with dear life, and you, my *jaan*, stay safe and soar high.



VISUAL: KAZI TAHSEEN AGAZ APURBO

of a job that pays in dollars over the intoxicating, potentially unrealistic possibilities of a future in Dhaka. I picked career opportunities over my nani's hugs, reading alone at the park over family lunches after Jummah prayers, a reliable healthcare system over a community so sustaining that not much else is needed in life. Every time, I chose sensible and practical over the only thing that made me whole: the undeniable feeling of safety, of being at home.

As I end yet another day with the unsettling feeling of being in a land away from my own, I look out for the supposed benefits of being here, and remind myself of what a privilege it is to have a choice. It's something that everyone wants but not many have, yet on most days it becomes difficult to reconcile the price I'm paying for the choices I make. From the outside, my years away from home depict a superficially desirable life, made of promotions, a new apartment, holidays with friends, and complete freedom. However, when you look closely, my days are made of long silences, solitary subway rides back home, perfunctory meals with acquaintances, mourning the loss of loved ones in between meetings, and panic attacks that creep in through the cracks of a prolonged

most mundane. And I've only felt this way in a city that makes no sense, a city where you'll find a hundred things wrong for one right, a city that's unfair and brutal – but a city that has kept all of my heart for herself, hiding it under her layers of resilience and generosity, with no desire to return it.

In most of my conversations with people still living in Dhaka, the need to leave the city is so primal, so desperate that I don't share how much I want to be in their shoes. I'm sure they would want to be in mine – after all, the grass is always greener on the other side. We're wired as humans to seek stability, a better standard of living, and a path to progress. These are things that Dhaka withholds from you; it stifles you, doesn't give you second chances, exerts full control over your destiny and punishes you for cracks inherent to her system, unless of course you are born or marry into extreme wealth and privilege. And so the only way up becomes out.

However, if you keep all this aside, the tenderness with which the city holds you at night, the hustle and big-heartedness that's ingrained in her fabric, her world of possibilities and audacity to dream, are unparalleled. There's not much else like the softness of her wet earth after monsoon

on to something, the quicker it slides through your fingers.

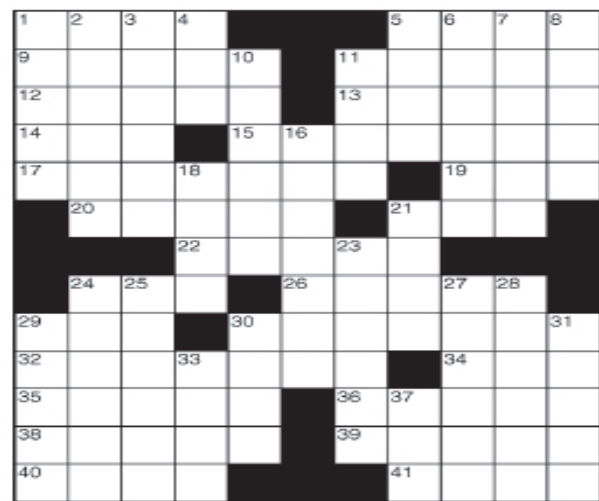
I'm often asked why I wish to move back to Dhaka. It's difficult to comprehend why one would choose to leave a life of comfort and security for one that poses more volatility, less opportunities. These questions are mostly justified, and objectively speaking, there's not much to complain about my life in Brooklyn. On the surface, it looks like the American dream, but that's also where the problem lies. It's monopolised by the constant chase of that dream, a running roster of never-ending things to achieve, adding yet another reason to stay back and make the sensible, albeit mechanical choice. But when you look at its core, everything is lifeless and reeks of sterility and practicality.

This country only wants the best parts of you, it judges me by what I can give it, my time and output. Our relationship is transactional and precarious. It has rendered me a statistic, threatening to replace me at the slightest scent of error. Dhaka, on the other hand, asks for my love, my loss and my pain, always patient and loyal. She doesn't hold grudges for the broken promises; instead, it accepts me with my imperfections

