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Delhi has total support for Hasina

Indian foreign secretary calls on PM, reaffirms deeper development, economic ties

STAR REPORT

Visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra has said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has the total support of his country. "We have total support for you and your leadership," a PMO spokesperson quoted him as telling the premier during his meeting with her at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

Hasina said Bangladesh considered India as a trusted friend, and expressed hope that this friendship would deepen further.

Briefing the media after the meeting, Prime Minister's Speechwriter Md Nazrul Islam said Kwatra told Hasina that his country would stand by Bangladesh in its development endeavours, including political and economic progress.

He said the Indian foreign secretary invited the PM to the 18th G20 Summit, scheduled to be held in New Delhi on September 9-10.

Hasina accepted the invitation and thanked her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, the current chair of the G20, for inviting Bangladesh as a "guest country" to all its meetings.

The top bureaucrat of the Indian foreign office described Dhaka-New Delhi ties to be "very firm" and said the entire world now valued the relationship as it reached a strategic level.

"This relationship is being strengthened further," he added.

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Visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday. Kwatra invited the prime minister to attend the 18th G20 Summit in New Delhi on September 9-10.

PHOTO: BSS

Erosion of democracy to limit US cooperation

Says US State Department Counsellor Chollet, expresses commitment to strengthening ties with Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

If democracy in any country, including Bangladesh, erodes, it limits the US's ability to cooperate with that country, US State Department Counsellor Derek Chollet has said.

"It doesn't mean we won't cooperate. It doesn't mean our relationship won't be important. But it just will be a limiting factor when it comes to business investment," he said during a meeting in Dhaka yesterday.

Chollet, an official of the rank of undersecretary who led a high-level seven-member delegation to Dhaka, said US companies want transparency, rule of law, and accountability when comes to investing in a country.

In general, US-Bangladesh relationship has great potential and that is why there has been a consistent stream of officials visiting Bangladesh, he said in the meeting with a group of senior journalists at the American Centre in Dhaka.

Chollet arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday



evening and called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, and other officials. In the afternoon, he interacted with senior journalists.

He said Bangladesh is a development success story from the region and has done a great job by sheltering more than a million Rohingyas. The US is committed to strengthening the ties with Bangladesh as with other countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

At meetings with the top leaders of Bangladesh, he stressed the importance of democracy, free and fair elections, freedom of the press, and a strong civil society.

Asked what may happen if there were no free and fair elections in Bangladesh, Chollet said he does not want to speculate.

"I have confidence there can be a free and fair election. The government has said they want to have a free and fair election. We've made no secret of the concerns we

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TORONTO CRASH

3 Bangladeshi students killed

Kumar Bishwajit's son in critical condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The son of celebrated singer Kumar Bishwajit is in a critical condition after he was involved in a road accident in Canada's Toronto that also killed three other Bangladeshi students on Monday night.

The deceased -- Shahriar Khan, Angela Barai, and Aryan Dipta -- were in a car that was being driven by the singer's son Kumar Nibir, Canadian journalist Shaogat Ali Sagar told The Daily Star.

They were students of Humber College in Toronto.

Shahriar and Aryan died on the spot and Angela passed away at a hospital.

"The vehicle was at speed. The driver lost control while exiting a highway and entering another. After hitting the guard rails, the vehicle flipped and then caught fire," Sagar said.

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POWER SUPPLY DURING SUMMER

At least \$4.45b needed to cover fuel costs

Says PDB's conservative estimate

ASIFUR RAHMAN

At least \$4.45 billion is needed in fuel costs to ensure adequate power supply from February to June, when demand is set to increase by more than 50 percent, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) estimates.

The amount could exceed \$5 billion if the power import bill from Indian Adani Power and the payment to Chevron, which operates the biggest gas field in Bangladesh, are factored in, according to PDB officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The months of February through June see heightened demand for electricity given the summer heat and Boro irrigation season.

And this year, Ramadan is scheduled to take place during the period, so an uninterrupted power supply is expected to ease the demands of monthlong fasting.

Subsequently, PDB estimates 15,000-16,000 megawatts would be needed in a day during the five months. In January, electricity production was around 7,000 to



TOTAL POWER GENERATION CAPACITY 23,482MW

TARGET FOR SUMMER 16,000MW

- From gas 6,240MW
- Coal 2,865MW
- Furnace Oil and Diesel 5,050MW
- Hydro/Renewable 60MW
- Import 1,785MW

10,000 megawatts a day, according to PDB data.

Last year, the highest production was in April: 14,778 MW.

"We might not be able to get rid of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

GENERATION EQ
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Momen seeks US support for Rab's capacity building

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday sought US support for increasing capacity building of Rab when visiting US State Department Counsellor Derek Chollet acknowledged improvement in performance of the force.

The foreign ministry issued a statement in this regard after Chollet had a meeting with Momen.

Chollet, who serves as a senior policy adviser to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, led a seven-member delegation at the meeting.

The foreign ministry statement said the US side acknowledged Rab's improved performance but emphasised on its sustained reforms while the force is now under a sanction imposed by Washington.

SEE PAGE II COL 4

Underprivileged freedom fighters get homes

PM hands over keys

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday handed over keys of 5,000 houses built under the government's 'Bir Nabish' project for underprivileged freedom fighters.

The liberation war affairs ministry organised the ceremony at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium where the PM joined virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

The houses are being given to the valiant freedom fighters as a gift from the PM as per her announcement on the occasion of Mujib Borsha, the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the celebration of 50 years of Bangladesh's independence.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the Tk 4,122cr project on March 21 last year.

Under the project, 30,000 houses will be built for insolvent freedom fighters, Birangana (women freedom fighters), widows and children of martyred and late freedom fighters.



Counsellor of the US Department of State Derek Chollet pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

Russia declares battlefield gains

Ukrainian forces retreated in Luhansk

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia said yesterday it had broken through two fortified Ukrainian defence lines on the eastern front, as Kyiv described conditions there as difficult and Western allies announced more military aid, including increased supplies of artillery rounds.

The Russian Defence Ministry said the Ukrainians had retreated in the face of Russian attacks in the Luhansk region, although it gave no details.

"During the offensive ... the Ukrainian troops randomly retreated to a distance of up to 3 km (1.9 miles) from the previously occupied lines," the ministry said on the Telegram messaging app.

"Even the more fortified second line of defence of the enemy could not hold the breakthrough of the Russian military."

The ministry did not specify in which part of the Luhansk region the offensive took place. The ministry added that its

"Southern group", backed by artillery, was waging an offensive in the direction of Donetsk.

President Volodymyr Zelensky's office said Ukrainian forces had repelled some Russian attacks in Luhansk but added: "The situation in the region remains difficult."

Luhansk regional governor Serhiy Haidai said Russia was pouring heavy equipment and mobilised troops into Luhansk.

The Kremlin has intensified attacks across a swathe of southern and eastern Ukraine in recent weeks, and a major new offensive has been widely anticipated.

Russia's main effort has been focused on the town of Bakhmut in Donetsk province adjacent to Luhansk.

The Ukrainian military said its units repelled Russian attacks in the areas of more than 20 settlements, including Bakhmut and Vuhledar - a town 150 km southwest of Bakhmut.

Delhi has total support for Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina said both countries can work on the socio-economic development of their peoples.

Kwatra said New Delhi was trying to make the terms and conditions of Indian Line of Credit (LoC) easier so that Bangladesh could avail the credit and repay it easily.

He said the currencies of the two countries could be used to run bilateral trade and businesses.

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary M Tofazzel Hossain Miah, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma were present.

Earlier in the day, the Indian foreign secretary held Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) with his Bangladeshi counterpart Masud Bin Momen, reports The Hindu.

The foreign secretaries of the two countries led their respective delegations to the FOC held at the

Foreign Service Academy.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed bilateral partnership, including political, security, trade, investment, defence, connectivity, water, power and sub-regional cooperation, the Indian high commission in Dhaka tweeted.

They also agreed to maintain close engagement in the context of Bangladesh's participation in the 18th G20 Summit as a guest country.

The last FOC was held on January 29, 2021, in New Delhi.

Also yesterday, Kwatra called on Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and held "productive exchange of views on further strengthening the wide-ranging partnership between India and Bangladesh", according to tweets by the Indian high commission.

Speaking to reporters at the Foreign Service Academy, Foreign Secretary Masud said India has assured Bangladesh of extending

its cooperation for importing hydropower from Nepal and Bhutan through its territories, reports UNB.

He said during the FOC they also discussed the "practical problem" in terms of transmission lines inside Bangladesh as there is a need for expanding the transmission network and boosting its capacity.

Masud said India will help Bangladesh if any specific project is taken up for expanding the transmission network and boosting its capacity within Bangladesh to supply electricity smoothly.

Bangladesh will also explore whether Indian LoCs can be used if any specific project is taken up in consultation with the ministry concerned for the expansion of transmission lines inside Bangladesh.

The Indian foreign secretary arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday evening on an official visit to Bangladesh at the invitation of Masud.

3 Bangladeshi students killed

FROM PAGE 1

Local media outlet CP24, citing the Highway Safety Division of Canada's Ontario Provincial Police, reported that the accident took place at 11:30pm (local time) on Monday.

Nibir, who was taken to Intensive Care Unit, was in a critical condition as of yesterday.

He was badly injured, with burns on several parts of his body. He underwent a surgery yesterday and was in need of two more, according to his family members.

After hearing the news, Kumar Bishwajit and his wife Naima Sultana departed for Canada. The singer also asked his fans for their best wishes and prayers for his son.

Death toll climbs above 41,000

FROM PAGE 16

Tourism Minister Nuri Ersoy told a news conference in Malatya, some 160 km from the epicentre of the earthquake.

Across the border, in Syria, relief efforts have been hampered by a civil war that has splintered the country and divided regional and global powers.

Though a single border crossing from Turkey to Syria was open after the quake, the UN did not send aid through for days, citing logistical issues.

"The situation is really tragic," Abdulrahman Mohammad, a displaced Syrian originally from the neighbouring province of Aleppo, said in Idlib, in the country's northwest, where many had found

refuge in the past decade from other war-torn provinces.

Parts of the provinces of Idlib and adjacent Aleppo held by Turkey-backed rebels suffered the bulk of the quake's casualties in Syria: over 4,400 of a death toll of more than 5,800, according to the United Nations and government authorities.

"Anyone who is working as a labourer and renting a house... If you need \$10 a day in expenses and you can barely get that - how are you supposed to rebuild?" Mohammad, originally from Aleppo, said.

Further to the north, in Jandaris, rescuers said they had not found anyone alive under the rubble since February 9 but continued to search. Residents said there were still people trapped.

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INTERCITY NID copies compulsory from March 1 for rail travel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It will be compulsory for passengers to have copies of their identification cards while travelling on intercity trains from March 1 to keep black marketing and unauthorised travel in check, the railways minister said yesterday.

As part of an upgraded ticketing system, all passengers will have to register their NID cards or birth certificates with Bangladesh Railway (BR), Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan said at a press briefing at the Railway Bhawan.

People will be able to register using NID, birth registration or passport using BR's system from tomorrow. No one will be allowed to buy tickets for intercity trains without pre-registration from March 1, he said.

The railway authorities will also set up a help desk at major stations to facilitate this transition from next week.

Railway staffers will, for the first time, use POS (point of sales) machines to check the matter and issue tickets on board for those travelling without tickets, he said.

People with leprosy left out of economic growth

Says UN expert
Alice Cruz

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of persons with leprosy in Bangladesh indicates that the country's outstanding economic growth is not reaching the entire population, UN expert Alice Cruz said yesterday.

She urged the government to increase budgetary allocations, undertake awareness campaigns, and ensure equal treatment facilities for leprosy patients at public hospitals.

"The problem is in the multiple layers of systemic exclusion, structural discrimination and institutional neglect in Bangladesh," said the UN's Special Rapporteur

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DIPAN NANDY

It's been more than a century since he won the Nobel Prize in literature and 82 years since he passed away. However, Rabindranath Tagore remains alive in the minds of readers. Be it poetry, songs, novels, short stories or plays, the works of Rabindranath Tagore are forever etched in their minds.

This was evident in this year's book fair as well, as booklovers are thronging the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela to buy his much-celebrated literary pieces.

