



DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 28, 2022

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXII No. 187

SRABAN 13, 1429 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILHAJ 28, 1443 HJRI

16 PAGES PLUS SHOUT : Tk15.00



## Forex reserves enough for 6-9 months' food import: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh would be able to meet six to nine months' food import expenditures with its current forex reserves.

"We have money in our hands to import food grains and other [essentials] items for at least three months during any crisis. With our current reserve, we'll be able to import food not for only three months, but for six to nine months," she said.

The premier was addressing the 28th founding anniversary programme of Bangladesh Awami Swechchhasebak League at the capital's Krishibid Institution Bangladesh auditorium. She joined the event virtually from the Gono Bhavan.

Swechchhasebak League, an associate body and the volunteer wing of the ruling Awami League, was founded on July 27, 1994.

Hasina said despite having enough forex reserves, the government would have

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## POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 2022

# Family planning paying dividends

TOTAL POPULATION  
**16,51,58,616**



MALE  
**8,17,12,824**



FEMALE  
**8,33,47,206**



TRANSGENDER  
**12,629**

SLUM POPULATION  
**1,80,00,486**

FLOATING POPULATION  
**22,185** in 2022 from **147,674** in 2011

### DHAKA CITY POPULATION

Dhaka north **59,79,537**

Dhaka south **42,99,345**

TOTAL **1,02,78,882**

RURAL  
**11,30,63,587**

URBAN  
**5,20,09,072**

POPULATION DENSITY  
**1,119**

LITERACY RATE  
**76.66%** in 2022 from  
**51.77%** in 2011

INTERNET USERS  
**30.68%**

MOBILE USERS  
**55.89%**



BARISHAL	<b>91,00,102</b>
CHATTOGRAM	<b>3,32,02,326</b>
DHAKA	<b>4,42,15,107</b>
KHULNA	<b>1,74,16,645</b>
MYMENSINGH	<b>1,22,25,498</b>
RAJSHAHI	<b>2,03,53,119</b>
RANGPUR	<b>1,76,10,956</b>
SYLHET	<b>1,10,34,863</b>

PREVIOUS CENSUSES	1974	<b>7.14cr</b>
	1981	<b>8.71cr</b>
	1991	<b>10.63cr</b>
	2001	<b>12.43cr</b>
	2011	<b>14.40cr</b>

POPULATION BY RELIGION in%	2022	2011
Muslim	91.04	90.39
Hindu	7.95	8.54
Buddhist	0.61	0.62
Christian	0.3	0.31
Others	0.12	0.14

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Bangladesh's population growth rate has slowed over the past four decades, a decline that experts attribute to massive family planning campaigns and the country's socio-economic advancement.

The growth rate came down to 1.22 percent from 1.46 percent in 2011, according to the preliminary report of the Population and Housing Census 2022. The rate was 2.84 percent when the second census was conducted in 1981.

The sixth census, officially unveiled in the capital yesterday, shows that the country's population is 16.51 crore, excluding the expatriates.

About the decline, officials and experts say Bangladesh is getting the dividends of efforts from the government and non-government organisations to control the population boom.

Besides, women empowerment, rational decision-making, rising education levels, especially among women, are the reasons for which the country's population dynamism is in the right direction as revealed in the preliminary report.

"Population growth rate is gradually declining due to the continuous decrease in the total fertility rate. Massive family planning campaigns, use of contraceptives and women education also played key roles in controlling the population boom," said Prof Mohammad Mainul Islam, former chairman of the Department of Population Sciences at Dhaka University, yesterday.

He, however, said since this is the preliminary report, a final result should be published shortly to chalk out an appropriate policy. Echoing Islam's views, Dr Ubaidur Rob, country director of Population Council, said the use of contraceptive was crucial in reducing the growth rate, and the country is gradually heading towards population stabilisation when the growth rate will be zero.

"Gradually birth rate will decline and death rate will increase and at one point the growth rate will be zero. It is expected that the population will stabilise by 2050," he said.

The population growth rate means annual average percentage change of population size, for a given country, territory, or geographic area.

It is the highest in Dhaka among all the divisions with 1.74 percent while the lowest in Barishal division with 0.79 percent.

In the last 11 years, the country's population has grown by 2.1 crore and the population rose to 16.51 crore, excluding the expatriates.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) released the primary report of its first digital census at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital. Dildar Hossain, project director of the BBS, highlighted various aspects of the report.

Apart from this, the country witnessed another major demographic shift with females outnumbering males for the first time.

Of the population of around 16.5 crore recorded in the latest census, 81,712,824 are males and 83,347,206 females -- which means for every 100

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## THAKURGAON POLLS VIOLENCE

# Infant 'hit by bullet', dies in mother's lap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A one-year-old girl died after being hit by what locals said was a stray bullet fired by police amid post-polls violence in Ranisankail upazila of Thakurgaon last evening.

Several hundred villagers demonstrated in front of Ranisankail Police Station until late last night demanding justice.

But Additional DIG Walid Hossain of Rangpur range police said the cause of death would be investigated because she might also have been hit by a brick chip thrown by the villagers.

Upazila Vice-Chairman Soheli Rana said he heard that a woman holding her baby was standing near the polling centre at Bhangbari VF Junior High School when the supporters of a defeated union parishad chairman attacked election officials and police around 6:00pm.

As police used firearms to disperse the locals, the baby got hit by a bullet in the head and died at the scene, he added.

Several other villagers told The Daily Star that a stray bullet fired by police had hit the infant.

The girl, Asha, was the daughter of farm worker Mohammad Badsha who is a resident of Mirdang village, said Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Soheli Sultan Zulkar Nain Kabir.

The UNO said the supporters of a defeated candidate in the election to Bachor Union Parishad started demonstrating as soon as the result was announced in the afternoon, claiming that the election was rigged.

After the election officers managed to leave the polling station with the electoral materials, the locals attacked police deployed in the area, he added.

Police then used two tear gas shells and fired four blank shots, said the UNO.

"I came to know later that a child died during the

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## CORRUPTION CASE

# Ex-OC Pradeep gets 20yrs in jail, his wife 21yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former Teknaf OC Pradeep Kumar Das amassed wealth through bribery and transferred it to his wife Chumki Karan, a judge observed yesterday.

Accumulating such wealth would not have been legitimately possible for a low-income government official, Chattogram Divisional Special Judge Munshi Abdul Majid added while delivering the verdict in a graft case filed against Pradeep and Chumki.

Pradeep was sentenced to 20 years and Chumki to 21 years in prison in the case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). The court also instructed authorities

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# No worries over fuel stock

Says BPC chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation yesterday said the government has a fuel import plan for the next six months and that there is no problem with the import, storage and supply cycle.

BPC Chairman ABM Azad said the country has 4.31 lakh tonnes of diesel, which is enough to meet 32 days' worth of demand, and the current stock of petrol (21,883 tonnes) is enough for 15 days.

Even if the government stops importing fuel, the current stock of octane (12,238 tonnes) is enough for nine days, furnace oil (85,041 tonnes) for 32 days, and jet fuel (62,891 tonnes) for 44 days, he told a press conference at BPC's Dhaka Liaison Office.

"This does not mean that the BPC will stop importing from tomorrow. Import, storage and supply is a cyclical process. At present, the stock of octane is for nine days. Within a couple of days, a ship carrying 30,000 tonnes of octane will reach Bangladesh. Then, the stock of octane will rise to 28 days. It's an ongoing process," he said.

According to the energy and mineral resources division, the daily demand is 13,607 tonnes for diesel, 1,300 tonnes

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## Kyiv moves closer to grain exports

### Coordination centre to oversee UN-backed deal opens in Istanbul

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday it had restarted operations at its blockaded Black Sea ports as it moved closer to resuming grain exports with the opening of a coordination centre to oversee a UN-backed deal.

Progress towards fulfilling the landmark agreement came as Kyiv's artillery struck a key bridge in Moscow-controlled territory in south Ukraine, damaging an important supply route as Ukrainian forces look to wrest back the Kherson region.

German authorities said Russia's state giant Gazprom drastically cut gas deliveries to Europe via the Nord Stream pipeline to about 20 percent of capacity in a move decried in the EU as revenge for Western sanctions over the invasion.

Ukraine and Russia last week agreed a plan with the help of Turkey and the United Nations to allow grain stranded by Moscow's naval blockade to be exported from three ports.

## BARAPUKURIA MINE

### Coal production resumes after three months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Production at Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited (BCMCL) resumed yesterday after three months.

The authorities suspended coal production on April 30 for development work.

Officials hope that coal produced at the mine will be a relief for the 525MW Barapukuria Coal-Fired Power Plant, which has been facing a shortage of coal.

Saiful Islam Sarkar, the new managing director of Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited, said production would continue for the next seven days on a trial basis.

Production would bump up after a week, he said, adding that all of the coal would be supplied to the power plant.

Around 2.5 lakh tonnes of coal were at the stockyard when production was suspended. The stock came down to just 60,000 tonnes at the beginning of this month as the power plant has been regularly taking coal from the stockyard.

As coal production was supposed to resume at the end of August, the power plant, which needs over 3,000 tonnes every day, would have run out of coal.



A firefighter works in a field, which burns after a military strike, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Mykolaiv region, Ukraine, in this handout picture released yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## ROAD CRASH ON HIGHWAYS

### Transport leaders for curbs on bikes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transport leaders yesterday called for restrictions on motorbike operations on highways in a bid to reduce the number of road crashes – a major concern over the past years.

Shajahan Khan and Mashiur Rahman Ranga, two top transport leaders, briefed reporters after a meeting at the Secretariat yesterday.

However, the taskforce, led by Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, did not take a final decision in this regard, meeting sources said.

The taskforce was formed in October 2019 to implement 111 recommendations, given by a committee led by Shajahan Khan, to curb road crashes and bring discipline in the road transport sector.

Yesterday's was the taskforce's fifth meeting.

The proposal came at a time when authorities, citing safety concerns, are taking stricter steps against bike operations.

The Bangladesh Bridge Authority earlier banned bikes on Padma Bridge.

Moreover, bike movement on highways were restricted for a week (from July 7 to July 13), aiming to ensure road safety during the Eid rush.

Besides, a government probe committee has recently recommended banning bikes on national highways as they noticed a sharp rise in accidents involving bikes

ahead of this year's Eid-ul-Fitr.

For the lack of public services and rise in bus fares, many people resorted to using two-wheelers to go home ahead of Eid. But the huge number of bikes caused more accidents, different road safety organisations said.

More than 35 lakh bikes have been registered with Bangladesh Road Transport Authority so far. But many unregistered bikes still operate unchecked across the country.

Many bike riders and users alleged that the decision was taken due to pressure from the bus owners.

After yesterday's meeting, Shajahan Khan, president of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation, said motorcycles account for around 40 percent of road accidents in the country.

Shajahan, also a lawmaker of ruling Awami League, said ride-sharing services by bikes are also dangerous.

"The number of fatal road accidents will come down if we control motorcycle [movement]."

Contacted, Ranga, president of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association and also a Jatiya party lawmaker, said he has pressed for the non-operation of ride-sharing bikes on inter-district routes.

About how ride-sharing service bikes would be recognised, he suggested having separate number plates and licences for them.

However, at least three participants of the meeting said although they have talked about ride-sharing services by bikes and recent accidents, no concrete decision against bike movement was taken.

Meanwhile, ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of the Road Transport and Highway Division, said the meeting decided to fix an economic lifeline of commercial vehicles to ensure safety and scrap those after expiry.

Another participant said the meeting mulled over fixing a 20-year lifeline for buses and 25 years for trucks.

"However the decision would become a government order after Buet experts give their opinions regarding it and a guideline is finalised in this regard."

Meanwhile, prominent road safety campaigner Ilias Kanchan, also a member of the taskforce, said the transport leaders often dominate the meeting and talk about their own issues, which are discussed all the time.

He said he and two other Buet experts were asked to join the meeting virtually, while transport leaders were allowed to join in person.

The meeting discussed several decisions taken previously, including taking action against illegal driving schools, giving appointment letters to transport workers, and increasing the number of centres for conducting dope tests before issuing professional driving licences.

## Former JCD leader arrested in DSA case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sunamganj court yesterday sent a former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader to jail in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

A local Awami League leader filed the case, accusing Emdadur Rahman Chowdhury Sami, 29, a former vice-president of Chhatak upazila JCD, of defaming lawmaker Muhibur Rahman Manik on Facebook.

Sami was arrested in Sylhet hours before he was sent to jail, said Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Chhatak Police Station.

The DSA case was filed on Tuesday night by Ishtiaque Ahmed Tanvir, member of the convening committee of Chhatak Municipality Awami League.

Ishtiaque said Sami had made false, derogatory and defamatory posts on Facebook about the MP.

## 5 more die from Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five people died from coronavirus in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, read a DGHS press release.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, 626 fresh Covid-19 cases were recorded during this time. The positivity rate was 6.83 percent.

With the latest count, the total number of fatalities now stands at 29,280 and the total cases at 2,003,570.

Of the dead, three were males. One each was aged between 61 and 70, and 71 and 80 while three were aged between 81 and 90.

## Man to walk gallows for killing woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Thakurgaon court yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing a woman in 2012.

The convict, Mofijul Islam, 33, was also fined Tk 1 lakh.

District and Sessions Judge Mamunur Rashid delivered the verdict.

Mofijul was accused of stabbing his neighbour Jasna Begum, 23, to death in front of her children after the victim refused to have an affair with him.

## Pair of new studies point to natural Covid origin

AFP, Washington

An animal market in China's Wuhan really was the epicenter of the Covid pandemic, according to a pair of new studies in the journal Science published Tuesday that claimed to have tipped the balance in the debate about the virus' origins.

Answering the question of whether the disease spilled over naturally from animals to humans, or was the result of a lab accident, is viewed as vital to averting the next pandemic and saving millions of lives.

The first paper analyzed the geographic pattern of Covid cases in the outbreak's first month, December 2019, showing the first cases were tightly clustered around Wuhan's Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market.

## Family planning paying dividends

FROM PAGE 1

females, there are 98.04 males or the country has 1,634,382 more females than males.

Officials and experts said this could be due to continuous rise in life expectancy and survival rate of women at birth. They also said it is not an isolated case for Bangladesh, rather women population is on the rise across the world.

"The other reason is that maternal mortality rate has declined," Dr Rob said.

Another important aspect of this census is that the population of other religious communities except for Muslims decreased in the country.

The ratio of Hindu population stands at 7.95 percent of the total population, according to the latest census while it was 8.54 percent in 2011.

Compared to the 2011 census, the Hindu population has decreased by 0.59 percent in this census. In the

country's first census conducted in 1974, the Hindus accounted for 13.5 percent of the population.

Asked about the decline in the Hindu population, Prof Mainul said there are two reasons – one is migration and the other is the lower fertility rate in the Hindu community. Lower fertility means Hindu couples have relatively less children.

Dr Rob too pointed out migration as a major reason. "Members of the Hindu community are feeling insecure and migrating to other countries," he said.

The biggest change took place in the urban population size. Of the population, 31.51 percent lives in urban areas while it was 23.30 percent in the previous census.

"Urbanisation is taking place rapidly. People are moving to urban areas but the urban setting, especially the healthcare system, is not ready to accommodate them. So special attention should be given to

this aspect," Dr Rob said.

Project Director Dildar Hossain said features such as declining growth rate, increasing literacy rate and sanitation are very encouraging but special attention should be given to the fact that the aged population is gradually increasing.

Both Mainul and Dildar said the population data will be finalised through post enumeration check which will take a few months to complete.

In the latest census, the percentage of aged population is 5.88.

The Population and Housing Census started simultaneously on June 15 across the country. The census was supposed to end on June 21, but due to floods in the north-eastern districts, the deadline was extended till June 28 in those districts.

The population density has increased to 1,119 people per square kilometre which was 976 in the last census of 2011.

motorcycles and more than Tk 3,000 to cars.

Md Abu Saleh Iqbal, managing director of Padma, said the filling station authorities have been asked to respond to the notice immediately.

At the BPC press conference, ABM Azad said the move to keep fuel pumps closed once a week is also not final. "No decision will be taken until it is confirmed that it [the move] will reduce the use of fuel at all."

According to filling station employees in the capital, after the government's decision to introduce load shedding and temporarily stop running diesel-fired power plants on July 18, the demand for diesel for personal generators increased.

"We had to provide 2,000 to 3,000 litre extra diesel to our known users,"

said the employee of a pump that sells around 17,000-20,000 litres a day.

The energy and mineral resources division yesterday issued a clarification to the media, saying that another 2,18,000 tonnes of diesel will arrive in eight vessels in August. A total of 25,000 tonnes of octane and 25,000 tonnes of jet fuel will come in two other vessels the same month.

"We have the next six months' plan to import fuel, with half of the amount under different government to government contracts," said the clarification.

The clarification urged people to use "subsidised" fuel with austerity.

According to the BPC chairman, as the fuel price in the international market is decreasing, the daily loss of BPC is now Tk 67 crore, which was Tk 100 crore a day last month.

## Forex reserves enough for 6-9 months'

FROM PAGE 1

to take steps to grow more crops in order to save foreign currencies and hold the reserves for any emergency.

Noting that the reserve was about \$3.8 billion in 2006 during the BNP's rule, the PM said her government was able to raise the figure to \$48 billion from \$7 billion in 2009.

She said Bangladesh had to spend huge amounts of foreign currencies from the reserve to import materials for development works, capital machinery for industries as well as Covid vaccines, testing kits and other Covid materials.

Taking a swipe at the government's critics over forex reserve and energy, Hasina, also the AL president, questioned why they don't see the development activities.

She said the government continued providing a huge subsidy, raised the per capita income of the people and has been able to retain the GDP growth.

The government also kept its promise of reaching electricity to every house, she said, adding that many developed countries, however, were now taking austerity measures over the use of energy.

"We also have to take precautionary measures so that we do not run into a great danger.... We have taken steps

for limited use of electricity, but it doesn't mean that we don't have any energy or it is running out."

Mentioning that it is true that Bangladesh needs to procure diesel, Hasina said the country doesn't import petrol and octane as these are extracted as byproducts in gas production.

