

DHAKA SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2023

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 44

FALGUN 13, 1429 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHABAN 5, 1444 HJRI

16 PAGES : Tk 15.00



### B1 World's best green factory now in Bangladesh



### P11 Sixth for Aus or first for SA?



### P7 Nepal ruling coalition in turmoil



### P5 Mosquitoes invade Khulna

## Dollar crunch raises spectre of load-shedding

### Independent power producers warn, want \$1.05b to be in operation for March-June

ZYMA ISLAM and REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Private power plants that use furnace oil risk facing severe shortage of fuel and this may result in power cuts during the hottest months of this year.

These plants will need \$ 1.05 billion between March and June to import enough fuel, according to a letter sent by the power producers' association to Bangladesh Bank.

The amount is more than a quarter of the total fuel cost Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) estimates that it will need in that period to ensure adequate power supply.

Since the power generated by these plants is expensive and the foreign exchange reserve has been in decline, the government may prioritise plants that require cheaper fuel like gas.

But the private plants make up as much as 27 percent of the total capacity of the country's grid. The likelihood



of them remaining underutilised raises concerns of major power cuts in summer.

The country's energy security is at peril without Bangladesh Bank's support for import of furnace oil or HFO, lube and spare parts for the plants, said the letter Bangladesh Independent Power Producers' Association sent to the BB on February 20.

"Due to the shortage of US dollars in the market, it is not possible for the member companies to import the required HFO... to meet the demand of electricity... The power producers are unable to import the required fuel and parts," said the letter signed by the association President Faisal Khan.

These power plants need 21.2 lakh tonnes of HFO between March and June to produce electricity at 80 percent of their rated power, said the letter, urging Bangladesh Bank to provide US dollars to local commercial banks so that letters of credit (LCs) can be opened for imports critical for power generation.

Contacted, BB Executive Director Mezbahul Haque said that the central bank will provide support according to whatever decision the government makes. The private power plants have already received over a billion dollars from the BB this year, he told The Daily Star.

However, according to the PDB 2022 report, the government last year spent only about half the budget it allocated for buying HFO and diesel because of shrinking dollar reserves.

Even after the government curtailed purchase of liquid fuel amid a shortage of dollar reserves, the total expenditure on liquid fuel needed for power generation

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Family members place floral wreaths at the grave of a Bangladesh Army officer who was killed during the BDR mutiny at the BDR headquarters in the capital on February 25-26, 2009. Yesterday was the 14th anniversary of the incident. The photo was taken at the Banani Military Graveyard. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Islamic University halls run by BCL diktat

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AMANUR AMAN from Kushtia

It's the Chhatra League leaders, not the university or the hall administration, who are running the show at the dorms of Islamic University.

They are the ones who are allowing the freshers in.

The university has seats for only 21 percent of its students at its eight dormitories. Taking an undue advantage of the huge seat crisis, apart from a few exceptions, Bangladesh Chhatra League grants permission to first-year students to stay at "gono rooms". In exchange, BCL men force students to join political rallies and processions, causing disruptions to their studies, said residential students.

"Gono room" is a term used by students for a dormitory room where many students stay together due to accommodation problems.

"Students do not even dare to speak against Chhatra League, let alone waging a movement, for fear of repercussions," said a masters student from Lalon Shah Hall.

Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, a professor of international relations at Dhaka University, said the issues of seat crisis and ruling party-backed student organisation's violence, bullying, sexual harassment and other crimes on campuses are related.

He said students need to depend on Chhatra League leaders for having seats as the hall authorities and teachers do not play their due roles. "They do not get seats based on needs and merit either. As a consequence, students become hostage to the whims of a pro-ruling party student organisation. The leaders recruit them for their organisation."

The issue of allowing students to live in dormitories by pro-ruling party student organisations came to the fore after the recent harassment of a female student at the Islamic University.

Phulpori Khatun, a first-year student, was tortured by some BCL leaders and activists at the Deshratna Sheikh Hasina Hall.

Phulpori on February 14 alleged that BCL university unit Vice President Sanjida Chowdhury, activist Tabassum Islam and several others tortured her on the night of February 12 for staying at the hall without their "permission".

A university official said Phulpori, who hails from Pabna, came to the hall with the help of an acquaintance of her elder sister. When Sanjida came to know about her staying at the hall as a "guest" without their "consent", she became furious.

Contacted, hall Provost Prof Shamsul

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## 14-party not functional now: Menon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon yesterday said the ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance is "non-functional".

He said his party would join the next general elections only when it would be allowed to participate with its own electoral symbol, "hammer".

Menon was addressing the party's divisional rally at the Madrasa Maidan in Rajshahi.

"It was Awami League's proposal that we [14-party] will participate in the movement, and elections and then form government together. We stayed with the movement and participated in the elections together, but when it

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## President blasts big businesses for loan default

### Graft key obstacle to progress, he says at JU convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday said common people are not responsible even for one percent of the defaulted bank loans, while big businesspeople and industrialists take out loans with no intention of paying them back.

"Of course, some bankers are also involved in it," he added. The president was speaking at the sixth convocation of Jahangirnagar University in Savar.

Saying that corruption is one of the biggest obstacles on the path of the country's development, he said everyone should be aware, and teachers should keep themselves free from corruption and nepotism.

Criticising a section of businesspeople, Hamid said that while starting a business,



SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## WAR IN UKRAINE Balancing act may get trickier for Bangladesh

### Say security analysts

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Security analysts fear that the Ukraine-Russia war could intensify in the coming days, pushing the whole world into further trouble, unless there are serious peace initiatives to stop the war that began a year ago.

If the war continues, the world will become more polarised between the Sino-Russian bloc and the US-led bloc, and Bangladesh like many other countries that maintain a neutral stance will find it increasingly difficult to maintain a balance, they said.

Russia is now controlling a significant part of Eastern Ukraine and annexed it through a referendum.

"So, it is not easily leaving Crimea, which was annexed in 2014, and the newly annexed region," said Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) President Maj Gen (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman.

"During the winter, the fighting took place at a comparatively low level, but as the spring is starting in March and the Western powers have pledged modern tanks to Ukraine, it is likely that the fighting will intensify then," he added.

"Ukraine also wanted fighter aircraft

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## GUN ATTACKS Ex-UP member killed, upazila chairman shot

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A former union parishad member was killed and an incumbent upazila parishad chairman was injured in incidents of gun violence in Narsingdi yesterday.