CROSSWORD

BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Spice from nutmeg
 - 5 Biting remark
 - 9 Cake cover
 - 11 Blender speed
 - 12 More polite
 - 13 Fuming
 - 14 Lupino of film
 - 15 Reception feature
 - 17 Courtroom conference
 - 19 Tax org.
 - 20 Stone unit
 - 21 Blue
 - 22 When Ovid wrote "Ars Amatoria"
 - 24 Derek and Diddle
 - 26 Writer L'Amour
 - 29 Plop down
 - 30 Place to get
- DOWN**
- 1 Some skirts
 - 2 Having a low pH
 - 3 Summer noisemaker
 - 4
 - 5 Overcook
 - 6 Mideast peninsula
 - 7 Slow down
 - 8 Saloon orders
 - 10 Singer Josh
 - 11 Docking site
 - 16 Kneecap
 - 18 Aphrodite's son
 - 21 Pond growth
 - 23 Floor makeup
 - 24 One under par
 - 25 "The Stunt Man" star
 - 27 European peninsula
 - 28 Bank activity
 - 29 Con games
 - 30 Trucker with a handle
 - 31 Budget amounts
 - 33 Small songbird
 - 37 Contented sound



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

REWARD SWAB
ARETHA TOTO
MADE OF MONEY
ANTON
LOSE REPS
ROBE VARIED
ICE RAY NAY
MASCOT YULE
LEAD OOPS
MEATY
MAID OF HONOR
OGRE REMAND
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নরসিংদী সড়ক বিভাগ
নরসিংদী
Email: eenar@rhd.gov.bd

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/লাইসেন্স নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগ, নরসিংদী কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালন (সওজ) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে অভ্যন্তরীণ কার্য (NCT Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/নবায়ন করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম নরসিংদী সড়ক বিভাগ এর কার্যালয় হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। আত্মীয় ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকার অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/চালান নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, নরসিংদী অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করে অথবা মানি রিসিটের মাধ্যমে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধ করে নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ আগামী ৩০/০৮/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে নরসিংদী সড়ক বিভাগে জমা প্রদান করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি-৬৩ অনুসরণযোগ্য এবং এ তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহবান/কাজ প্রদানের নিত্যনত্যা বিধান করে না। উল্লেখ্য যে, ইতোপূর্বে অত্র দপ্তরের তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদারগণ ২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থ বছরের লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ফি বাবদ টাকা ২,০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) মাত্র + ১৫% ভ্যাটসহ বিনা জরিমানায় আগামী ৩০/০৮/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমাপূর্বক লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

26.07.22
মোঃ হামিদুল ইসলাম
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জিডি-১৪৩৭



When the sun dims down in the port city, the Chattogram port lights up in the sodium yellow of the many container ships coming in and out with goods -- signaling an array of hope and progress. This photo was taken recently in Barik Building Mor area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

HALDA no safe haven for dolphins

Awareness is the key

Dr Manzoorul Kibria on stopping dolphin deaths



Despite taking various initiatives including an action plan and a protection committee, Halda river dolphins continue to perish. In the past week, three mammals were found dead. In a conversation with The Daily Star, Dr Manzoorul Kibria, a prominent Halda researcher and professor of zoology at Chittagong University, spoke about Halda's dwindling Ganges dolphin population, elaborating the scenario and suggesting steps for a way out.

The Halda researcher identified fishing nets, propellers of mechanised boats, decreasing water levels upstream due to sluice gates and dams, and industrial pollution as some of the main reasons.

Dolphins die from minor injuries when heavy mechanised boats or sand dredgers move in the river and hit the mammals. Dolphins have a thin layer of fat under their skin. An injury at this level can quickly lead to infection and kill the dolphin, he said.

Dolphins get entangled with fishing nets in rivers. If a dolphin is trapped underwater for 30 minutes in this state, it will suffocate and die, he added.

Dolphins are an integral part of the area's ecosystem, to the point that their conservation can benefit a wider range of aquatic and threatened species, including turtles, gharials and otters.

The species has been disappearing from the Halda at a worrying rate over the last few years. The reasons are entirely human-made. Most of the blame can be attributed to engine boats and unsustainable fishing practices.

Engine boats are the main cause, as they killed most dolphins by hitting them. Fishing nets come in second - dolphins get stuck in them and suffocate to death. Then there are hunters who kill dolphins for their fat.

Dr Kibria said, "The way to protect dolphins is to make people aware. Mechanised boats should be stopped in the river. The installation of nets in the river should be stopped."

If the initiatives are not implemented properly, the endangered species will soon disappear from the Halda, he added.

The dire state of Ctg cinemas

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Once upon a time, Chattogram's cinema halls used to buzz with audience. The Eids were the most festive seasons for film lovers across all classes of the port city, which had as many as 35 cinemas that used to release Bangla films regularly.