"We've much more petrol and octane than our demands. We can also sell these sometimes."

The AL chief said, "We have some so-called wise men who at times talk about many things. But I don't know whether they have any knowledge about many matters."

She alleged that those people want to mislead the general people talking back and forth.

Hasina said many intellectuals write on many topics and an economist wrote about the Padma Bridge construction saying that it was built unnecessarily as it would not be a profitable one.

She said the economist, in his article, questioned who would use the bridge and also raised an objection to the installation of rail tracks in it as the people of the southern region travel by launches.

"I doubt how much they know Bangladesh and I don't know whether they have ever visited the southern

region."

Hasina said there is an organisation that finds everything bad. The 2007 caretaker government put something in their brain that stops them from liking a healthy democratic trend to continue in the country, and they also don't see the country progressing.

"If an unusual government is there in the country, their values get increased. They think they are wise and they can do everything," she said.

Citing that many conspiracies continue to interrupt the progress of Bangladesh, the PM said she believes that this progress can't be halted no matter how many conspiracies are hatched.

"Bangladesh is progressing at an irresistible pace and In Sha Allah, we'll continue moving forward," she added.

Hasina asked the Swetchhasebak League leaders and activists to highlight the development activities and successes of the government before the people.

She also thanked Swetchhasebak League men for their volunteer works during the recent floods and Covid-19 vaccination campaign.

At the function, a cake was cut to celebrate the birthday of PM's son and ICT affairs adviser Sajeeb Wazed.

## Ex-OC Pradeep gets 20yrs in jail

FROM PAGE 1

concerned to confiscate the assets owned by the couple.

The accused were at the courtroom when the verdict was read out. They multiple lawyers present there. They were sent to jail afterwards.

Public Prosecutor Mahmudul Hasan said under the ACC act, Chumki was sentenced to one year in prison and fined Tk 1 lakh, defaulting which would result in an additional month in jail; under another section

of the same act, both Pradeep and Chumki were sentenced to eight years; under the money laundering act, both were sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined Tk 4 crore, defaulting which would result in an additional two years in jail; under Corruption Prevention Act, the couple were sentenced to two years in jail and fined Tk 10,000, defaulting which would result in an additional two months in jail.

The sentences would be executed

concurrently, he added.

OC Pradeep's lawyer Shamir Das Gupta told reporters that his clients were innocent and he would appeal against the verdict at the High Court.

Earlier this year, a court sentenced Pradeep to death for killing Maj (ret'd) Sinha Rashed Khan.

The corruption case was filed by ACC Assistant Director Riaz Uddin. They were accused of amassing about Tk 3.95 crore through illegal means.



## Land crisis key barrier

Says Taposh on establishing playgrounds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scarcity of land is the main obstacle to establishing playgrounds and parks in the capital, said Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday.

The DSCC mayor said this while inaugurating Basabo playground development work.

Taposh said their main target is to set up at least one playground and park in a ward but acquiring land is the main obstacle for the implementation.

On Basabo field, he said they have kept space at the playground for international football matches, along with seating arrangement for visitors. A separate place has also been kept for cricketers' practice.

Taposh said they also have kept a separate space for children.



The wire situation in the capital is quite dangerous, to say the least. Workers perform regular maintenance work without any safety gear, which makes them more vulnerable to risks of accidents. The photo was taken yesterday in Farmgate.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## A path full of obstacles

Say speakers on challenges to get mahr; women still being deprived of paternal property add to their woes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even though mahr or dowry is allowed in the Islamic family law, women face layers of obstacles to actually get it. At the same time, they get deprived of their paternal property,

University, said the law allows women to receive mahr, but in certain sections of the society, it is men who take dowry.

"Brothers will tell sisters that they have been given mahr during marriage, so they cannot have any claims on paternal property.

We need a uniform family law for all religions and women, which governs marital and inheritance rights as well as rights that ensure self-guardianship, regardless of religion.

DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA  
Economist

While I recognise that many women need mahr to restart their lives after divorce, I dream of a day when equality exists and women do not need mahr.

SHAHEEN ANAM  
Executive Director of MJF

leaving them with nothing.

Mahr is a gift of cash or wealth that is given to the bride upon her marriage by the husband's side, as part of obligations of the marriage contract.

Speakers said this at a virtual discussion on the challenges to obtain mahr, organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and Madaripur Legal Aid Association.

Mahr or denmohor is important in a scenario where women still do not get paternal property, they said.

They also demanded a family law that will be uniform.

"We need a uniform family law for all religions and women, which governs marital and inheritance rights as well as rights that ensure self-guardianship, regardless of religion," said Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, eminent economist at Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"If a woman does not have other rights, she will never be able to realise the right to mahr," said Dr Bhattacharya.

Dr Shahnaz Huda, professor of law at Dhaka

The women do not have any control over this dowry," said Dr Huda.

Women have to wait for years on end for courts to settle mahr related cases before they can get the amount they are entitled to, said Dr Abdullah Al Faruque, law professor at Dhaka University.

"The arbitration council should be empowered to deal with mahr related cases," Dr Abdullah said, adding that village arbitrations usually award women less money than formal courts.

Speakers also said that the time limit for filing dowry related cases should be withdrawn as soon as possible.

"While I recognise that many women need mahr to restart their lives after divorce, I dream of a day when equality exists and women do not need mahr," said Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, at the discussion.

Fazul Haque, who heads Madaripur Legal Aid Association, also spoke at the event as a special guest, among others.

## HC dismisses petition seeking Odhikar's registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday dismissed a petition filed by non-governmental organisation "Odhikar" challenging the legality of the government's decision of not renewing its registration.

The NGO Affairs Bureau on June 5 cancelled Odhikar's registration, which expired in March 2015, saying that the organisation published misleading information about various extrajudicial killings, alleged disappearances and murders, which have severely tarnished Bangladesh's global image.

Odhikar is reportedly one of the few organisations that have routinely logged cases of enforced disappearances and published quarterly and annual reports detailing the incidents. They also support and mobilise the families of enforced disappearance victims.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Md Khairuzzaman and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton delivered the verdict after Odhikar's lawyer Ruhul Amin Bhuiyan said his client will not proceed with the petition as it has submitted an appeal to the office of the secretary concerned of the PMO.

Replying to a query, the lawyer said there is no legal bar for Odhikar to run its functions as a volunteer organisation.

Contacted, Deputy Attorney General Kazi Mynul Hassan said Odhikar has no registration, and so it cannot run functions from now on.

However, Odhikar's lawyer Ruhul Amin Bhuiyan said the DAG's comment is not right as Odhikar needs registration only for foreign donation.

Odhikar, established in October, 1994, applied to the DG of the NGO Affairs Bureau on September 25, 2014 for the renewal of its registration.

As the Bureau kept the application pending, the organisation filed the petition with the HC in 2019.

The HC on May 13 of that year, issued a rule questioning the inaction of the NGO Affairs Bureau.

## WORK TOGETHER

PM for harnessing D-8 potential to become a powerful economic block

STAR REPORT



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for working together to harness D-8 countries' potential to become a powerful economic block.

She also placed a five-point proposal that included implementing preferential trade agreement (PTA) among the member

states to maximise use of business prospects and opportunities to double the intra-D-8 trade from 129 billion dollars in the next decade.

She was virtually addressing the 20th D-8 Council of Ministers held at a city hotel, joining from Gono Bhaban, reports BSS.

She expressed her happiness as Bangladesh is celebrating the 25th anniversary of D-6 as chair of the organisation.

The premier said implementing the Preferential Trade Agreement will help harmonise the intra country trade, liberalise the barriers, and stimulate trade and economic cooperation among the member states.

She expressed her satisfaction as chamber representatives, business people, entrepreneurs from different member states have participated in the 2nd D-8 CCI General Assembly and in the Business Expo on the sidelines of the ministerial session.

"While we were all reeling from the aftermath of the

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## 'Govt needs to spend \$9 per patient annually'

Citing study, speakers say on controlling high blood pressure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Life-saving care for high blood pressure -- the leading preventable risk factor for heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes -- can be expanded nationwide if the government spends \$9 per patient annually, according to a study.

Expanding the roles of nurses and other healthcare providers to support blood pressure management can save money, making treatment more feasible and accessible nationally, according to the study.

Funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, Directorate General of Health Services and National Heart Foundation conducted the study under the hypertension control pilot programme, in collaboration with Resolve to Save Lives.

The programme has been successfully implemented in 51 upazila health complexes.

Starting in 2018, the programme has so far registered 1,00,000 patients for treatment and has successfully controlled blood pressure of 58 percent of the patients during treatment.

Published in the British Medical Journal, the study findings were also shared at an event in Dhaka yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## Increase capacity of labour wings at foreign missions

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour welfare wings at different foreign missions need to be more friendly and sensitive towards migrant workers while providing services to them, speakers said at a workshop yesterday.

They said besides strengthening the capacity of the existing 29 labour attaches, more such wings have to be established. The experts also called for digitising the services of the labour attaches to reach out to a greater number of migrant workers.

The workshop titled "Migrants Friendly Consular Services" was organised by Warbe Development Foundation in collaboration with International Labour Organisation (ILO) at Probashi Kalyan Bhaban.

"There have been allegations that migrant workers do not get adequate service at the labour welfare wings," said Warbe Chairman Syed Saiful Haque.

"Considering such issues, a set of tools has been incorporated in the manual aiming to ensure better services to migrant workers," he added.

Riaz Uddin Khan, an independent consultant on migration, said while migrant workers' contribution is immense in the country's economic progress, it is often heard that they do not get required services from Bangladesh embassies.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



BNP's demonstration over electricity crisis is the greatest joke of the year.

OBAIDUL QUADER  
Awami League general secretary



A good number of rental power stations are getting huge sums of money as capacity charges, even though they are not producing any power.

MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR  
BNP secretary general



Death toll 8

Total number of patients 2,366

311 still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients 2,047

61 more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER  
TIMING

JULY 28

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:20 12:45 5:00 6:50 8:15  
JAMAAAT 4:55 1:15 5:15 6:55 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Eminent singers Ferdausi Rahman and Syed Abdul Hadi were honoured with "Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal" at an award ceremony at Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## 'Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal' conferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University yesterday conferred the "Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal" at an award ceremony at Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban on the campus.

This year, eminent singers Ferdausi Rahman and Syed Abdul Hadi were honoured with this award for 2020 and 2021, respectively. Due to the pandemic, the programme was not held in the previous years.

Both artists were honoured with gold medals and remuneration of Tk 1 lakh each.

Vice Chancellor Md Akhteruzzaman handed out the medals to the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1





## Feroza Begum

FROM PAGE 3  
artists, while Anis Ud Dowla, chair of ACI Group and donor of the trust fund, delivered the welcome speech.

Ferdousi Rahman said, "I am happy today, not because I have earned an honour, but I have got the opportunity to share the memories with Feroza Apa."

"I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to sing the duet 'Amar Shampun Jatri Na Loy' with Feroza Apa, in a documentary on Kazi Nazrul Islam. I am elated because this award is associated with her," said Syed Abdul Hadi.

## 'It happened due to negligence'

Says state minister on collision between two Biman aircraft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Civil Aviation Md Mahub Ali yesterday said the collision between two aircraft of Biman on July 3 was due to negligence.

He said the ministry is investigating the incident.

Mahub said this while talking to reporters following his surprise visit to the aircraft hangar and

GEC department of Biman at Dhaka airport.

He also said four people have already been suspended in this regard.

Civil Aviation Secretary Md Mokammel Hossain said, "It [the incident] was nothing but a crime. Stern actions will be taken against those involved."

"If another incident like this happens, it will be the end of Biman," he said.

## Govt needs to spend

FROM PAGE 3

"In the span of two years, the programme has registered more than 1,00,000 patients -- averaging more than 4,000 new patients a month -- with a 58 percent blood-pressure control rate, almost fourfold the national average," said Prof Md Robed Amin, line director of non-communicable disease control at DGHS.

Many lives can be saved -- with prevented heart attacks and strokes -- by investing in strengthening primary care services to provide blood pressure treatment to Bangladeshi adults, said Dr Tom Frieden, president and CEO

of Resolve to Save Lives and former director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Thirty percent of deaths in Bangladesh are due to heart disease, but less than 5 percent of Bangladesh's health-sector budget is allocated for addressing non-communicable diseases," said National Professor Brig (ret'd) Abdul Malik, founder and president of National Heart Foundation.

"The pilot programme shows that high-blood-pressure patients can get care at a low cost at primary healthcare settings countrywide," he said.

## Work together

FROM PAGE 3

pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has pushed the world in a fresh danger," she said.

The conflict and, the subsequent sanctions and counter-sanctions have disrupted the production and supply of food, fertiliser, energy and power, and other commodities, she added.

The premier said countries like Bangladesh have been bearing the brunt of the impacts of the war.

"We should all come forward to bravely address this looming humanitarian crisis," she added.

She also said Bangladesh is ready to provide space at the Special Economic Zones for investment by the member states.

The PM said the ICT is an area that has immense prospects. The youths of

the D-8 countries can be turned into formidable workforce.

She also said the D-8 should concentrate on diversified agriculture production to ensure food security and steady food supply.

All the D-8 member states should be careful about energy usage and the necessity of alternate energy sources, she said. "I propose that the D-8 focuses on developing capacity by involving other countries who have expertise in alternate energy," she added.

D-8, also known as Developing 8, is an organisation for development cooperation among the following countries: Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

## Tortured by cops, framed

FROM PAGE 5

On July 19, she went to Mohonpur Police Station with a neighbour for seeking police assistance in recovery of the latter's two-year-old child.

She said the OC and an ASI denied them help and the ASI told her that police couldn't help her as she had feud with the lawmaker.

The police officials talked to someone over the phone and a few moments later, one of the lawmaker's men went to the police station. The man asked police to teach her a lesson.

Then two policewomen and the on-duty officer beat and dragged her to another room and assaulted her.

She was then confined to the police station.

The next day, police sent her to the court, showing

her arrested in two cases filed by one Doli Begum -- who came to the station with another of the MP's men -- over extortion.

"Both the cases are false," claimed Habiba.

Habiba's mother Mina Begum and husband Masud Rana were also present at the press conference.

Masud, a tea-stall owner, said they have been passing days in fear.

Asked about the allegations, the lawmaker from Rajshahi-3 constituency Ayeen Uddin said he was unaware of the incidents stated by Habiba.

He said he was abroad during the stated time.


Contacted, Tawhidul Islam, OC of Mohonpur Police Station, denied the allegations of torture and denying assistance.

He said Habiba and her neighbour went to the police station about a feud between the couple over their two-year-old child. "We tried to settle the issue amicably," said the OC.


The OC claimed that Habiba started hurling abuses towards the police and insisted that the husband leaves the child with the wife, whom she brought into the police station.

He said Habiba was arrested for creating nuisance inside the police station and was later shown arrested in an extortion case on which a trial is currently ongoing.

"Habiba did not bring such allegations when she was produced before the court. Why is she doing so now?" asked the OC.



28th July, 2022 is the 1st Death Anniversary of Dr. Syed Abdus Samad. May Allah grant him jannah. Requesting all his well wishers to make dua for his eternal peace. (Syeda Amatul Mawla) (Syed Abdur Rubb)



**PAN PACIFIC SONARGAON DHAKA**  
*The Oasis of Luxurious Hospitality and Tranquility*  
**Invitation for Tender**

Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide contractors/manufacturers/dealers/distributors/ suppliers for supply of the following items. The detail Specifications, terms and conditions are mentioned in the Tender Schedule.

SL No.	Name of the Items	Quantity	Schedule Price (Non-negotiable)
1	Air Handling Unit 50 TR Complete (2nd re-tender)	02 Sets.	Tk.2000
2	Upgrade/Replacement of AVAYA Media Gateways, Line & Trunk Cards with Accessories	01 Lot.	Tk.2000
3	New HR System & Database (2nd-re-tender)	01 No.	Tk.1500
4	Banquet Stage with Carpet Top	11 Nos.	Tk.1500
5	American Pool Table (3rd-re-tender)	01 No.	Tk.1000
6	Plastic Sun Lounger for Pool Area	15 Nos.	Tk.1000
7	Emergency Generator ATS	01 No.	Tk.1000
8	Deep Well Submersible Pump	01 No.	Tk.1000
9	Photocopy Machine	02 Nos.	Tk.1000
10	Portable Partition	08 Nos.	Tk.1000
11	Banquet Chairs	500 Nos.	Tk.1000
12	Hot Water Tank Temperature Controller Valve	02 Nos.	Tk.1000
13	Well Pump Motor	01 No.	Tk.1000
14	Replacement of PFI unit including Accessories (2nd-re-tender)	01 No.	Tk.1000

Interested bidders may obtain Tender Schedule from the Purchasing Department on submission of a letter on their respective letterhead up to **August 24, 2022** during office hours. Tender will be received up to **02:30pm on August 25, 2022** and will be opened on the same day at **03:00pm** in presence of bidders, if any.

Tender must be supported by an Earnest Money amounting to 5% of quoted price in the form of Bank Draft or Pay Order from any Scheduled Bank of Bangladesh in favor of Sonargaon Hotel.

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel authority reserves the right to accept/reject any tender in part or in full or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Purchase Manager, Tel (880) 2 9128008, Extn: 4164**

## Increase

FROM PAGE 3

"It is necessary for Bangladesh foreign missions and the labour welfare wings to be better equipped to ensure better services for migrant workers," said Laetitia Weibel Roberts, chief technical advisor of ILO Migration Project in Bangladesh.

Farida Yasmeen, director at the multilateral economic affairs wing of foreign ministry, recognised the necessity to increase the capacity of the labour attaches.

"The ministry will soon appoint more labour welfare officials at different wings," said Nasreen Jahan, joint secretary (mission and welfare) of expatriates' welfare ministry.

## Right policies

FROM PAGE 5

Key discussant Paul Dorosh, policy researcher at International Food Policy Research Institute, said, "Government intervention in fertiliser supply chain, expanding domestic fertiliser production, and improving midstream factors of supply chain seems to be more effective than subsidies. Cash transfers to the lower income group is most effective to control poverty and food crisis."