In Raipura upazila, police recovered the body of former Bashgari Union Parishad member Swapan Ahmed, 42, from the bank of the Meghna in Boroghat hours after he was shot dead.

His nephew Jahidul Islam Kamal said the family was preparing to file a case.

Locals and police sources said Swapan might have been killed over rivalry in exerting influence in the area.

He was accused of murder, robbery, and arson in at least 12 cases, they added.

Meanwhile, Shibpur Upazila Parishad Chairman Harunur Rashid Khan was shot twice by assailants at his home.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Members of the Awami League attack BNP activists and the stage of a BNP programme in front of the latter's district office in Nilphamari town around 11:30am yesterday. PHOTO: COLLECTED

## BNP ROAD MARCH Over 100 hurt in clashes with police, AL men

### At least 100 held

STAR REPORT

Over 100 leaders and activists of the BNP were held during the party's nationwide road march programme yesterday.

At least 100 more people, including six policemen, were injured when police and the ruling party men attacked them.

In Natore, six crude bombs exploded near the BNP's party office.

"Jubo League and Chhatra League men hurled the bombs from motorcycles to scare our men," said Zillur Rahman Khan Chowdhury, general secretary of Natore city unit BNP.

Contacted, Farhad Bin Aziz, president of the district unit BCL, refuted the allegation and said the BNP men were behind the blasts.

Fifty-nine leaders and activists of the BNP were held in this connection, said police.

In Jhalakathi, some 60 BNP activists and six policemen were injured in a clash between police and the party men. The clash broke out when police intercepted the BNP's march on Amtala road in the town.

"Police attacked our peaceful programme without any provocation," said Sahadat Hossain, member secretary of the district unit BNP.

Nasir Uddin Sarkar, officer-in-charge (OC) of Jhalakathi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## No restrictions on Khaleda engaging in politics

Law minister reiterates

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia can't participate in elections because of her convictions in corruption cases, said Law Minister Anisul Huq.

However, there was no such condition that she would not be able to engage in politics, he added.

The minister was talking to local reporters after attending the centenary celebrations of Jamsheerpur High School in Badoir union of Brahmanbaria's Kasba upazila yesterday.

"As Begum Khaleda Zia has been convicted in two cases, she is barred from contesting elections under Article 66 of the constitution."

Anisul, the chief guest at the event, said one of those cases was heard in trial court and the other in the High Court following an appeal, and she was convicted.

"The trial court in one case handed a jail sentence of five years, which was later increased to 10 years by the High Court following an appeal. In the other case, she was sentenced to seven year's imprisonment by the judicial court."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

## RMP finds kidnappers' torture cell

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Detectives in Rajshahi have busted a torture cell, used by kidnappers, in the city's Hetomkhan area and arrested four suspects.

Bijoy Basak, additional commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, said police came to know about the torture cell while investigating a kidnapping case.

Police arrested four members of a kidnapping gang during a special operation on Friday, and recovered locally-made weapons, the official said during a press conference at the RMP's Detective Branch office yesterday.

The four — Arefin Ahad Khan alias Sunny, 42, Mostaq Ahmed alias Fahim, 22, Md Parvez, 27, and Sabbir Sarkar, 25 — were picked up from different areas of Rajshahi city.

Two cases were filed with Boalia Police Station in connection with the incident.

Yesterday, a local court sent the arrestees to jail after they were produced before it.

According to police, the arrestees kidnapped a hawkler, Delwar Hossain Mondol, from Rajarhata area on the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



In a day-long drive in the capital yesterday, traffic police at the Sonargaon intersection seized rickshaws illegally running on the Nazrul Islam Avenue.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Russia sanctions busters to 'face severe costs'

Warns G7; no G20 joint statement after China objections on Ukraine war

AGENCIES

G7 leaders issued a stern warning to any country abetting Russia's war in Ukraine, as G20 finance ministers, facing objections from China, again failed yesterday to agree on a joint statement on the global economy.

The G7 leaders, who were joined by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, issued the warning in a virtual call marking the first anniversary of Russia's invasion, while members added a raft of new sanctions on Moscow and its supporters.

"We call on third countries or other international actors who seek to evade or undermine our measures to cease providing material support to Russia's war, or face severe costs," the Group of Seven leaders said in a joint statement.

The statement came as both Moscow and Kyiv seek to restock their forces for intensified fighting in what analysts expect will involve offensives by both sides along the long front lines in Ukraine.

In New Delhi, current G20 president India issued a "chair's summary" which

said "most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine" and that there were "different assessments of the situation and sanctions" at the two-day meeting in Bengaluru.

A footnote said two paragraphs in the summary about the war, which it said were adapted from the G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration in November, "were agreed to by all member countries except Russia and China".

Spain's representative Nadia Calvino had said earlier that because of "less constructive" approaches by some unspecified countries at the talks among the world's top 20 economies, agreeing on a statement was "difficult".

China wanted to change the language of the statement from November, officials told AFP, with one saying on condition of anonymity that Beijing wanted to remove the word "war".

Previous meetings of G20 finance ministers and central bank chiefs have also failed to produce a common communique since Russia, a member of the grouping, invaded its neighbour last February.

China has sought to position itself

as a neutral party in the conflict while maintaining close ties with strategic ally Russia.

Top Chinese diplomat Wang Yi was in Moscow on Wednesday to meet President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who is due at a G20 foreign ministers meeting in New Delhi next week.

Chinese state news agency Xinhua quoted Wang as saying China was willing to "deepen political trust" and "strengthen strategic coordination" with Russia.

On Friday, the first anniversary of the invasion, China published a 12-point paper calling for a "political settlement" to the crisis that was met with scepticism from Ukraine's allies.

G20 host India has also refused to condemn Russia, which is New Delhi's biggest arms supplier and has become a major source of oil for India since the invasion.

Western countries — including the United States, Germany and France — had insisted the language in any joint statement could not be weaker than the communique issued by G20 leaders in Indonesia in November.

## Condemned convict dies at DMCH

UNB, Dhaka

A convict in the BDR mutiny case died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital early yesterday.

Deceased Abdul Baten, 70, was given the death penalty.

Inspector Bachhu Mia, in-charge of Dhaka Medical College Hospital police camp, said Baten fell sick around 1:30am in Dhaka Central Jail and was taken to the hospital, where the doctors declared him dead.

Seventy-four people, including 57 army officials, were killed in the mutiny in the capital's Pikhana headquarters of the erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on February 25 and 26 in 2009.