However, the industry is on the verge of collapse due to audience crisis and the recent popularity of OTT platforms.

"Once, we would be left exhausted due to huge pressure of audience in the cinema halls. People



used to go crazy for one ticket. It's all history now," said Abul Hossain, owner of Cinema Palace and Sugandha.

Only two cinema halls -- "Cinema Palace" in KC Dey Road area and "Sugandha" in Kazir Dewri area are now running in the port city despite a limited audience.

The owners and staff said the poor quality of films, lack of good actors, and OTT and satellite TV channels have destroyed the sector. The hit has been harder during the pandemic.

Popular "Almas" and "Dinar" cinema halls started their journey in 1965. They were shut down in December 2020. Both the halls operated under Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust. Purabi cinema hall was also shut down due to audience crisis.

Around 33 cinema halls were shut down and turned into high-rise buildings or markets, said cinema hall owners.

Shopping complex Mahal Market was built on Khurshid Mahal hall in Laldighi area, while Asian SR hotel replaced Uzala cinema hall on station road. Agrabad's Banani Cinema Hall has turned into Banani Complex, while New Market's Jalsa has turned into "Jalsa Market".

"Piracy of Bangla films started the audience crisis in the hall. Later TV channels added more woes showing the films on the TV set. In the age of OTT platforms, audience have little incentive to leave their rooms and come to the halls," said Abul Hossain, also president of Chattogram Film Display Association.

"Now we have running three shows each in two halls per day. We are currently running 'Poran' for the audience but the response is not good. We have increased our facilities to attract more audience," he added.

"We saw in our first autopsy report that the injuries were caused by a sharp propeller of mechanised boats. We requested authorities to ban mechanised boats in the river."

Dr Manzoorul Kibria professor of zoology at Chittagong University and a prominent Halda researcher

SIFAYET ULLAH

A dolphin was found dead in the Halda river in Chattogram on July 21.

Experts suspected the mammal may have died after it got caught in a stray fishnet and suffocated to death.

Just a day before, another dead dolphin, around seven-feet long and weighing 90kg, washed up in the same area.

With this, at least 38 dolphins have been found dead in the river and its canals in the last four years, according to data from Halda River Research Laboratory of Chittagong University.

Researchers identified fishing nets, propellers of mechanised boats, decreasing water levels upstream due to sluice gates and dams, and industrial pollution as some of the main reasons behind the deaths.

Dr Manzoorul Kibria, professor of zoology at Chittagong University and a prominent Halda researcher, conducted the first autopsy of a dolphin in 2018.

"We saw in our first autopsy report that the injuries were caused by a sharp propeller of mechanised boats," he said. "We requested authorities to ban mechanised boats in the river."

Meanwhile, experts also said many of the dolphins were killed, but so far only a single case has been filed in this regard in 2020 by the forest department.

Mentionable, the department is in charge of protecting the dolphins.

The killing of dolphins is increasing every day due to a lack of identification of killers and impunity, said Prof Kibria.

Asked, Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury, divisional



forest officer of Chattogram Nature and Wildlife Conservation wing of the Forest Department, said, "We are not able to protect dolphins properly, due to a shortage of manpower."

The forest department has undertaken a 10-year-long conservation plan from 2020 to 2030 to protect species that are declared endangered by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) in 2015.

"We are working amid manpower shortage with the authorities concerned, stakeholders and communities to ensure that the plan is being properly followed," the DFO added.

According to experts, the Ganges river dolphin was first discovered in 1801.

Named Shushuk in Bangla, it's an endemic aquatic mammal found only in the Indian subcontinent.

With a lifespan of 25 years on average, a dolphin takes nine to 10 years to mature, and it takes around two years for an adult dolphin to birth a calf. This means a dolphin can give birth to around five calves during its reproductive years at maximum.

According to IUCN, the Ganges river dolphin is endangered globally as well as in Bangladesh (IUCN Bangladesh, 2015).

The species is included in the First Schedule of Bangladesh Wildlife (Protection & Security) Act, 2012 to ensure a higher level of protection for their conservation.

A new look for CU shuttle train

NAIMUR RAHMAN

Chittagong University's (CU) main means of transport for thousands of students, the shuttle train - gets a fresh coat of paint in the form of graffiti.

Lukas Zeilinger, a Berlin artist, started painting the shuttle train last Thursday. The project was interrupted several times due to rain.

There is no fixed theme for the graffiti, although there are many influences of Bangladeshi culture - seasonal flowers, the Bengal tiger and one coach has the Sundarbans written on it. However, the Bangladesh Railway logo and coach number were kept untouched.