Anamika Roy, a student at Dhaka University, was seen purchasing "Gitanjali" from the sales executive of Puthiniloy's pavilion at the Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

"Rabindranath's words are magical. I especially find it interesting how intricate human feelings are depicted in his tales. His works influence me to dream and to be strong even in the darkest of times. That's the main reason I am still

AMAR EKUSHEY BOI MELA

Rabindranath: timeless echoes

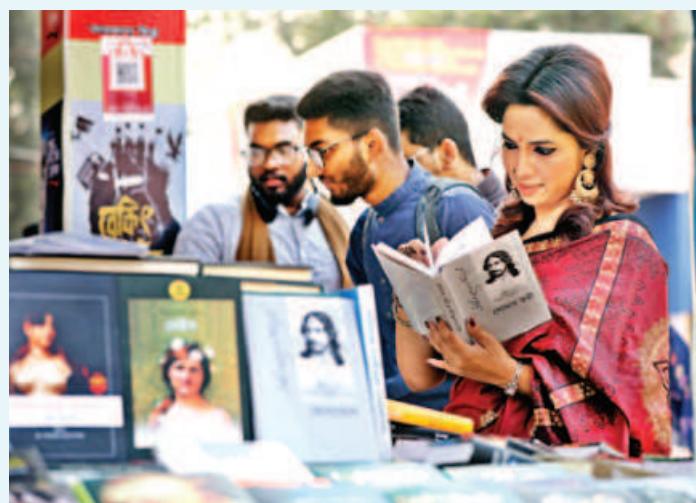


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

reading his books," she said.

Puthiniloy published a series of books by Rabindranath Tagore, titled "Rabindranath in book pocket". They published all the novels in 26 parts. All the short stories of Rabindranath are published in 13 parts. The other set of his poems, dramas and songs was published in 11 parts.

Abdul Hanif, sales executive of the pavilion, said, "There is a huge demand for the books. The sales of 'Shesher Kabita', 'Gitanjali' and 'Shonar Tori' are extremely high."

Publication house Oitijhya published Rabindra-Rachanabali in 30 volumes. The books are edited by Prof Syed Akram Hossain of

Dhaka University's Bangla department.

Amjad Hossen Kajol, manager of Oitijhya, said, "People still love Rabindranath's works. Our sales are solid."

Pathak Shamabesh published "Rabindra Samagro" in 25 volumes.

Shams Shuvro, manager of the Pathak Shamabesh, said, "The first 18 volumes are like the Bishwa Bharati edition. The other seven volumes include the English works of Rabindranath, the letters of Rabindranath, rare photographs and paintings of Rabindranath."

"We also sell a single volume. For the readers, we are offering a three to twelve months EMI system for buying all the volumes," he added.

"Rabindranath is relevant for all ages in his thought and spirit," said young poet-writer Pias Majid, in response to why Rabindranath's books are still being sold.

According to Bangla Academy, 84 new books were published at the fair yesterday.

NHRC being in lower category not 'honourable' Says commission's chair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Being a category "B" human-rights institution is not "honourable" for the National Human Rights Commission, said Dr Kamal Uddin Ahmed, the new chairperson of NHRC, at a webinar yesterday.

All the national human rights institutions of the world are categorised in a global ranking by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), from which the commissions must get accreditation.

The GANHRI indexes the institutions in "A" and "B" categories according to how compliant they are to the Paris Principles – a set of minimum standards that all national human rights institutions must operate by. The principles are decreed by the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Category A institutions are fully compliant with the principles, and category B institutions are partially compliant. The national institutions of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are category B, while those of India and Nepal are category A.

One of the limitations is the founding law of the NHRC, the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009, which restricts the commission from investigating any law enforcement agency, including the police and Rab.

DR KAMAL UDDIN AHMED
NHRC Chairperson

He said they are trying to change the law.

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) organised the webinar to exchange dialogue with the new chairperson.

Speakers from different human-rights organisations commented that the NHRC must devise methods to work around the legal restrictions that prevent it from exercising its role fully.

They added that the commission must take steps to make sure that they are exercising whatever power they have been given.

ASK Executive Director Nur Khan Liton pointed out that the nature of enforced disappearance has changed; victims are no longer being permanently disappeared. Rather, law enforcers are temporarily disappearing victims by picking them up and keeping them in illegal detention for over 24 hours before showing them as arrested.

ASK Programme Director Nina Goswami moderated the event.

A ray of hope for kidney patients

Prof Towhid's dialysis, transplant centre providing free treatment to the underprivileged



PHOTO: STAR

MD ABBAS

Md Shahajahan, a 23-year-old resident of Begumganj upazila in Noakhali, was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease in 2017. Following a thorough examination, doctors advised him to start dialysis treatment.

In 2018, he began his dialysis treatment, initially at a local hospital. However, to cover the expenses, he had to sell all the property he inherited from his father, leaving only his house.

In 2020, Shahajahan moved to Dhaka and began receiving dialysis services from the National Institute of Kidney Diseases & Urology (NIKDU). He requires two dialysis sessions per week, each of which costs Tk 2,900.

His monthly cost for dialysis,

including the expenses for medication, amounts to at least Tk 50,000. Despite his financial difficulties, he continued with his dialysis treatment until the end of 2021. However, at the beginning of 2022, he contemplated discontinuing the treatment due to financial strain.

Later, he came in contact with Prof Dr Towhid Hossain, a retired professor from the National Institute of Kidney Diseases & Urology, who has been providing free dialysis services to underprivileged patients for the last one and a half years.

"I told Towhid Sir everything. He managed free dialysis services for me. Since then, I'm getting free dialysis treatment and now I'm doing good," Shahajahan shared with The Daily Star.

Thirty-year-old Kamrul Islam has also been availing of free dialysis services from Prof Towhid for the past eight months.

Kamrul and his wife Sharmin Akhter moved to Dhaka from Bhola after learning about Prof Towhid's services. Since then, Kamrul has been receiving free dialysis. The couple was also provided with free accommodation in Dhaka.

Expressing her gratitude, Sharmin said, "If Prof Towhid did not help us, my husband's treatment might have stopped."

Around 113 underprivileged dialysis patients are receiving completely free dialysis services from Prof Towhid, who is currently a doctor at North Bengal Hospital in Sirajganj.

To cater to the demands of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

We plan to purchase four acres of land within a mile's distance from the current centre. Hopefully, we will be able to set up the hospital within two years.

DR TOWHID HOSSAIN



Bangladesh Advancing Development and Growth through Energy (BADGE)

বাংলাদেশ ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল সেক্টর ইন্ডেস্ট্রিয়াল কেন্দ্রে প্রকল্পটি বাংলাদেশ আড়াক্ষণিক কেন্দ্রের অধীন রয়েছে। এর বাস্তুত বাংলাদেশ আড়াক্ষণিক কেন্দ্রের অধীন রয়েছে। কামিজেটি এবং হাইকোম্পানি, অ্যারজেনক একাডেমি, বাংলাদেশ ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল কেন্দ্রের অধীন রয়েছে। এবং মাত্র মেডিক্যাল প্রতিষ্ঠান বাংলাদেশ ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল কেন্দ্রের অধীন রয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, মুসলিম মাদ্রাসা এবং মানবিক ক্ষেত্রে কাজ করে থাকে। এবং মাত্র মেডিক্যাল প্রতিষ্ঠান বাংলাদেশ ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল কেন্দ্রের অধীন রয়েছে।

Solicitation of Notice of Funding Opportunity

Tetra Tech ES, Inc. is the implementing organization of the Bangladesh Advancing Development and Growth through Energy (BADGE) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Tetra Tech announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity. In this regard, Tetra Tech is requesting for Grant Applications from local grass-root organizations and community groups, local entrepreneurs, private companies, non-profits, academia, research and development institutions, and women-led organizations that are working in energy access, clean energy, energy efficiency, improving quality and reliability of supply, and modern energy services. For details, please visit Tender/EOI section of www.bdjobs.com.



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22-25 February 2023

12:00 - 20:00 (Last day till 19:30)
ICCB International Convention
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VISITOR Pre-registration



[IPF - Bangladesh](#)

*Children under 16 are not admitted to entry.

A STUNNING RETURN



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Kohinoor
Dastgir's
death anniv

STAR REPORT

The sixth death anniversary of Kohinoor Dastgir, wife of former ambassador Maj Gen Quazi Golam Dastgir, will be observed today [February 16], said a press release.

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



Road Transport Act

FROM PAGE 5
of road safety, which was outlined by the United Nations action plan for road safety. However, the government did not put emphasis on that," he added.

Furthermore, the WHO stated that slowing down, wearing seat belts, wearing proper helmets, not driving drunk, and providing special seats for children would reduce accident rates and casualties.

About 23,166 people die in road accidents annually in Bangladesh, according to the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research.

"There is an ongoing

controversy on the accident statistics. If we count the government stats, it shows that Bangladesh is a better country than Sweden in road safety. Is it believable?" said Shariful Alam, country representative of the road-safety programme of Global Health Advocacy Incubator.

Secretary General of National Heart Foundation Prof Khondker Abdul Awal Rizvi, who presided over the programme, said all the countries made their roads safer day by day, but in Bangladesh, the scenario is the opposite.

"We need to establish a dedicated authority that will have power and money

to make all the decisions on road safety issues," he said.

Prothom Alo journalist Sohrab Hassan said the transport sector is the most indisciplined one in the country. He suggested providing a driver a designated time to rest for at least eight hours a day.

Journalist Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul conducted the dialogue, while President of Bangladesh Orthopaedic Society Prof Monayem Hossain, Secretary General Prof Md Jahangir Alam, and journalists from different media outlets were present.

People with leprosy

FROM PAGE 3
on the elimination of discrimination against leprosy patients and their family members, while addressing a press conference in Dhaka.

At the press conference, she shared her eight day field-visit experience in Bogura and Nilphamari and highlighted the obstacles to eliminating leprosy from the country.

She also called for draft anti-discrimination laws to formally recognise leprosy – also known as Hansen's disease – as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

Bangladesh has the fifth highest number of leprosy cases in the world, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), with relevant data indicating

ongoing transmission, late diagnosis, and gaps in the health system.

"Government officials at the district level lack proper knowledge about leprosy, while the issue has remained unaddressed in the government's action plan," said Cruz.

Leprosy patients are often ostracised in society and their families are also subjected to discriminatory attitudes," she added.

During her visit, Cruz met members of the government, representatives of civil society organisations, healthcare workers, and leprosy patients.

She will submit a report on her visit to Bangladesh to the Human Rights Council in June 2023.

A ray of hope

FROM PAGE 3
growing number of underprivileged dialysis patients and to establish the service as an institutional form, Prof Towhid, with the support of the Center for Zakat Management (CZM), launched a kidney dialysis and transplant centre at the beginning of this month.

The newly-launched kidney dialysis and transplant centre, situated at Hazratpur in Dhaka's Keraniganj, is a two-storey building that houses eight modern dialysis machines capable of providing services to 60 patients.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, former advisor to a caretaker government and advisor to CZM advisory

board, inaugurated the centre as the chief guest yesterday.

Although the centre can provide dialysis services to 60 patients, they are currently operating at half its capacity, as they only have 30 donors as of yet.

"This is the only institution in the country that provides completely free dialysis services to patients, with no ticketing costs," Prof Towhid said.

The centre also offers free medical examinations and medications, he mentioned.

Prof Towhid also shared his vision to establish a modern hospital dedicated to kidney dialysis and transplantation with a capacity of 1,000 patients.

"We plan to purchase four acres of land within a mile's distance from the current centre. Hopefully, we will be able to set up the hospital within two years," he added.

6th Death Anniversary



The Sixth Death Anniversary of Mrs. Kohinoor Dastgir, w/o of former Ambassador Major General Quazi Golam Dastgir, KAAO, psc, will be observed on Thursday, February 16, 2023. Relatives,

friends and well-wishers are requested to pray for her.

30TH
CHATTOGRAM
INTERNATIONAL
TRADE FAIR
2023

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

16th February 2023

at 3:00 PM

Venue : Railway Pologround

Chittagong

Chief Guest

Dr. Hasan Mahmud MP

Hon'ble Minister
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI

Special Guests

Mr. Md. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury

Hon'ble Mayor
Chittagong City Corporation

Mr. M. A. Latif MP

Hon'ble Former President, CCCI
& Member, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Shipping

Mr. Md. Jashim Uddin

Hon'ble President
The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of

Commerce & Industry (FBCCI)

Chaired by :

Mahbubul Alam

President, CCCI



Organized by

'We hope China will help repatriate Rohingyas'

Says State Minister Enamur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief Enamur Rahman yesterday expressed hope that China will help to repatriate Rohingya people.