A total of 58 cases, including one for murder and looting and the rest for mutiny, were filed in connection with the incident.

Some 152 people were sentenced to death and 423 others to different jail terms in the case. Besides, 277 accused were acquitted.

## Siblings killed in Sirajganj road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A woman and her brother were killed and two others injured when a truck hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Sirajganj Sadar yesterday.

The dead were identified as Lipi Khatun, 28, and her brother Mukul Hossain, 25, who passengers of the CNG run auto-rickshaw.

Md Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Sirajganj Sadar Police Station, said the accident took place around 1:00pm when a Sirajganj-bound speeding truck hit the three-wheeler in Kurulia area near Simanto Bazar.

Lipi died on the spot while Mukul died on the way to Sirajganj General Hospital.

The two others injured, including the CNG driver, were admitted to the hospital for treatment.

Police rescued the victims and seized the truck. The driver of the truck, however, had fled after the accident, the OC said.

## Magnitude 5.5 earthquake strikes central Turkey

DEUTSCHE WELLE

A magnitude 5.5 earthquake struck Central Turkey yesterday, the European Mediterranean Seismological Center (EMSC) said.

The quake was at a depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles), EMSC said, while the local AFAD disaster agency said it occurred at 12:27 pm local time (10:27 GMT).

The Kandilli earthquake monitoring center said the epicenter was located in the district of Bor, in the province of Nigde.

Nigde is some 350 kilometers (217 miles) west of the Turkish-Syrian border region that was struck by two major quakes on February 6.

Mayor Emrah Ozdemir told state broadcaster TRT that no damage was reported yet.

Teams are on site to assess the aftermath, Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay wrote on Twitter.

Prior to this, at least seven tremors over magnitude 4 had been recorded since Friday evening in Turkey, including the quake-hit south, according to AFAD.

## 14-party

FROM PAGE 1

came to formation of the [current] government, we were left out," he said.

Five candidates of Workers Party of Bangladesh, a key ally of the 14-party alliance, took part in the last national elections in 2018 under the banner of the grand alliance with Awami League's electoral symbol "boat".

"We stood together with the Awami League during BNP Jamaat's anti-government movement, during the war crimes trials, and the movement by Hefazat-e Islam in 2013.

"Again in 2014, we resisted the arson attacks by BNP-Jamaat coalition."

Menon said his party had then initially refused to join the cabinet but later changed its mind.

"And again, we took part in the national polls taking responsibility of joining a poorly participated election [2018]," he said.

As another national election is approaching, the ruling Awami League is saying that it would join the polls under the banner of 14-party alliance, he said.

"Recently, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressed a rally in Rajshahi and sought vote for boat, the symbol of the Awami League. Where is hammer? Is the Awami League seeking vote for hammer?" Menon said.

"Is this the 14-party coalition that we forged on the basis of national consensus in the light of the 14-party's 23-point charter?"

"We won elections with our own symbol, but when we participate elections with boat, the Awami League voters choose to vote for either BNP or Jatiya Party," he continued.

"This can't be an ideal coalition politics," he said.

Menon said Workers Party general secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha, who is the MP of Rajshahi Sadar, would certainly take part in the next elections with his party symbol "hammer".

Liakat Ali Liku, president of Rajshahi district unit of the party, chaired the rally.

## Dollar crunch raises spectre of load-shedding

FROM PAGE 1

doubled in 2021-2022 fiscal year, compared to the year before.

Since a majority of the private or independent power producers (IPPs) rely on liquid fuel, the price of electricity sold by them rose by 77.43 percent.

Even after spending so much money, the plants sat idle in summer last year due to shortage of fuel, leading to the worst power outages the country had seen in years.

Besides, even if the government cannot supply enough dollars to the banks to meet the demands of the IPPs, it is legally obligated to continue paying capacity charges.

Between 2019 and 2021 capacity payments made to IPPs accounted

for as much as 45 percent of the total cost of the electricity purchased from them, according to an analysis by this newspaper.

The government currently owes more than Tk 14,000 crore, or about \$ 1.4 billion, in unsettled bills to IPPs, according to PDB sources.

This year, Orion Power with its four HFO-run power plants would require over \$ 197 million for fuel.

Last year, a plant of Orion Power's Dutch Bangla Power and Associates Ltd in Siddhirganj had a plant load factor (PLF) of just 19 percent.

PLF is the ratio between the actual energy generated by the plant to the maximum possible energy that can be generated with the plant working at its rated power and for an entire year.

## Islamic University halls run by BCL diktat

FROM PAGE 1

Alam said he was not aware that Phulpori was staying at the dormitory.

Asked whether a fresher needs to have BCL's permission for staying at the hall or getting a seat, he said, "Chhatra League has nothing to do with this. Rather, the hall administration allocates seats."

He said it is usual that first-year honours students would get seats at the end of their academic year or the second-year students would be allocated seats.

Established in Kushtia in 1980, Islamic University has now 15,893 students, including 5,172 females. There are eight dormitories, including three for females.

Although the eight halls have a total of 3,282 seats, 4,876 students are now staying in them.

University authorities and residential students said about 800 students now live in Deshratna Sheikh Hasina Hall against its capacity of about 450. At least 40 students are living in the prayer room of the dormitory. There are nine "gono rooms" in the hall.

A "gono room" student from Lalon Shah Hall said 17 students stay at his room. They usually cannot read properly in the overcrowded room.

"These gono rooms are controlled by Chhatra League activists. We haven't seen any student getting a seat without the permission of Chhatra League," said Emanul Shohan, president of the

IU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Union.

Ashiqur Rahman, Bangladesh Chhatra Maitri IU unit president, said as many students do not get seats in halls, they stay in different places of Kushtia and Jhenidah, about an hour's journey from the university. He said expenses of guardians also increases as students need to rent homes.

Asked about the allegations, Chhatra League IU unit President Faisal Siddike Arafat refuted all of them. He claimed that they never control any "gono room" or halls.

"There is an acute accommodation crisis at the university. If any students from outside Kushtia contact us, we try to help them."

He said they never force anyone to join their political programmes.

Vice Chancellor Prof Shaikh Abdus Salam said it is really tough for freshers to get a seat in halls.

"As far as I know, second-year students are allocated seats at dormitories."

He said constructions of four new halls were underway. Once those are opened, the accommodation crisis would ease as each of them will accommodate 1,000 students, the VC added.