The graffiti's funding has been borne by the artist himself, and the spray cans used for the painting are sponsored by "Molotow", a paint company.

Lukas Zeilinger's style features vehicles as a medium for his art. He said while most people traditionally experience art in museums, by using vehicles as a medium, the art visits the people.

"It all started back in 2019. I taught in a slum school for a few months and a train was always passing through the place. That's when I came to the idea of doing it," he told The Daily Star.

"I came here from Berlin to introduce



this art form, which Bangladesh isn't very seasoned with. The main idea of this graffiti is that we use the train as a moving canvas," he added.

"The university shuttle is the perfect canvas for graffiti because I want to reach out mostly to young people," he further added.

Arup Barua, a guest lecturer in CU's Dramatics department, took the initiative and worked as an associate on

the project. Arup said, "Lukas first visited our university in 2019 and he was thinking about what we can do. I approached him for our shuttle train. Then I convinced the university and railway authorities. We aimed to introduce students to graffiti art."

Students were also excited to see this new change. Mritika, a third-year student, said,

"I hope the other parts of the campus will be also painted by our students. However, the authorities should also take steps to improve the overall shuttle experience."

Adnan Hossain, a fourth-year student in the Chemistry department, said, "This is a happy moment for us, but the intolerable heat due to lack of fans inside the compartments might fade this feeling."

SAFF U-20 CHAMPIONSHIP Upbeat booters take on India

SPORTS REPORTER

After starting their SAFF U-20 Championship campaign with a 1-0 win over Sri Lanka, Bangladesh will take on India in their second match at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar today.

The young booters in red and green attended a team meeting on Tuesday morning and afterwards were separated in two groups to complete their strength and conditioning training in the gym followed by ice bath and swimming recovery. However, they didn't have any training sessions on the field ahead of their clash against the neighbouring nation.

With three points gained in the first match, Bangladesh are currently in second position behind Nepal on goal difference. The hosts, however, will get their journey in the tournament underway with the match against Bangladesh. Consecutive victories for Bangladesh will increase their chances of finishing inside the top two of the table.

The match will take place in the same venue at 04:30pm Bangladesh time and will be broadcast live on SAFF Facebook page.



Karim Benzema leaps to bring the ball under his spell during Real Madrid's final training session at UCLA ahead of their second pre-season game against Club America at the Oracle Park in San Francisco on Wednesday morning. Benzema, Los Blancos' top scorer in all competitions last season, is set to be back in action today after missing the 1-0 defeat to Barcelona in their previous friendly.

PHOTO: REAL MADRID

BANGLADESHI UMPIRES scaling new heights

MAZHAR UDDIN

Although the Bangladesh cricket team's performances on the field have hogged the limelight over the years, another important aspect of the game that has remained overshadowed is umpiring.

For a long time, the general consensus was that a lack of quality was the reason why Bangladeshi umpires were unable to make it to the International Cricket Council's (ICC) elite umpires panel, but things started to change following the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020.

Faced with that challenge, the ICC decided to have local umpires officiate international matches during bilateral series, which proved a blessing in disguise for Bangladeshi umpires, giving them a chance to showcase their ability on the international stage.

Four umpires from each Test-playing nation represent the ICC international umpires panel. Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid Saikat, Gazi Sohel, Mausudur Rahman Mukul and Tanvir Ahmed are Bangladesh's representatives among those 48 total members in the panel. Another Bangladeshi umpire and former cricketer, Morshed Ali Khan Sumon, is also in line to get into the ICC's international panel.

The ICC also has an emerging panel of umpires that consists of six to seven umpires included among the 48. They are kept as backups for the elite panel of umpires, to be upgraded in case of a vacancy in the elite panel or if an umpire



retires from duty.

Despite the fact that there are no Bangladeshi ICC's elite panel list that consists of eleven umpires from across the world, the recent displays by Bangladeshi umpires in bilateral series has had a positive impact in the ICC and bred optimism that a Bangladeshi umpire could find a place in the elite panel in future.

While many may believe that umpiring is judged only on decision-making, that actually only accounts for 25 per cent of the marks that an umpire may receive. The other 75 per cent come from other criteria such as the feedback from the

match referee, players and coaches reports, ability to manage the match, English-language proficiency and the ability to handle critical situations on the field.