Enamur made the comments after a meeting with the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen at the ministry's office at Bangladesh Secretariat.

"We hope China will play an important role in repatriating forcefully displaced Rohingya people to Myanmar," said Enamur.

Lack of political

FROM PAGE 5
and regional autonomy, said Asadullah Tareq, general secretary of Oikya

National Samajtantrik Dal, said there is no scope for further delay, as the fire in the hearts of the people of the hill tracts to achieve their rights have been kept alive through generations.

"Jana Samhati Samity will not back out when it comes to achieving our people's rights and the implementation of the Peace Accord," said Dipayan Khisa, member of the information and circulation division, Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samity.

The discussion was chaired by Sadhuram Tripura, central member of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samity. Monira Tripura, staff member of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samity, Nazmul Haque Prodhan, general

Urging Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to take necessary steps to implement the treaty properly, Nazmul Haque Prodhan, general

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The schedule of the items with terms and conditions (hard copy) can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (2nd floor) of the University up to 06.03.2023 during office hours (up to 03:00 p.m.) on working days. The schedule of item no. b&c will also be available in the e-tender process (<http://etender.ewu.edu.bd>). The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is Tk.500/- (excluding online service charge for e-tender process).

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule by 07.03.2023 within 02:00 p.m. Hard copy of the tender must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the Office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. Tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on the same day (07.03.2023) at 02:30 p.m. at the Conference Room (4th floor, Room No # 508) of East West University in presence of the bidders (if any) by ensuring health safety.

The bidders must mention the "name of the item" at the top of envelop. Otherwise, the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics

জাতীয় চক্ৰকলা প্ৰকল্প ২০২৩

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মহিলা বিষয়ক অধিদল, কুমিল্লা

তাৰিখ: ১৫/০২/২০২৩ খ্রি

দৰগতি বিভক্তি

মহিলা বিষয়ক অধিদলৰ কুমিল্লা চে-সেন্টারৰ সিভিল শিক্ষণৰ জন্য মাসিক ভিত্তিকে এক টানা ১২ (বাৰা) মাসেৰ জন্য (সৱনাৰী ছুটিৰ বাবে বাটীত) শাল ভবানি সৱনাৰাহেৰ নতুন পিকারীৰ নিয়োগৰ নিমিত্তে নিয়েয়োক শৰ্ষ সাংগৰেক সৱনাৰাহ আহুন কৰা যাব।

০১। একুশে প্ৰতিষ্ঠান ও সৱনাৰাহকীনৰ বাবে হাস্পাতাল টেক্স সাইনেল, হাস্পাতাল আৰাকৰ অভিযোগ, ভাটী, রেজিস্ট্ৰেশন সার্ভিসেক কোচে কোচে সৱনাৰাহেৰ নতুন পিকারীৰ বাবে নথি দেওয়া

MEHAZABIEN pushes forward

Mehazabien Chowdhury is well known for making headlines for her diverse selection of characters. From playing a police officer to donning the role of a greedy nurse—the talented actress knows how to blend into her roles effortlessly.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

This year, she has delivered two stellar performances in Vicky Zahed's projects, *Kajoler Din Ratri* and *The Silence*.

In conversation with The Daily Star, the actress opens up about her upcoming projects, and much more.

People have been loving your performance in 'The Silence'. How are you enjoying their feedback?

My greatest achievement is that my fans and co-artistes have responded positively to *The Silence*. I cannot put into words how much this means to me. My fellow co-artistes have also penned appreciative notes about my performance. All of this encourages me to pursue my passion more diligently in the future.

How challenging was it for you to play Ruby in the project?

Ruby was a complex, multi-layered character. I had to change my look for the role and had to stay silent throughout the series. It's really hard to convey a character's thoughts and feelings using just expressions, while staying silent. However, I got into the character while shooting and the end product is something that I am proud of.

What kind of response did your new look receive?

Everybody loved my new look in *The Silence*, it was something that created a lasting impression on the audience's mind.

Vicky Zahed is one of those directors who likes innovating and experimenting with their projects. He always keeps in mind what



intrigues the audience, and how to surprise them.

Many have written screenplays and characters with you in mind. How does that make you feel?

It feels surreal that everybody loves me so much that they try to make room for me in their projects. I am thankful to them for always believing in my skills.

Do you believe that you're a complete artiste?

I don't know whether I am a complete artiste or not, but I do believe that I take my art very seriously. Acting is my love and passion. Whenever I do something, I try to deliver my best, so that the outcome is brilliant.

How did your family feel about 'The Silence'?

It is very hard to please my family members with my acting. However, when they truly like something, they do give me a lot of praise. They enjoyed *The Silence* a lot, and they are hoping for a second season of the Binge series.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

'I am so proud of you', says Arnob to Pritom

The second season of Coke Studio Bangla was off to a flying start as the first song, *Murir Tin*, was released. The song, which features dialects from Chattogram, Sylhet and Khulna, was received well by the audience.

Coke Studio Bangla also arrived at 6 locations in four divisions, making it a countrywide celebration. New gen musician Pritom Hasan is a part of this season's CSB – he performed at Dhaka's Rabindra Sarobar alongside Shayan Chowdhury Arnob himself.

"Thank you Coke Studio Bangla for letting me be on stage with Arnob bhai", wrote Pritom on his verified Facebook page.

Arnob, who shared a wonderful medley with Pritom, was visibly impressed by his performance. "Thank god you were there, you were absolutely brilliant! I am so proud of you", wrote the renowned singer-songwriter on that post.

Pori, Razz celebrate son's 'Mukhe Bhaat'



Pori Moni is usually active on social media when it comes to sharing the wonderful moments of her life. The actress had recently been out celebrating Valentine's Day and Pohela Phalgun with her lovely family.

Just earlier this month, the celebrity couple of Pori Moni and Sarif Islam Razz celebrated six months of their first-born child, Rajya.

On this special occasion, the star couple arranged the ceremony of his *Mukhe Bhaat*.

Pori Moni shared the pictures of the event, where she, Razz and Rajya are sharing their love with underprivileged children. Pori was also spotted serving food to the children.

NEWS

Debate over presidential polls 'unnecessary'

FROM PAGE 16

district judge, as the president-elect.

Many pointed out that the ACC law stipulated that at the end of a person's tenure, a commissioner shall not be eligible to hold any profitable office in the service of the republic. And the president's position was an office of profit.

"If anyone tries to raise an irrelevant debate over the head of state, it is unexpected," the CEC said while talking to reporters at his office.

Habibul Awal said the ACC law says at the end of a person's tenure, a commissioner shall not be eligible to get appointment to any profitable office in the service of the republic.

"There is a difference between an

appointment and being elected. He [Shahabuddin] is not appointed by anyone, rather he is elected."

The CEC added that many were not bringing up the issue of his election; rather they were saying that he was given a position that is an office of profit.

Talking about office of profit, Habibul Awal said he was aware of the High Court verdict in the case of Abu Bakar Siddique vs Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in 1996.

"Operative part of the verdict clearly mentioned that election of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was completely legal. The discussion part [of the verdict] said the president of Bangladesh holds office of profit,

but it is not an office of profit in the service of the republic.

"So, creating confusion by giving different opinions regarding it [the election] is unnecessary", he commented.

Meanwhile, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin yesterday said there is no scope for raising any question about Shahabuddin's election as president. "It is absolutely legal and it is irrelevant to raise any questions."

Speaking to reporters at his office, he said the post of president is not an office of profit.

The HC judgment in 1996 categorically said that the post of president is not an office of profit, the attorney general added.

Arsa, 9 other armed groups found active

FROM PAGE 16

According to reports, 10 miscreants

groups are currently active in Rohingya camps. Among them, Arsa is active in Ukhia, Balukhali, Palangkhali and Whykong; RSO and Master Munna gangs in Ukhia and Palongkhali; Islami Mahaj and Jabu dacoit gangs in Whykong and Chakma dacoit gangs, Nabi Hussain dacoit gang, Putia dacoit gang, Salman Shah dacoit gang, Khaled dacoit gang are active in Nayapara camp.

Noting that Arsa controls most of the camps, the report said Arsa and Nabi Hussain dacoit gang often engaged in clashes over dominance resulting in incidents of murders. The report highlights the criminal activities that took place in 2021

and 2022. The overall crime appears to have decreased to some extent. However, during this period, the number of murders has increased. In 2021, 22 murder incidents took place. In 2022, the number of murder incidents was 32.

Meanwhile, the number of thefts and robberies decreased from 77 in 2021 to 75 in 2022, shootings from 51 to 18, kidnappings from 173 to 86, internal feuds from 11 to one, drug incidents from 268 to 249 and other crimes from 567 to 553.

The report mentions that 222 fire incidents occurred from January 2021 to December 2022. 99 of these are accidental, 60 were sabotage and 63 incidents were unknown.

In the report, it was said that Rohingya areas are vulnerable to HIV/

AIDS, hepatitis C, diphtheria, etc. So far, 710 HIV-positive people have been detected in Cox's Bazar and 612 of them are Rohingya.

As of December 22, 61 Rohingya have died of HIV. More than 5 thousand Rohingya women are engaged in sex work in various hotels in Cox's Bazar.

The report also said, 95 babies are born every day in Rohingya camps. In 2025, the Rohingya population could grow to 12-13 lakh, the report said.

Ruling Awami League MP Shubid Ali Bhuja, chief of the parliamentary body presided over the meeting. Committee members Muhammad Faruk Khan, Md Ilyas Uddin Mollah and Md Nasir Uddin participated in the meeting.

India probing into BBC's tax structure

FROM PAGE 16

western state of Gujarat during riots in 2002 in which at least 1,000 people were killed, most of them Muslims, though activists put the toll at more than twice that number.

The government last month dismissed the documentary, "India: The Modi Question", as propaganda and blocked its streaming and sharing on social media. The foreign ministry said last month the documentary was meant to push a

"discredited narrative", was biased, lacked objectivity and showed a "continuing colonial mindset".

The BBC has stood by its reporting for the documentary and said it was cooperating with Indian tax officials.

The BBC was served tax notices in the past but the organisation had not provided a convincing response to tax authorities, Kanchan Gupta, Senior Adviser at the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, told Times Now news channel.

"The Income Tax Department is conducting a survey of the BBC's tax status and affairs in India. We understand officers from the department may wish to speak to members of staff about the BBC in India," Liliane Landor, director of the BBC World Service, said in the note sent to staff and reviewed by Reuters yesterday.

A spokesperson for the BBC did not immediately respond to a request for comment from Reuters.

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This artwork was conceived by FCB Bitopi, executed through Midjourney AI.

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UKRAINIAN CHILDREN

Russia held 6,000 for 're-education'

Says report; UN warns grain deal in 'difficult territory'

AGENCIES

Russia has held at least 6,000 Ukrainian children - likely many more - in sites in Russian-held Crimea and Russia whose primary purpose appears to be political re-education, according to a US-backed report published on Tuesday.

The report said Yale University researchers had identified at least 43 camps and other facilities where Ukrainian children have been held that were part of a "large-scale systematic network" operated by Moscow since its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

The children included those with parents or clear familial guardianship, those Russia deemed orphans, others who were in the care of Ukrainian state institutions before the invasion and those whose custody was unclear or uncertain due to the war, it said.

"The primary purpose of the camp facilities we've identified appears to be political re-education," Nathaniel Raymond, one of the researchers, said in a briefing to reporters.

Some of the children were moved through the system and adopted by Russian families, or moved into foster care in Russia, the report said.

The youngest child identified in the Russian program was just four months old, and some camps were giving military training to children as young as 14 years, Raymond said, adding that researchers had not found evidence those children were later deployed in combat.

Russia's embassy in Washington, responding to the reports that Russia forcefully holds children, said Russia accepts children who were forced to flee Ukraine, reports Reuters.

"We do our best to keep underage people in families, and in cases of absence or death of parents and relatives - to transfer orphans under guardianship," the embassy said on the Telegram messaging platform.