Asked about the allegation of Chhatra League controlling the "gono rooms" and compelling students to join political programmes, Salam said, "I can't give you the answer. The hall

administrations have to work with many people. Our main concern is that there should be no indiscipline."

## Death toll

FROM PAGE 12

accessing them.

"I have eight children. We are living in a tent. There is water on top (of the tent) and the ground is damp. We are asking for more tents and they don't give them to us," Melek, 67, who was waiting in a line to collect aid outside a high school in the town of Hassa.

The school was being used as an aid distribution center by a group of volunteers called Interrail Turkey. One volunteer, Sumeyye Karaboccek, said the shortage of tents remained the biggest problem.

Erdogan's government has endured a wave of criticism over both its response to the devastation and what many Turks say were years of non-enforcement of construction quality control.

The Turkish government's initial plan now is to build 200,000 apartments and 70,000 village houses at a cost of at least \$15 billion, he said. US bank JPMorgan had estimated rebuilding houses and infrastructure will cost \$25 billion.

The UNDP said it estimated that the destruction has left 1.5 million people homeless, with 500,000 new homes needed.

## Over 100 hurt in clashes with police, AL men

FROM PAGE 1

Sadar Police Station, however, said the BNP men attacked them first.

Police charged baton to disperse the procession and detained 16 BNP activists, he added.

In Patuakhali, at least six BNP activists were injured when they clashed with police in the town.

Police charged baton on the BNP activists as soon as they started the road march, said Snehanshu Sarker Kutti, member secretary of the district unit BNP.

Contacted, Moniruzzaman, OC of Patuakhali Sadar Police Station, said they only freed the road when the BNP men blocked it illegally.

In Bagerhat, police foiled the BNP's programme and picked up some 30 party activists, said Obaidul Islam, education affairs secretary of the BNP's central committee.

Shahadat Hossain, additional superintendent (Sadar circle) of Bagerhat police, said both the Awami League and the BNP had programmes at the same time.

"We requested the BNP to hold their programme later but they did not comply. Thus, we detained their 30 men," he said.

In Netrakona, 23 BNP men were injured as the ruling party men swooped on them when they were gathering for the road march.

Motorcycles and minibuses were vandalised and set ablaze during the clash.

Police fired two bullets to bring the situation under control and detained five BNP activists.

The ruling party men attacked the BNP activists in Kurpur area when the latter were gathering for their procession, said Rafiqul Islam Hilali, member secretary of the district BNP.

At that time, several crude bombs exploded, and banners and festoons

were snatched from the BNP men, he added.

Refuting the allegation, Shamchur Rahman, general secretary of the district unit AL, said the vandalism could be a result of the BNP's factional conflict.

Khandaker Shaker Ahmed, OC of Netrokona Model Police Station, said the held two BNP men as the party activists tried to create chaos in several places.

In Gazipur, the BNP activists had to cut short their programme when police obstructed them.

Meanwhile, chase and counter-chase took place between the BNP and the ruling party men in Nilphamari. The parties blamed each other for the chaos.

Police eventually intervened and brought the situation under control, said Abdur Rauf, OC of Nilphamari Police Station.

[Our Bagerhat, Pirojpur and Pathuakhali correspondents contributed to this report]

## Ex-UP member

FROM PAGE 1

Three men visited the 70-year-old chairman and Awami League leader around 6:00am. After talking to Harunur for a while, the men opened fire, said Shibpur AL General Secretary Shamsul Alam Bhuiyan.

He added that security camera footage showed the men fleeing the neighbourhood in a motorcycle.

Local AL leaders and activists blockaded a regional highway in the afternoon to protest the incident.

Harunur was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with two bullet injuries on his back, said Civil Surgeon Nurul Islam.

Police are looking for the gunmen, said Narsingdi Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime), Anirban Chowdhury.

## BDR MUTINY

# 'It was done to destroy army's morale'

Says Fakhru; probe, trial centring incident not transparent, says GM Quader

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said the BDR mutiny was part of a long-term conspiracy that aimed to destroy the morale of the country's army.

On the same day, Jatiya Party Chairperson GM Quader said the trial and investigation process of Pilkhana carnage was not transparent; most families of the martyrs believe this as well.

The BNP and JP leaders made the remarks at the capital's Banani army graveyard, after placing floral wreaths at the grave of army officers who died during the BDR carnage.

The nation yesterday mourned the death of 74 people, including 57 army officers, in the incident that occurred on February 25-26 in 2009.

Talking to the media, Fakhru said the BDR mutiny was a serious conspiracy that was against the country.

Claiming that around 7,000 jawans of then BDR (now Border Guard Bangladesh) are innocent, Fakhru said, hearing of their cases is yet to be completed.

"They have been spending their lives in inhumane prison conditions for 13 to 14 years. Their families and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



To illustrate how plastic waste, like wrappers and bottles, pollute waterbodies, participants of "Climate Expo-2023" prepared this exhibit. Though this display, they have highlighted the need to promote sustainable products to protect the environment. This photo was taken yesterday at the capital's Gulshan Society Lake Park.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## 14th anniversary of Pilkhana carnage observed

### STAR REPORT

The 14th anniversary of the Pilkhana carnage was observed yesterday.

Floral wreaths were placed at the graves of the slain army officers at the Military Graveyard in the capital's Banani on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at 9:00am.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, chiefs of three armed forces, BGB director general, and victims' relatives also paid their tributes to the dead.

Marking the day, BGB will organise Quran-khwani, as well as doa and milad mahfil in mosques at the headquarters and all other units and border outposts, said a BGB press release yesterday.

Seventy-four people, including 57 army officials, were killed in the mutiny in the capital's Pilkhana headquarters of the erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on February 25 and 26 in 2009.

## Mobile courts to stop flying of kites, lanterns near tracks

### Mulls metro rail authority



### TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The metro rail authority is considering carrying out mobile court drives to stop the flying of kites or sky lanterns near the metro rail tracks, as they failed to find out any technical solution in this regard.

Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) — the operating agency of metro rail — is taking the hard approach as the metro rail operations are getting frequently disrupted with kites or sky lanterns getting stuck at electric lines.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on December 28 inaugurated the country's first-ever metro rail line, which was opened to the public on the following day.

However, the authorities had to suspend operations for two hours "on safety grounds" on January 1 as a huge number of extinguished sky lanterns fell on the overhead electricity lines after the new year celebrations.