"I think we were able to portray a positive image because the Bangladeshi umpires did really well in the last seven series after getting the opportunity during Covid-19. Since we don't have any umpires in the elite panel, the ICC sent one elite panel umpire for Test matches during that period in line with their Covid-19 criteria for umpires' appointment," Gazi Sohel said.

"Saikat bhai was the on-field umpire and

I was there as TV umpire for all four Tests. Apart from that, the Bangladeshi umpires officiated all the ODIs and T20Is. The ICC was impressed by our performances and we would get emails from the ICC praising us and congratulating us. After the home series against Australia, the Australian team manager, just after returning, sent an email and expressed satisfaction over the umpiring. He said that the umpiring in the series was outstanding. Our decisions were correct nearly 92 per cent of the time, which is interestingly the highest in world cricket over the last two years.

"So we were able to reach that level successfully, which is the reason ICC started to count on us. Previously the ICC used to prefer only the number one umpire from Bangladesh. But nowadays they are also giving opportunities to number two and three as well."

Those qualities coupled with the personality of Bangladeshi umpires caught the eyes of the ICC and Bangladeshi umpires are now getting opportunities to officiate the ICC's global events.

Saikat previously had the opportunity to officiate the ICC Women's World Cup earlier this year while Mukul and Sohel were appointed to officiate the ICC Under-19 World Cup in the West Indies.

Recently, Sohel returned from Zimbabwe, where he was the only umpire from Asia and Europe to officiate in the just concluded ICC T20 World Cup qualifier B round. He also officiated in final game of the event.

New buzz word for Zim series

SPORTS REPORTER

"Calculative cricket" was the buzzword yesterday as members of the national team geared up for the upcoming Zimbabwe T20I series.

Buzzwords are never too far away before any series and, having had former T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad go on about 'positive intent', newly appointed T20I skipper for just the Zimbabwe series Nurul Hasan Sohan introduced 'fearless cricket' to the cricket fraternity's vocabulary.

27-year-old off-spinner Sheikh Mahedi did not shy away from throwing in a catchphrase of his own either. Asked about his role, he said that it was important to make up for lack of power-hitting options as a batter. "I can't just hit a six off the very first ball. We have to play calculative cricket. If we can't hit sixes, we have to make up with singles, doubles and fours," he said.

The lack of power-hitting has been a much-discussed topic recently, especially after the World Cup debacle in UAE.

"We're not power-hitters. We can't be Andre Russell or [Kieron] Pollard even if we wanted to. We have to improve as per our capabilities," he said.

For Mahedi, chopping and changing the line-up is detrimental to finding solidity in the T20 format. Told that Sri Lanka have developed power-hitters, he replied: "We can be better than Sri Lanka but we need time. In our country, T20 batters are shuffled a lot in the batting order. Sri Lanka do not do that."

With Bangladesh sending a relatively young squad for Zimbabwe T20s, Mahedi opined that everyone would need to think for themselves in the absence of senior stars.



Swadhinata relegated

SPORTS REPORTER

Newcomers Swadhinata Krira Sangha were relegated from top-flight football when they surrendered a two-goal lead to play out a 2-2 draw against three-time champions Sheikh Jamal DC in their penultimate round match of the Bangladesh Premier League at Birshrestha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj on Tuesday.

The outcome of the match left bottom placed Swadhinata KS with 10 points from 21 matches, four less than their nearest rivals Uttar Baridhara Club with only one game in hand. Uttar Baridhara, too, risk demotion after suffering a 7-0 defeat to Saif SC at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj on the same day.

Even though Swadhinata showed promise early in the season by moving into the quarterfinals of season's curtain-raising Independence Cup and followed that up with a shock victory over Bashundhara Kings in the league opener, they could not carry the momentum. They have so far racked up 15 defeats alongside four draws and two wins. They will play their last match against Sheikh Russel KC.

The relegation fight for the other club will be between Baridhara and 10th placed Muktiyoddha Sangad as the day's results took ninth-placed Rahmatganj (18 points from 20 matches) out of the drop zone.

Uttar Baridhara, with 14 points, will play their last match against Abahani while 10th-placed Muktiyoddha Sangad, with 15 points, will play their last two matches against Chittagong Abahani and Saif Sporting Club.

Father-son duo on verge of history

ANISUR RAHMAN

FIDE Master Tahsin Tajwar Zia was reluctant to learn the intricacies of chess from his father, Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman, but his interest bloomed as he found himself confined at home during the Covid-19 pandemic and now Tajwar is far more serious about the game and spends a lot of time learning from his prominent father.