Binayak Sen, research director of BIDS, moderated the webinar.

**TO LET**

One superbly finished apartment on Rd 73, Gulshan opposite Russian Embassy. Entire floor measuring 6400s.ft with four large beds, very large separate drawing & dining rooms, large study room spacious family area etc. 3 parkings. Just beautiful. Previously rented to an Embassy. **Contact: 01711535010** D-85

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ রিজিওনাল কান্ট্রিফিটি প্রকল্প-১  
বাংলা মন্ত্রণালয়  
প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ভবন  
৭১-৭২, ইকটিন গার্ডেন রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০  
ফ্যাক্স নং-২৬,০০,০০০০,০৬৬১৪,০০১,১৮-৪৪০ তারিখ ২৬/০৭/২০২২

**নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীনে বাণ্যবায়নধীন বাংলাদেশ রিজিওনাল কান্ট্রিফিটি প্রকল্প-১ (বিসআরসিপি-১) এর আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত শূন্য পদে প্রকল্পের মেয়াদকালীন সময়ে সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে চুক্তিভিত্তিক কর্মচারী নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

ক্র. নং	পদের নাম	মোট এবং বেসং	যোগ্যতা
০১.	হিসাবরক্ষক পদের সংখ্যা: ০১ (এক) বেতন: ৩১ বিসএল ২০২৩ইং পর্যন্ত।	গ্রেড- ১৩ বেতনঃ সর্বসম্মত মাসিক ১৯,০০০/- (উনিশ হাজার তিনশত) টাকা মাত্র।	• যে কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে বাণিজ্য বিভাগে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি। • গ্যারান্টিং স্ট্রাকচার, রেজিস্ট্রেশন এবং বেসিক অফিসিয়ার ট্রান্সফারিং এ দক্ষতা।


**জনকল নিয়োগ শর্তাবলী:**

- ১। প্রকল্পের জনকল সার্বজনিকভাবে প্রকল্পের কাজে নিয়োজিত থাকিবে এবং চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনকলের ক্ষেত্রে প্রদত্ত আদেশবিধি ও অন্যান্য বিধিসমূহ প্রযোজ্য হবে;
- ২। কাজের মান (Performance) সন্তোষজনক না হইলে প্রকল্প পরিচালক/উপস্বত্ব কর্তৃপক্ষ এক মাসের নোটিশ প্রদান করতঃ প্রকল্পে নিয়োজিত জনকলের চুক্তি বাতিল করতে পারবে;
- ৩। চুক্তিভিত্তিক নিয়োজিত জনকল অস্থায়ী কর্মচারীদের ন্যায় চুক্তি প্রাপ্য হবে;
- ৪। প্রকল্প মেয়াদ শেষে চুক্তিপত্রই অব্যাহতি পর হিসেবে গণ্য হবে।
- ৫। বাধ্যতাবদ্ধ প্রার্থীর পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীগণকে প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ নমুনা মোহাবেক আবেদন ফরম পূরণকরতঃ প্রকল্প পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ রিজিওনাল কান্ট্রিফিটি প্রকল্প-১ (বিসআরসিপি-১) বারবার ১০০/- (একশত), টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারসহ প্রকল্প দপ্তরে (লেভেল-১২ (পশ্চিম পাশ), প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ভবন, ৭১-৭২, ইকটিন গার্ডেন রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০)। **আপসী ২৮ আগস্ট ২০২২ তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে** জমা প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। বিজ্ঞপ্তি ও আবেদন ফরম প্রকল্প ও বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে: [www.bcp-1.gov.bd](http://www.bcp-1.gov.bd) & [www.mincom.gov.bd](http://www.mincom.gov.bd)

মোঃ বিজয়স্বরূপ রায়  
প্রকল্প পরিচালক (মুখ্য সচিব)  
বাংলাদেশ রিজিওনাল কান্ট্রিফিটি প্রকল্প-১  
ফোনঃ ৫৫১০৭০২২  
ইমেইলঃ [pobcp1moo@gmail.com](mailto:pobcp1moo@gmail.com)

বিডি-১৪৪৩



**বাংলাদেশ কলেজ অব ফিজিশিয়ান্স এন্ড সার্জন্স**  
**Bangladesh College of Physicians & Surgeons**

Memo No: BCPS /Elogbook/2022/19084 Date: 26 July 2022

**Tender Corrigendum**

The following corrigendum has been made to be the invitation of Tender Ref no: BCPS /Elogbook/2022/18433(1); Date: 06 July 2022 for procurement of Well experienced reputed National Software Development Firm (Time Based) for development of E-Logbook.

SL	Published as	To be replaced with
01	The firm must have updated audit report of previous 5 years. Average annual turnover for a minimum of BDT 20 Crore in last 3 years. Serial 17 (6)	The firm must have updated audit report of previous 5 years. Average annual turnover for a minimum of BDT 7 Crore in last 3 years. Serial 17 (6)
02	EOI Closing Date & Time: 28 July 2022; Time: 1:00 PM	EOI Closing Date & Time: 04 August 2022; Time: 1:00 PM

All other terms & Conditions will remain unchanged. This corrigendum will be treated as a part and parcel of the tender.

Honorary Secretary  
Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS)

GD- 1440



**বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENT BANK LTD**  
Head Office, 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000  
Website: [www.bdbl.com.bd](http://www.bdbl.com.bd)  
Real Estate Department

No. 06.3/251/1085 Date: 27-07-2022

**e-GP Tender Notice**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) for procurement of the following goods are described below:

Tender Notice No.	BDBL/RED/OTM/2022/04
Tender ID	717737
Name of goods	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 60 Nos. Automatic Vault Alarm System & Automatic Fire Extinguisher for Different Branches of BDBL and Central Monitoring System (CMS) for BDBL Head Office Bhaban.
Last date of tender document selling & downloading	16-08-2022 up to 06:00pm.
Date of tender closing & opening	17-08-2022 at 4:00pm.
1. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.	
2. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal ( <a href="https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/">https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/</a> ) is required.	
3. The fees of downloading e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited through any branches of any registered bank.	
4. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ( <a href="mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd">helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd</a> ).	

**Md. Nazrul Islam**  
Deputy General Manager  
☎: 02-223350689  
☎: 01552335439

GD-1447



**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**  
REGISTERED OFFICE  
26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

**Disclosure relating to un-audited Second Quarter (Q2) Financial information**


This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of Pubali Bank Limited in its 1345<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting (physical and virtual) held on Wednesday, July 27, 2022 at 4:00 PM in the Board Room of the Bank's Head Office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka has approved the **Un-audited Second Quarter (Q2) Financial Statements of the Bank ended on June 30, 2022** and disclosed the following key financial indicators of the Bank:

Particulars	As on 30 June 2022		As on 30 June 2021	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Operating Profit	6,268,413,971	6,484,853,764	4,865,552,217	5,023,992,631
Net Profit/(Loss) after Taxation	2,246,787,629	2,425,387,148	1,722,705,913	1,852,746,327
Net Asset Value (NAV)	39,254,375,664	39,766,890,626	40,381,302,119	40,398,038,523
NAV Per Share	38.17	38.67	39.27	39.29
Earnings Per Share (EPS)	2.18	2.36	1.68	1.80
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS)	(7.00)	(7.02)	9.43	10.32

The details of the published **un-audited Second Quarter (Q2) Financial Statements** ended on June 30, 2022 are also available in the website of the Bank at [www.pubalibangla.com](http://www.pubalibangla.com)

Dated: Dhaka  
July 27, 2022

By order of the Board  
Sd/-  
**Zahid Ahsan**  
Deputy Managing Director & Company Secretary



**Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University**  
Khulshi, Chattogram-4225

Memo No. CVASU/EO/REV/22-23/IFT-1 Date: 27/07/2022

**e-Tender Notice**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of goods as follows:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Package name	Tender closing date	Tender notice publication date
719628	CVASU/EO/Rev-PRTC/PGD-8/21-22	Procurement of Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) Machine ( <b>Re-Tendered</b> )	14-Aug-2022 15:30	28-Jul-2022 09:00

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

The fees for **last downloading** the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to date & time (14-Aug-2022 12:00 for Tender ID 719628).

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

**Chief Engineer**  
Engineering Office  
Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University

GD-1446





These four school friends -- who have not been in touch for 47 years -- had a heartwarming reunion yesterday. The long-lost friends got reconnected after a photo from their school days was posted on a Facebook group.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

# What’s a few years between friends?

DIPAN NANDY

So they thought when they took a group photo commemorating the end of their school life. After that, life took these seven young girls on different paths. Some got admitted to different colleges while some moved elsewhere with their families. Since then, 47 years had passed. None of them was in touch with one another. In a twist of fate, what brought four of them together after 47 long years was that black and white photograph.

Dilkhosh Begum Putul, Shamima Akhter Rubi, Jhuma Abdullah and Nayar Sultana Hawa got reunited with each other with happy tears and smiles on their faces. The precious moment took place yesterday at a Dhanmondi restaurant in the capital.

The story behind this reunion is nothing short of a movie plot. At the beginning of this month, Putul suddenly fell ill. During a heart-to-heart conversation with her daughter Khusnood Nazeen Prottyasha, she talked about her long-lost school friends.

Prottyasha pulled out the only photo of her mother's schoolfriends from the family album and posted it on a Facebook group called "Bangladesh Dushprapya Chitrasamgra" (Rare Pictures of Bangladesh).

In the post, she mentioned that it was taken in 1975, at the farewell reception of Sher-e-Bangla Balika Mahavidyalaya (previously known as Mark Sikkha Mandir). She marked the people in the photo and mentioned that none of them is currently in touch with one another.

It was from the comment section that Putul found four of her friends from the picture and planned a reunion. But they had to plan it without three of the gang, one of whom is currently undergoing medical treatment and another could not make it to the reunion.

Whereabouts of the seventh member is still unknown. "When I told my mother that I found her long-lost



school friends, she started recovering quickly. It was nothing short of magic," said Prottyasha.

The moment came after 47 years when the four could hug each other like in the old days.

"Social media has positive impacts too. If nothing else, it brings friends together. What else do we need?" said Giridhar Dey of Bangladesh Dushprapya Chitrasamgra.

"We have the reflection of our age on our faces but we could still recognise each other. It is as if nothing changed," they said.

After all, what's a few years between friends?

রেজিস্ট্রারের কার্যালয়

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ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়  
কুষ্টিয়া-বিনাইদহ, বাংলাদেশ

২০২১-২০২২ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণিতে D-ইউনিট এর অন্তর্গত বিভাগ সমূহে ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ধর্মতত্ত্ব ও ইসলামী শিক্ষা অনুষদজুজ্বল তিনটি বিভাগ যথা (১) আল-কুরআন এন্ড ইসলামিক স্টাডিজ বিভাগ, (২) দাওয়াহ এন্ড ইসলামিক স্টাডিজ বিভাগ, (৩) আল-হাদীস এন্ড ইসলামিক স্টাডিজ বিভাগ এবং কলা অনুষদজুজ (৪) আরবী ভাষা ও সাহিত্য বিভাগের সমন্বয়ে গঠিত D-ইউনিটের ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণির ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণে আগ্রহী ভর্তিচ্ছু শিক্ষার্থীদের নিকট হতে আবেদন পত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১। আবেদন করার পদ্ধতিঃ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.iu.ac.bd/admission> এ প্রকাশিত ভর্তি নির্দেশিকার উল্লিখিত এবং ওয়েবসাইটে প্রদর্শিত ধাপসমূহ অনুসরণ করে আবেদন করতে হবে।

২। আবেদনকারীর প্রাথমিক যোগ্যতাঃ আবেদনকারীকে অবশ্যই ২০২০ অথবা ২০২১ সালের উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান এবং ২০১৭, ২০১৮ অথবা ২০১৯ সালের মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। ভর্তি নির্দেশিকায় উল্লিখিত শর্ত পূরণ করা সাপেক্ষে বিভিন্ন কৌশল ভর্তির জন্য আবেদন করা যাবে। বিশেষ কৌশল ভর্তির আবেদন সংক্রান্ত তথ্য পরবর্তীতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে।

৩। আবেদন করার সময়সীমাঃ আগামী ০১/০৮/২০২২ খ্রি. রাত ১২.০১ মিনিট থেকে ১৩.০৮.২০২২ খ্রি. রাত ১১.৫৯ মিনিট পর্যন্ত আবেদন করা যাবে। এই সময়ে ওয়েবসাইটে নির্দেশিত পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করে প্রাথমিক আবেদন কি বাবদ ১২৫০/= (এক হাজার দুইশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা মোবাইল, রকেট/নগদ/বিকল্পভাবে মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করতে হবে।

৪। ভর্তি পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত তথ্যঃ

(ক) ভর্তিচ্ছু প্রত্যেক আবেদনকারী কেবল D-ইউনিটের ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবে।

(খ) ভর্তি পরীক্ষা আগামী ২৮/০৮/২০২২ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্র গ্রহণের তারিখ পরবর্তীতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের এবং পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী পরবর্তীতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.iu.ac.bd/admission> এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশসহ এসএমএসএসএস মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে।

(গ) মোট ৮০ নম্বরের MCQ পদ্ধতিতে ভর্তি পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। MCQ পরীক্ষায় প্রতিটি ভুল উত্তরের জন্য ২.৫% নম্বর কাটা যাবে।

৫। ভর্তি পরীক্ষার কলাকল, হুজুর ভর্তি প্রক্রিয়ার সময়সীমা এবং ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণির ক্লাস তফসিল পরবর্তীতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.iu.ac.bd/admission> এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে।

৬। ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে প্রচলিত বিদেশী ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তির নীতিমালা (Foreign Students Admission Ordinance) অনুযায়ী ২০২১-২০২২ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণিতে উপরিস্থিত ইউনিট অন্তর্গত বিভাগসমূহে বিদেশী ছাত্র-ছাত্রীরাও ভর্তি হতে পারবে। এ বিষয়ে বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও নীতিমালা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট [www.iu.ac.bd](http://www.iu.ac.bd) থেকে সন্ধান করা যাবে।

২৪/০৭/২০২২  
(এইচ.এম. অসী হুসেন)  
রেজিস্ট্রার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়  
কুষ্টিয়া

GD-1441

‘Tortured by cops, framed in false case’  
Ex-UP member alleges it happened for talking against local MP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A former Union Parishad member has alleged of being tortured and implicated in a false case by police in Rajshahi’s Mohonpur a week ago.

Sheikh Habiba, ex-member of Ghasigram UP, told a press conference at a city restaurant yesterday that she was dealt wrongly by police as she spoke against local lawmaker Ayeen Uddin.

Referring to the prime minister during the press conference, she said, “Apa, a great injustice was done to me. I want justice.”

She said the lawmaker’s men were threatening her and her family of dire consequences since she spoke against the MP in March.

According to media reports, she reportedly called the lawmaker a son of razakar.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Right policies to tackle crisis vital

Speakers tell webinar on poverty induced by Russia-Ukraine war

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With global food and fertiliser prices alarmingly high already, the government must come up with policy responses to offset the increase in poverty stemming from the Russia-Ukraine war, said policy researchers in a webinar organised by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) yesterday.

Speakers said global food, fuel, and fertiliser prices have risen rapidly in recent months, largely driven by the fallout from the ongoing war in Ukraine and the sanctions imposed on Russia.

Other factors, such as export bans, have also contributed to rising prices. Palm oil and wheat prices increased, respectively, by 56 and 100 percent in real terms between June 2021 and April 2022.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

রেজিস্ট্রারের কার্যালয়

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২০২১-২০২২ শিক্ষাবর্ষে শারীরিক শিক্ষা ও ক্রীড়া বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণিতে ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। সাধারণ তথ্যঃ

(ক) শারীরিক শিক্ষা ও ক্রীড়া বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে ২০২১-২০২২ শিক্ষাবর্ষের অধীনে ১ম বর্ষ স্নাতক (সম্মান) শ্রেণিতে ভর্তির আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। কোটা ব্যতীত বিভাগে আসন সংখ্যা ২৫।

(খ) ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.iu.ac.bd> এ প্রকাশিত নিয়মাবলী অনুসরণ করে অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে হবে। আবেদনের সময়সীমা: ০১/০৮/২০২২ তারিখ রাত ১২টা থেকে ১৩/০৮/২০২২ তারিখ রাত ১১:৫৯ মিনিট পর্যন্ত।

(গ) আবেদনকারীকে ওয়েবসাইটে নির্দেশিত পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করে প্রাথমিক আবেদন কি বাবদ ১২৫০/= (এক হাজার দুইশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা আবেদন করতে হবে।

(ঘ) বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট থেকে প্রবেশপত্র সংগ্রহপূর্বক আবেদনকারীকে সংশ্লিষ্ট ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে।

(ঙ) ভর্তি পরীক্ষা আগামী ২৮/০৮/২০২২ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

(চ) পরীক্ষার স্থলে কোনো ধরনের ইলেকট্রনিক ডিভাইস, ফোন – মোবাইল ফোন, ক্যালকুলেটর, হেডফোন, মোবাইল ব্যাট্রি ইত্যাদি সঙ্গে রাখা যাবে না।

২। ভর্তি আবেদনের যোগ্যতাঃ

(ক) ২০১৭, ২০১৮ ও ২০১৯ সালের এসএসসি/সম্মান এবং ২০২০ ও ২০২১ সালের এইচএসসি/সম্মান, ডিপ্লোমা-ইন-কমার্শ, বাংলাদেশ কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ডের অধীনে এইচএসসি (ভোকেশনাল), A লেভেল এবং অন্যান্য সম্মান পরীক্ষায় সম্মান নির্ধারণ কমিটি কর্তৃক অনুমোদন সাপেক্ষে উত্তীর্ণ শিক্ষার্থীরাই কেবল নিম্নোক্ত যোগ্যতা সাপেক্ষে ভর্তি পরীক্ষার জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবে :

উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান শ্রেণীর শিক্ষা শাখা/ধারা	মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান পরীক্ষার ন্যূনতম জি.পি.এ (৪র্থ বিষয়সহ)	উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান পরীক্ষার ন্যূনতম জি.পি.এ (৪র্থ বিষয়সহ)	উত্তর পরীক্ষার সর্বমোট ন্যূনতম জি.পি.এ (৪র্থ বিষয়সহ)
বিজ্ঞান সাধারণ শিক্ষা বোর্ডের বিজ্ঞান শাখার মধ্যম বোর্ড (বিজ্ঞান) এবং ভোকেশনাল (এইচএসসি) বিজ্ঞান শাখা হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।	৩.৫০	৩.৫০	৮.০০
মানবিক সাধারণ শিক্ষা বোর্ডের মানবিক শাখার বিজ্ঞান, পার্বত্য অর্থনীতি এবং মধ্যম বোর্ড (সাধারণ, হুজুরি) মানবিক শাখা হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।	৩.০০	৩.০০	৬.০০

২

বণিজ্য	৩.০০	৩.০০	৬.৫০
সাধারণ শিক্ষা বোর্ডের বণিজ্য শাখার ডিপ্লোমা ইন বিজনেস স্টাডিজ, কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় (এইচএসসি) এবং ডিপ্লোমা ইন কমার্শ বণিজ্য শাখা হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।			
কারিগরি শিক্ষা	৩.২৫	৩.২৫	৬.৭৫

জিসিই (General Certificate of Education)-এর ক্ষেত্রে O লেভেল (Ordinary Level) পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে ৫টি বিষয়ে এবং A লেভেল (Advanced Level) পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে ২ টি বিষয়ে উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে।

উভয় লেভেলের ৭ টি বিষয়ের মধ্যে ৪ টি বিষয়ে কমপক্ষে বি গ্রেড ও ৩ টি বিষয়ে সি গ্রেড থাকতে হবে।

(খ) এইচ এসসি ২০২১ পরীক্ষায় বোর্ড কর্তৃক অনুমত পাঠ্যসূচীর আলোকে ভর্তি পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

৩। ভর্তি পরীক্ষা পদ্ধতি ও নম্বর বণ্টনঃ

(ক) ভর্তিচ্ছু সকল পরীক্ষার্থীকে ১ ঘণ্টায় ১০০ নম্বরের MCQ পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণ করতে হবে।

(খ) MCQ পরীক্ষার বিষয় ও মান কটন নিম্নরূপঃ

বিষয়	নম্বর
ক. বাংলা	৩৫
খ. ইংরেজি	৩৫
গ. সাধারণজ্ঞান	৩০
মোট	১০০

(গ) MCQ পরীক্ষায় প্রতিটি ভুল উত্তরের জন্য ০.২৫ নম্বর কাটা যাবে।

(ঘ) উপর্যুক্ত লিখিত পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণ পরীক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে মেধাক্রমে নির্বাচিতদের শারীরিক সক্ষমতা ও যে কোনো একটি খেলায় দক্ষতা প্রমাণের ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণ করতে হবে। ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষার তারিখ ও সময় পরবর্তীতে জানানো হবে।

(ঙ) ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষার নম্বর ৩০।

(চ) MCQ পরীক্ষায় পাশ নম্বর ৪০ এবং ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় পাশ নম্বর ১২

৪। মেধাক্রমে নির্ধারণ, ফলাফল প্রকাশ ও ভর্তির জন্য নির্দেশনঃ

(ক) লিখিত ও ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত নম্বর এবং খেলা-ধুলায় ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত জাতীয়/আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যায়ে স্বীকৃত সনদ নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে চূড়ান্ত মেধা তালিকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে প্রকাশ করা হবে।

(খ) জাতীয়/আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যায়ে সনদপ্রাপ্ত পরীক্ষার্থীকে MCQ পরীক্ষার দিন পরীক্ষার স্থলে অথবা তার পূর্বে নির্ধারিত দিনে খেলা-ধুলায় মূল সনদ, জাতীয় দলের Accreditation Card ও নির্দিষ্ট ফেডারেশন কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত প্রত্যয়ন পত্র প্রদর্শন করে তার ফটো কপি সমন্বয়কারীর নিকট জমা দিতে হবে।

(গ) BKSP এর সনদধারী ভর্তিচ্ছুদের জন্য ২০% বিশেষ কোটা সুবিধা থাকবে এবং তাদের ক্ষেত্রে MCQ পরীক্ষার পাশ নম্বর ২০ প্রযোজ্য হবে।

২৪/০৭/২০২২  
(এইচ.এম. অসী হুসেন)  
রেজিস্ট্রার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়  
কুষ্টিয়া

GD-1440



# How a 3-minute song elevated AN ENTIRE FILM

**Hashim allegedly fell in love with a girl, who was reportedly studying on Lalon Shah in Kushtia, and sung the words from his heart in her honour. While the singer neither confirms nor denies this origin, many choose to believe it anyway, to give it even more depth in their suspension of disbelief.**

**SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ**

An eccentric genius by the name of Hashim Mahmud has been in the limelight for the last few days, for all the right reasons.

“Hawa” – the film which has already blended a mysterious, alluring narrative with one of the most tasteful, engaging promotional campaigns in recent memory, has struck gold with “Shada Shada Kala Kala”, a masterclass in rustic songmaking.

Hashim allegedly fell in love with a girl, who was reportedly studying on Lalon Shah in Kushtia, and sung the words from his heart in her honour. While the singer neither confirms nor denies this origin, many choose to believe it anyway, to give it even more depth in their suspension of disbelief.

“After searching for four months, I came to know that Hashim bhai was ill, and did not frequent Charukala anymore. I got the



permission to use his song in ‘Hawa’, but he could not sing the version for the movie despite our best efforts,” said Sumon.

Arfan Mredha Shiblu, who was often around Hashim during his jamming sessions, was the one to give his voice to the film track. “Five generations of Charukala students have grown up listening to Hashim bhai, and it was an honour for me to voice his song”.

Sumon, who was a student of Charukala himself, perhaps wanted to reward this urban



COLLAGE: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

legend—which culminated in this banger of a song.

Shiblu, who had worked as a location manager with Sumon, regularly went on set to internalise the feel of the song. An experienced theatre actor, he put forth all his passion and character work into bringing a sense of addiction into his lines.

The concept of only using percussive instruments was Sumon’s vision brought to life by Shiblu, music director Emon Chowdhury, and percussionist Mithun Chakra.

“When Sumon bhai narrated the concept to me, I knew I had to make something special,” said Emon Chowdhury. “He wanted the subjects on-screen to portray the idea that they were playing whatever was at hand, but at the same time, wanted an ‘epic’ vibe to it.”

Custom boat parts, including the helm and sides, and water containers, among many other paraphernalia, were included in the song.

“The mixing and mastering of all these instruments were gargantuan tasks,” said Emon. Originally, he wanted to use 500 instruments, but that would have made the task even more difficult.

What is more astounding, was the fact that the song was completed only 20 days before its release.

Mithun Chakra, whom many now know as the percussionist behind the magic of Coke Studio Bangla, arguably did the best work of his life here.

“I was perplexed when Emon bhai contacted and told me that I had to rehearse for the song”, he said. “I had worked in film music before, but no one really had me rehearsing for anything.”

In the end, the mastery that Mithun boasts over percussive instruments, came through. “Since we barely used any recognised instruments, we had to make sure that the tunings were particularly right. I remember entering a ‘kolshi’ (vase) shop with Emon bhai, and checking each one’s tuning before the shopkeeper got annoyed, and almost threw us out!”

Percussion-heavy songs like “Shada Shada Kala Kala” are rare in the South-Asian film industry, perhaps last seen in some of Satyajit Ray’s works. What the musical team of “Hawa” has done here is touched the nerve of exactly what was required for not only the film, but a music industry in dire need for something refreshing.

In my humble opinion, “Hawa” will be viewed for the plot, lauded for the performances, but remembered for its music.



## Netflix announces ‘The Gray Man’ sequel and spinoff

**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK**

Netflix’s “The Gray Man” has been the talk of the town after its release on the streaming platform. Now, Netflix has announced that they will be turning the “The Gray Man” into a spy-thriller franchise. The announcement was made on Tuesday, with the company revealing that they will be doing both a sequel and a spin-off for the Ryan Gosling starrer movie.

“The Gray Man” has been touted as one of Netflix’s most expensive movies to date. After its release, it became the most watched movie on Netflix in around 92 countries.

## When Shakib meets Shakib



**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK**

The ‘king’ of Dhallywood, Shakib Khan had recently remarked that he would be returning to Bangladesh in July. However, now it seems unlikely that the actor will be returning this July.

This is because Shakib Khan will be busy attending an event called “Meet and greet with the World Superstar Shakib Al Hasan and Dhallywood King Shakib Khan” on July 29. The event is scheduled to take place at Marina Road in Queens, New York this Friday.

The CEO of US Showtime Music, Alamgir Khan Alam, confirmed this news to The Daily Star.

# NEWS

## Govt may not remove interest rate caps

**FROM PAGE 12**

that Bangladesh has sought as a balance of payment and budget support as well as to mitigate the effects of climate change on Bangladesh.

Kamal said the request for opening talks for the loan comes as a precautionary move and not as a bailout to stave off an economic collapse.

Recently, Sri Lanka, which has become the first country to default on its foreign repayments in 23 years, and Pakistan, whose public finances and foreign reserves are in a parlous state, have turned to the Washington-based multilateral lender for help.

Bangladesh’s formal request to the IMF for negotiations has led many to draw a parallel.

“If we were going bankrupt, why would IMF, WB, JICA want to give us money? People are lobbying us to take loans as Bangladesh is a good marketplace for them to lend to. They

have full faith in us.”

Kamal though acknowledged that reinforcements are needed to shore up its foreign currency reserves in the face of bulging import bills, elevated commodity prices in the world market and a probable global recession.

“We don’t print dollars – we have to earn it. And we do so through our migrant workers and exporters. We are indebted to them. They are keeping us going.”

As of July 20, foreign currency reserves stood at \$39.7 billion, according to data from the central bank. This is sufficient to cover about five months’ import bill.

“We do need the loan. But we will shop around for the best terms and lowest interest rate -- we are not in a desperate position. We will see IMF’s terms. If we get favourable terms, we will take it. We have not decided for certain.”

## IMF loan out of precaution

**FROM PAGE 12**

economic turmoil in the coming days.

“We have given a proposal to the IMF on getting possible fundas part of taking precautionary measures.”

He said he has strong objection to use of the word “bail-out” used in some media reports.

“Why bail-out? Is the country in so deep a crisis that we have to take the bail-out?” he asked.

Kaikaus mentioned that using the terms like “bail-out” is damaging the country’s dignity as it is not in such a situation.

He requested the media to check with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission in Dhaka to see whether Bangladesh has fallen into a deep economic crisis like Pakistan or Sri Lanka.

“This was a regular discussion between the finance ministry and the IMF,” he said about the government’s recent move to get funds from the IMF.

The principal secretary cited various types of fund assistance from the IMF to different governments of Bangladesh in 1993, 2003, 2012 and 2020.

“We are taking funds from the IMF, Asian Development Bank and World

Bank on a regular basis,” he said.

But he mentioned that Bangladesh is getting budgetary financing now, not project financing, from them as they have trust in the country that it could utilise the fund more efficiently.

“This time we sought budget assistance; this is for meeting the deficit in balance of payment, not bail-out. It is basically the money that we need as foreign currency to spend for our development activities.”

Talking about the power situation, the top bureaucrat said the government, like others, is also concerned about the power so that it does not become a crisis in future.

“That’s why we are saving our power now for the coming days.”

Regarding the misleading news on Indian Adani Group and Meghnaghat power plant, he said it is just baseless.

“Why are you making horror stories? Tell the truth,” he told the media.

The principal secretary mentioned that these types of news would be harmful for the country and its possible investments from abroad.

He said the recent move by the government to save power through area-based load shedding has been

When prodded on why the government made an about-face on its stance of not seeking the loan from IMF for now, he said: “The cost burden would have become higher if I announced it beforehand. This is a bargain point. We don’t want to exude desperation. What else could have been a better approach?”

Kamal also fired off a warning shot to those said to be exploiting the current strained stock of dollars.

“We will take action against them. The dollar market must be allowed to hit an equilibrium -- no one should create an artificial crisis. We have the mechanisms in place to find out who is engaging in foul play and we can stop them.”

He also said mis-invoicing will be targeted.

“People are opening LCs [letters of credit] by showing higher dollar prices -- we will take action against them.”

effective and there is no need to increase it.

“We are saving 2,000-3,000MW electricity...”

Responding to a question regarding import of fuel from Russia, he asked if other countries can import, why couldn’t Bangladesh.

He also mentioned that the government is exploring new sources for cheap fuel import.

## Buzz Aldrin’s

**FROM PAGE 12**

selling to a bidder on the phone,” Sotheby’s said in a statement.

“After deep consideration, the time felt right to share these items with the world, which for many are symbols of a historical moment, but for me have always remained personal mementos of a life dedicated to science and exploration,” Aldrin, the last living member of Apollo 11’s three-member flight crew, said in a statement last week.

He explained the jacket was separate from the spacesuit he wore while walking on the moon with fellow astronaut Neil Armstrong, but that he wore it while flying to and from the Moon.

## SUST student was stabbed

**FROM PAGE 12**

DC Azbazar said, “Three suspects, including Hossain, were initially detained and interrogated on Tuesday night. Hossain confessed and named his associates. Those two were also arrested and had confessed to the crime.”

The official added that the murder weapon, a knife, and Bulbul’s cellphone were recovered from Kamrul’s house.

In court, Hossain gave his confessional statement under section 164 of CrPC, which was recorded by Metropolitan Magistrate

Suman Bhuiyan.

“On Monday afternoon, Hossain and Hasan went to the campus with two others. In the evening, the two others left and Kamrul joined them.

“At that time, Bulbul and his friend went to the Gazi Kalur Tila on the campus for a stroll. The trio attempted to mug them. When Bulbul tried to fight them, they stabbed him in the chest and fled with his mobile phone.”

The police official added that the three accused have no previous criminal records. “However, the murder was clearly related to their

mugging attempt. No other motive was found in the investigation.”

Bulbul, a third-year student of public administration, was from Nandipara in Narsingdi Sadar Upazila.

Meanwhile, Tk 5 lakh will be given to Bulbul’s family as compensation from the university fund within a week, Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed, vice-chancellor of the university, said at a press briefing yesterday.

The VC praised the police’s prompt investigation into the murder and assured students that CCTV cameras will be installed to tighten security.

## Sri Lanka extends emergency

**FROM PAGE 12**

vowed a tough line against “trouble-makers”.

Police said in separate statements that they had arrested activists Kusal Sandaruwan and Weranga Pushpika on unlawful assembly charges.

After Rajapaksa fled, Sandaruwan was seen in social media footage counting a large cache of banknotes found in the president’s home.

Police have also released photographs of 14 suspects wanted in connection with an arson attack on Wickremesinghe’s home on the same day the president’s office and residence were overrun.

The arrests of the two activists came a day after student leader Dhaniz Ali was nabbed when he boarded a Dubai-bound flight at the country’s main airport in the evening.

Police said there was a warrant for his arrest in connection with a magistrate’s court case, without giving further details.

Lawmakers also voted yesterday to formalise the state of emergency imposed by Wickremesinghe until mid-August.

The emergency ordinance, which empowers troops to arrest and detain suspects for long periods, would have

lapsed yesterday if it had not been ratified by parliament.

Police last week demolished the capital’s main anti-government protest camp in a pre-dawn assault that raised alarm among foreign diplomats and rights groups.

Public anger simmered for months in Sri Lanka before the huge demonstration on July 9 that brought an end to Rajapaksa’s rule.

He had been blamed for mismanaging the nation’s finances and steering the economy into a tailspin after the country ran out of foreign currency needed to import vital goods.

## EC ‘subservient to government’

**FROM PAGE 12**

and it also poses a threat to the environment.

Kader Siddiqui said he heard from others about “strong backbone” of Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal. His party wants to keep faith in the current EC that it would be able to conduct a free and fair election.

In response, Awal said they would strive to be undeterred while conducting the next national polls. He said only God knew how much successful they would be.

The CEC added that during the elections, they would exercise powers as per the constitution, laws and regulations.

Earlier in the day, while meeting with Zaker Party, Awal said they were yet to make any decision on use of

EVM in the next general election.

He added that it is not “possible to hack” EVM as it is a standalone machine and not connected to the internet.

EVM is still not safe, said Zaker Party, proposing introduction of E-voting.

The commission held dialogues with two political parties at its office in the capital yesterday. The EC has been holding the talks to seek recommendations on how to conduct the next national polls in a free and fair manner.

As of yesterday, the EC has met delegates from 23 parties.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Jatiya Party skipped the EC dialogue yesterday.

The BNP, Jatiya Samajtantrik

Dal (JSD Rab), Bangladesh Kalyan Party, Bangladesh Muslim League, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Liberal Democratic Party and Islami Andolan Bangladesh had earlier shunned the talks that began on July 17.

## Infant ‘hit by bullet’

**FROM PAGE 1**

violence,” he said. “But I don’t know how the child died. Details will be known after an autopsy.”

Contacted, Presiding Officer Khatibar Rahman said the election officers did not know the identity of the locals who attacked officials.

None of the officials could say supporters of which candidate instigated the violence.



Pakistan in new crisis after top court’s ruling

SC invalidates PM son’s victory in Punjab, hands power to Khan’s ally

AGENCIES

Pakistan’s top court has ruled to hand control of the country’s most populous province, Punjab, to a candidate backed by ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan, triggering fresh political uncertainty in the South Asian nation amidst a crippling economic crisis.

The move ramps up pressure on the federal government, made up of a coalition of parties that ousted Khan from premiership in April, as it attempts to implement tough, and unpopular, economic reforms to stave off a financial crisis.

In a short order, Pakistan’s Supreme Court ruled that a Khan-backed candidate for Punjab’s chief minister, Chaudhry Parvez Elahi, had been wrongfully denied victory in a vote last week, and ordered he be installed as the province’s premier before midnight on Tuesday. He replaces Hamza Shahbaz of PML-N.