It also reiterated Russia's allegations that Ukraine, using Western weapons, strikes civilian infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the UN warned yesterday that agreements to enable grain shipments from war-torn Ukraine, desperately needed to ward off hunger in poor countries, were in "difficult territory."

The hard-won Black Sea Grain Initiative was brokered by the UN and Turkey last July. It was renewed a first time in November and is up for renewal again on March 18, reports AFP. "I think we're in slightly more difficult territory at the moment," UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths told reporters.



Children walk in a camp for Syrian refugee in Turkey set up by Turkish relief agency AFAD in the İslahiye district of Gaziantep yesterday after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake on February 6 has killed at least 41,000 people and devastated swathes of Syria and neighbouring Turkey.

PHOTO: AFP



UNDERCOVER MEDIA PROBE

Israeli firm meddled in more than 30 polls worldwide

AFP, Paris

An Israeli firm sought to influence more than 30 elections around the world for clients by hacking, sabotage and spreading disinformation, according to an undercover media investigation published yesterday.

It adds to a growing body of evidence that shadowy private firms across the world are profiting from invasive hacking tools and the power of social media platforms to manipulate public opinion.

The firm was dubbed "Team Jorge" by investigating journalists who posed as potential clients in order to gather information on its methods and capabilities.

Its boss, Tal Hanan, is a former Israeli special forces operative who boasted of being able to control

supposedly secure Telegram accounts and thousands of fake social media profiles, as well as planting news stories, the reports say.



The investigation was carried out by a consortium of journalists from 30 outlets, including the Guardian in Britain, Le Monde in France, Der Spiegel in Germany and El País in Spain, under the direction of the France-based non-profit Forbidden Stories. "The methods

and techniques described by Team Jorge raise new challenges for big tech platforms," the Guardian wrote.

"Evidence of a global private market in disinformation aimed at elections will also ring alarm bells for democracies around the world."

Hanan did not respond to detailed questions, saying only: "I deny any wrongdoing."

The 50-year-old told three undercover reporters that his services, often called "black ops", were available to intelligence agencies and political campaigns.

"We are now involved in one election in Africa... We have a team in Greece and a team in [the] Emirates... [We have completed] 33 presidential-level campaigns, 27 of which were successful," the Guardian quoted him as saying.

SHIPWRECK OFF LIBYA

73 migrants presumed dead: IOM

REUTERS, DUBAI



At least 73 migrants were reported missing and presumed dead following a shipwreck off the Libyan coast on Tuesday, the official Twitter account of International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Libya said yesterday. Seven survivors made it to shore from the boat, which was carrying around 80 people, who had reportedly departed from Qasr Alkayar, east of Tripoli, to head to Europe, the IOM added. So far, 11 bodies have been retrieved by the Libyan red Crescent and the local police, while the seven survivors are in hospital, the IOM said. Libya has become a major launching point for migrants seeking to reach Europe via a dangerous route across the desert and over the Mediterranean. The central Mediterranean remains the world's deadliest migratory sea crossing. The latest tragedy brings the numbers of deaths there since the beginning of this year alone to 130, IOM said. According to the agency's Missing Migrants Project, more than 1,450 migrant deaths were recorded on that route in 2022.

Sturgeon quits

Says she is too divisive to win independence

REUTERS, LONDON

Nicola Sturgeon quit as Scottish first minister yesterday, saying her dominance over her party and the country was no longer the asset it once was in the fight for an independent Scotland. The 52-year-old, who has been first minister since 2014, also said she would stand down as leader of the ruling Scottish National Party (SNP), saying a fresh face would have a better chance of reaching across the political divide, and that she had become too divisive - and too tired - to lead that fight any more. She will stay in place until a successor is found. Sturgeon became SNP leader in the wake of a 2014 independence referendum when Scotland voted 55 percent to 45 percent to remain part of the UK. But in recent months she has been outmanoeuvred by Sunak's government over attempts to hold a second referendum.

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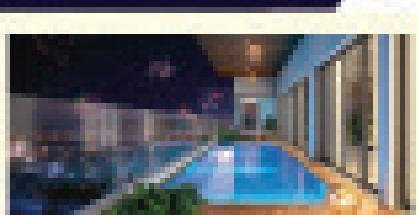
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INTERNATIONAL

ECP PROTEST CASE

Pak court rejects Imran Khan bail

DAWN/ ANN

An Islamabad court yesterday rejected the request of PTI chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan, for an extension of his interim bail.

The plea was made in a case pertaining to a protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) following its decision in the Toshakhana case.

The verdict was announced by Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan on the grounds of non-appearance in court.

Earlier yesterday, the court rejected Imran's request for exemption from appearance on medical grounds. "Imran Khan should appear in court by 1:30pm," the judge said in an order announced at 1:20pm.

The PTI chief has been convalescing in his residence in Lahore ever since he was wounded in an assassination attempt.

During today's hearing, Imran's lawyer Babar Awan told the court that Imran tried to travel to Islamabad but could not.

Previously, the court had granted the PTI chief the last opportunity to appear on February 15.

The case was filed against Imran after PTI workers took to the streets and held demonstrations outside ECP offices across the country.

The reference alleging that Imran had not shared details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana and proceeds from their reported sales was filed by lawmakers from the ruling coalition last year. On October 21, the electoral body had concluded that the former premier had indeed made "false statements and incorrect declarations" regarding the gifts.

The Toshakhana is a department under the Cabinet Division that stores gifts given to rulers and government officials by heads of other governments and foreign dignitaries. According to Toshakhana rules, gifts/presents and other such materials received by persons to whom these rules apply shall be reported to the Cabinet Division.



A photo taken yesterday shows people wading through flood waters in Napier, a coastal city on New Zealand's North Island. Authorities yesterday confirmed three deaths after Cyclone Gabrielle cut a trail of destruction across northern New Zealand, with helicopters plucking people stranded from their roofs as floods surged overnight.

PHOTO: AFP

Rising seas threaten exodus of 'biblical' scale

Warns UN chief, says Bangladesh, India, China are in danger

AFP/United Nations

The UN Secretary-General has warned that global warming could force a mass exodus "on a biblical scale" as people flee low-lying communities and called for legal frameworks to be implemented in preparation, especially for refugees. "The danger is especially acute for nearly 900 million people who live in coastal zones at low elevations – that's one out of ten people on Earth," Antonio Guterres told the UN Security Council on Tuesday. "Low-lying communities and entire countries could disappear forever... We would witness a mass exodus of entire populations on a biblical scale," he said. It is not only small island states at risk as sea levels rise, he added. Countries such as Bangladesh, China,

India, and the Netherlands are all in danger, Guterres said, while "mega-cities on every continent will face serious impacts" – from Cairo to Jakarta to Los Angeles to Copenhagen. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says sea levels rose by 15-25 centimeters (6-10 inches) between 1900 and 2018. If the world warms by just two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) compared to the pre-industrial era, then those levels will rise again by 43 centimeters by the year 2100. But if it warms by three or four degrees Celsius, sea levels could rise by as much as 84 centimeters, the IPCC says. The problem must be addressed "across legal and human rights frameworks,"

Guterres warned. Rising sea levels mean shrinking land mass, he said, which could drive possible disputes over land and maritime space. "The current legal regime must look to the future and address any gaps in existing frameworks," including in international refugee law, he said. It must also provide for the future of states that face losing their land territory completely. Guterres said the Security Council has a "critical" role to play in addressing "the devastating security challenges arising from rising seas." The issue has been controversial in the past: In 2021, Russia vetoed a resolution linking climate change and global security, which was supported by the majority of the Council members.



Govt set bar too low

FROM PAGE 16

China it is 10mg.

This analysis was presented in a study conducted by the Centre for Atmospheric Pollution Studies (CAPS) at Stamford University. It was revealed at a seminar at the university yesterday.

The DoE also allows 400mg of sulphur dioxide [SO₂] for plants launched before 2020 and 200mg for those launched later. The numbers are the same for nitrogen oxides [NO_x].

In China, the SO₂ limit is 35mg and NO_x is 50mg and in Japan, the limits are 28mg and 40mg respectively.

But the World Health Organization's limit for PM 2.5 is only 5 microgram per cubic metre, SO₂ is 40 microgram and NO_x is 20 microgram.

Romen Raihan, associate professor of public health and informatics at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, told The Daily Star that inhalation of PM 2.5 beyond limit can cause infections in the upper and lower respiratory tracts that can lead to pneumonia and aggravate asthma symptoms.

The excessive PM 2.5 in

lungs reduces the oxygen level in blood and can result in low birth weight of neonates.

Oxygen deficiency in blood puts stress on the heart which ultimately causes heart diseases, he said.

Ahmad Kamruzzaman Majumder, chairman of Department of Environmental Science at Stamford University, told The Daily Star that the new rules set a standard that would deteriorate air quality. "Our air is already toxic and has hit global headlines for being among the worst in the world."

Easir Arafat Khan, associate professor of Chemical Engineering at BUET, said he and several others made recommendations before the rules were formulated. But some of the recommendations were not reflected in the rules.

PMIO are inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 10 micrometres and smaller; and PM2.5 are fine inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 2.5 micrometres and smaller. For context, the average human hair is about 70 micrometres in diameter.

Iraq dig

FROM PAGE 16

The joint team from the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pisa discovered the remains of a primitive refrigeration system, a large oven, benches for diners and around 150 serving bowls.

Fish and animal bones were found in the bowls, alongside evidence of beer drinking, which was widespread among the Sumerians.

"So we've got the refrigerator, we've got the hundreds of vessels ready to be served, benches where people would sit..."

and behind the refrigerator is an oven that would have been used... for cooking food," project director Holly Pittman told AFP.

"What we understand this thing to be is a place where people – regular people – could come to eat and that is not domestic," she said.

"We call it a tavern because beer is by far the most common drink, even more than water, for the Sumerians", she said, noting that in one of the temples excavated in the area "there was a beer recipe that was found on a cuneiform tablet".



Xpel
Mosquito Repellent Spray

ডেঙু ও চিকিৎসালিঙ্গাবাহী মশা থেকে
নিশ্চিত প্রাকৃতিক সুরক্ষা
সরাসরি তুকে ব্যবহারোপযোগী
সম্পূর্ণ কেমিক্যাল মুক্ত

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Director (CMSD)
Department of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Dhaka

Tender for Goods (Single Lot)

Ref. No: CMSD/G-2207/ICT/22-23/Proc-3/36
Dated: 13/02/2023

KEY INFORMATION

1	Procurement method/document	ICT Open.
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FUNDING INFORMATION

2	Source of funds	Development Budget (Aid Grant/Credit).
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PARTICULAR INFORMATION

4	Project/programme code	
5	Project/programme name	4th HPNSP
6	Tender Package No.	G-2207
7	Tender package name	Procurement of "OT Equipment".
8	Tender publication date	16/02/2023
9	Tender last selling date	02/04/2023
10	Tender closing date and time	03/04/2023 11:00am
11	Tender opening date and time	03/04/2023 11:30am
12	Name and address of the office(s)	
-Selling tender document (principal)	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208. Tender document will be delivered from the counter of CMSD to the tenderers or their local agents.	
-Selling tender document (others)	CMSD.	
-Receiving tender document	Do.	
-Opening tender document	Do.	
13	Place/date/time for pre-tender meeting	Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD) 27/02/2023, 11:30am.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

14	Eligibility of tenderer	Tender will be conducted through the International Competitive Tender (ICT) procedures specified in the tender schedule and PPA-2006 & PPR-2008.			
15	Brief description of goods or works	1. OT Table Universal, Hydraulic, Head mobile-12 Nos., 2. Delivery Table-38 Nos., 3. Centre Spot light-150 Nos., 4. Diathermy Machine Automatic (Electrocautery)- 15 Nos., 5. Pulse Oxymeter (pediatric probe)- 800 Nos., 6. Pulse Oxymeter- 1000 Nos., 7. Pressure Sterilizer, Electric-60 Nos., 8. Drum sterilizer, cylindrical 240mm- 300 Nos., 9. Drum sterilizer, cylindrical 290mm- 300 Nos., 10. Autoclave (Medium)- 5 Nos.			
16	Brief description of related services	As per technical specification.			
17	Tender document price	BDT 4,000/- (Bangladesh Taka four thousand) or US\$ 50 (fifty) only.			
17	Lot No.	Identification	Location	Tender security amount in Taka	Completion time in weeks/months
	Single Lot	Procurement of "OT Equipment"	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.	BDT 5,00,000.00 (Five lakh Taka) or USD 4,800.00	To be delivered on or within 16 weeks after opening of the letter of credit for delivery from abroad and after signing of the contract for delivery from within Bangladesh & Tenders offering delivery beyond 16 weeks will be treated as non-responsive.