As a result, the father and son are on the verge of making history. They are set to represent Bangladesh in the upcoming 44th Chess Olympiad in India from July 28, which would mark the first instance that a Bangladesh national team featured a father-son duo. Zia will be competing in the Olympiad for the 15th time but it will be 16-year-old Tajwar's debut.

"Tahsin was not interested in learning chess at the academies where his father trained. Instead, he wanted to go outside and buy different toys, which at times annoyed his father. Zia had given up hope of making Tahsin a chess player, but the Covid-19 pandemic changed things. Now, father and son are more serious and spend a lot of time watching videos, analysing games and reading chess magazines at

home," proud mother Tasmin Sultana told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that she was happy to see her dream of seeing her son and husband team up for Bangladesh come true.

"It was a dream to represent Bangladesh alongside my son, especially after he started performing well in the domestic circuit. It will be a great experience. It is an honor and I am proud of him because he reached this level on merit. We will try to perform well for the nation," Ziaur Rahman said after the official press conference at the National Sports Council yesterday.

Zia and Tahsin played together for Bangladesh Ansar during the Bangladesh Games and played against each other many times in the Premier Chess League, National Chess Championships and different international rating chess tournaments. Tahsin held his father to a tie on occasion in classical chess and even defeated Zia in a recent round of rapid chess at a tournament.

"Tahsin is in fine form. He played well in the National Championship and Premier League and drew against strong Grandmasters. So, I think he will continue to do better as he participates in more tournaments in the coming days," Zia evaluated.

"The most positive aspect is that he is still young and studious and has a lot of energy to practice. Of course, I want to see him in a better position than us. I expect him to make records which Bangladeshi chess players have not achieved yet."

Tahsin opined that he was currently still far off the level of his father, but he wanted to surpass him and become a Super Grandmaster in the future.

"My father is better than me in every aspect. He is an experienced GM. Representing Bangladesh alongside my father was a dream. I have been travelling with my father to see the Olympiad since 2012 and I am now going to play in the Olympiad alongside him and I am really happy. I want to be a Super Grandmaster by crossing 2700 rating," said Tahsin.

GM Niaz Mursheed, GM Enamul Hossain Razib and FM Mehdi Hasan Parag are the other members of the five-player squad that will begin their campaign in Chennai.

Meanwhile, WIM Rani Hamid was not included in the women's squad for the first time in 38 years after a poor performance in the national championship. The women's team included FM Shamima Sharmin Shirin, WFM Nazrana Khan Iva, WFM Noshin Anjum, CM Jannatul Ferdous and Umme Taslima Protiva Talukdar.

In the last edition of the Chess Olympiad, Bangladesh men's team finished 56th out of 185 nations while the women's team became 72nd among 151 nations. However, organisers expect to produce better results. The squad leaves for India today.




PHOTO: REUTERS

ENGLAND, SOUTH AFRICA MEET IN 1ST T20I

England skipper Jos Buttler dives to his right to catch the ball during a training session at the Seat Unique Stadium in Bristol yesterday. After sharing the three-match ODI series 1-1, England will play the first of three T20Is against South Africa in Bristol today.

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No fertiliser crisis despite 2 plants' closure

Says agriculture minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque yesterday said there would be no fertiliser crisis in the country before the next boro season despite the closure of two plants amid gas shortage.

He said this at a press briefing at the agriculture ministry.

"We've talked to the high-ups. We've been told that there is little hope of getting gas. In that case, we'll have to meet the demand through imports."

Stating that price hike of fertilisers in the international market is a problem, Razzaque said the price shot up to \$1,500 from \$300-350 per tonne.

Though this will put pressure on the country's forex reserves, the government has decided to keep the supply of fertilisers uninterrupted, he added.

Asked if the government would increase the price of fertiliser, the minister said no decision was made yet in this regard.

"The prime minister is trying not to increase the prices. We used to provide a subsidy of Tk 8,000-10,000 crore on fertilisers, but the figure has now gone up to Tk 28,000-29,000 crore."

He said the farmers are the beneficiaries of the subsidy. The state-owned Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd and

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



A man trying to sell a large Gangetic Goonch, locally known as Bagha Ayer, by the side of a road in Nagdarpar area of Khilgaon in the capital yesterday. The IUCN recognises Gangetic Goonch as an endangered species and as per the country's Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act 2012, it is illegal to catch, sell and consume it.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh to host 2024 Women's T20 World Cup

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 will be held in Bangladesh, International Cricket Council



announced as it confirmed the host nations for every major ICC Women's tournament between 2024-2027 during the ICC Annual Conference in Birmingham on Tuesday.