Pakistan’s President Dr Arif Alvi administered the oath to Elahi in Islamabad. Elahi had to rush from Lahore to the federal capital after Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman refused to carry out the job.

Elahi had been denied victory by the speaker of the Punjab assembly, who disregarded votes cast in his favour on the basis of them being against party line and handed victory to the candidate of the ruling coalition.

The court overturned the speaker’s decision. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah yesterday warned of imposing governor’s rule in Punjab if he was restricted from entering the province, reported Dawn.

The development gives Khan’s campaign for fresh elections a shot in the arm. The ousted premier has been holding protests across the country for snap general elections, which are not due until late next year.

The tug of war between Khan and his opponents has already weighed heavily on the economy of the nuclear powered nation of 220 million, which is in the middle of a tough IMF programme.

Pakistan is struggling with falling foreign exchange reserves, a widening current account deficit and a sharply depreciating currency.

Adding to the uncertainty, the decision may lead to a standoff between the government and judiciary.



S Jothimani, a lawmaker from India’s main opposition Congress party reacts after she was detained outside the Parliament in New Delhi, India, yesterday. She and other lawmakers from the party were protesting against inflation rising and the Enforcement Directorate summons to their party leader Sonia Gandhi. PHOTO: REUTERS

Strong quake hits Philippines  
Four killed, dozens injured; nearly 300 aftershocks recorded

AFP, Manila

A 7.0-magnitude earthquake killed at least four people in the northern Philippines yesterday, toppling buildings, and shaking high-rise towers more than 300 kilometres away in the capital Manila.

The shallow but powerful quake struck the mountainous and lightly populated province of Abra on the main island of Luzon at 8:43 am, the US Geological Survey said.

Shallow earthquakes tend to

cause more damage than deeper ones. This one left more than a hundred people injured across the hilly region, triggered dozens of landslides, damaged buildings, and knocked out power.

In Vigan City, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the province of Ilocos Sur, centuries-old structures built during the Spanish colonial period were damaged, police said.

Yesterday’s quake was one of the strongest recorded in the Philippines in years and was felt across swathes

of Luzon island, the most populous in the archipelago. It was followed by nearly 300 aftershocks, the local seismological agency said. Several of the subsequent quakes measured from magnitude 4.7 to 5.2, according to USGS.

Residents and office workers in Manila were evacuated from high-rise buildings.

Military personnel have been deployed to Abra to help with rescue operations. At least 58 landslides have been reported.



REFERENDUM ON NEW CHARTER  
Fear of autocracy as Tunisia votes ‘yes’

REUTERS, Tunis

A new Tunisian constitution giving far more power to President Kais Saied passed in a referendum with a 30.5 percent turnout, the electoral commission said, tightening his grip in what critics fear is a march to a new era of autocracy.

The commission said 95 percent of voters approved the constitution in Monday’s referendum boycotted by opposition groups, which accuse Saied of staging a coup against the young democracy that emerged from Tunisia’s Arab Spring uprising of 2011.

Opposition groups, which have struggled to counter Saied since he began amassing power a year ago, accused the authorities of inflating the numbers and said they still recognised the 2014 constitution as the legitimate one.

The new constitution includes changes that shift power back to the presidency and away from parliament which - to Saied’s supporters - had become synonymous with political bickering and government paralysis.

Saied has denied accusations that he is a new dictator, and says freedoms won in 2011 are protected.

Even though the vote was for a permanent change to the constitution, the rules set by Saied did not require a minimum turnout for it to be approved.

The main opposition alliance said the official results were “false and not credible”.

US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said Washington noted widespread concerns that the constitution was not written in an inclusive way and that it weakened checks and balances and could compromise human rights.

His initial moves against the parliament a year ago appeared hugely popular with Tunisians, as thousands flooded the streets to support him, but with little progress in addressing dire economic problems, that support may have waned.

“We are firmly opposed to (US House) Speaker Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan. If the US pushes ahead and challenges China’s bottom line... the US side will bear all the consequences.”

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian

**Eastern Refinery Limited**  
(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)  
North Palenga, Chaltogram-4204  
Bangladesh

**Invitation for International Tender**

ERL hereby invites offers from reputed Suppliers/Manufacturers/Agents/Distributors for the supply of the following goods in accordance with the terms & conditions set out hereafter:

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources/Energy and Mineral Resources Division		
2. Agency	Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation		
3. Purchaser name	Eastern Refinery Limited		
4. Purchaser district	Chattogram		
5. Invitation for	Goods		
6.	a) ERL/PURIT-2022/61 (RT) b) ERL/PURIT-2022/52 (RT) c) ERL/PURIT-2022/53 (RT) d) ERL/PURIT-2022/54 (RT) e) ERL/PURIT-2022/55 f) ERL/PURIT-2022/56 g) ERL/PURIT-2022/57 h) ERL/PURIT-2022/58 i) ERL/PURIT-2022/59 j) ERL/PURIT-2022/60 k) ERL/PURIT-2022/61 l) ERL/PURIT-2022/62 m) ERL/PURIT-2022/63 27 July, 2022		
7. Date	27 July, 2022		
8. KEY INFORMATION	Procurement method: International Open Tendering Method		
9. FUNDING INFORMATION	Source and source of funds: Eastern Refinery Limited (Own Fund)		
10. PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10. Tender document last selling date	(a) (b) (c) (d) 24 August 2022, 18:00 Hrs. (a) (b) (c) (d) 07 September 2022, 18:00 Hrs. (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) 11 September 2022, 18:00 Hrs.		
11. Tender closing date and time	(a) (b) (c) (d) 25 August 2022, 11:15 Hrs. (a) (b) (c) (d) 08 September 2022, 11:15 Hrs. (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) 12 September 2022, 11:15 Hrs.		
12. Tender opening date and time	(a) (b) (c) (d) 25 August 2022, 11:30 Hrs. (a) (b) (c) (d) 08 September 2022, 11:30 Hrs. (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) 12 September 2022, 11:30 Hrs.		
13. Offer validity	520 days (from the date of tender opening)		
14. Tender document selling address	(i) Accounts Department, Eastern Refinery Limited, North Palenga, Chaltogram-4204, Bangladesh. Phone: 09-02333301281-7. (ii) ERM, Liaison Office, YMCA Bhaban, 2nd Floor, 1/1 Pioneer Road, Kakrai, Chak-1500, Bangladesh. Phone: 885-2-6391980,3391981.		
15. Tender receiving address	Purchase Department, Eastern Refinery Limited, North Palenga, Chaltogram-4204, Bangladesh.		
16. Tender opening address	Purchase Department, Eastern Refinery Limited, North Palenga, Chaltogram-4204, Bangladesh.		
17. INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
17. Eligibility of tender	As per Tender Data Sheet		
18. Brief description of goods:			
Name	Price of tender document (non-refundable)	Tender security	Shipment validity
a) Spares for Tank Agitator	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 45,000.00 Or USD 475.00	90 days
b) Spore for Air Compressor GB 3001 and S	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 170,000.00 Or USD 1700.00	90 days
c) Radiation Pipe of Furnace F1101 AUS	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 150,000.00 Or USD 1500.00	90 days
d) Seamless Cold Drawn Low Carbon Steel Heat Exchanger Tubes	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 40,000.00 Or USD 400.00	90 days
e) Various ERW Pipes	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 150,000.00 Or USD 1500.00	90 days
f) Various Seamless Pipes	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 140,000.00 Or USD 1475.00	90 days
g) Spares for Cooling Tower Circulation Pump PM 6004 JKL/ALN	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 40,000.00 Or USD 400.00	90 days
h) Spores for EM 6001 D/E	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 35,000.00 Or USD 375.00	90 days
i) Complete Pump assembly without Motor- PM 1201 A/B	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 180,000.00 Or USD 1800.00	90 days
j) Spores for EM 6001 R/G	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 55,000.00 Or USD 580.00	90 days
k) Spores for 2MW Caterpillar Engine	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 70,000.00 Or USD 740.00	90 days
l) Gearbox for Cooling Tower Fan & Transmission Shaft of Fan	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 85,000.00 Or USD 885.00	90 days
m) Complete Cooling Tower Fan Assembly with Spares	Tk. 1000.00/- Or, USD 12.00/- set	Tk. 90,000.00 Or USD 1050.00	90 days
PURCHASER DETAILS			
19. Name of official mailing tender	Mr. Siddiqueur Rahman		
20. Designation of official mailing tender	Assistant General Manager (Procurement)		
21. Address of official mailing tender	Eastern Refinery Limited, North Palenga, Chaltogram-4204, Bangladesh		
22. Contact details of official mailing tender	Telephone: 880-2333301281-7, Ext. 360, Mobile: 01321146642, Fax: 880-2333301289, E-mail: siddiqueur@erl.com.bd, info@erl.com.bd, Website: www.erl.gov.bd		
23.	a) The purchaser reserves the right to reject all tenders or amend the tender proceedings. b) If it is not possible to receive/offer the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working day at the same time and same venue.		

GD-1445

RT loses fight against EU ban

Moscow warns of retaliation

REUTERS, Brussels

State-controlled media outlet Russia Today yesterday lost its court fight against a European Union ban imposed in March over alleged disinformation, prompting the Kremlin to warn of retaliatory measures against Western media.

Europe’s second highest court upheld the EU decision, taken after Brussels accused Russia Today of systematic disinformation over Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The EU sanction, which applies to RT’s English unit and operations in Britain, Germany, France and Spain, means RT content cannot be broadcast or disseminated by EU operators.

Singapore extends visa for Lanka’s ex-leader

AFP, Singapore

Singapore has extended a short-stay visa for Sri Lanka’s deposed president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the country on July 13, local media in the city state reported yesterday.

He first escaped to the Maldives in a military plane and travelled on to Singapore, where he has been staying on a short-term visit pass since July 14. Rajapaksa’s 14-day visit pass has been extended, allowing him to stay until August 11, the Straits Times newspaper reported Wednesday, without citing a source.

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges  
Road Transport and Highways Division  
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)  
Office of the Project Director

**Preparation of Comprehensive Transport Master Plan for Narayanganj and Gazipur City Corporation**  
Nagar Bhaban (Level-13), Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000.

Memo: 35.02.0000.012.14.007.2022-28 Date: 27/07/2022

**Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Consultancy Services of Preparation of Comprehensive Transport Master Plan with Pre-Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design of Truck Terminal for Gazipur City Corporation**

1. **Background:**  
Gazipur is one of the districts of the Dhaka division, bounded in the north by Mymensingh and Kishoreganj Districts, in the east by Narsingdi District, in the south by Narayanganj and Dhaka Districts and in the west by the Tangail District. Gazipur has already emerged as an industrial hub along with growing business and trade activities, the area requires better and faster mobility options for the dwellers and commuters which can also reduce pressure on Dhaka. Considering the transport problems of the city, the government of Bangladesh (GoB) intends to formulate a “Comprehensive Transport Master Plan (CTMP) with Pre-Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design of Truck Terminal for Gazipur City Corporation” Area. The implementing agency is DTCA under the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges. This Comprehensive Transport Master Plan (CTMP) will identify priority issues, such as improvement of mass transit system (buses and rail transportations), development of urban expressway, and establishment of an organization for implementation and maintenance/operation of the projects.

2. **Scope/Tasks of the Consultancy services:**  
The tasks of the consultancy services are as follows:-  
- Review existing plans of various agencies, necessary data analysis and evaluation of the current and future needs of a public transport system based on current and future demands.  
- Conduct traffic surveys, (namely household interview surveys), cordon line surveys, screen line surveys, public transportation surveys etc.  
- Prepare a comprehensive transportation demand model based on the existing system. An operational model for the area will be developed using transport modeling software. This model will be used for any necessary corridor or subarea studies and evaluations.  
- Prepare future infrastructure improvement plans and projects. Prepare a road network development plan. Prepare transport management measures and policy actions.  
- Identify suitable location for truck terminal within the city corporation and prepare a plan, pre-feasibility study and conceptual design of the Truck Terminal based on the Master Plan. Prepare program and different measures for traffic management and its safety. Identify and study the route for Mass Transit System (MRT, LRT, BRT) and priority projects.  
- Design an improved bus network system and integrate bus services plan with other modes.  
- Recommend and develop institutional arrangement and capacity building of Transport Authority.  
- Identify necessary projects, schedules, responsibilities, costing, and funding sources to meet future demand, and prepare a roadmap and implementation plan by involving and integrating all relevant stakeholders of the Government ministries and agencies, major development partners, private sectors and NGOs.  
- Analyze the projects which are being prepared and/or implemented in the area and incorporated into the framework of the Master plan.

3. The Project Director now invites Consulting firm(s) (National) to express their interest in providing the above services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services. The EOIs will be reviewed on the basis of the following and the Consulting firm(s) is requested to submit the supporting documents properly and sequentially in support of the above-mentioned scope of work: (i) Registration of the firm (s), (ii) Company profile: including management personnel, firm’s specialty, performance etc., (iii) Availability and Summary of qualification of key professionals, (iv) List of rendered services in last 5(five) years (v) Experience in similar tasks/projects, (vi) Yearly turnover of the firm for last 5 (five) years and (vii) Annual Audit Report for last 3 (Three) years and (viii) History of litigation in courts or any arbitration proceedings (if any).

4. Applicants may arrange a joint venture, consortium or association (JVCA) with other consulting firm(s) to enhance their qualifications but should clearly/explicitly mention whether the association is in the form of a “Joint Venture” or “Sub-consultancy”.

5. The Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with procedures set out in the Public Procurement Rules (PPR), 2008. (Reference 105(1))

6. It is expected that the service will commence in November 2022.

7. Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the above study must be submitted to the address below by office hours on 11 August 2022. The envelopes must be clearly marked “EOI for Preparation of Comprehensive Transport Master Plan with Pre-Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design of Truck Terminal for Gazipur City Corporation”.

8. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs.

*Mizanur Rahman*  
27-07-2022  
Project Director,  
Preparation of Comprehensive Transport Master Plan for Narayanganj and Gazipur City Corporation  
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)  
Telephone: 0247120836  
Email: mizanurrahman.buet07@gmail.com

GD-1444



# Don't allow criminals to milk the banking sector

## Authorities must take stern action to stop scams and frauds

IT'S unfortunate that at a time when we should err on the side of caution and restraint – rather than of excess – in financial matters given the country's economic crisis, the opposite is happening. A combination of factors including bad decisions, poor regulation and absent accountability for the wrong-doers continue to plague us. The High Court on Tuesday made a succinct observation that should be taken seriously: that the “most serious crimes” are being committed in the banking sector. How can our economy get out of the current mess if we don't stop this procession of scams and frauds?

The court's observation comes on the heels of the exposure of another scam in which a firm named SB Exim, using forged documents in the name of exporting terracotta tiles, allegedly swindled Tk 200 crore from Bangladesh Commerce Bank Ltd (BCBL) in 2018. That wasn't the end of it, however. BCBL, in response, created a loan against the payments made to the borrower as it hadn't received the money from foreign banks. Subsequently, the loan defaulted, leading to BCBL rescheduling it without informing Bangladesh Bank. Then, in a shocking move, the central bank permitted rescheduling the defaulted loan in violation of its own rules. It's like a crime cycle that begins and ends with bad decisions, with the public – the main sources of funds for lenders – caught in the middle.

Such scams are taking place quite regularly, thanks to lack of good governance and legal action for the criminals and their enablers. Our memories of scams involving BASIC Bank, Hallmark Group, Farmers Bank, Reliance Finance Ltd, International Leasing and Financial Services, People's Leasing and Financial Services and other institutions are still fresh. Many billions of taka were thus looted. But hardly anything happened to the nexus of politicians, bankers and business magnets that took advantage of our fragile regulatory structure.

The government's role in all this is quite disquieting: Not only has it not taken exemplary action against these “financial thugs”, to quote an earlier HC observation, the central bank has even appeared to harbour defaulted borrowers, relaxing rules on loan classifications and rescheduling and thereby helping the industry camouflage scams. Reportedly, bad loans totalled Tk 113,441 crore in March this year, just shy of the record high of Tk 116,288 crore totalled in September 2019.

A vested quarter is clearly at work trying to cripple our economy, laundering money through under-invoicing and over-invoicing in the name of exports/imports. Had the laundering been tackled, our foreign exchange reserves would have been in a better shape today. Besides the financial regulators, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the cumbersome judicial process are also responsible for the continuation of this situation and the culture of impunity enjoyed by criminals. We urge the government and the judiciary to take strong measures to stop financial irregularities.

# Why such disregard for directives on official trips?

## Govt must take action against officials violating the ban

IT is inconceivable that despite calls by the prime minister for government employees to observe austerity involving foreign exchange such as public projects and foreign trips, some are ignoring the directive. According to a report by *The Daily Star*, as many as 39 officials of the civil aviation ministry and the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) made over 50 foreign trips during the 2021-22 fiscal year, which cost around Tk 1.5 crore. Earlier, in mid-July, we were surprised to learn of foreign trips made by officials of the Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA), including its managing director, as part of a project that had over 80 percent of its physical work already completed.

It should be mentioned that the government banned non-mandatory official tours to ensure the best use of scarce resources amid the ongoing economic crisis. According to our report on aviation employees, the list of officials who went on trips included the civil aviation secretary and CAAB chairman. Reportedly, these officials went abroad despite there being no urgency, but merely to attend seminars, conferences, and workshops, and even to enjoy air-shows or product demonstrations. In case of CWASA, the purpose apparently was to train and inspect some factories. In other words, those were simply pleasure trips, undertaken at a time of national crisis, using public money that should have been saved for better purposes.

The question is: How will the “experience” thus gained help the work or sectors of relevant public officials? In the wake of the financial crisis stemming from the pandemic, the government had ordered all routine foreign tours to be abandoned, 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. We see neither “emergency” nor “unavoidable purposes” in these recent tours. The CAAB chairman remains ahead of all other aviation officials when it comes to foreign trips. After him comes the secretary of civil aviation. And lo and behold, even the personal secretary of the state minister for civil aviation visited a country to attend a seminar.