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

18	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Tofael Islam.
19	Designation of official inviting tender	Director, CMSD.
20.	Address of official inviting tender	CMSD, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
21	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel. No. 88-2-48115486, Fax: 88-02-9126547 E-mail: cmsdstore@dhaka.net

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

GD-283

**বাংলাদেশ কলেজ অব ফিজিশিয়ানস্ এন্ড সার্জনস্
Bangladesh College of Physicians & Surgeons**

বিসিপিএস নং নিয়োগ-৫৩৩/২০২৩/২০৩২০

তারিখ: ১৪-০২-২০২৩ খ্রি

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ কলেজ অব ফিজিশিয়ানস্ এন্ড সার্জনস্ (বিসিপিএস)-এর নিম্নরূপ পদে চুক্তিভুক্ত হিসেবে লোক নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের কাছ থেকে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে :-

জারি হোকার পদের নাম ও অভিজ্ঞতা

জারি নং	পদের নাম	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগাতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স	বেতনক্রম (জারি মেতন ক্ষেত্র ২০১৫-১৬২০০/-
১.	সিনিয়র সিস্টেম এনজিনিয়র (১ম শ্রেণি)	০১	(১) অন্যমৌলিক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদার্থবিদ্যা / কলাইজ পদার্থ বিদ্যা / গবিন / পরিবাহ্যন / বিজ্ঞান এভিনিউস্ট্রিশন / কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞান-এ মাত্রভাবে। (২) সিস্টেম এনজিনিয়েট হিসেবে কর্মপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা। (৩) আর্টিফিশিয়াল ইন্টেলিজেন্স, অ্যারেস্ট ওরিয়েন্টেড প্রোগ্রাম এবং রুটিউটিং সম্পর্কে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পর্কের অধিকারীর দেয়া হবে। (৪) স্থানূল্য আন্তর্জাতিক জার্নালে কর্মপক্ষে ০৫টি প্রকাশিত প্রাবল্যক্রেশন এবং বর্তমান কম্পিউটার জগতে মন্তব্য কোন টেকনোলজি সম্পর্কে অথবা পরিবহন প্রযোজন সম্পর্কে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পর্কের অধিকারীর দেয়া হবে। (৫) স্থানূল্য কম্পিউটার সেসাইটির ন্যূনতম সহযোগী সদস্য।	অনুরূপ ৬৫ বছর	৫০০০- ৭২০০/-

প্রার্থীদের জন্য পালনীয় শর্তাবলী ও জ্ঞাতব্য বিষয় সমূহ

(১) উচ্চারিত পদে আবেদনকারীগণকে সামা কাগজে "সচিব, বাংলাদেশ কলেজ অব ফিজিশিয়ানস্ এন্ড সার্জনস্ (বিসিপিএস), ৬৭, শহীদ তাজউরেহুম আহমেদ সরণী, মহাবালী, ঢাকা-১১১১" ব্যাকর আবেদন করাতে হবে।
(২) আবেদনগুলো আবেদনকারী পূর্ণ জীবন পূর্ণ নাম বাংলায় ও ইংরেজিতে (Capital Letter), (৩) পিতা/মাতৃর নাম, (৪) মাতৃর নাম, (৫) পদের নাম (৬) ছাত্রী টিকিনা, (৭) বর্তমান টিকিনা, (৮) জন্ম তারিখ, (৯) ২২-০২-২০২৩ খ্রি তারিখে বয়স (১০) দর্ম, (১১) জাতীয়তা, (১২) শিক্ষাগত যোগাতা, (১৩) অভিজ্ঞতার বিবরণ (১৪) জাতীয় পরিচয় নম্বর এবং (১৫) মোবাইল/ফোন নম্বর উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
(১৬) প্রার্থীগণকে আবেদনপত্রে সামা (১৬) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ কর্তৃত কর্তৃত প্রেরণ কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (১৭) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ কর্তৃত কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (১৮) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (১৯) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২০) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২১) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২২) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৩) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৪) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৫) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৬) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৭) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৮) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (২৯) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩০) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩১) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩২) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৩) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৪) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৫) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৬) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৭) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৮) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৩৯) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪০) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪১) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪২) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৩) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৪) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৫) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৬) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৭) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৮) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৪৯) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৫০) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া ও অভিজ্ঞতার সকল সমন্বয়ের স্থানান্তরিত অনুলিপি (৫১) প্রথম প্রেরণ প্রেরণ প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃত প্রেরণ প্রক্র

Erosion of democracy to limit US cooperation

FROM PAGE 1
have had about the treatment of certain advocates in civil society, particularly in human rights, concerns about previous elections," he said.

He added, "The US will continue to voice those concerns in the months to come. But sure, we have confidence and we have heard from the government today their commitment to hold a free and fair election. And we'll hold into that."

During his courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday, the premier said, "The next election will be fair and free. I fought for democracy throughout my life."

She reiterated that the Election Commission is completely independent.

Prime Minister's speechwriter Md Nazrul Islam briefed reporters afterwards.

Hasina said if the people vote for the Awami League in the next general election, her party will govern the country.

"I never want to come to power through vote-rigging," she said, adding that she always struggled for the people's rights to food and vote.

She said the first-ever EC reconstitution law was passed in parliament and then a neutral EC was constituted based on the law.

The PM said that apart from the Awami League, no other political party in the country had any base at the grassroots. The BNP and the Jatiya Party were born in the cantonment.

Hasina said the transformation of Bangladesh has become visible over the last 14 years of her government.

The Russia-Ukraine war and the Rohingya issues also came up for discussion during her meeting with Chollet.

She said the world should stop this war as it has caused high inflation and commodity prices throughout the globe.

Mentioning that the US is the most powerful country, she said it can take steps to stop the war. The disputes can be settled through negotiations, she said.

About the Rohingyas, the premier said they have become a burden on Bangladesh and some of them are getting involved in criminal activities like drug and human trafficking, she said.

militancy, and infighting.

She asked the international community to assist the initiative in Bhashanchar and try their best for quick and amicable repatriation of the Rohingyas.

Chollet said the US would try their best for the repatriation of the displaced people but added that the repatriation will be possible when a democratic government assumes power in Myanmar again.

PM's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman F Rahman, PM's Principal Secretary M Tofazzel Hossain Miah, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, and US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas were present.

Chollet's tour comes high on the heels of a series of visits by high-profile US officials in recent months.

The US is Bangladesh's biggest foreign direct investor, and donor for the Rohingya crisis. It wants Bangladesh on its side under its Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Dhaka's relations with Washington saw some strains following the sanctions on Rab and some of its officials and for not inviting Bangladesh to Biden's Summit for Democracy in 2021.

Dhaka is eager to have the sanctions withdrawn. It also wants more support for the Rohingya crisis, climate change adaptation, and reinstatement of the GSP facilities that were suspended after Rana Plaza collapse in 2013.

Asked when will the sanctions on the Rab be lifted, Chollet, at the meeting with senior journalists, said it was good that there has been a decline in extrajudicial killings over the last one year.

"Nevertheless, in order to really turn the page on this issue, we are going to need to see sustained reforms as well as accountability [of the Rab]," he said.

"Quite frankly, I don't think we're there yet on these fronts ... We are committed to continuing to help Bangladesh strengthen the rule of law and security. But until we see accountability, until we see sustained reforms, we are not going to be able to turn the page on that."

Asked why Bangladesh was not invited to the second summit for democracy, scheduled for March 29-30, Chollet said after the first summit

for democracy, the US asked all the countries to come up with a plan of action for the coming year.

"Many of them came up with their own plan of action, but Bangladesh chose not to ... That's its decision to make. We're looking forward to, perhaps in the future, them [Bangladesh] coming up with their own plan of action to be able to contribute to this important effort," he said.

Chollet said part of the reason why he came to Bangladesh is to send the message that the US will continue to support Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue despite many challenges around the world.

While the US continues to work for improving conditions in Myanmar, it will also work with Bangladesh to ease the sufferings of the people inside the camps.

US Ambassador Peter Haas, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Samakal acting editor Muzammil Husain, The Daily Ittefaq Editor Taslima Hossain, The Business Standard Editor Inam Ahmed, AFP Bureau Chief Shafiqul Alam, Jamuna TV CEO Fahim Ahmed, and Channel 24 Executive Director Talat Mahmud were present at the event.

Chollet left Dhaka last night.

Invest more in Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 2
as part of the celebration of 50 years of the diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and South Korea.

The envoy said that his country is keen to strengthen the bilateral ties with Bangladesh further in the next 50 years.

The relationship will grow gradually from strength to strength in the days to come, said the Presidential Envoy and Senior Secretary for Future Strategy in the Office of the President of Republic of Korea.

Diplomatic relations were established 50 years ago as South Korea recognised Bangladesh on May 12, 1972.

During the meeting, the South Korean presidential envoy shared his personal experiences regarding his visit to Bangabandhu Memorial Museum yesterday morning.

At least \$4.45b needed to cover fuel costs

FROM PAGE 1
He hoped that there will be no interruption in the fuel supply chain during the summer months.

Whether the government would be able to make the funds available to import the fuel necessary for power generation remains to be seen as the pressure on foreign currency reserves that saw acute loadshedding between August and November last year -- is yet to subside.

As of February 8, foreign currency reserves stood at \$32.6 billion, down 28.1 percent from a year earlier -- and enough to cover four months' import bills, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

"In such a situation, it will not be possible to spend \$4.45 billion for fuel import -- PDB's estimation needs revision," said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

There were talks of the government increasing the local gas supply and setting up solar systems in schools and for irrigation as alternate options.

"Then why will they need the huge amount of money to import fuel?"

The government is trying to control imports in different sectors to preserve dollars. "PDB's plan is contradictory to the government's initiatives," Moazzem added.

PDB's plan to ensure 16,000MW electricity a day is appreciable as it

Momen seeks

FROM PAGE 2
Momen said Rab is a key force in law enforcement and earned people's confidence and trust over the years.

Drawing attention to Bangladesh's remarkable progress in the socio-economic sector, he suggested that the US take advantage of Bangladesh's liberal investment policy by investing in the designated special economic zones.

Chollet, who led a seven-member inter-agency US delegation, also called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and held a breakfast meeting with Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen.

Secretary (west) Ambassador Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury and other senior officials of the foreign ministry were present at the meetings from the Bangladesh side.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas, Counselor for USAID Administrator Clinton White, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of US Department of State, South

would go some way towards bringing down loadshedding and people's sufferings, said Mohammad Tamim, professor of petroleum and mineral resources engineering at BUET.

"But from where they would be able to manage the dollars? It will be challenging," he added.

The ongoing dollar crisis is PDB's concern too.

And to meet the additional demand amid the narrow fiscal space, PDB is aiming to get the most out of the gas-fired power plants as those are the cheapest electricity generators.

In fiscal 2021-22 fiscal year, the cost per kilowatt-hour of electricity by gas-fired power plants was Tk 3.46. In contrast, it was Tk 9.17 for coal-fired plants, Tk 22.10 for furnace oil-based plants and Tk 154.11 for diesel-fired plants.

Of the 23,482 megawatts of electricity production capacity, gas-fired power plants account for 47.8 percent, furnace oil 25.2 percent, coal-fired plants 11.1 percent and diesel-run plants 5.5 percent.

Subsequently, PDB has asked Petrobangla to provide 1,200 million cubic feet (mmcfc) of gas a day.

Recently, in a letter to the finance division, Petrobangla wrote that they will need around \$1.75 billion in five months to meet the demand for liquified natural gas through spot purchases and long-term contracts.

The state-owned agency plans to

import 10-12 cargo LNG from the spot market by June. Another 24 cargo is expected under long-term agreements with Qatar and Oman, said a Petrobangla official requesting anonymity.

This will require \$1.75 billion, he said.

"Additional money will be needed as we have a liquidity crisis now. PDB said they will need additional gas but we have not got our dues from the company. Bangladesh Bank also doesn't cooperate with us," he added.

