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Bangladesh storm into the final

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A hat-trick from skipper Sabina Khatun saw Bangladesh run riot at the Dasharath Rangasala Stadium in Kathmandu on Friday as the women in red and green put eight past Bhutan in the semifinal of the SAFF Women's Championship.

The 8-0 victory also ensured a second final berth for Bangladesh, who are set to meet Nepal in the all-important final at the same venue on September 19. Nepal beat India 1-0 in the other semifinal yesterday.

Bangladesh exposed Bhutan's high backline time and again to net goals one after another despite Bhutan captain Pema Choden having vowed to give Bangladesh some tough times on the ground.

It took only two minutes for Golam Rabbani Choton's charges to open the scoring. Availing a perfectly weighted through pass from Monika Chakma, forward Sirat Jahan Swapna

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Bangladesh captain Sabina Khatun speeds past two Bhutan players during the first semifinal of the SAFF Women's Championship at the Dasharath Rangasala Stadium in Kathmandu yesterday. Sabina scored a hatrick as Bangladesh romped to an 8-0 win to book a final berth.

PHOTO: SAFF

MYANMAR MILITARY Do more to cut its access to arms supply UN Human Rights Office urges states

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN Human Rights Office has called for the countries to do more to cut the Myanmar military's access to revenue and arms supplies to halt its repression of the people, said a report released yesterday.

The report aimed to follow up on earlier recommendations made by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (IFFM) on economic interests of the Myanmar military. The IFFM was formed after the military's brutal campaign against the Rohingyas in Rakhine State.

The campaign, which was described by the US as genocide, forced about 7.5 lakh Rohingyas into Bangladesh in 2017. In 2021, the military took over control of the country, ousting the elected government.

Since then, there were continuous conflicts between the military and pro-democracy people. About 2,000 people have been killed in the conflicts.

The UN report released yesterday reiterated the IFFM's recommendations to impose targeted financial sanctions on the Myanmar military and its economic interests as well as arms embargos.

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Sorry state of a chest clinic

No pulmonologist, running water in Khulna facility

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Nur Alom stood in front of the squalid tin-roof building and wondered if he had made a mistake, travelling all the way from his village in Bagerhat to the Chest Disease Clinic in Khulna city.

The 62-year-old farmer from Rampal had a persistent cough for a year and he came to the clinic in the hope of receiving modern treatment.

But the peeling paint and crumbling plaster of the clinic sank his heart even before he stepped inside. The front yard covered in coarse, overgrown grass makes it seem like the facility has been abandoned and allowed to slide into utter decrepitude.

"There was no doctor to see me. An employee collected phlegm for tests. And a nurse asked the employee to give me some medicines," Nur Alom told this correspondent after his brief visit to the clinic last week.

"I had to spend over Tk 600 for the trip

and I think the money has been wasted," he added.

Officials said the building was built in 1962.

According to an employee who has been working here for over 17 years, an X-ray machine has been lying idle and collecting dust for decades.

"As far as I know, the machine was never used because it is not meant to be operated under a tin roof," said the employee, requesting anonymity.

On rainy days, the floor and walls get wet because of the leaky roof. But the dankness can be felt even when it does not rain for weeks, he added.

Other employees said they only have to depend on sputum tests to detect tuberculosis because the X-ray machine is unusable.

"It is often not possible to detect TB by a sputum test. An X-ray test is much-needed," said an employee.

An estimated 300 patients visit the facility every month.

Even though it is a chest clinic, there is

no pulmonologist at the facility. A medical officer is the only doctor at the clinic. But the hospital employees say the doctor often remains absent.

Contacted, Medical Officer Tanzina Mostafa said, "Generally, I attend patients. If I am in a meeting, or on leave, my assistant sees the patients and prescribes medicines after consulting me over the phone or a video call."

The post of a junior consultant has remained vacant for the past six years. In 2017, a physician was ordered to join the clinic. But the consultant never went there, according to the officials.

The facility has 12 employees and five vacant posts.

Dilip Kumar Das, the only cleaner, said, "There is no running water in the building. I have to carry water in a bucket from a nearby pond every day."

Suzat Ahmed, civil surgeon of Khulna, said, "We are aware of the issues facing the clinic. The problem is, physicians do not want to work there. They somehow manage to get our transfer orders cancelled."

He added that a proposal has been sent to the ministry for constructing a new building and recruitment of physicians.

Khurshid Alam, director of the National TB Control Program, said steps will be taken to improve the facility.