Four women's tournaments will take place in four years, starting with the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024, which will take place in Bangladesh.

It will be the first time that Bangladesh host a major ICC women's tournament and the second time it will be host a T20 World Cup, previously staging the 2014 edition.

The tournament will be held between September-

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

CTG UNIVERSITY 5 BCL men remanded over sexual assault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday placed five Bangladesh Chhatra League activists on a two-day remand each in a sexual assault case filed by a female student of Chittagong University.

The court of Judicial Magistrate Farjana Yasmin granted the remand after hearing the remand prayer by Sub-Inspector Mizanur Rahman of Hathazari Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case.

The IO had sought seven-day remand for each of the BCL men.

The case was filed with Hathazari Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act on July 20.

After arrests, the perpetrators admitted their involvement with BCL to Rab officials, Commanding Officer Lt Col Muhammad Yousuf of Rab-7 told The Daily Star.

The five are: Azim Hossain, 23, and Nurul Absar Babu, 22, of CU; Masud Rana, 22, and Nur Hossain Shawon, 22, of Hathazari College; and Saiful Islam, 23, a college dropout.

Campus sources said the arrestees are supporters of CU BCL President Rejaul

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EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATES' JUDICIAL POWER

A crucial question unsolved in 13yrs

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The question of legality over the executive magistrates performing some judicial functions, including taking cognisance of offences, has not been resolved in the last 13 years as a related case remains pending before the High Court.

This is due to changes in hearing jurisdictions of HC judges concerned and the government's inaction to dispose of the case.

The legal proceedings ensued after parliament passed amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) in 2009, paving the way for executive magistrates to take cognisance of offences.

The HC, hearing a writ petition filed in the same year, had questioned this jurisdiction of executive magistrates, saying only the judicial magistrates are entitled to do such activities as per the constitution and the directives of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

However, as the case is pending before the HC, executive magistrates have been enjoying the judicial powers.

The government has also not taken any initiative for a hearing on the rule in the HC and disposing of the rule, court sources said.

According to case documents, the last hearing of the case took place in April 2015 when counsels for the petitioner and the state, and two amici curiae (friends of the court) — Dr Kamal Hossain and Ajmalul Hossain — had placed their arguments before the HC bench of Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Md Ashraf Kamal.

During the hearing, both the lawyers told the HC that performing judicial functions by the executive magistrates was not lawful.

Dr Kamal Hossain and Ajmalul Hossain told the High Court that performing judicial functions by the executive magistrates was not lawful.

Opposing the petition, state counsel and then deputy attorney general Motaher Hossain Sazu said executive magistrates were given the powers to take cognisance of some offences for the time being to maintain peace and tranquility in the areas concerned.

The executive magistrates have been given the powers to carry out such functions under sections 145 to 147 of the amended CrPC, passed in parliament on April 7, 2009. The government issued a gazette notification on the act the following day.

According to the sections, an executive magistrate decides issues of possession, grants ad-interim injunctions, appoints a receiver (administrator), restores possessions and grants

injunctions in cases until those are disposed of by the judicial magistrates' courts.

The writ petition was filed with the HC on November 14, 2009, challenging the legality of the amended sections, saying that those contradict some provisions of the constitution and the principles of the Supreme Court judgement in the Masdar Hossain case, widely known as judiciary separation case.

Advocate Manzill Murshid, writ petitioner's counsel, attributed the delay in disposal of the petition to the changes in hearing jurisdictions of the HC judges concerned.

"The High Court bench has been reconstituted thrice since then [last hearing]," Murshid told The Daily Star.

He said the other two amici curiae — M Amir-Ul Islam and Rakanuddin Mahmud — were scheduled to place their arguments before the HC on resumption of the proceedings.

The senior lawyer said the then chief justice had reconstituted the HC benches as part of his

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COVID VACCINE 1.93cr shots to expire by November

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 1.93 crore Covid-19 jabs, stored as the first and second doses, will expire by November, health officials said yesterday.

As a result, no first or second dose of the vaccine will be available after that, Shamsul Haque, member secretary of the Covid-19 Vaccine Management Taskforce, said.

The government has a target to inoculate around 13.29 crore people. Of them, 12.96 crore have taken their first doses, according to Shamsul.