Individual power producers told The Daily Star that they would require \$1.5 billion to import furnace oil and diesel to produce electricity as per PDB's demand.

The Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation will need \$2.25 billion to import fuel, 10 percent of which will be needed for power generation.

Power Cell Director General Mohammad Hossain is hopeful of a better summer this year.

"Most of the coal-fired power plants are now in operation. Though the coal price hiked abnormally in the international market, we are trying to get it as coal is cheaper than furnace oil and diesel," he added.

US MASS SHOOTING

Biden demands Congress act on gun violence

AFP, Washington

US President Joe Biden called on Congress Tuesday to act against America's epidemic of gun violence, one day after a new massacre on a Michigan university campus killed three people and injured five.

As the leader of a nation plagued by daily shootings, Biden said he had promised the state's Democratic governor the "deployment of all necessary federal law enforcement."

The gunman shot his victims, all students, during a rampage on the Michigan State University (MSU) campus before dying of a self-inflicted gunshot wound several hours later.



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Chhatra League
must be reined inWill AL ever do anything about the
criminality of its student wing?

There seems to be no end to the criminality of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL). In its latest display of atrocities, two BCL leaders of Islamic University (IU) in Kushtia have allegedly tortured a female student for hours. The two accused are Sanjida Chowdhury, vice-president of the IU BCL unit, and Tabassum Islam, an activist of the same unit. The victim, a first-year student, said she was at the Sheikh Hasina Hall when the accused took her to one of the gono-rooms (common rooms) at around 11pm on February 12, mercilessly beat her, insulted her using obscene language, forcibly stripped her naked, and took videos of her.

According to a written complaint submitted by the victim, after torturing her till 3:30am, the accused threatened that she would be driven out of the hall, and the video would be circulated, if she told anyone about the incident. A report by *Prothom Alo* revealed that this was not the first time that such an incident happened in IU. On the condition of anonymity, a number of students alleged that another female student was tortured similarly by BCL last year. They further alleged that Sanjida controls a group perpetrating such heinous offenses at the university.

According to another *Prothom Alo* report coming out on the same day, a male student of Rajshahi University also alleged that BCL members had locked him up in a room and mentally and physically tortured him. He said he had been threatened by the university's BCL General Secretary Naim Islam and 7-8 of his followers to vacate a dorm room that was allotted to him recently. When he refused to comply, they took him to Naim's room, and beat him up.

As the avalanche of media reports on BCL will suggest, its unchecked operation on nearly every university campus in the country has led to similar incidents of harassment and torture – and even murder, as in the case of BUET's Abrar Fahad – of ordinary students and rival political activists alike. We are treated to such horrific news almost every day. Just the day before, for example, this newspaper reported how BCL members are now increasingly getting involved in mugging-related activities in Dhaka University. After over a decade of establishing total control over all campuses – through torture, barbarities and collusion with university administrations – it seems the BCL has now turned into a full-blown criminal gang.

And why wouldn't it, when the ruling party itself has provided it with constant patronage to the effect of making university administrations and law enforcement agencies totally unwilling to take meaningful action against BCL atrocities? Instead of disciplining BCL, whose members have been involved in some of the most serious crimes as per the law of the land, ruling party high-ups have blatantly defended it, despite the ever growing list of victims and protests from all sections of society. We call on the ruling party to abandon this strategy. It must show its commitment to democratic principles as well as establishing the rule of law for everyone.

A good incentive for
primary studentsSchool feeding project must be
quickly and efficiently executed

We welcome the news of a government plan to introduce a new school feeding programme for students of all state-run primary schools starting July. According to a report by this daily, the primary and mass education ministry is set to complete a feasibility test for the mid-day meals project this month, and will start preparing a Development Project Proposal in March. Feeding programmes for government schools have existed in various forms since the country was liberated. They have always been an important part of the school system, ensuring that students not only consume a chunk of their required daily calories in school, but also stay at school.

As per data of the primary education ministry, attendance rose by 6.6 percent and dropouts fell by 6 percent in schools covered by the last government feeding programme (which ended in June last year). However, given the patchy track record of the planning and implementation of government feeding programmes, we also feel the need to be cautious in our optimism.

One may recall that the last proposed large-scale school meal project had made headlines for all the wrong reasons. In August 2020, the primary and mass education ministry had proposed a Tk 17,290 crore undertaking to feed 1.41 crore students of 65,566 government primary schools for five years. Controversy arose when the planning commission identified several unnecessary expenses in the proposal. The allocation for foreign trips by officials to "cook khichuri" – or as in the ministry's words, to "gather knowledge about implementation of mid-day meal programmes at schools" – was criticised. The proposal was ultimately rejected by the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) headed by the prime minister. But it now stands as an example of how important projects like school feeding programmes can be derailed due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and mismanagement. This, we hope, will not happen with the latest feeding project under consideration.

It is also crucial that the new programme is implemented as soon as possible. The government's last school feeding programme ran from 2010 till June 2022, under which the authorities provided 75 grams of fortified biscuits to nearly 3 million schoolchildren in 104 upazilas. But it has already been almost eight months since public school students have been deprived of free meals provided by the government. This cannot go on – especially at a time when difficult Covid recovery and global inflation have strained the economy, making dropout seem like an unavoidable choice for many poor students and households.

We urge all relevant authorities to come up with a proposal for the mid-day meals programme that will be sensible. A speedy and efficient implementation is key to ensuring that students, especially in the most poverty-stricken areas of the country, will not only receive proper nutrition but also will stay focused in school.

EDITORIAL

Presidential election, AL
strategy and the next polls

THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla
is chief reporter at
The Daily Star.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Although there was much speculation about who would become the next president of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and although some had reported about the "frontrunners," no one knew what was about to happen. The name Md Shahabuddin as president was not even muttered under the breath so far as the media was concerned. Not just every news outlet, but most of the country, including senior ministers, appeared to have been in the dark.

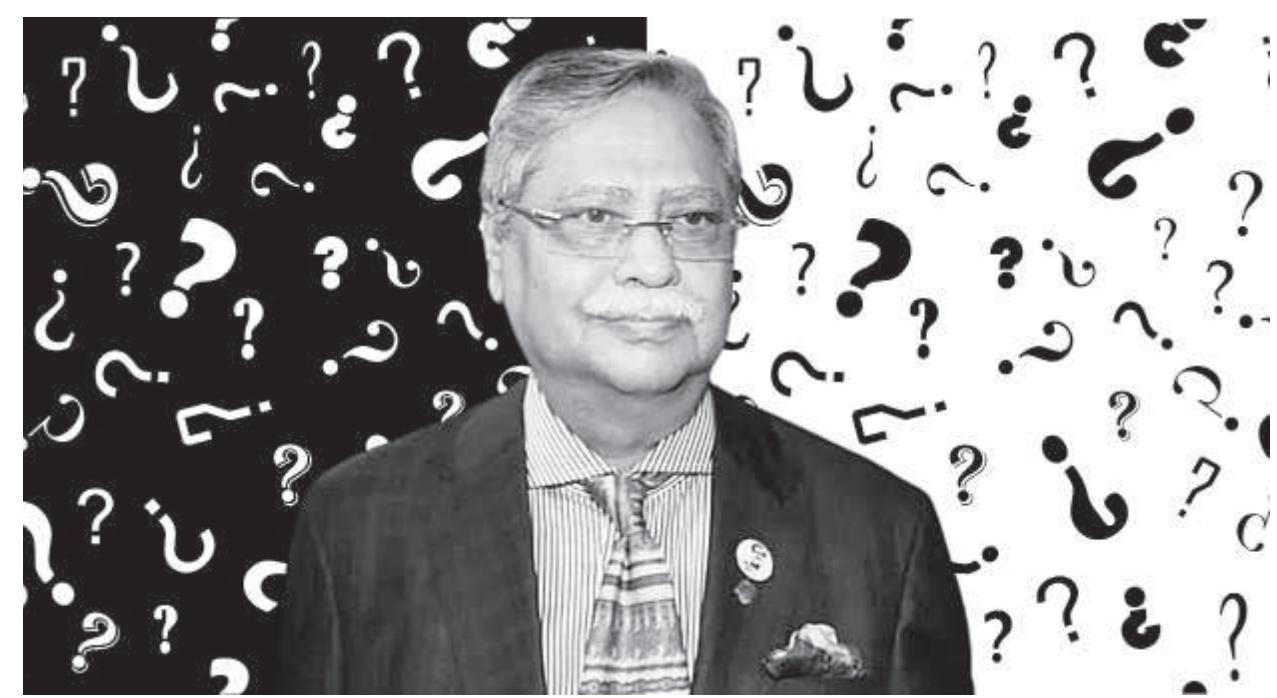
But then, the ruling party stalwarts could not really express discontent for not being involved in the decision. The entire leadership of the Awami League willingly and happily relinquished any authority they had and to allow the party president, who is also the prime minister, to nominate the next president of the country.

The nomination of a president is not to be taken lightly. The next parliamentary election is due to take place early next year, and the newly elected president will be in office at that time.

When the 2014 election was held, the BNP and other opposition political parties boycotted the polls to make them questionable. But the ruling party employed a strategy whereby 153 constituencies saw their MPs elected uncontested, which meant that even before the election was held, the Awami League had secured a mandate to form the government.

And then in 2018, the general election was also highly questionable with widespread allegations, including from lawmakers and diplomats considered "friendly" to the ruling Awami League, that the election was held "the night before." The Awami League returned to power with an overwhelming two-thirds majority.

Now that Bangladesh is less than a year away from the next parliamentary election, everyone is speculating about



VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

the ruling party's strategy to win for the fourth consecutive term.

This nomination showed that the Awami League president is fully capable of pulling off a surprise without even the party stalwarts finding out. Not only was Sheikh Hasina able to evince her political shrewdness, but also that her party's strategy for the next election would most likely be a surprise as well – one that will ensure another five years in office for her party. On the face of it, this presidential nomination should at least boost the morale of the party loyalists and reassure them of another electoral victory.

Although the post of the president is mostly ceremonial – the president acts as advised by the prime minister, except when appointing the premier and the chief justice – it takes on some significance during elections

when the president assumes more of an executive role, issuing directives to the Election Commission.

According to Section 5(2) of the Representation of the People's Order, 1972, all executive authorities of the government shall assist the Election Commission in performing its functions, and for this purpose, the

Shahabuddin, in a television interview said it was not only the desire of the government, but also the desire of the whole world that the next general election in Bangladesh be held with the participation of all political parties.

"If there is a national disaster or if there is any anarchy regarding the

president may, after consultation with the commission, issue such directions as they may deem necessary.

So, while the BNP and other opposition parties have been staging demonstrations demanding elections under a non-partisan government, threatening to boycott the polls (if held under the ruling government), coupled with the mounting pressure to hold an all-inclusive election, the role of the election-time president will be crucial.

Speaking to *Prothom Alo*, senior Awami League leader Matia Chowdhury said the prime minister had chosen a person (for president) who had full faith in the country and the principles of the constitution, and would also have a strong stand against unrest and anarchy.

The newly elected president, Md

election, or if there is a deliberate attempt to sabotage the electoral environment, the president has some work to do," he said. "I am not going to back down from that. I am a freedom fighter; I liberated this country. We gave so much blood for the country. So if there is an attempt to create anarchy, I will play my role in making the election fair. But I would like to exercise my power judiciously and fairly so that there is no bias. So that people realise that their president has done his part for the country."

Predictably, the president has been quite the talk of the town over the last few days, as well as the likely strategy the Awami League may adopt in the run-up to the election. But as the ruling party president has shown, all those speculations could well turn out to be mere conjecture.

Clean energy will reduce our fiscal burden

Shafiqul Alam
is an energy analyst at the Institute
for Energy Economics and Financial
Analysis (IEEFA).

SHAFIQUL ALAM

Bangladesh's energy and power sectors continue to experience the pinch due to its reliance on expensive imported liquefied natural gas (LNG), coal and oil. This is increasing the country's fiscal burden, eventually prompting the government to pass the cost on to the consumers. For instance, amid the high fossil fuel costs, the government raised the price of electricity twice in a span of 20 days in January 2023.