This is totally unacceptable. We urge the higher authorities to strictly monitor the activities of all government agencies to ensure compliance with the travel restrictions. Public officials also should use better judgment before making such decisions or using hard-earned taxpayers' money to ensure it only serves public interests, and not anyone else's.

# ‘We can't afford any further depletion of our reserves’

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute, talks about Bangladesh's current economic crisis and related solutions in an interview with Eresh Omar Jamal of The Daily Star.

*There has been a sudden increase in the price of the dollar recently. In reaction to that, some experts have criticised the central bank's policy of trying to artificially keep the taka's price high against the dollar. Do you think that criticism is justified?*

The central bank did two things. It intervened significantly in the exchange rate market by selling USD 8 billion in the last one year. This intervention didn't work and resulted in a significant reserve loss. What the global experience tells us is that market intervention works to smoothen things out, but it cannot stop fundamentally driven market trends. The market trend in recent weeks showed that the taka would depreciate against the US dollar – that cannot be stopped. But if on a particular day there is a shortage of dollars and its price is rising, an intervention can be used to smoothen things out.

But what we've had is continued large-scale interventions, which have led to a reserve loss of USD 8 billion. In the face of strong and unending market pressure, the Bangladesh Bank (BB) has now let the exchange rate float, as it could not afford any further reserve loss.

Aside from that, the BB staff are calling the banks and verbally asking them to fix their dollar rate at around Tk 94. But no private transactions are happening at this rate in the interbank market – the only transactions in the interbank market that are happening are when the BB gives dollars for public sector imports – for example, to import oil or gas. I learned that we are importing oil at the rates of Tk 97, Tk 98 or Tk 100 – because the interbank exchange rate set by BB is completely ineffective. Since the BB authorities no longer want to spend more dollars, which is the right policy stance, they can no longer intervene in the market directly, but they are intervening verbally. Because of that, the interbank market has become completely dysfunctional.

What is happening as a result is that, if someone sends remittance through the official channel, they will get around Tk 93 for USD 1. But if they send it through hundi, they will get around Tk 110. So, remittance through the official channel has decreased. Obviously, this policy is not working and needs to change. The interbank rate should be brought closer to the market rate, so that the difference is not more than Tk 2.

**We have too many banks and too much mismanagement in the banking sector, which have been overlooked by our regulators.**

*Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves have now slipped below USD 40 billion. How concerned should we be about that?*

The government is saying it is around USD 40 billion. But, in reality, according to the IMF's definition of reserves, Bangladesh has USD 8 billion less than the official number. The reason behind that is that USD 7 billion has been allocated to the Export Development Fund (EDF) and is being used by Bangladeshi exporters. Another USD 450-500 million is locked up in the Green Transformation Fund, and around USD 250 million has been given to Sri Lanka, which is unavailable for now.

When we evaluate the sustainability of a country's forex reserves, we look at two things: a) The adequacy of the reserve level; and b) its direction. In Bangladesh's case, the direction is obviously a big concern. We have already sustained a reserve loss of USD 8 billion. So there is a significant declining trend, despite the government receiving substantial aid

from different development partners due to the pandemic.

What we have right now will allow us to import merchandise and services for about four months. Since having reserves that can pay for imports for three months or less is considered to be critical, what we have right now is above the bare minimum. It is below a comfortable level, but it's okay. However, because the direction is also negative, it's concerning.

Even the new BB governor, on his first day at the job, said we need to think about how to increase our forex reserves. We cannot afford any further depletion of our reserves, because we will need to keep importing and imports will be naturally increasing in a growing economy. Another issue is the high trade imbalance we had in the last fiscal year, amounting to around USD 33 billion, while the current account deficit amounted to almost USD 17-18 billion, which we borrowed to cover the financing gap. If we cannot address such a high current account

deficit and trade imbalance, then our reserves will continue to deplete. So, we have to work urgently on correcting the imbalance in our balance of payments.

The government's debt service is still at an acceptable level this year. The debt obligation for many of the big projects – Roopur Nuclear Power Plant, Karnaphuli Tunnel, the Padma Railway Bridge – will come due around 2024. In the future, that will exert some

pressures to absorb some of the additional debt service pressure.

There will, however, be problems on the budget management side. The sudden depreciation of the taka against the dollar will increase our public sector debt by Tk 1.8 lakh crore, to Tk 7.7 lakh crore, and there will be corresponding increase in the total debt servicing cost in taka terms. Managing the taka amount will be a major challenge given the very low revenue-to-GDP ratio of only 9.5 percent. Private sector debt will also increase by Tk 65,000 crore to Tk 2.75 lakh crore, which will be a major problem for our corporate sector, since this debt would need to be repaid within a few years or would need to be rolled over in the next one to three years. The rollover risk may emerge as a major challenge for private debts if foreign creditors become risk-averse and recall their money upon maturity.

*How can the government contain imports?*

There are three policies the government can use. One is by adjusting the exchange rate, so that imports become expensive. The second is to use monetary policy – by increasing the interest rate – to bring down our overall credit demand. This would again bring down aggregate demand. Almost every central bank in the world is increasing its interest rates to tighten credit, bring down demand, reduce imports, and lower prices. But Bangladesh cannot do the same if our interest rates are stuck at nine percent and six percent. During the pandemic, it was fixed at nine percent, keeping in line with the market fundamentals at that time. Though the situation is different now, the government has not changed its policy accordingly.

Thirdly, the government can use fiscal policy. Here it has taken some good decisions, like cancelling foreign trips of its officials, etc. But it still has to pay vast amounts of subsidies for

**The Bangladesh Bank intervened significantly in the exchange rate market by selling USD 8 billion in the last one year. This intervention didn't work and resulted in a significant loss of forex reserves.**

want long-term growth. For that, we need to create a stable environment. That's why we need to focus on restoring macro-economic stability.

*Since the next parliamentary election is due next year, could the government be politically motivated not to sacrifice short-term growth?*

I would say that political motivation should encourage the government to make the necessary changes right now. Because if it delays, things could blow up right before the election.

*Some have suggested that our banking sector, which has been hit by one scam after another, and has been plagued by corruption and regulatory failures, is now a house of cards. What are your thoughts on it?*

Our financial sector is very weak and underdeveloped. Its size, in comparison to India, China and even other East Asian countries, is very small. It has many problems as well. And it's because of these problems that it is not growing.

We have too many banks and too much mismanagement in the banking sector, which have been overlooked by our regulators. If we look at the banks,



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

pressure, but will still be manageable.

Government and non-government loans till December last year amounted to USD 92 billion: public and publicly guaranteed loans were nearly USD 70 billion, and non-government loans around USD 22 billion. The latter already increased to more than USD 25 billion by this June, and USD 15 billion of that is short-term, which needs to be repaid in one year. That can also create some pressure on the reserves if the private sector cannot roll over USD 15 billion of loans. Even if they are non-government loans, they are ultimately to be paid out of our total forex availability, and ultimately, it's the BB that has to provide the foreign currency for this repayment.

*Eminent economist Debapriya Bhattacharya recently said that Bangladesh's debt situation may become tricky from 2024-25. How well-positioned are we to repay our loans that are soon to come due?*

He was referring to the government debt, and the debt servicing required for the megaprojects. I think we should be able to handle such payments, if we don't have any problem with rolling over the private sector debt, and our exports and remittances perform relatively well. The issue is that we need to contain our import growth at healthy rates. We need to bring down import growth to 15-20 percent over the medium term. If we can do that, we shouldn't have much problem, as we will be able to use higher foreign exchange inflows and contain import

fuel, gas, fertilisers, etc. Since most of these price-controlled products are imported and paid for in US dollars, the cost of these products will significantly increase in taka terms. The government has allocated Tk 82,000 crore as subsidies in FY2022-23 budget, but the amount can easily rise beyond Tk 1 lakh crore, only because of the recent exchange rate depreciation.

The government may be hoping that since Western countries are increasing their interest rates and are likely to continue increasing their policy rates further, that may lead to a global recession, which would slow down the economies, leading to falling commodity prices. As a result, we may not have to make any adjustments. Whether that presumption works out or not, I don't know.

*But wouldn't our GDP growth be affected if the government adjusts the interest rate to slow down inflation?*

Of course, it would. The purpose of adjusting the inflation rate would be to slow down growth. But this year is not the year for economic growth; but for macro-economic consolidation – restoring balance to our balance of payments, stabilising the exchange rate, bringing down inflation, and addressing other macro-imbalances.

*So, would it be correct to say that we are at a point of trade-off, where we need to sacrifice some short-term growth for long-term stability?*

Yes; instead of short-term growth, we

their return on equity in 2010 was 24-25 percent. That has now come down to around 4.5 percent. As a result, stock prices of banks have collapsed. No one wants to buy and hold them, since there is no return. But it is still highly taxed and abused at the same time. These matters are of great concern.

The non-stop loan rescheduling that we are doing will stop working at some point – when deposit growth stops or slows down. When that happens, it will lead to a major economic and political downfall. Since we have not reached that point yet, it looks alright. But it's a Ponzi scheme.

*Economists worldwide have always said that you cannot taper a Ponzi scheme forever. If what we have in the banking sector is a Ponzi scheme, isn't there a point where it becomes impossible to hide?*

In the case of many banks, it is a Ponzi scheme. They believe that deposits will keep growing to keep them afloat. There is also the expectation that BB would bail them out. And so far, their expectation has been correct as the government has always bailed out the failed banks.

*But that's basically socialising banks' losses onto the public.*

Yes. And when it happens on a massive scale, they would have to give these bailouts by printing more money. That would create huge inflation and destabilise the whole economy.



# The origin of the om: Ahmed Sofa’s aura



Salimullah Khan  
is professor at the General Education  
Department of ULAB.

SALIMULLAH KHAN

The poet resembles this prince of clouds  
who chases the tempest and laughs at the  
archer:  
exiled on earth amidst a booing crowd,  
his enormous wings impede his walk.

— Charles Baudelaire

WITH the death of Ahmed Sofa on July 28, 2001, Bangladesh (or modern Bengal in historical perspective) lost not simply one of its most original thinkers; it also marked the passing of an age. In death, as in life, Sofa found himself on the wrong side of power, which explains why his passing was shunned by the powers that were and mourned only by a handful of friends and fellow workers. I, for one, have never been ashamed of expressing my admiration for him.

Ahmed Sofa was engaged with the large questions of the day in Pakistan and Bangladesh for at least four decades and provided a unique intellectual terrain of resistance to tyranny, injustice, and inhumanity in his homeland and beyond. Today, some 20 years later, his work, distinguished for both its depth and clarity of thinking, continues to speak to thousands, if not to millions. In this tribute, I will not call on his sundry interventions but will invoke one of his enduring contributions. As a storyteller, Sofa became, in Walter Benjamin’s formulation, “the figure in which the righteous man encounters himself.”

But what is a storyteller? For Benjamin, he is an artisan, a worker of sorts: “The storytelling that thrives for a long time in the milieu of work – rural, maritime, and then urban – is itself an artisanal form of communication, as it were. It does not aim to convey the pure ‘in itself’ or gist of a thing, like information or a report. It submerges the thing into the life of the storyteller, in order to bring it out of him again.”

In 1976, the year I made Sofa’s acquaintance in Dhaka University, it was already two years since he discovered his calling as a thinker with an incomparable aura surrounding him. He had already joined “the ranks of the teachers and sages,” as Benjamin would say. What may be the basis of this aura? It lies in “the ability to reach back through a whole lifetime,” a life which includes not simply his own experience, but the experiences of others as well, what he knows by himself as well as what he knows by hearsay. “His gift,” Benjamin says, “is the ability to relate his life; his distinction, to be able to relate his *entire* life.” The storyteller is a

With a traditional realistic novel, a short story collection, and a bouquet of tales for children before, *Omkar* is the first work with which Sofa discovered what is most his own storytelling, the allegory. It made all the difference between him and the rest in Bengali literature of the late twentieth century. The signifier “om”, kit and caboodle would henceforth follow his path until his last tales were crafted. Its denouement would be evident in *Alatchakra*, Circle of Desire, realised a decade later.

Thanks to *Holiday*, *Omkar* came out in an English rendition in 1975. Introducing her translation much later, Roushan Jahan put *Omkar*’s storyline in a capsule: “the story of a young dumb [sic] girl, who refuses to accept the physical limitation and after persistent and desperate efforts, finally succeeds in mastering the handicap.” The story, however, goes a little beyond this challenge.

Set in historical time, a time out of joints in East Pakistan, the story draws on a formative

an urban milieu, becomes desperate in her attempts to speak. In passionately forcing open her glottis, at the end of the day she succeeds in uttering “Bangla”, but loses consciousness and starts to bleed from the mouth. It is significant to recognise that a signifier represents a subject for another signifier, and not for another subject. What is also significant is that Sofa does not let out either the girl’s or her husband’s name. Her attempt at uttering a signifier is provoked by roaring sounds out there, the fury of marchers on the streets of Dhaka, signifying something; thus linking up *Erlebnis* (or everyday experience) with *Erfahrung* (or longtime historical events). This is a tale told by no idiot. It tells the story of a transformation, churning logos out of mythos. *Omkar*, in other words, raises itself to the status of an allegory.

As the first-person narrator speaks: “For all these years, she has expressed all the feelings of joy and pain, wonder and frustration by grumbling like a dynamo. What pains of expression she must have suffered. By now, the procession was passing our house. It was like the crater of a volcano. The whole country seemed to be in long labour. The shouts of these people were those of a mother in labour. I was trembling. It seemed Bangladesh, her sky, her air, everything was trembling. Suddenly my wife jumped clear off the ground and said ‘Bangladesh’. At last her dumb [sic] voice has delivered an intelligible word. She fell



Ahmed Sofa (1943-2001)

ILLUSTRATION: BIPILOB CHAKROBORTY

phase of the new Bengali Muslim middle class. The story is told as the fable of the country lawyer Abu Nasr, also the father of the girl, who made a paltry fortune as collaborator of the Pakistani military regime. The simple fable, in Jahan’s take, “has a surprising depth, breadth and resonance”. Abu Nasr in a typical single shot kills two birds, marrying his physically challenged daughter off to a parvenu and neutralising a rival clan all the same. Narrated by the girl’s husband, “a timid, passive young man from a downward mobile family,” as Jahan comments, “the two main strains of the story – the public and the private – mesh beautifully.”

The climactic moment of the story coincides with the beginning of the end of old Pakistan when Pakistan’s myriad peoples united against Ayub Khan’s military regime and East Pakistan rose up, unwilling to put up with the loss of self under neocolonialism, in the face of waning national identity and dignity. Ahmed Sofa opens up the myth of the origin to an allegorical gaze.

An everyday story reaches its climax when the speech-impaired girl, a housewife in

unconscious and lay bleeding. I looked at the blood-splattered floor, then at my wife.”

Ahmed Sofa could well have left the myth there. Dissuaded by a thesis that claims that “style is not the man himself but one the man addresses,” the narrator adds: “A question rose in my mind, ‘whose blood is redder? That of Asad, the martyr, or that of my dumb wife?’” This veil of choice serves a subtle propaedeutic to the inaugural signifier *om*. As there is no meta-language, it all depends on the unfolding of history. It is history that shapes both the signifier or existence and the signified or its meaning.

The heights Sofa reached, enormous wings he carried, tempests he haunted and archers he ridiculed, of course, came not without a price. He had been indicted as a German agent or even “Ghaddafi’s man.” These attacks were not merely defamatory on Ahmed Sofa’s identity as a Bengali Muslim and dignity as a thinker, but part of a much larger project to undermine the cause he resolutely stood for, the cause of workers and peasants in a nation that shed buckets of blood in struggles for prestige, in 1947 and in 1971.

# Why is Dhaka city so dirty?

Irene Sergiou is an architect based in Nicosia, Cyprus.  
Dr Syed Saad Andaleeb is distinguished professor emeritus at Pennsylvania State University and former vice-chancellor of Brac University.

IRENE SERGIOU and SYED SAAD ANDALEEB

THE Dhaka metropolitan area is teeming with a population of 22.5 million, according to UN estimates in 2021. In 1971, this population was 1.5 million. With a centralised administration and the best infrastructure in the country – including education, healthcare, and communication – Dhaka has been the focus of rapid urbanisation. This gives rise to numerous challenges – from unruly traffic, health and hygiene issues, social problems, and economic disparities, to their effects on the environment. With more people in a relatively small urban space, their consumption needs are bigger, which then translates into waste disposal problems.

This problem has become massive because of the indiscriminate manner of waste disposal by Dhaka residents, along with the insufficient and inefficient waste management practices. This is reflected in the accumulation of garbage in the streets, the playgrounds, open spaces, the landfills, etc. Why is this happening? What is the psychology of littering or improper waste management?

The root of the problem lies in human behaviour, especially people’s apathy towards dealing with waste. For them, it is someone else’s problem. The individual is the beginning of the vicious circle; therefore, things must change with them first.

There’s a term called “habit loop,” which describes the essential features of habits: The *trigger* (waste accumulation at home), the *behaviour* (disposal of waste as conveniently as possible) and the *reward* (saving time by not experiencing the “hassle” of searching for a garbage bin or thinking of separating waste by categories, such as organic waste, liquid, recyclable or non-recyclable, and hazardous). Most people usually work in an “autopilot mode.” As a result, bad habits become ingrained. This habit loop needs to be reframed.

The idea of rewards would seem to offer some possibilities. We believe that creating the right *incentives* could play a significant role to break into and change the passive “autopilot” habits and turn them into active and more “thoughtful” ones, which would result in developing positive routines and impulses. A simple behavioural change, such as separating waste at the household level, would thus reflect a change of bad habits, which is then rewarded through a system of points.

Behavioural change is also facilitated by raising awareness about the significance and importance of dealing with household and other types of waste (cognitive learning theory) through education – both formal and informal – to help the city residents think more about their recycling behaviours and their far-reaching consequences. Raising awareness requires persistent efforts to make people put more thought into changing their waste disposal behaviour.

So how do we get a cleaner city? How do we become better and more responsible residents of Dhaka?