In addition to the remaining 33 lakh people, around 94 lakh others were yet to take their second doses.

"In total, 1.27 crore people should take their first or second jabs immediately," Shamsul said.

So far, the government has collected 30.78 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines. Of those, 28.85 crore shots have already been administered.

The five brands of vaccines being used are — Covishield, Moderna, Sinopharm, Pfizer, and Sinovac — which were either purchased by the government, or donated by different countries or organisations.

Besides, the government received some 3.36 lakh shots of the single-dose vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson company as a gift from the United States government in January. Shamsul said that the government will now import vaccines for the booster dose campaign.

He added that around 7.3 crore vaccine recipients are now eligible for the booster dose. "After November, only the booster dose campaigns will continue."

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'Supercharged' rice sees crop yields improve 40pc

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Chinese scientists have discovered a way to boost the yield of rice crops by up to 40 percent through tweaking the plant's genes.

A team led by plant biologist Wenbin Zhou from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) found that the change allowed the plant to absorb more fertiliser, increase photosynthesis and accelerate flowering.

The experiments ran for three years in climates ranging from temperate to tropical, with researchers hopeful that the "supercharged" technique could be applied to other crops.

"I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like that before," said Matthew Paul, a plant geneticist at Rothamsted Research, who was not involved in the work.

The scientists hope it can address global food shortages brought about by rising population growth and conflict-related supply chain issues.

"To achieve the required yield increases and make agriculture more sustainable, intensified breeding and genetic engineering efforts are need to obtain new crop varieties with higher photosynthetic capacity and improved nitrogen use efficiency," stated a paper detailing the research, published in the scientific journal Science.

"Our work demonstrates that by genetically modulating the expression of a single transcriptional regulator gene, substantial yield increases can be achieved while the growth duration of the crop is shortened."

Improving photosynthesis is seen as one of the most promising avenues for increasing crop yields, though genetically modified foods, including transgenic crops, have faced opposition from

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Three held over killing of SUST student

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Police yesterday detained three individuals in connection with the murder of a student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Sylhet.

"We cannot confirm whether they're involved with the murder. We're interrogating them," said Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (North) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP).

A source in the SMP said the detained individuals live near the campus, but are not students of the university.

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Students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology at a human chain yesterday protesting the murder of their fellow student Bulbul Ahmed who was stabbed to death on the campus on Monday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

BANGLADESH-INDIA FRIENDSHIP POWER COMPANY (PVT.) LIMITED
 (A Joint Venture of BPOB and NTPC Limited)

NET/IT Ref No: BIFPCL/OTM/SH/C&M/2022/202 Date: 27.07.2022

Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for Hiring of Vehicles

1. BIFPCL invite tender from interested tenderers with the following details:

Name of the Tender	Deployment of vehicles for a Period of Two (2) Years at 2x660 MW Maitree Super Thermal Power Project, Rampal, Bagmati.
Brief scope of service	Hiring 34 Nos. of Vehicles (07 Nos. Sedan car, 16 Nos. Microbus, 10 Nos. Double cabin Pickup & 01 No. Mini Bus/Coaster) on Regular monthly basis and specific requirement on daily basis (as and when basis) for Maitree Super Thermal Power Project, Rampal, Bagmati for 2 years.
Tender Security	Two separate Tender Securities: Tk. 3,65,000/- (BDT Three Lakh Sixty Five Thousand only) and Tk. 10,000/- (BDT Ten Thousand only) for Regular monthly basis and specific requirement on daily basis (as and when basis) respectively.
Tender document Sale date and time	From 27/07/2022, 09:00 Hrs. to 10/08/2022, 23:59Hrs.
Last date for submission of Tender	11/08/2022, 15:00 Hrs.
Opening of the Tender	11/08/2022, 15:30 Hrs.

Interested tenderers having service facility to perform the required service may participate in the tendering process.

2. For Qualifying Requirements, Scope of Work, availability of Bidding Document, and other details, please visit our website at www.bifpcl.com or contact Chief Procurement Officer, BIFPCL, Level-17, Unique Heights (Bank), 117 Kazi Nazim Islam Avenue, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1000, Tel. Nos. +88-0258314264, email: cpo@bifpcl.com or DG@bifpcl.com, MSTPP, Rampal, Dist. Bagmati, Bangladesh, Tel. Nos. +88-01678582961 email: jibhaskar@bifpcl.com

Tapas Kumar Mazumdar
 Chief Procurement Officer-Ec, BIFPCL