On the other hand, BPDB's average electricity purchase cost from independent power producers (IPPs) in FY 2021-22 was Tk 11.55 per kWh. In all likelihood, Bangladesh's average power generation cost will cross double digits in taka during FY 2022-23, compared to Tk 8.84 per kWh in FY 2021-22. Therefore, the BPDB, despite recent electricity price hikes, will have a huge revenue shortfall. Notably, the subsidy burden of the power sector during FY 2021-22 was Tk 29,700 crore, which may further rise in FY 2022-23.

While the government cites fiscal reasons for such price hikes, the country's average power generation cost will increase considerably without any major overhaul of the imported fossil-fuel-dependent energy system. Moreover, high fuel and electricity prices will affect industries, and the power sector may still struggle to ensure an uninterrupted electricity supply.

This situation makes clean energy investment an even more compelling case for Bangladesh to reduce its fiscal burden.

The new gas price for power generation, effective from February 1, costs the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) an additional Tk 9 per cubic metre (CM). Analysing the BPDB's gas-based power plants' average generation costs, based on FY 2021-22's revised annual report, the incremental gas-based electricity generation cost is Tk 2 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

In the same breath, coal remains costly at USD 245 per tonne in the international market, 88 percent higher than USD 130 per tonne considered in FY 2021-22 by the BPDB.

Hence, the average cost of coal-based power generation will shoot up by the end of FY 2022-23.

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The government will ultimately feel the exigencies to pass the additional costs on to the consumers.

Following the unprecedented gas price hike, the government resumed LNG import from the spot market for the first time since July 2022. It recently ordered one LNG cargo, costing Tk 850 crore, and intends to purchase up to 12 LNG cargoes in 2023. Even if the next 11 cargoes are 25 percent cheaper, the total cost of 12 LNG cargoes will be more than Tk 7,850 crore.

Apart from gas, there are other areas of concern. For instance, the government needs funds to keep coal-based power plants operational to circumvent load-shedding. Reportedly, outstanding bills of the Payra coal-fired power plant against coal purchase reached USD 168 million. Banks declined opening Letters of Credit (LC) for further coal import. The waning foreign currency reserves earlier caused a delay in loan repayment for the Payra plant.

With the annual requirement of four million tonnes of coal to run the

Payra power plant at full capacity, the government requires substantial foreign currency to keep the plant operational throughout the year. Although the current coal price stands at USD 245 per tonne, considering a reduced coal price of USD 200 per tonne, the cost of fuel to operate the Payra plant from February to December 2023 will be a whopping USD 733 million.

Moreover, due to coal shortages, the first of the two units of the Rampal power plant suspended generation after just 29 days of commercial operation.

In all likelihood, Bangladesh's average power generation cost will cross double digits in taka during FY 2022-23, compared to Tk 8.84 per kWh in FY 2021-22. Therefore, the BPDB, despite recent electricity price hikes, will have a huge revenue shortfall. Notably, the subsidy burden of the power sector during FY 2021-22 was Tk 29,700 crore, which may further rise in FY 2022-23.

Keeping both power plants operational would heavily burden foreign currency reserves because of coal imports. If electricity production in Payra and Rampal power plants at full capacity cannot be ensured, Bangladesh will again opt for electricity rationing during the summer of 2023.

Industries have been the hardest hit due to gas shortages as they use this fuel in process and captive generation. As such, owners of textile industries previously expressed interest in paying around 40 percent

higher gas price, provided that the government imports additional LNG to fill the demand-supply gap. However, an 88 percent increase in gas prices has made captive power generation considerably expensive. The cost of gas per kWh of electricity from a captive unit now stands at Tk 6.58 against roughly Tk 3.5 in January 2023.

Similarly, two rounds of increase in electricity tariffs mean the cost of grid electricity for large industries, if purchased at a flat rate, is now Tk 9.32 per kWh compared to what was Tk 8.45 per kWh in December 2022.

With rising production costs, the apparel sector, which contributes to more than 80 percent of our export earnings, will lose its profit margin unless it can transfer the additional cost to international buyers or receive cash incentives from the government.

The cost of grid electricity has reached a level that it now provides a strong market signal to industries to promptly increase rooftop solar systems to reduce operational costs. Similarly, the rapidly rising average cost of electricity generation in the country makes a compelling economic case for Bangladesh to enhance deflationary renewable energy at the grid scale to rein in the soaring power generation costs and contain the challenges of imported fossil fuels.

Alongside this, energy efficiency measures on the demand side would reduce significant energy consumption and thus cut down on the import of LNG, coal and oil. High energy prices also demonstrate the strong financial viability of energy efficiency interventions.

While enhancing the share of renewable energy and optimising energy consumption through energy efficiency sound ambitious, these are achievable with proper action plans.

Both renewable energy and energy efficiency will immediately impact Bangladesh's energy and power systems. This is why the government and private sector should direct capital investments on the ground towards promoting renewable energy and enhancing energy efficiency.



DESIGN: MAISHA SYEDA

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

1901 feels a lot like 2020 in Pamuk's latest novel

Orhan Pamuk's 'Nights of Plague' (Knopf, 2022)

NOUSHIN NURI

There is a woman who writes letters. She sits at her desk overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, day after day, and fills pages to send to her sister in Istanbul. Almost a century later, another woman would derive heavily from their correspondence to write the history of Mingheria and hand it down to us in the form of the book named *Nights of Plague*.

Orhan Pamuk shows Mingheria as the boiling pot of nationalism. As the plague covers the capital Arkaz like an ominous blanket, places where flowers used to grow start reeking of death. The sea turns into steel. Such extreme ordeal breeds the ground for seemingly inconsequential actions by individuals who change Mingheria forever.

The letter writing woman is Princess Pakize. She came to the Ottoman island of Mingheria with her husband, Prince Consort Doctor Nuri—a brilliant quarantine doctor—to put an end to the infectious bubonic plague that was creeping out of control yet was being kept secret by the authorities. The island, called the pearl of the Mediterranean Sea, has an almost mythical quality to it. Famous for its pink-white marbles and fragrant rose biscuits, Mingheria is the birthplace of a contemporary historian, Mina

Mingher, whose voice the writer chooses to tell the story in.

Our historian does a rigorous job of "verifying the authenticity" of the Mingherian history she learns. Her primary source, and inspiration, are the letters of Princess Pakize, and to confirm different historical details, she refers to memoirs of those who survived the time. Perhaps because of all the cross-referencing and promises of accuracy, it took me a hundred pages and a Google search of 'Mingheria' to realise that all of it—Mingheria, Princess Pakize, and Mina Mingher herself—are fictional.

Nights of Plague, like Orhan Pamuk's prize-winning novel *My Name is Red* (Knopf, 2001), is historical fiction with a murder mystery. But as one historical event unfolds after another, with Princess Pakize and her husband constantly evoking for me a sense of Sherlock Holmes while trying to solve the murder, the book's pages darken with a shadow of Westernisation at the dusk of the Ottoman Empire.

Opposed to most of the Empire, where Westernisation took a firm footing, Pamuk shows Mingheria as the boiling pot of nationalism. As the plague covers the capital Arkaz like an ominous blanket, places where flowers used to grow start reeking of death. With no scheduled ferries visiting the island anymore, the sea turns into steel, making it clear that Mingheria is left on its own. Such

extreme ordeal breeds the ground for very subjective, seemingly inconsequential, but history-altering actions by individuals who change Mingheria forever.

With the island completely cut off, pictures sent by correspondents to foreign newspapers remained the only source that allowed the world to know what was happening in Mingheria. The author, in a solemn but satirical tone, shows how these pictures were misinterpreted by newspapers—either due to lack of knowledge, or to create a more interesting narrative, or both. Reading about this brings a sense of déjà vu of our own struggle with fake news during the Covid-19 pandemic.

How Mingherians responded to the infectious plague in 1901 isn't altogether different from our response to the Covid-19. They too hid their patients in fear of stigma and isolation, selfishly hoarded commodities, and used the disease as a political and religious weapon. The first edition of the novel (in Turkish) came out in October 2021 and Pamuk started writing it just four years before the pandemic broke out, which lends to him an almost clairvoyant quality.

But clairvoyant or not, he definitely was a painter, as he wrote in his memoir, *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (Knopf, 2005). Painting with words takes a literal meaning in this novel. Historical landmarks are

captured in paintings that Pamuk describes, taking note of the little details of the background, rendering the mood in their subtle and dominant hues, and creating vicarious visual pleasure for the readers.

After Mina Mingher has told us the story of Mingheria, she walks us through her tiresome experience of writing this book. She is denied renewal of her Mingherian passport for 20 years. The authorities relent at some point, but her possessions would be searched in her absence and the secret police would monitor her every move. It's the story of many intellectuals who have tried to tell a history without being blind to the Empire's injustice against its Greek, Armenian, and Kurdish populations. Many writers, including Orhan Pamuk and Elif Shafak, have suffered because Turkey still holds on to this collective amnesia.

Be it lack of intellectual freedom or the outbreak of a disease, Pamuk constantly evokes the present through the past in this book. Plague has crept through the map of history, cloaking cities in death and desolation. But it didn't stop at destruction. In Mingheria, the plague was as much about creation as it was about death.

Nooshin Nuri is studying business in school and literature at home. Reach her at noushin2411@gmail.com.

BOOK REVIEW: REPORTAGE

Feeling and doing for homeless children

'Nobody's Children' by Rubaiya Murshed (University Press Limited, 2022)

PROTIK BARDHAN

Rubaiya Murshed's *Nobody's Children* is a genre of its own kind—it employs both stark facts and literary elements at the same time. As the title aptly suggests, it is focused on the issue of children who are living on the streets without proper care or support from their families.

One reading between the lines would unfailingly get tinged with the warmth and honesty of the author's feelings. To me, that is the most noteworthy thing about the book.

Its preface starts with a quote from the famous Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky: 'What is honour when you have nothing to eat'. Surely, it is a way of emphasising that necessities such as food and shelter are more important than abstract concepts like honour when it comes to survival and well-being. Only the victim knows how it hurts when one goes to sleep hungry or half-fed or how it feels to experience public negligence and scorn.

But Rubaiya, despite being an economist, does not reduce her characters to mere economic indicators like poverty, hunger, deprivation, and so on; instead, she

makes a beautiful rendering of them in their totality.

A chapter titled "The Boy Who Loved" offers one such heart-touching example of a street boy named Saiful. He was once forced to take refuge in a bus stop near TSC in the Dhaka University campus.

"For street children like Saiful on such rainy nights", Rubaiya writes, "the only relatively dryer places to try and sleep are bus stands or under park benches". But Saiful, despite having no shelter and food security, exhibits a strong sense of affinity towards a beautiful yellow-beaked bird—an ochin palkhi, in his own words. As its wing breaks, we see how a frantic Saiful risks his own life to heal the bird, which was in the custody of a DMC student. Saiful camps outside the student's dormitory. It rains on and off all night, and he develops a high fever and pneumonia.

The bird cannot be saved, and Saiful cries out his heart for it, as if he were giving vent to all the frustrations and woes he has suffered since his birth.

Making others feel for them
Before joining the University of Dhaka, Rubaiya taught at the Sunnydale School, Dhaka for a



DESIGN: SARAH ANJUM BARI

few months. Sometimes as a proxy teacher, she shared the stories of the homeless children with class eight students and then asked them to write down whatever came to mind as they imagined themselves in the position of a homeless street child.

A part of Rubaiya thought that the children would feel bored by her approach. On the contrary, they wrote their impressions beautifully in their notebooks before tearing out the pages to hand over to her. The impressions of Fabiba Anbar,

a student of Class Eight, Sunnydale School, go like this:

"Frankly speaking, I cannot even imagine myself as a homeless street child. We, the ones who have the privilege to stay with our families and enjoy the luxuries of life, are just so indulged in these that we never realise how important and valuable these things are. We just take everything for granted."

SDG and Rubaiya's efforts
Eradicating poverty is a central theme of the SDGs, with Goal 1

specifically aimed at ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. The goal recognises that poverty is not only a lack of income, but also a lack of access to basic services such as education, healthcare, and clean water. A lack of opportunity is not just an economic problem, but also a moral and ethical issue, Nobel laureate philosopher and economist Amartya Sen has argued. To him, access to education is a fundamental aspect of human development and a key driver of economic growth and prosperity.

Rubaiya, in her way, makes a commendable attempt to ensure that these children can have access to education through the bok tol school she and her cohorts run for them.