As a city producing thousands of tonnes of solid waste a day, the problem could be broken down into four phases:

**Phase 1** – The Pre-Waste Phase: This is where people are informed of how much they waste and of their own carbon footprint to help them make responsible decisions when purchasing consumables, choosing packaging, daily usage of water, burning rubbish, using air conditioners year-round, printing pages unnecessarily, etc.

**Phase 2** – The Act of Disposing: When people are made more conscious, they will begin to “segregate” waste properly. They may even begin to reuse some of it, expand the lifespan of an item, or repurpose it before dispensing with it.

**Phase 3** – The Collection System: Behavioural change must be accompanied by an efficient waste collection system that is in sync with the households.

**How are metals recovered? How is non-biodegradable waste treated? Do the current methods of recycling or composting have adverse effects on the environment? These questions must be given serious consideration.**

This requires a proper, organised, and coordinated system of waste collection with timing/locations/logistics all worked out.

**Phase 4** – The Post-Waste Phase is essentially about how the waste is treated. Is everything ending up in the same landfill or is there a recognition of value in waste?

In some regions of the world, organic waste is composted and sold; in other areas, portions of the landfills are seeded with larvae to be fattened on organic waste and used later for fish or poultry feed. How are metals recovered? How is non-biodegradable waste treated? Do the current methods of recycling or composting have adverse effects on the environment? These questions must be given serious consideration.

Behaviours such as senseless littering, garbage not being collected, or primary and secondary waste segregation not coordinated with transportation can amplify the problem. But the root of this massive problem is about targeting and changing mindsets. And mindsets are embedded in culture and some inherent traits such as habits. As culture influences the way we are brought up and what we value, it affects our way of thinking, behaviour, and actions. Over time, some elements of culture will thus have to change.

Importantly, change will begin with the state of awareness at various levels, conscious reflection, and ethical behaviour. In addition, collaboration is critical at all levels: Individual level, community level, and public service provider level, who must operate jointly within a set of regulations.

To benefit the household, the environment and the economy, the greening and cleaning of Dhaka (and other cities) is imperative and will only come with people acting consciously, incorporating innovative features of recycling, and developing teamwork between formal and informal bodies that make up the city. This process must begin soon.

*This op-ed, the second of a four-part series, resulted from the authors’ participation in the 23rd ASEF Summer University (ASEFSU23) interdisciplinary hackathon on “Livable Cities for a Sustainable Future” envisioned by Asian and European young professionals and students.*

kinsman of Plato’s Socrates: “I want to tell you a story. You may think it is a mere story, but for me it is the logic.”

Ahmed Sofa was able to produce two slender poetic collections, “Time the Hangman” and “Songs of Sufferance” in 1975. Earlier, in 1974, he put out the novella, *Omkar*.

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CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Moist

5 Happy colleague

10 Continually

11 Stop working

12 Fictional captain

13 Appears onstage

14 Director Martin

16 Director Wes

20 Greek letters

23 Blvd.'s kin

24 Sports summary

25 Sound of Washington

27 Crew need

28 Dead ducks

29 Director Francois

DOWN

1 Retreats

2 Opposite of "sans"

3 Office note

4 In fair shares

5 Slow-witted

6 Mink's cousin

7 Cobbler's kin

8 Mess up

9 "You bet!"

11 Oboists' needs

32 Director Clint

36 Guessing game for kids

40 Diverts

41 Rotate

42 Fourth-down plays

43 Throw

15 Small fastener

17 Cooking mint

18 Finished

19 Brooklyn team

20 Easy run

21 Get news of

22 Pale tan

25 Sullen look

26 Loosen, as a cap

28 Neon and helium

30 Banquet

31 Cube's sextet

33 Ibsen's home

34 Musical work

35 Colors

36 Travel aid

37 Outback bird

38 Sister, of sorts

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Memo No. 46.02.5903.000.07.001.22-1835  
Date: 27/07/2022

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Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID No.	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time	Procurement method
1.	GDP-SAWJ-99	Improvement of Boro Faida-Baher Ghata-Bhura Bazar Road by BC at Ch. 3000-3385m Upazila: Sirajdikhan, District: Munshiganj (Road ID: 356944017)	718398	Upto 12:00 14-Aug-2022	At 14:00 14-Aug-2022	LTM
2.	GDP-SAWJ-100	Improvement of Tongbat Upazila Bypass Road (Tongbat-Artisi-Rongmeher GPS Road) by BC at Ch. 00-566m Upazila: Tongbat, District: Munshiganj (Road ID: 356942013) (Salvage Material cost BDT 27.37-825.00)	718600	Upto 12:00 14-Aug-2022	At 14:00 14-Aug-2022	LTM
3.	e-Tender/LGED/ MUN/OCBM/2022-23/FW-01	Supplying Materials for Routine Maintenance on Pavement under Munshiganj District	719082	Upto 12:00 14-Aug-2022	At 14:00 14-Aug-2022	LTM

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GD-1442



BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

# Mundanities, magic realism, Bangladesh

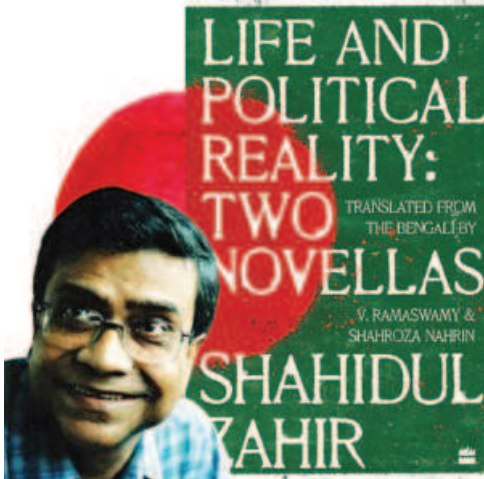
Revisiting Shahidul Zahir's novellas

JAHANARA TARIQ

Like the unforeseen rip and the “phot” with which Abdul Mojid's footwear breaks away in the beginning of *Shahidul Zahir's Life and Political Reality* (Samhati Prokashan, 2022), translated from Bangla by V Ramaswamy and Shahroza Nahrin, the readers too are dropped like egg yolks within the sprawling, caustic narrative of Zahir's story. A split in time occurs as our protagonist scuffles through his dismal memories of 1971. Tortuous branches of prose flow through the fabric of history, intertwined with the debris of appalling cruelty, navigating eddies of crises, and setting off flash floods of collective remembrance. This novella examines the war, keeping the focus narrow, on a particular mohalla but exploring the destruction of idealism and the spirit of frustration encompassing Bangladesh in her post-war years. Thus the personal space is the same as the political sphere, the individual on the same strand as the collective.

Through the use of anaphoric instances, Zahir stamps certain images in the reader's mind. Mojid's sandal straps, the inauspicious dispersion of cut flesh to the ravens by Moulana Bodu, the murder of Momena, and Mayaraani's Satanic chants are some of the snapshots among many others which reemerge through the span of the novel. These images in turn work as a kind of hook for the readers to rely on and to get hold of where the story is headed. Hence the narrative is not necessarily an open-ended stream of consciousness, one that moves from point A to B, from B to C and so on—but one which circumnavigates, touching all the points and creating many intersections. It might sound chaotic, yet it is anything but, as nothing becomes repetitive or cacophonous, let alone monotonous.

The themes and the distinctions of the plot—the substance, so to speak—tend to fall flat to Zahir's grasp over style. Instead of aligning itself with a steadfast arc or a steady plotline, the story moves restlessly through



COLLAGE: MAISHA SYEDA

the treacherous terrains of time and space. Without a single break in the paragraph, *Life and Political Reality* hovers over readers like a massive cloud of text formed with a deft pen.

*Abu Ibrahim's Death*, the second novella in the collection, may seem like an odd choice for *Life and Political Reality's* accomplice, in so far that it is a text that is riddled with the occurrences of everyday life. The story opens with the death of Abu Ibrahim and then reverts into the life he lived. We see him in different roles, an absent spouse, a loving father, a righteous government worker.

The protagonist is someone who acts as a shadow of Maoist, Marxist morality. However, when offered a bribe by a businessman, a Shylockian figure who is cartoonish and sinister with his talks of whiskey and money-making, Ibrahim's conscience gets a hold of him. He stands against the culture of taking backhanders but simultaneously is afflicted with a burden to buy land for his own family. He does not resist the man, however, with a bellowing horn of an idealist hero like the doctor in Satyajit Ray's *Ganashutra*, but with a steely, quiet rumination which infuriates the

shady merchant. First published in 1991, the political context of then-Bangladesh and the zeitgeist of uncertainty and disillusionment are captured through Ibrahim's struggle of navigating his principles in a fractured world.

While reading *Abu Ibrahim's Death*, I was surprisingly reminded of Wong Kar Wai's meditations on Hong Kong's urban spaces—the pages saturated with aching glances, quiet longings which become deafening in unsaid words. Zahir draws up a shade of Dhaka abloom with flame flowers and a kind of tranquillity that appears to be a myth in this present day.

However, despite the dreariness of the themes, there are instances in both novellas which act as a celebration of unobtrusive, everyday beauty. From Ibrahim's act of savouring an ice cream with his daughter, to Abdul Mojid choosing not to become a gunda when he finds access to the doors of the neighbourhood library—it all adds an emotional, wistful tuning to the callous realism and the indisposition of cut flesh and horror.

Shahidul Zahir's expertise lay not only in the depiction of social reality or the nuances of local culture, but in the experimental language he opted for, in his play of dialogues and dialects. In case of the translation of *Abu Ibrahim's Death*, the dialects were not translated like in *Life and Political Reality*. The inclusion of that would have perhaps helped to draw a better picture of the characters, given an indication of their social class too.

While the Bangla, original renditions of the two pieces evoke a certain sense of maya, the English versions do not fall short. Ramaswamy and Nahrin provide worthy translations of these masterpieces, concurrently holding the audience haunted and mesmerised.

Jahanara Tariq is Adjunct Lecturer at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB).

OPINION

## What's missing from quirky period dramas?

SHABABA IQBAL

The '90s offered something of a renaissance of period dramas, particularly with meticulous screen adaptations of Jane Austen's beloved novels. While filming 1995's *Sense and Sensibility*, Emma Thompson, who wrote the screenplay and starred as Elinor Dashwood, agonised over line changes and refused producers' pleas to “novelise” her script and sell it as an “update”.

Fast forward two decades and a new type of period drama is taking over today. Filmmakers are ditching accuracy and precision in a move to cater to Millennials and Gen Z audiences. Young and “good-looking” actors are cast, contemporary music is played in ballroom scenes, and the flirting and sex are ramped up. From the language to the set design to the score, forays into period drama are increasingly spiced up with modernity to both delightful and disappointing effects.

The Austen-inspired *Bridgerton* (2020)—Netflix's Regency-set romance based on Julia Quinn's novels published from 2000 to

2006—uses candy-coloured costumes and an idealised depiction of race in society, featuring prominent Black and South Asian characters and motifs like string quartets playing Ariana Grande covers instead of period waltzes. Lady Whistledown, a *Gossip Girl*-esque scandal sheet narrator, dominates the plot.

Since its release, *Bridgerton* has proven to be as controversial as it is popular. It explores race and representation in the early 19th century through the Duke of Hastings, a Black man named Simon Basset (Regé-Jean Page) in Season 1, and Kate Sharma (Simone Ashley) in Season 2, an Indian. But

in a rush to be inclusive, it glaringly overlooks nuances. A controversial scene in Season 1 depicts the sexual assault of a Black man by a white woman in a context where the inverse was a narrative that used to kill Black men. This is appalling, to say the least.

“Sharma”, Kate's surname on the show, is a common name among upper-caste Indians—and herein lies the problem. In celebrations of representation, the notion of being an “Indian” continues to be cemented in the upper-caste Hindu mould in popular culture and media. And even though it is appreciable that Hollywood is showcasing diversity in a genre that has long been greatly fronted by white characters, in its bid to be a light, frothy, and visually pleasant show, *Bridgerton* does not meaningfully address these complex issues.

*Emma*. (2020), starring Anya Taylor-Joy as the titular smart, wealthy, and meddlesome matchmaker, is a great example of a period film that incorporates subtle contemporary influences into the personality and costume design of characters. This adaptation is distinguished by its commitment to snarky retorts and a bright aesthetic, as seen in Emma's flashy mustard yellow gown and extravagant black hat with yellow feathers.

Emma and Mr Knightley's relationship is also edgier in the film, more socially acceptable. There are dance scenes without gloves, fleeting male nudity, and kisses when the girl's father is present in the room. She has her widowed, neurotic father to care for—or is that just her excuse to live as free of constraints as any man? It's a radical notion for the Regency era, and Taylor-Joy relishes in Emma's snobbery and callousness, confounding expectations of how a young lady of fortune should behave. Such playfulness is in keeping with the spirit of the book and with Austen's humour. Nevertheless, *Emma*. falls at a risk of being so highly stylised and goofy that it loses many of the deeper layers of the novel.

The recent Netflix adaptation of Austen's *Persuasion* (2022) plays like a romantic comedy rather than a complex, sombre story about second chances at love. In the film, protagonist Anne Elliot (Dakota Johnson) ends up in several contrived circumstances on her quest to win back her “ex”. Breaking the fourth wall, she cheekily addresses the audience after comments from her family members, which seems nonsensical for the introverted and dejected Anne we know from the novel. She has been turned into the awkward yet sassy and vivacious heroine that has been popping up in recent, contemporary period dramas. Trying too hard to be quirky, the film widely fails to capture the tone of the book. This points to a prevailing issue in adaptations of classic novels today where studios seem to think female characters need to be glossed with a “zany” and “feisty” persona in order to be relevant.

It appears that in warping period pieces on screen into colourful, digestible, and clickable content for Millennial and Gen Z viewers, filmmakers are doing a disservice not only to historical and literary texts, but also to the audience that they are, apparently, so desperate to attract.

Shababa Iqbal is a contributor to Daily Star Books. Email: siqbal.tds@gmail.com.

ESSAY

## Ali Riaz's 'More than Meets the Eye' and a writer's responsibility

MD. MAHMUDUL HASAN

I have been following Professor Ali Riaz's writing for quite some time, and I stand amazed by the prolificity and eclectic scope of his work. On July 23, 2022, Dhaka's University Press Limited (UPL) organised at its head office in Farmgate a publication ceremony of his book *More than Meets the Eye: Essays on Bangladeshi Politics* (2022). The event was broadcast live on UPL's Facebook page, which enabled me to attend it remotely from Kuala Lumpur.

Truly more than meets the eye, the book discusses contemporary politics and the erosion of social and political institutions in Bangladesh. Ali Riaz examines the profound social divisions that have weakened civic life and cohesion in the country. Discussants of the publication ceremony deplored the policies of what they called an ‘authoritarian’ government that has been ruling Bangladesh for over a decade.

As Bangladeshis, whether inside the country or abroad, we keenly follow its political and other developments. We are alive to most of what is happening in the country and reported in the media. Hence, it is almost impossible for the writer of such a book to say something new or completely unheard of.

During the publication ceremony, some suggested (though not cynically) that much of what the book discusses is what we, as Bangladeshis, already know. What is more, some sought from the author solutions to the political ills that he has diagnosed in the book.

Since I attended the event virtually, my opportunity to engage in the discussion in a personal way was limited. I wanted to say that some members of the audience seemed to have missed the point that a writer's job is not always to say something new or original, especially when they act as a social or political commentator. Nor is it necessarily their duty to carve out solutions that will transform a country into a land of freedom and opportunity.

In her powerful essay “The Small Personal Voice” (1957), the British-African writer Doris Lessing maintains that a writer writes out of “a feeling of responsibility, as a human being, for the other human beings”. She regards the writer as “an architect of the soul” who must know the nature of the soul they wish to persuade. A good writer writes what they and we see, though at

times they may reveal what others may have missed. The writer has greater abilities to articulate our shared experiences and to critique underlying socioeconomic structures.

A writer is not a stranger to society. They are one of us and share similar desires and interests. Our collective human problems and struggles often form the basis of their writing, as they synthesise and represent our ideas and imaginations. Therefore, when we seem to identify with what we read, we indirectly testify that the writer has been able to hold our interest and is successful in their endeavour to develop a meaningful rapport with readers.

Given the prevailing culture of impunity and the stifling of dissent in today's Bangladesh, one must congratulate the author of *More*

key attributes in the repertoire of a writer: intellectual independence and integrity. In *Decolonising the Mind* (1986), the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has identified the category of “state intellectuals” who do not possess such ingredients and therefore fail to commit to egalitarian goals.

The term ‘buddhijibi’ has gained wider currency in popular discourse in Bangladesh. It generally refers to urban writers and intellectuals of some persuasion. In response to a question from the audience during the publication ceremony, Ali Riaz warned against the wholesale, indiscriminate use of the term. He is reluctant to confer this appellation on self-proclaimed and self-seeking intellectuals who are silent about the assault on civil liberties and about sociopolitical problems that have



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

*than Meets the Eye* on his courage in sensibly defying it. He took the plunge while many have been nursing the fear of victimisation and reprisal. There are perhaps others – in the country and beyond – with comparable intellectual capacities but seem to have been silenced by economic incentives or intimidation, or by positions and perks. In that sense, Ali Riaz does not belong to those writers who, in Doris Lessing's words, “can be bludgeoned into silence by fear or economic pressure”.

In his book *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994), the Palestinian-American public intellectual Edward Said argues that a true intellectual who seeks to represent his people cannot be “a functionary nor an employee completely given up to the policy goals of a government.... In such situations, the temptations to turn off one's moral sense ... are far too great to be trusted”. Here Said emphasises two

beset Bangladesh.

In this respect, Ali Riaz seems to think along the same line with the famed Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe. In an essay titled “The Black Writer's Burden” (1966), Achebe states: “One of the writer's main functions has always been to expose and attack injustice”. That is to say, when a writer avoids this responsibility of exposing the truth about a government, they actually take off the badge of a writer from their neck.

The South African writer Nadine Gordimer suggests that a writer should not hesitate to tell the truth to power even if such telling renders them political. She says: “If you're writing honestly about your society and that society is in turmoil, you become a political writer”. Morally, one cannot remain a detached scholar and observe events of injustice and suffering from on high.