On February 20, DMTCL issued a circular urging people to avoid flying kites or sky lanterns within at least a one-kilometre radius of the metro rail line, after the operation of metro rail was halted for two consecutive days.

The authority said metro rail is operating between Uttara and Agargaon using high powered electric lines and kites, sky lanterns or gas balloons can result in severe accidents or suffering of the passengers due to the delay.

Yesterday, the authorities had to suspend the metro rail's operation for around 22 minutes after a kite got stuck in the overhead electric line.

Contacted, MAN Siddique, managing director of DMTCL, said they have been requesting people using loudspeakers not to fly kites or sky lanterns near metro tracks but to no avail.

"We are planning to carry out mobile court drives if the situation does not improve. However, the number of such incidents is decreasing," he added.

Siddique also mentioned that this problem has no technical solution.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

# DSA: a weapon to create culture of fear

Speakers tell memorial meeting on writer Mushtaq Ahmed

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Digital Security Act (DSA) 2018 has been making the lives of citizens even more unsafe, said speakers at a memorial meeting yesterday.

They also said the government has created a culture of fear to maintain its illegal power and DSA is one of its weapons. In light of the upcoming election, the government is in the process of making some more dangerous laws, namely the Data Protection Act and the Digital Business Act.

Speakers urged the citizens to create a larger movement to abolish all the laws that are repressive and opposed to the interest of the people, including the Digital Security Act.

To commemorate the second death anniversary of the writer Mushtaq Ahmed, who was arrested in a case filed under the DSA and later died in jail in 2021, the meeting was held at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in the capital's Dhanmondi.

Speakers also urged the government to compensate all the victims of the DSA, bring the accomplices of false cases to justice and make the absolute power of the government accountable for making such laws.

Environmentalist Syeda Rezwana Hasan said the weapons of the authoritarian or autocratic government are the repressive laws that they use to silence the protesting people so that the actual criminals can carry out activities like illegal sand

mining, hill cutting, deforestation, and other destructive activities without any hindrance.

"These laws not only violate the rights of the affected people but also trample on their fundamental rights, causing immense suffering to them and their families," she said.

Prof Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University's law department described DSA as the most heinous law in the country's history, calling for its abolishment, compensation for the affected people and the prosecution of the false accusers.

Addressing those citizens who are not yet vocal on the issue, photographer and social activist Shahidul Alam said they have to be questioned for their silence.

Ganasanghati Andolan Coordinator Jonaed Saki said the mere abolishment of such laws will not be enough, rather, the system needs to be changed to ensure the rights of the people.

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, president of Nagorik Oikko; journalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol; Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar; and Didarul Islam Bhuiyan, economic affairs coordinator of the Rastra Sangskar Andolan; spoke at the event, among others.

The meeting was moderated by architect Golam Mahfuz Joardar, who was also tortured in police custody after being arrested under a DSA case.



## Tk 25,000 minimum wage for RMG workers

### Speakers demand at roundtable

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment workers have demanded the immediate formation of a wage board and minimum wage of Tk 25,000, considering the increased price of daily commodities and rising living costs.

The demand was made at a roundtable organised by Garment Workers Trade Union Centre held at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

While addressing the programme, renowned economist Prof Anu Muhammad criticised the government's use of the term "adjustment" while hiking prices, which he claims was imported from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

"How can they survive with Tk 8,000? Can a four-member family live off this amount? What about their education, treatment, and other living expenses?" questioned the economist.

Comparing the wages of RMG workers in Bangladesh with other less-developed countries, Muhammad pointed out that Bangladeshi RMG workers receive the lowest wages.

He also stressed the importance of arranging food rationing facilities for RMG workers who are in need of such support.

Mahbubur Rahman Ismail, president of Bangladesh Textile

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## CLIMATE CHANGE

# Youngsters unite for solution-based adaptation

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Youths coming from different parts of the country were at the centre of a day-long expo yesterday that aimed to promote sustainable products and services as well as encourage innovations for climate-change adaptation.

They came up with various environment-friendly products and shared their views in interactive sessions on how people can work both in rural and urban areas to bring changes in others' lives to mitigate climate change impacts.

The Earth Society with support from Climate Parliament Bangladesh, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Movers, and RR-Imperial Electricals Limited organised the "Climate Expo-2023" at Gulshan Society Lake Park in the capital.

The event was held to find how Sustainable Development Goal-13: "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts" can be achieved.

Mikal Hossain Khan, founder of Projjolito Narail, said his organisation has been campaigning in remote areas of Narail district to inspire local farmers to use more organic fertilisers to grow their crops.

"These farmers are little aware about health hazard and risk to the environment that mineral fertiliser may pose," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## The unfulfilled dreams of an artist

### Sculptor Shamim Sikder unwell, unable to finish incomplete projects

### DU CORRESPONDENT



Ekushey Padak awardee sculptor and former professor of Dhaka University Shamim Sikder has been unwell for three months. She came to Bangladesh six months ago from London, aiming to complete her unfulfilled work.

However, all she gained was disappointment due to multiple barriers on the path to her dreams.

The 70-year-old artist is suffering from multiple illnesses, including cardiovascular, respiratory and kidney complications, according to Imran Hossain, a curator of Shamim Sikder Sculpture Park.

Shamim Sikder arranged a press conference yesterday at Fuller Road to share her unspoken dreams of finishing her incomplete projects.

She is currently undergoing treatment at Dhaka United Hospital, after being shifted from two hospitals previously due to no improvement in her health.

Imran, read the written statement at a conference on behalf of her.

"Her dreams remain incomplete. She dreamt reconstructing the sculpture of Zainul Abedin at DU's Faculty of Fine Arts, and urged the university authorities to unveil it after the reconstruction," said Imran.

Imran also mentioned that Shamim had plans to reconstruct the Guernica sculpture at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, she could not proceed with the plan due to the alleged non-cooperation from the ministry.

Shamim Sikder, who was a professor of the sculpture department of DU's Faculty of Fine Arts, built the "Shonarjito Shadinota" at DU's TSC in 1990 and Swadhinata Sangram at the university's Fuller Road area. Earlier, in 1974, she built a sculpture in Dhaka Central Jail to commemorate Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

## Gonotontro Moncho protests 'wrongful' arrests

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonotontro Moncho, a recently formed alliance of seven political parties, strongly condemned the arrests of District People's Rights Council leaders in Khulna and Bagerhat yesterday.