There are 64 specialised clinics and hospitals across the country under the national programme.



SCO SUMMIT IN UZBEKISTAN Xi, Putin contest West-based order Urge world to shun 'bloc politics'; Modi calls for reliable supply chain

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping yesterday called for a shake-up of the world order as they met with Asian leaders for a summit challenging Western influence.

The meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in ex-Soviet Uzbekistan brought Putin and Xi together with the leaders of SCO members India, Pakistan, and four Central Asian nations, as well as the presidents of Iran and Turkey.

Putin and Xi met on Thursday for their first face-to-face talks since the start of the conflict in Ukraine, and on the Chinese leader's first trip abroad since the early days of the coronavirus pandemic.

The summit has been put forward as an alternative to "Western centric organisations", at a time of increasing pressure on Moscow over Ukraine and growing anger in Beijing over US support for Taiwan.

Xi told leaders at the summit that it was time to reshape the international system and "abandon zero-sum games and bloc politics".

Leaders should "work together to promote the development of the international order in a more just and rational direction," Xi said.

Putin hailed the growing influence of countries

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BNP supporters at a rally in the capital's Dholaikhal yesterday. The Dhaka Metropolitan South unit of the party organised the rally to protest the increase in prices of daily necessities and the recent deaths of BNP men allegedly in police firing.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Fiji to hire more workers from Bangladesh

JAMIL MAHMUD

Fiji has emerged as a potential destination for Bangladeshi migrant workers with job opportunities opening up for foreign workers in various sectors including construction, garment and agriculture.

Due to a shortage in its own workforce, Fiji is currently hiring foreign workers, according to the Bangladesh high commission in Canberra, Australia.

The mission in Canberra provides consular service to Bangladeshis in Fiji as Bangladesh does not have a mission office there.

It is possible to send about 700 to 1,000 Bangladeshi workers to Fiji each year, said Md Salahuddin, counsellor (labour) at the Bangladesh high commission in Canberra.

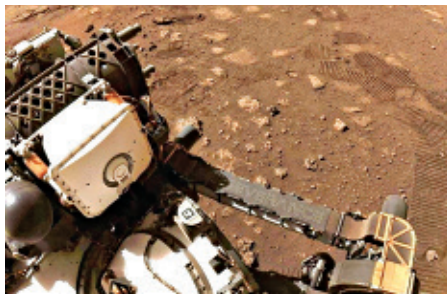
"At present, there is demand for foreign workers in Fiji and Bangladeshis remain a top priority," he told this newspaper yesterday over phone.

In the past nine months, about 200 to 250 Bangladeshi workers have gone to Fiji for work, he added.

Construction companies in Fiji have been making applications to take workers from Bangladesh, according to a report published in Fijian news portal fijiivillage.com recently. The report quoted Aiyaz Sayed Khaiyum, Fiji's attorney-

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Mars rover sees hints of past life in rock samples



AFP, Washington

Nasa's Perseverance Mars rover has detected its highest concentrations yet of organic molecules, in a potential signal of ancient microbes that scientists are eager to confirm when the rock samples are eventually brought to Earth.

While organic matter has been found on the Red Planet before, the new discovery is seen as especially promising because it came from an area where sediment and salts were deposited into a lake -- conditions where life could have arisen.

"It is very fair to say that these are going to be, these already are, the most valuable rock samples that have ever been collected," David Shuster, a Perseverance return sample scientist, told reporters during a briefing.

Organic molecules -- compounds made primarily of carbon that usually include hydrogen and oxygen, but also at times other elements -- are not always created by biological processes.

Further analysis and conclusions will have to wait for the Mars Sample Return mission -- a collaboration between Nasa and the European Space Agency (ESA) to bring back the rocks that is set for 2033.

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World stocks extend losses on fears of recession

AFP, London

Stock markets fell further yesterday as weak UK retail sales data and a dire warning from global shipping giant FedEx fuelled fears of recession.

Equities were already struggling this week after data showed US inflation slowed but not as much as expected, fuelling fears of aggressive monetary tightening by central banks.

Investors worry that central banks will move too aggressively to tame inflation through rate hikes that could put the brakes on economic growth.

Wall Street stocks slunk lower after FedEx reported on Thursday that it has shipped fewer packages than expected over the summer due to weakness in the global economy.

The company said it was closing stores, freezing hiring and parking aircraft, while warning of a big earnings hit, with its CEO Raj Subramaniam telling CNBC he expects a global recession.

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