Feeling the same way
In his poem 'Chimney Sweeper', published in his collection, *Songs of Innocence*, in 1789, William Blake reflects on the bleak and unjust conditions faced by child chimney sweepers in 18th-century England, who were often forced into dangerous and dirty jobs at a young age. Blake uses imagery and symbolism to critique the treatment of these children and highlight the innocence and purity that are lost

as a result of their exploitation. The poem remains one of Blake's most widely read and studied works and is regarded as an important work of social criticism, an expression of the Romantic movement's concern for the oppressed and marginalised.

Both Rubaiya and Blake use their platforms to raise awareness about these issues and advocate for the betterment of these groups. Their actions demonstrate a strong sense of empathy and a desire to bring about change in society. Furthermore, both individuals show a willingness to challenge the status quo and speak out against the injustices they see in their communities.

This book, written in communicative and lucid prose, is a kind of docufiction, which is rapidly gaining popularity across the countries. It is a form of storytelling that uses real-life events, people, and places as the basis for a fictional or semi-fictional narrative. Rubaiya shows mastery in this particular genre. I hope her writer self will not be eclipsed by her researcher or economist self; rather, both will make a wonderful combination.

Protik Bardhan is Senior Sub-Editor, Prothom Alo.

BOOK REVIEW: MEMOIR

A life in words and images

'Je Jibon Amar Chilo'
by Imdadul Haq Milan
(Ananya, 2023)

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Fiction writer Imdadul Haq Milan has written an autobiography, published at this year's Ekushey Boi Mela. Against a large canvas, he paints a picture of his life and highlights stories that have not been told before. To a reader, these anecdotes will be delightful.

The memoir is no less than a novel—replete with sorrows, disappointments, love and joy. How many people the author has received neglect from in his life, how much humiliation he has endured, how many relatives have become strangers and how, those who were far away, have come close.

As a writer, Haque struggled early in his career. He went door-to-door to publishers—no one wanted to print his book. He started his career by writing fiction for a weekly magazine through the guidance of Rafiq Azad, a poet he greatly admired.



The two had met through Milan's writing—he had written his novel, *Dukkho Koshto*, inspired by one of Azad's poems in 1976. The book gained popularity, and the friendship between the two flourished. The bond led Milan to serialise his novel in the *Uttaradikhar* newspaper published by Bangla Academy.

Over the course of these years, Milan lost the newspaper job and later also moved to Germany in the hopes of better living for his family. But he couldn't stay there for long. When he returned to Bangladesh, unemployment and depression gripped him.

Taking us from his childhood in Gendaria to the friendship, in later years, with actors Humayun Faridi and Afsal Hossain, other renowned characters, and back to talk of his Nana Bari, the author does not shy away from conveying the truth of his experiences.

The story begins in Medinimandal village, where the author grew up, where his father struggled to raise him and his siblings. The story takes us, also, to Milan, first TV drama. Reminiscing about those days, he writes, "My first TV drama was *Mayakanan*. Afzal and Subarna's pair was wildly famous then. *Mayakanan* became popular because of their performance, and people recognised me in the play." Thus began the journey.

The story ends, at least in the book, with the author comparing human life to a river—its twists and turns, the many ups and downs, the characters who have loved and hurt, humiliated or disappointed him.

Milan's life, as presented in this book, truly is like a story.

Shah Alam Shazu is a journalist and writer.

Imranur waiting for good news

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) is seeking further assistance for England-based sprinter Imranur Rahman to help him flourish after the 29-year-old sprinter created history by becoming the first Bangladeshi to win a gold medal in the 60m sprint at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championship in Kazakhstan last Saturday.

The 29-year-old, who arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday night, spent the hours yesterday meeting officials and media before a training session at the Army Stadium in Banani in afternoon. Imranur is also expected to receive a grand reception within a couple of days.

Imranur is a part-time athlete who has been working two jobs to bear the expenses of his family and training but the schedule means there is



little room for him to fully dedicate himself to training, although he has been working under a professional coach in England.

"We believe the way he has been training in England will stay intact because we are hoping for some good news in the coming days. We expect some sponsors to come forward and provide him with financial help because Imranur has the capacity to deliver more at the international level," said BAF general secretary Abdur Rokib Montu, who added that Imranur's success would have a positive impact on budding athletes that are currently participating in the School and Madrasa Athletics Championships as well as the Bangladesh Youth Games.

The BAF had previously sought help from the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA), who provide financial aid to athletes with potential to shine in international competitions.

"As he is representing Bangladesh Army, the Army is looking after him by paying him a monthly honorarium, bearing air tickets for international tournaments and providing pocket money. In addition, the Bangladesh Olympic Association has also been with him in different ways from the beginning since he came to Bangladesh," said BOA secretary general Syed Shahed Reza.

"After the competition of ongoing Youth Games, we will sit to discuss what he [Imranur] needs and what the BOA can provide for him, especially after his recent success. We will definitely do for him in the coming days," said Reza.



Comilla Victorians skipper Imrul Kayes and Sylhet Strikers' Mushfiqur Rahim, who showed up on behalf of Sylhet captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and appeared to have recovered from a fever which triggered controversy in the second Qualifier on Tuesday, pose with the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) 2023 trophy during an official photoshoot at Uttara's Diabari metro station yesterday ahead of the franchise-based T20 tournament's title decider between the two sides, scheduled to take place at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

PHOTO: BCB

Sylhet, Comilla primed for 'battle of nerves'

SPORTS REPORTER

After over a month-long battle among seven teams, two of the best and most deserving sides rose to the top, with Sylhet Strikers set to take on Comilla Victorians in the final of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

Imrul Kayes' Comilla will be eyeing a fourth title while Sylhet, led by inspirational skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, will be eager to clinch their maiden BPL trophy.

The teams had made contrasting starts to the BPL, with Comilla losing their first three games on trot before becoming the first team to qualify for the final on the back of a 10-match unbeaten streak. Meanwhile, Sylhet had a dream start, winning their first five games on trot, and were among the first teams to qualify past the initial phase.

In terms of strength, Sylhet rely heavily on their local performers. The likes of Najmul Hossain Shanto and Towhid Hridoy are among the top run-getters in the BPL while the experience of Mushfiqur Rahim and skipper Mashrafe's leadership quality will also prove crucial in the all-important final.

On the other hand, Comilla have transformed into a dangerous unit that blends locals with some big overseas names that can single-handedly change the course of a game like Andre Russell, Sunil Narine, Moeen Ali and Johnson Charles.

According to Kayes, the final will be a battle of nerves and he placed an emphasis on staying ahead of any mind games.

"I think tomorrow (Thursday) is totally



Comilla have transformed into a dangerous unit that blends locals with some big overseas names that can single-handedly change the course of a game like Andre Russell, Sunil Narine, Moeen Ali and Johnson Charles.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

going to be about mind games. In such a high-voltage game, whoever holds their nerve and stays calm will do better because there's no guarantee that you will win even if you score 200 hundred runs. I remember during the final of the previous edition, we were behind till the 18th over but we went on to win in the last two overs. It's a different ball game. You have to be calm on the field," Kayes told reporters on the eve of the final.

Interestingly, neither Comilla nor Mashrafe -- who has led various franchises -- have ever been on the losing side in the final, meaning something has to give.

After losing to Sylhet in the first group game, Comilla managed to win the next

two encounters against them, including a comfortable four-wicket win in the first Qualifier.

However, Shanto -- who has been instrumental for Sylhet and is among the leading run-scorers in the BPL with 452 runs in 14 games -- said that they were not thinking about their opponents and were instead focusing on executing their plans.

"I think two of the most deserving teams have reached the final by playing some brilliant cricket. I think it's unimportant who we are playing against since our aim will be to execute our plans. They (Comilla) are definitely a good side but whoever plays better cricket on the day will win. We are not worried about big names," said Shanto.

PSG left looking to Mbappe

AFP, Paris

Paris Saint-Germain were deservedly beaten by Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie on Tuesday, but Kylian Mbappe's cameo on his return from injury gives them reason to believe they can still prevent another premature exit from Europe's elite club competition.

Mbappe did not look like a player who had been brought back much earlier than expected following a thigh injury as his electrifying pace caused panic in the Bayern defence when he came on for the final half-hour.

The France superstar could not inspire a comeback as Bayern left the Parc des Princes with a 1-0 win, but only a brave Yann Sommer save and then a marginal offside call denied him an equaliser.

"We only lost 1-0, there are no more away goals, and if we play our attacking game, cause them problems and score once, we'll be level," Mbappe said as he looked ahead to the return leg in Germany on March 8.

"We are not beaten, not at all. We still have every chance."

However, what Tuesday's game confirmed was the extent to which PSG are dependent on Mbappe,



despite the presence of Lionel Messi and Neymar in their attack as well.

Messi and Neymar struggled to have any real influence on the game in the first 57 minutes before Mbappe came off the bench, by which time Kingsley Coman had put the away side ahead.

"When he came on Mbappe completely lifted the atmosphere in the stadium and that also gave the other players a lift," admitted Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann.

"It is clear that Kylian Mbappe can change any game."

Ten Hag wishes Barca tie was final

AFP, London

Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag believes his side's last 32 Europa League clash against Barcelona would have been worthy of the final itself.

United have enjoyed a resurgence under their Dutch boss, who took charge ahead of this season.

They now travel to Spain for Thursday's first leg tie against La Liga leaders Barcelona in third place in the Premier League, five points behind table-toppers Arsenal but having played two games more than the Gunners.

Both Barcelona and United have rich European histories, with eight European Cup and Champions League titles between them, in addition to other continental trophies.

"I think Barcelona and (us) as well (would) have preferred to play (this match) in the final," Ten Hag told UEFA in comments published Wednesday.

"We are looking forward (to it), it (takes) a lot of energy searching for that finish, and it will be a great game. 'Hopefully, everyone is fit for Barcelona and for us. So we see a game (that will be played) at the highest level."

'There is something to learn no matter the result'

The Women's T20 World Cup has been going on in full-swing in South Africa since February 10 and although the group stages are yet to be completed, Bangladesh have already faced Sri Lanka and Australia and come out disappointed from both matches. Keeping wickets in hand appeared to be a major challenge for the Tigresses, as did setting a solid platform by attaining enough runs through the Powerplays. On a brighter note, some of the newer players in the team who joined just after a promising campaign in the inaugural U-19 T20 World Cup have been showing immense promise. Speaking to The Daily Star's Naziba Basher, Bangladesh captain Nigar Sultana Joty shared her insights into the T20 World Cup and spoke about the different strategies the team could adopt to churn out wins. The excerpts of that interview are below:

DS: What is the atmosphere like in South Africa?

there is a lot more for them to learn.

DS: The first two matches did not go our way. What did you take away from those defeats?

NJS: We actually have some great players. But we are



falling short when it comes to runs per over. I believe we are

falling short especially in the Powerplay. While other teams

manage to score at least 7-8 runs per over during the Powerplay, we are

falling behind. We need

to improve in that regard.

DS: What is your preparation like as a team?

NJS: Like I said, everyone has been giving their best. There are some areas that we need to work on collectively and I believe if we can conquer those areas, we can move ahead.

DS: What are your hopes from the new players?

Joty: I have to talk about our new pacer Marufa Akter. She has been bowling sensational and has been giving her absolute best in every game. As a matter of fact, all the young players have been doing the same. However,

DS: You have had a couple of international tournaments during the run up to the WC. What did you learn from those in terms of WC preparations?

NJS: We really need to pick up on our batting and the line-up needs to get

much stronger. However, we need to accept the fact that all of us have to try harder to play in different conditions. I think that is where we fall behind the most. We can't put up with different conditions. We need to work on that.

DS: We know it is quite difficult for those used to playing in South Asian conditions to excel in countries with different conditions in terms of pitch and weather. How much do you think you can use the South African conditions to your advantage?

NJS: Like I said, it is different for each country. After many tournaments and matches, some of us were able to acclimatise to different types of weather, pitches and more. But with new players in the team, it becomes a little tougher. They will need to learn how to adjust as well.

DS: What is your ultimate goal from this T20 World Cup?

NJS: We just want to be able to bring something back to the country, for the country.



New Zealand captain Tim Southee and his England counterpart Ben Stokes pose with the trophy in Mount Maunganui yesterday ahead of the first match of the two-Test series beginning today.

PHOTO: ECB