Establishing the untenability for an academic to remain alienated from la condition humaine, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o poses these rhetorical questions: “In a society built on a structure of inequality, where do we stand? Can we remain neutral, cocooned in our libraries and scholarly disciplines, muttering to ourselves: I am only a surgeon; I am a scientist; I am an economist; or I am simply a critic, a teacher, a lecturer?”

Writers and intellectuals are obligated to discuss the conditions of their fellow human beings. They embody the sensitive, artistic conscience of their people. It is their responsibility to stir moral indignation at gross injustices and the plight of the masses. Readers in return receive a cathartic pleasure after reading what the writer has said about them. In “African Literature and Social Problems” (1975), Romanus Egudu states that through depicting people's difficulties, writers provide readers with “intellectual pleasure in the midst of tears”. W H Auden says it more beautifully in his “In Memory of W. B. Yeats”:

Follow, poet, follow right  
To the bottom of the night,  
With your unconstraining voice  
Still persuade us to rejoice;  
With the farming of a verse  
Make a vineyard of the curse,  
Sing of human unsuccess  
In a rapture of distress.

Lastly, the British writer John Osborne came to my mind when someone from the audience at the UPL event urged Ali Riaz to provide solutions to the problems he describes in *More than Meets the Eye*. Reflecting on his role as a writer in 1950s Britain, Osborne says in his essay, “They Call It Cricket” (1957): “I am a writer and my own contribution to a socialist society is to demonstrate those values in my own medium, not to discover the best ways to implement them”.

Accordingly, Ali Riaz employed his training in political science to comment on the new “political settlement” that has developed in Bangladesh and to articulate the threats it poses to the country. However, providing solutions is not the task of the writer alone. That will need to involve many stakeholders at various levels.

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# Nova’s ‘dream came true’

SPORTS REPORTER

Piash Ahmed Nova’s dream to strike against India in SAFF U-20 Championship came true when the BKSP student struck a brace to power Bangladesh to a 2-1 win over the neighbouring nation in their second match at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, India yesterday.

Fresh from a single-goal win over Sri Lanka in their tournament opener, the boys in red and green came strongly against the hosts to notch up consecutive victories in the inaugural U-20 Championship, which previously was a U-18 tournament where India beat Bangladesh 2-1 in the final to win the title in 2019.

Nova, also a player of Bashundhara Kings, gave Bangladesh the lead in the 29th minute with a brilliant left-footed strike inside the box after Indian defenders fumbled to clear a long ball from Bangladesh, who rattled the woodwork twice prior.

Six minutes later, Gurkirat Singh levelled the margin with an eye-catching header inside the box but Bangladesh restored the lead with the 10-grade student - Nova - converting from the spot one minute into the stoppage time of the first half.

“I had a wish to score against India and I thought of it almost the whole night. Even I thought of how I would celebrate after scoring goals against India. I’m really happy that I have struck against India and my dream came true,” Nova told The Daily Star from Odisha over the phone after match.

Nova also informed his elder brother Pial Ahmed phoned him from Bangladesh to inspire him to score against India before the match day.

“My elder brother named Pial Ahmed called yesterday [Tuesday] to inform me that India is a large country which has big provinces like Bangladesh and they have a lot of footballers across the country.

“He asked me to show India that Bangladesh also possess talented footballers by scoring goals. I am also happy to keep the words of my brother,” said the 6-feet-height forward from Amla of Kushtia.

Nova also knows the tale of Bangladesh U-18 team’s defeat to the Indian counterparts in the SAFF U-18 Championship but he believes the current group of the players are better than the previous squad.

“I have learnt from seniors that Bangladesh created more chances than India in that final but the players tried individually instead of playing as a team, thus squandering the chances to miss the title,” Nova added.

“However, we are a team who are determined to play the final of the ongoing tournament. Each of the players are also trying to give their level best from their respective positions. All three departments are also functioning as a unit because we first want to ensure the final berth.”

Coach Paul Smalley said: “We’ve got young elements in the squad. It’s a mixture of our Elite Academy players and Under-20 players. We’ve had a small period of time for preparation and did a little bit when we got here in India. We researched all of the teams who are in the competition and spent a lot of time on the analysis. I think we’ve got depth and width in all our positions.”

Bangladesh will play their third match against Maldives tomorrow.



Bangladesh team's striker Piash Ahmed Nova (L) celebrates with teammates after one of his two goals during their 2-1 win against India in the SAFF U-20 Championship at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

# Home conditions at 2024 T20 World Cup embolden Salma



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will host the 2024 ICC Women’s T20 World Cup, the first time the country will host a major women’s event, and it is expected to be a great opportunity for the Tigresses, who are looking to take the next step in world cricket.

Despite Bangladesh’s disappointing performance in previous T20 World Cups, T20 skipper Salma Khatun said that the Tigresses were looking forward to the challenge and preparing accordingly.

“Playing host always gives you an added advantage and motivates the team to give their best. Since we will host the T20 World Cup in 2024, I think it is important for us to prepare from now. It might seem like we still have a lot of time, but the fact is that we need a long-term vision for the mega event,” Salma told The Daily Star yesterday.

The tournament will be held between September and October in 2024. It will be the second time Bangladesh will be host a T20 World Cup, previously staging the men’s 2014 edition.

Bangladesh can also take positives from the fact

that the Tigresses are defending Asia Cup champions. Coupled with home conditions and support from a local crowd, those factors could play big roles as the Tigresses attempt something extraordinary.

“It is too early to comment on whether we can win the title or not. The thing that we need to do is give our best on the field. Another thing to remember is that we are the defending Asia Cup champions, so we do have the ability to do something special. But at the moment it is important to stick to our process and not look too far beyond,” Salma said.

According to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) women’s wing manager Tawhid Mahmud, Bangladesh will have a busy schedule leading up to the 2024 World Cup. He hoped that would prepare the hosts well enough before the mega event.

“Although it is the ICC who announce all future schedules officially, at the moment I am not able to comment on the number of matches and series we are going to play. But I can say that the Bangladesh national women’s team has a very busy schedule till January 2025. We will be playing a lot of matches before the 2024 World Cup,” Tawhid said.

# SL 9 wickets from levelling series

REUTERS, Colombo

Sri Lanka set Pakistan a record target of 508 and then restricted them to 89-1 to keep alive their hopes of a series-levelling victory in the second test on Wednesday.

The hosts declared their second innings on 360-8 but were robbed of precious time as only six overs could be played in the final session before bad light stopped play.

Opener Imam-ul-Haq was batting on 46 at stumps with Pakistan 419 runs behind the improbable target.

The onus would be on Pakistan skipper Babar Azam, batting on 26, to help his team bat out the final three sessions for a draw that would also secure a 1-0 series victory for the tourists.

West Indies own the record for the highest successful fourth innings chase in tests having overwhelmed a target of 418 in a 2003 test in Antigua.

Earlier, Dhananjaya de Silva smashed 109, his ninth test hundred, to help Sri Lanka consolidate their position at the Galle International Stadium.

# Muktis hold Ctg Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha Sangsad were held to a 1-1 draw by Chittagong Abahani in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj yesterday.

A fourth draw in 21 matches helped Muktijoddha Sangsad to raise their points tally to 16, but they still remain in the relegation zone with just two points more than Uttar Baridhara Club.

Muktijoddha Sangsad and Uttar Baridhara Club will play their final matches of the season against Abahani and Saif SC respectively.

Meanwhile, Mohammedan SC also played out a 1-1 draw against Bangladesh Police at the Shaheed Smriti Stadium in Rajshahi. Both Police and Mohammedan sit on equal 30 points from 21 matches.

At the Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj, Sheikh Russel beat Rahmatganj MFS 3-2 to jump to the seventh place with 28 points from 21 matches.

“We’ve got young elements in the squad. It’s a mixture of our Elite Academy players and Under-20 players. We’ve had a small period of time for preparation and did a little bit when we got here in India. We researched all of the teams who are in the competition and spent a lot of time on the analysis. I think we’ve got depth and width in all our positions.”



Bangladesh coach Paul Smalley

**Bangladesh Red Crescent Society**  
National Headquarters (NHQ)  
684-686 Red Crescent Sarak, Bara Moaghbazar, Dhaka-1217.

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**  
Bangladesh Red Crescent Society invites application from the suitable professional candidates for the position of **Deputy Secretary General** on contractual basis based in Dhaka.  
He will be responsible for implementing the decisions of the Board and oversee its country-wide projects and programs. Planning, budgeting, budgetary control, supervision, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, human resources development and Management are some of the key responsibilities. The person we are looking for should be able to maintain effective interrelations with Government of Bangladesh, UN agencies, national and international Organizations, especially with humanitarian organization.  
Age 50 years & above as on 07 August 2022 but not over 62 years. The incumbent should possess a minimum Bachelor degree in any discipline with minimum 20 years of job experience, of which 8 years in any Senior Management Position of any reputed organization. A computer literate, fluent in spoken in English and very high proficiency in written English are absolute requirements. Red Crescent Society being a voluntary humanitarian organization, experience and knowledge of crisis Management, Disaster mitigation, attending and participating in international conference at home and abroad and working experience in Humanitarian field will be given preference.  
Applications should be submitted with full CV mentioning two references, two recent passport size photographs and necessary documents to The Chairman, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, 684-686 Red Crescent Sarak, Bara Moaghbazar, Dhaka-1217 by 07 August 2022. Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview. Salary and other facilities are subject to negotiation.  
**Chairman**

# Ronaldo doesn’t fit Bayern’s ‘philosophy’

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich chief executive Oliver Kahn said on Wednesday that making a move for Cristiano Ronaldo in the transfer market would not fit the club’s “philosophy”.

Ronaldo arrived back at Old Trafford on Tuesday ahead of talks with Ten Hag over his future.

But Europe’s top clubs, including Bayern, have not been scrapping for the Portuguese star’s signature.

“We discussed this topic – otherwise we wouldn’t be doing our job properly,” Kahn told German daily Bild.

“Personally, I think Cristiano Ronaldo is one of the greatest-ever footballers.

“But we came to the conclusion that, despite the esteem that we hold him in, he wouldn’t have fitted our philosophy at the moment.”

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## SUST student was stabbed to death by muggers

### Say police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Those who stabbed SUST student Bulbul Ahmed to death on the campus on Monday evening were all muggers, police said. Three people were arrested in this regard and produced before a Sylhet court, which sent them to jail.



The information came to light after police interrogated three suspects, one of whom was arrested. Two others were arrested afterwards, Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (North) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, told a press briefing yesterday.

The three jailed are Kamrul Ahmed, 29, Md Hasan, 19, and Abul Hossain, 19, residents of Tilagaon, a village adjacent to SUST campus.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Students walking home on a risky path from Tejgaon Girls' School and College in the capital yesterday. The roads in the area have been dug up to install underground electric lines. Locals said the work has been going on for over a week, causing distress to commuters.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Sri Lanka extends emergency

### Two protest leaders arrested

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's parliament yesterday approved the extension of a state of emergency for a month, as police said two activists who helped lead mass demonstrations that toppled the country's president were arrested on unlawful assembly charges.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa was forced to flee when tens of thousands of protesters, incensed by the island nation's unprecedented economic crisis, stormed his residence in the capital Colombo.

He later flew to Singapore and tendered his resignation while his successor Ranil Wickremesinghe declared a state of emergency and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Govt may not remove interest rate caps

Hints finance minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday indicated that the government would be unwilling to remove the interest rate cap on loans and deposits, which is expected to be a condition tagged by the International Monetary Fund with its support package.

"The IMF, the World Bank can say what they want but I think they will be in agreement with me and praise us -- this was our best decision," he told media after a meeting of the cabinet committee on purchase.

Earlier in 2020, the Bangladesh Bank capped the interest rate on loans at 9 percent and on deposits at 6 percent, rendering the market mechanism for money supply ineffective.

"Because of the interest rate cap, the economy is in a good state. If the cap

was not there, the interest rate for loans would have been 20-22 percent then and all the industries and businesses -- be it small, medium or large -- would have disappeared during the pandemic and there would have been rampant unemployment then."

Furthermore, the banking sector, particularly the private banks, which were in the red before, are now in the green. Everything is fine," Kamal added.

However, the IMF staff mission, which recently wrapped up its nine-day tour of Bangladesh, called for withdrawing the interest rate ceilings, which would help control inflation and also ease the pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

This is tipped to be one of the conditions for the financial assistance

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



AHM Mustafa Kamal

## IMF loan out of precaution

PM's principal secy says Dhaka seeking it not for bail-out

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikaus has said the country's current foreign exchange reserve can meet all types of import expenditures for more than five months.

"We have import expenditure for more than five months in our reserve whereas it is said that having more than three months' import expenditure is the symbol of a strong economy. There is no risk to us," he said.

Kaikaus was briefing reporters at his office yesterday on some "misleading news" in newspapers and other media.

The principal secretary mentioned that as per the predictions from various organisations like IMF, Word Bank, ADB and others, the world is likely to see an

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## EC 'subservient to government'

Krishak Sramik Janata League says about commission's 'overzealousness' to use EVM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League (BKSJL) yesterday said the Election Commission's over-enthusiasm for EVM indicates that it was "subservient to the government".

In a written statement submitted during talks with the commission, leaders of the party said such over-enthusiasm regarding use of electronic voting machine (EVM) made "people suspicious about the EC".

BKSJL President Abdulkader Siddiqui alleged that the commission "showed a step-motherly attitude" towards them as they allotted two hours for talks with the Awami League and BNP, but only an hour for other parties, including BKSJL.

"This proves the Election Commission has lost its neutrality," he said.

BKSJL General Secretary Habibur Rahman Talukdar said holding a free, fair and acceptable national election is not impossible under a political government.

At the dialogue, the party proposed relaxation of registration conditions for political parties. It alleged that laminating posters with plastic during electioneering increased election expenses

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Buzz Aldrin's Apollo 11 jacket sold for \$2.7m

AFP, New York



The jacket worn by US astronaut Buzz Aldrin during his 1969 flight to the Moon aboard Apollo 11 was sold at auction for \$2.7 million in New York Tuesday, Sotheby's announced.

The white jacket, adorned with an American flag, Nasa's initials, a patch for the Apollo 11 mission and the name "E. ALDRIN," is part of a personal collection of items the 92-year-old astronaut decided

to put up for sale.

"The exceptionally rare garment was chased by multiple bidders for almost ten minutes before

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

★ রেমিট্যান্স অ্যাওয়ার্ড-২০২১ ★

এর মনোনয়নের জন্য বিদেশে অবস্থিত বাংলাদেশি মালিকানাধীন অনিবাসী

এক্সচেঞ্জ হাউজ/রেমিটার প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে আবেদন আহ্বান

বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতিতে অনিবাসী বাংলাদেশি ও বৈদেশিক মুদ্রা প্রেরণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের অবদানের স্বীকৃতি প্রদান এবং বৈধ উপায়ে বিদেশ থেকে অর্থপ্রেরণকে উদ্বুদ্ধ করতে ব্যক্তিসহ বিভিন্ন এক্সচেঞ্জ হাউজ/রেমিটার প্রতিষ্ঠানকে 'বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক রেমিট্যান্স অ্যাওয়ার্ড-২০২১' প্রদান করা হবে। এ লক্ষ্যে বিদেশে অবস্থিত বাংলাদেশি মালিকানাধীন অনিবাসী এক্সচেঞ্জ হাউজ/রেমিটার প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। অনিবাসী বাংলাদেশি নাগরিকগণের ৫০% এর অধিক মালিকানা রয়েছে এমন এক্সচেঞ্জ হাউজ/রেমিটার প্রতিষ্ঠান আবেদন করতে পারবে।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইটে (<https://www.bb.org.bd>) আবেদন ও তথ্য প্রদানের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট দু'টি ফর্ম ([https://www.bb.org.bd/nrb/others/form1\\_2021.pdf](https://www.bb.org.bd/nrb/others/form1_2021.pdf)) ও ([https://www.bb.org.bd/nrb/others/form2\\_2021.pdf](https://www.bb.org.bd/nrb/others/form2_2021.pdf)) আপলোড করা হয়েছে। বিদেশে অবস্থিত অগ্রহী বাংলাদেশি মালিকানাধীন অনিবাসী এক্সচেঞ্জ হাউজ/রেমিটার প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নির্ধারিত ফর্ম যথাযথভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রাদি (স্ক্যান কপি) আগামী ১৪/০৮/২০২২ তারিখের মধ্যে [pinaki.ranjan@bb.org.bd](mailto:pinaki.ranjan@bb.org.bd) ইমেইলে প্রেরণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

অসম্পূর্ণ বা নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে প্রাপ্ত কোনো আবেদনপত্র অ্যাওয়ার্ডের জন্য বিবেচিত হবে না। অ্যাওয়ার্ডের জন্য বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

(জয়শ্রী বাগচী)

পরিচালক (এফআইডি)

ফাইন্যান্সিয়াল ইনক্লুশন ডিপার্টমেন্ট

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা

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Always in our Thoughts



Najma Dowla  
(04 October 1946 – 28 July 2021)

Today marks the First Death Anniversary of Mrs. Najma Dowla, Director of the Board of ACI Limited and its Subsidiaries since 1996.

On the day, the family members, relatives, and friends will recall fond memories they hold of late Mrs. Najma Dowla and pray for the salvation of her departed soul.

Mrs. Najma Dowla breathed her last on 28 July 2021 at the age of 75. She lived a fulfilling life as a daughter, a wife, a mother, and a friend. She was a tremendously strong woman being diligent, kind and tenacious.

Mrs. Najma Dowla was the wife of Mr. M. Anis Ud Dowla, Chairman, ACI Group.

She was also the mother of Ms. Shusmita Anis, Managing Director of ACI Formulations Limited and Vice-President of Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) and Dr. Arif Dowla, Managing Director of ACI Limited.

Najma Dowla was the daughter of late Mrs. Rawshan Khan and Mr. Nurul Islam Khan, retired as Commissioner of WAQF Administration.

May Allah grant her eternal peace in heaven.

ACI