They claimed that police have arrested the activists

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



President Abdul Hamid handing over gold medals to the graduates during the sixth convocation of Jahangirnagar University yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Sixth JU convocation held

### JU CORRESPONDENT

The sixth convocation of Jahangirnagar University was held yesterday.

On the occasion, the university campus was decorated with colourful banners, festoons and arches.

President Abdul Hamid, also chancellor of the university, inaugurated the programme around 3:30pm, held at the central playground of JU.

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique addressed the ceremony as the convocation speaker.

Earlier, a press release from university authorities said around 15,500 students would participate in the convocation while 16 graduates would be given gold medals.



PRAYER TIMING  
FEBRUARY 26  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-15 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30  
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Tk 25,000

FROM PAGE 3  
Garments Workers Federation, demanded the formation of a wage board within a week and called for all workers to unite and press for their demands.

Poet and journalist Sohrab Hassan criticised the government for exploiting farmers and RMG workers, who he believes are the lifeblood of the country.

Other speakers at the event included Mujahidul Islam Selim, former president of Communist Party of Bangladesh; Md Towhidur Rahman, chairperson of Bangladesh Garments Sramik Oikya Parishad; Advocate Mantu Gosh, president of Garment Workers Trade Union Centre, its general secretary Sadekur Rahman Shamim, and vice president Joly Talukder.

Mild tremor jolts Cox's Bazar

STAR REPORT

A light tremor, measuring 4.1 on the Richter scale, jolted Cox's Bazar and its adjoining areas yesterday.

The earthquake was felt at 4:39pm, said Abdur Rahman, assistant meteorologist at Cox's Bazar Met office.

The epicentre of the quake was inside Myanmar, some 377km south-southeast of Dhaka, the official added. No casualty or damage has been reported.

Mobile courts to stop

FROM PAGE 3  
Prof Moazzem Hossain, a member of the panel of experts of Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA), said he has never heard of such a crisis in other countries.

He said DTCA gave DMTCL certain conditions, including safety measures against falling objects, that

needed to be fulfilled before going into commercial operation.

"I am not sure whether they [DMTCL] are carrying out a commercial operation or going through an experimental stage. If they have launched a commercial operation, they have to take necessary preventive measures," he added.

The mutiny in 2009 shocked the nation. A total of 829 people, mostly BDR members, were accused in the carnage case filed later.

On November 5, 2013, a Dhaka court sentenced 148 BDR members and two civilians to death, 160 to life in prison, and 256 people, mostly BDR soldiers, to rigorous imprisonment.

The court acquitted 278, but the prosecutors later appealed against the acquittal of 69.

Youngsters unite for

FROM PAGE 3  
Ahsan Rony, founder of Green Savers, said his organisation has been campaigning for rooftop gardening keeping advanced urban farming in mind in Dhaka city for over a decade now.

He said, at the beginning, they found it hard to get sufficient expertise to mobilise city dwellers in rooftop gardening.

Now, about 50 to 60 people who are technically expert in advance urban farming and known as "doctor of tree" work under the platform and provide

services to citizens. Journalist Iftekhar Mahmud said alongside awareness campaigns like the expo, the government must come forward with policies and actions for climate change adaptation.

Addressing the opening session as chief guest, Akhter Hossain, principal coordinator (SDG affairs) at Prime Minister's Office, said the government's latest SDGs progress report 2022 reveals that Bangladesh is an "early bird" in 16 indicators and also on track in 42 other indicators.

To address the climate change challenges, the government has prepared several key strategies and plans, he said.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry Secretary Farhina Ahmed, French Ambassador to Bangladesh Marie Masdupuy, Shirin Sultana Lira, programme manager (governance, climate change and environment) at the Swiss Embassy in Bangladesh, and Mozammel Haque, senior governance advisor of UNDP Bangladesh, spoke at the event among others.

Stop plastic usage

FROM PAGE 5  
camps must be stopped immediately.

Chief Executive of PAHLS and CCNF Co-Chair Abu Morshed Chowdhury, said, "We need to stop using plastic if we want to save our blue economy. For this,

we need proper execution of government law."

Mizanur Rahman Bahadur, assistant director of COAST, and CCNF member secretary Zahangir Alam jointly moderated the event.

Gonotontro Moncho

FROM PAGE 3  
without a warrant in an old case.

The alliance demanded immediate release of all activists who they claim were wrongfully held.

Besides, the party leaders said the current regime would soon be ousted through a mass uprising. They called on the people from all walks of life to join the movement.

It was done to destroy army

FROM PAGE 3  
future are being destroyed," he added.

"Today, I will demand to resolve all judicial issues against them. They should be released."

Asked about an Awami League leader mentioning that Khaleda Zia's movement on the day of the carnage was "suspicious", Fakhrul said such a statement is nothing but irresponsible.

Meanwhile, GM Quader said due to non-

transparency in the investigation process, the martyrs' families are angry. "The government needs to pay attention to the trial of the brutal killings so that the families can be relieved."

"What action has been taken against those who were responsible for such horrific murders? The nation wants to know," he added.

After placing wreaths, the victims' families expressed disappointment that the verdict of the BDR carnage

case is yet to be executed.

The mutiny in 2009 shocked the nation. A total of 829 people, mostly BDR members, were accused in the carnage case filed later.

On November 5, 2013, a Dhaka court sentenced 148 BDR members and two civilians to death, 160 to life in prison, and 256 people, mostly BDR soldiers, to rigorous imprisonment.

The court acquitted 278, but the prosecutors later appealed against the acquittal of 69.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
District Primary Education Office  
Jhenaidah  
http://dpe.jhenaidah.gov.bd/  
Memo No. 38.01.4400.000.99.09.2021-131 Dated: 23.02.2023  
Invitation for e-Tender Notice No. 01/2023  
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute  
Office of The Principal  
email: dhakampi1985@gmail.com  
web: www.dmpi.gov.bd  
Ref.No: DMPI/Gov/GP-2022-23/023  
Date: ২৩/২/২৩  
e-Tender Notice  
e-Tenders are invited through e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Principal, Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute under the Directorate of Technical Education for the procurement of following package Which will be available at e-GP website (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) from date and time as follows:

