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Mismanagement rampant at Dhaka airport

Complain passengers at CAAB's mass hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Passengers yesterday complained of mishandling of luggage and misbehaviour by staffers and employees of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and different airlines.

They, mostly migrant workers, expressed helplessness while speaking at a mass hearing at the airport in presence of top officials of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) and the airport.

CAAB organised the programme as part of its initiative to improve passenger service at the country's main airport.

SM Ishaq, a Bangladeshi migrant in Saudi Arabia for 27 years, said he visited Dhaka at least 25 times during this period.

He said he always picks Biman, the national flag carrier, for travelling home out of love for the country. "But airport and Biman staffers misbehaved with me on many occasions when I sought their assistance."

Ishaq said the migrants earn foreign currencies working hard in foreign land, but the airport and Biman officials do not show minimum respect to them in many cases.

"I urge the airport and airlines officials concerned to show some respect," he pleaded while drawing the

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A schoolgirl helps another jump across a gaping hole in the middle of a footpath in the capital's Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday. As the work for removing overhead cables and installing them underground continues, roads and footpaths across the city have been dug up, making it dangerous for pedestrians to move.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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BUSINESS

Forex volatility persists despite BB intervention

Volatility has continued to prevail in Bangladesh's foreign exchange market, with the US dollar hitting a record Tk 119 in the open market yesterday.

Meanwhile, pressure on importers over clearing bills slightly eased amid worries among bankers following the Bangladesh Bank's action against the treasury chiefs of six private banks.

Yesterday, the central bank injected \$114 million into the financial sector to reduce dollar shortages.

STORY ON B1

Parties sitting together hallmark of democracy
Says US ambassador

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas has said it is necessary for political parties to sit together despite differences of opinions.

Speaking at an event at a city hotel yesterday, he said, "Just to be clear, the US does not favour any political party in Bangladesh over any other."

The envoy said he was happy to see leaders of three major political parties -- Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party -- sitting at a table together for discussions at the event.

The programme was organised marking the launch of the e-learning platform "Politics Matters" (politicsmatters.com.bd).

USAID's "Strengthening Political Landscape" project, implemented by Democracy International, launched the platform to bring political knowledge and skills to the fingerprints of Bangladeshi political leaders and enthusiasts across the country.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud, also the Awami League joint general secretary, BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, and Jatiya Party Presidium Member Shameem Haider Patwary were present.

Haas said that since his arrival in Bangladesh, he has met many political leaders and parties, and he will continue to meet more as he wants to learn more about the country.

He happily meets political leaders individually, but he is happier to see them together -- sitting, learning and talking -- despite different political



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CHINESE LOANS
Developing countries must 'think twice'

Mustafa Kamal tells FT AGENCIES

In an interview with the Financial Times, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal has warned that countries, especially developing nations, must think twice before taking more loans through China's Belt and Road Initiative.

His comments come at a time of global inflation and slowing growth, which are acting as strains on indebted emerging markets.

Speaking to the FT, Kamal said Beijing needed to be more rigorous in evaluating its loans amid concern that poor lending decisions risked pushing countries into debt distress.

He pointed to Sri Lanka, where Chinese-backed infrastructure projects that failed to generate returns had exacerbated a severe economic crisis.

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DATA PROTECTION ACT
Latest draft too leaves room for rights abuse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The latest draft of the data protection act still provides scope for law enforcers to deny citizens the right to data protection.

Share at a meeting with the press at the Bangladesh Computer Council yesterday, it said the government can exempt certain classes of "data controllers" from following the stringent rules laid out in the law to protect citizens.

The government can make this exemption for the "prevention, identification, or investigation of any crime, for pressing charges, and for extracting unrealised taxes".

The draft, however, does not specify at length who can be exempted under such conditions, and what preventive measures there are.

It also does not mention anything about who can conduct digital forensics, and under what circumstances.

While these exemptions exist, the director-general of the data protection agency, to be set up under this draft law, can order anyone to provide them with access to their data to carry out the purposes set by the law.

"This means the director-general can access the data of anyone from Google and Amazon to the city corporations," said Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT.

"This is needed because they [DG of the data protection agency] need to be able to investigate whether the law is being followed and to investigate complaints against such organisations."

He stressed the need for storing data within the

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AI spots 'anomalies' in space

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

An artificially intelligent system has spotted a number of "anomalies" in space that could help us better understand the universe.

Researchers hope the system can be used to spot far more such space anomalies -- and help lead scientists to new supernovae and other extreme

and distant objects in space.

The new system is set to help scientists overcome the vast amount of data that comes in each day from the sky above us, picking through to find the most interesting and intriguing possible objects.

In recent decades, astronomers have struggled in part because they have too much data: the advent of large-scale surveys of the skies means that scientists are gathering vast amounts of data each night. That means there are billions of potentially interesting objects lying in wait in catalogues to be discovered by scientists.

Astronomers have therefore looked to use artificial intelligence to help sort through that vast amount of data. And in the latest study, scientists used them to find interesting objects in images of the Northern Sky that were taken using the Zwicky Transient Facility, or ZTF.

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Consolation win for Tigers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh ended the three-match ODI series against Zimbabwe with a resounding 105-run victory in the third match in Harare yesterday, but the result was hardly a reflection of their disappointing white-ball tour of the African nation.

Despite the win yesterday, Bangladesh will return from the tour with defeats in both ODI and T20I series, by the same 2-1 margin.

Afif Hossain scored an unbeaten 81-ball 85 while Anamul Haque Bijoy continued his good run of form with a 71-ball 76 but the Tigers were still found wanting with the bat as they posted a below-par 256 for nine on a good batting wicket in Harare.

However, led by pacer Mustafizur Rahman's four-for, a clinical bowling display from



Children performing on stage at the Central Shaheed Minar during a programme, organised by the Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, to celebrate International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The day is observed on August 9 every year.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

NATO MEMBERSHIP
US ratifies bids by Finland, Sweden

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden on Tuesday signed US ratification of bids by Finland and Sweden to enter Nato, taking expansion of the Western alliance in response to Russia's Ukraine invasion one step closer.

Biden said the two northern European countries would become "strong, reliable highly capable new allies" by making the "sacred commitment" to mutual defense in the US-led transatlantic alliance.

Earlier this month, the Senate voted 95-1 in favor of the Nordic states' accession, making the United States the 23rd of the 30 Nato countries to give formal endorsement. Unanimous support is needed for new membership.

Biden, who has made restoring traditional US alliances a cornerstone of his administration after Donald Trump's move to upend ties around the world, praised Nato as "the foundation of American security."

Biden also praised Finland and Sweden, saying both have "strong democratic institutions, strong militaries and strong and transparent economies" that would now bolster Nato.

President Vladimir Putin's Russia "shattered peace and security in Europe" by invading Ukraine, Biden said.

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