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
ট্যাকসেস আপীলাত ট্রাইবুনাল  
রাজস্ব ভবন (১০ তলা)  
প্লট এফ ১/এ, আগারগাঁও  
শের-ই-বাংলা নগর  
www.tat.gov.bd  
নথি নং-০৮.০২.০০০০.০০০.১১.০০২.১৮.৩২৭  
তারিখ: ২৩/০২/২০২৩খ্রিঃ  
১০/১১/১৪২৮বাং  
নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি  
অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ, অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়, শাখা-৩ (আয়কর) এর নথি নং-০৮.০০.০০০০.০৩৭.১১.০০১.২২-৩৭এ তারিখঃ ১২/১০/২০২২খ্রিঃ অনুযায়ী প্রাপ্ত ছাত্রদের ভিত্তিতে ট্যাকসেস আপীলাত ট্রাইবুনালের অধীনে রাজস্ব খাতে গ্রেড-১৪ এর ০৩ (তিনটি) গ্রেড-২০ এর ০৭ (সাতটি) শূন্য পদে অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত স্থায়ী বাসিন্দা/নাগরিকদের নিম্নে উল্লিখিত পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের শর্ত সাপেক্ষে অনলাইনে http://tat.teletalk.com.bd ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

AL-backed panel sweeps Dhaka bar election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League lawyers' group "White Panel" has gained a landslide victory in the Dhaka Bar Association (DBA) election, bagging all 23 posts in the 2023-2024 executive committee.

Dhaka Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Abdullah Abu, who acted as chief election commissioner, announced the results at DBA office yesterday.

Mizanur Rahman Mamun was elected president with 7,883 votes. His "Blue Panel" opponent Khorshed Miah Alam got 1,035 votes.

Khandakar Golam Kibria Jobayer was elected general secretary with 7,614 votes, defeating Blue Panel contestant Sayed Nazrul Islam, who got 1,514 votes.

The BNP-backed lawyers' group Blue Panel on Thursday boycotted voting in the polls bringing allegations of irregularities and rigging against Abdullah Abu.

However, Abdullah Abu said pro-BNP lawyers' allegations were totally false, fabricated and vague.

The two day election for the new committee at DBA was held on Wednesday and Thursday where a total of 9,243 out of 19,618 lawyers cast their votes.

A total of 46 candidates from the two panels contested in the polls against 23 posts.

Mosquitoes invade Khulna

Authorities failing to control the menace, claim dwellers

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

After winter ended, mosquitoes took control of Khulna, making life difficult for many city dwellers. Locals claim that the situation has been going on for a long time, with the authorities continuing to turn a blind eye.

Swarms of mosquitoes from nearby ponds, bushes, water bodies, and drains invade houses shortly after sunset, disrupting students' studies, residents' sleep, and other household activities.

This makes them vulnerable to serious diseases, including malaria, dengue, yellow fever and even zika virus, according to physicians.

According to the conservancy department of Khulna City Corporation, mid-February to the third week of March is the mosquito breeding season.

Anwar Hossain, a resident of Alamnagar area of KCC ward-12, said, "I did not see any mosquito



**City dwellers should work with the city corporation. Otherwise, we will be unable to solve this problem alone due to a shortage of human resources. Besides, the problem will reduce once we finish the ongoing project of excavating drains, culverts and canals in the city.**

TALUKDER ABDUL KHALEQUE  
Khulna City Mayor

control initiative even once this month. I have to spend Tk 360 to 400 every month to buy coil."

Jahangir Hossain, who runs a tea stall in Moilapota area, said if mosquito coils are not lit in his shop after evening, the situation becomes unbearable.

"My business usually picks up from evening as customers start gathering around during this time. But I have been receiving far fewer people in my stall lately due to mosquito menace," he added.

He also claimed that he had not seen anyone from KCC conducting anti-mosquito drives in the last two months.

Advocate Md Babul Howladar, member secretary of Khulna Citizen Society, echoed the same.

According to KCC data, the city corporation spent Tk 2.10 crore in 2014-15, Tk 2.50 crore in 2015-16, and Tk 2.80 crore in 2016-17 for mosquito control initiatives.

The budget grows year after year, and in 2021-2022 Tk 3.18 crore, and in 2022-23 Tk 3.25 crore were allocated for this purpose

According to Md Abdul Aziz, KCC chief conservancy officer, black oil (80 percent diesel and 20 percent furnace oil) is being sprinkled in city drains to prevent mosquito breeding. A fogger machine operation is also underway to kill mosquitoes.

"We already bought larvicide, adulticide, kerosene oil, diesel, perfume, furnace oil, light diesel

etc... Every day, 31 permanent staffers and 31 temporary ones conduct anti-mosquito drives in all the wards of KCC," said Abdul.

"People should be aware too. Garbage should not be thrown in the drains. Besides, flower gardens, canals and ponds need to be clean," he added.

Contacted, Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque said, "City dwellers should work with the city corporation. Otherwise, we will be unable to solve this problem alone due to a shortage of human resources."

"Besides, the problem will reduce once we finish the ongoing project of excavating drains, culverts and canals in the city," he added.

Two youths who were picked up return home



Mehedi Hasan Jamal Uddin

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The two youths who were picked up from Jail Gate area in Lalmonirhat, after being acquitted of a militancy case, returned home yesterday.

A group of masked people took them from the spot on February 21. Families of the youths later claimed that a law enforcement agency took them to Dhaka for interrogation.

The law enforcers handed over the two youths -- Mehedi alias Mehedi Hasan, 27, from Hatibandha upazila, and Jamal Uddin, 32, from Kaliganj upazila -- to their families in Dhaka at 11:30pm on Friday, family members told The Daily Star yesterday.

Jamal is doing his master's at a college in Dhaka, and Mehedi is studying at Fazil level at a madrasa in Lalmonirhat.

Mehedi's father Abdul Latif told this newspaper that the law enforcers took them to Dhaka for questioning.

The youths were taken to their village homes yesterday, said families.

According to court sources, a case was lodged against six youths for allegedly being involved in banned militant organisation JMB in 2017.

In this case, four youths -- including Jamal and Mehedi -- were acquitted. Two other youths were jailed for 42 years.

Lalmonirhat Sessions Judge and Special Tribunal-1 Judge Md Mizanur Rahman delivered the verdict on February 19.

Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Ershadul Alam told The Daily Star that he heard that two youths missing from Jail Gate were rescued in Dhaka.

He said they returned home, but he has no information about how they went missing and how they were rescued.



The 12th Inter-school Bangla Olympiad 2023 -- organised by International Hope School Bangladesh -- was held on its premises at the capital's Uttara yesterday. More than 1,500 students from around 100 schools across the country participated in it. School Principal Rokhsana Zarin and Bangla Olympiad Coordinator Kamrul Ahsan, among others, spoke on the occasion. The Olympiad's prize-distribution ceremony will be held on March 11 at International Mother Language Institute Auditorium in Segunbagicha, Dhaka.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Youth hacked to death in Tangail

Locals set house of suspected killers on fire



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A youth was stabbed to death in Delduar upazila of Tangail yesterday morning.

Locals torched the house of the suspected killers after police recovered the body of Mohammad Raihan, 20, a resident of Nalua village in the upazila. The body, which was found beside a house near Pathrail-Gadatala road, bore injuries marks, said police.

The victim's family said Raihan was missing since Friday night. Later, his body was found beside the house of Marjina Begum, an alleged drug trader. Police said they had arrested Marjina

a week ago on charge of trading drugs. A local court sent her to jail. Police detained two sons of Marjina, who are also drug traders, in connection with the murder, said Officer in Charge of Delduar Police Station Nazrul Islam Mridha.

Following their detention, a mob vandalised their house and set it on fire, the OC added. Raihan's body was sent to Tangail General Hospital for autopsy.

"After preliminary investigation, police suspect that the youth was murdered centring a dispute over trading drugs. However, it will be ascertained after an investigation," the OC said.

Stop plastic usage in Cox's Bazar, Rohingya camps

Speakers demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tonnes of plastic waste is produced in Cox's Bazar and Rohingya camps every day, which ultimately end up in rivers and sea, said speakers at an event in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

They demanded to stop plastic use to save biodiversity, in a programme titled "Using Plastic Must be Stopped in Cox's Bazar and Rohingya Camps".

The speakers said plastic covers about 40 percent of the ocean surface, and scientists fear that there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2030.

Speakers also said the Bhakkhali river of Cox's Bazar is full of polythene now. The use of plastic in Cox's Bazar and Rohingya

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

BANGLADESH RURAL ELECTRIFICATION BOARD  
POWER DIVISION, MINISTRY OF POWER, ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES.  
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Memo No: 27.12.4147.034.11.004.23.78 Date: 19/02/2023

**Tender Notice e-GP (LTM)**

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for construction/Up-gradation/Conversion of overhead electrical distribution line Under the geographical area of Jashore PBS-1/2, Khulna, Satkhira, Kushtia, Meherpur, Jhenaidah & Magura PBS. Tender submission deadlines are mentioned below:

| SL. No. | Sub-Package No.       | Description of Works   | Tender ID No. | Closing & Opening Date | Closing Time | Opening Time |
|---------|-----------------------|--|---------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-45-01  | Construction of 7.698 Km New & Up-gradation of 7.889 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-1.  | 753691        | 14/03/23               | 10:00        | 10:00        |
| 2       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-45-02  | Construction of 7.213 Km New & Up-gradation of 8.451 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-1.  | 753692        |                        | 10:30        | 10:30        |
| 3       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-46-01  | Construction of 7.759 Km New & Up-gradation of 6.958 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-1.  | 753693        |                        | 11:00        | 11:00        |
| 4       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-46-02  | Construction of 6.701 Km New & Up-gradation of 8.251 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-1.  | 753694        |                        | 11:30        | 11:30        |
| 5       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-48-01  | Construction of 9.192 Km New & Up-gradation of 1.442 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-2.  | 753695        |                        | 12:00        | 12:00        |
| 6       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-314-01 | Conversion of 0.118 Km LT to HT, 7.463 Km HT Single Phase to HT Three Phase & 1.813 Km Insulated Conductor under the Geographical area of Jessore PBS-2.                         | 753696        |                        | 12:30        | 12:30        |
| 7       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-16-01  | Construction of 8.283 Km New 33 KV Electrical Source Line under the Geographical area of Khulna PBS.   | 753697        |                        | 13:00        | 13:00        |
| 8       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-16-02  | Construction of 12.226 Km New 33 KV Electrical Source Line under the Geographical area of Khulna PBS.  | 753698        |                        | 14:00        | 14:00        |
| 9       | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-20-01  | Construction of 16.439 Km New 33 KV Electrical Source Line & Up-gradation of 2.375 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Satkhira PBS.                               | 753699        |                        | 14:30        | 14:30        |
| 10      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-66-01  | Up-gradation of 19.565 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Satkhira PBS.   | 753700        |                        | 15:00        | 15:00        |
| 11      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-66-02  | Up-gradation of 18.740 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Satkhira PBS.   | 753701        |                        | 15:30        | 15:30        |
| 12      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-67-01  | Up-gradation of 19.530 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Satkhira PBS.   | 753702        |                        | 16:00        | 16:00        |
| 13      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-57-01  | Up-gradation of 20.266 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Kushtia PBS.  | 753703        |                        | 10:00        | 10:00        |
| 14      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-57-02  | Up-gradation of 20.240 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Kushtia PBS.  | 753704        |                        | 10:30        | 10:30        |
| 15      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-63-01  | Construction of 2.165 Km New, 0.392 Km Dismantling & Up-gradation of 11.732 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Meherpur PBS.                                      | 753705        |                        | 11:00        | 11:00        |
| 16      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-63-02  | Construction of 2.878 Km New, 1.081 Km Dismantling & Up-gradation of 16.333 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Meherpur PBS.                                      | 753706        | 11:30                  | 11:30        |              |
| 17      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-64-01  | Construction of 1.918 Km New, 0.394 Km Dismantling & Up-gradation of 16.139 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Meherpur PBS.                                      | 753707        | 12:00                  | 12:00        |              |
| 18      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-64-02  | Construction of 2.786 Km New, 1.557 Km Dismantling & Up-gradation of 15.696 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Meherpur PBS.                                      | 753708        | 15/03/23               | 12:30        | 12:30        |
| 19      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-15-01  | Construction of 9.140 Km New 33 KV Source Line, Up-gradation of 2.243 Km 33 KV Source Line and R & I of 4.106 Km 33 KV Source Line under the Geographical area of Jhenaidah PBS. | 753709        | 13:00                  | 13:00        |              |
| 20      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-15-02  | Construction of 9.332 Km New 33 KV Source Line, Up-gradation of 1.466 Km 33 KV Source Line and R & I of 3.922 Km 33 KV Source Line under the Geographical area of Jhenaidah PBS. | 753710        | 14:00                  | 14:00        |              |
| 21      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-51-01  | Construction of 0.804 Km New, Up-gradation of 9.730 Km R/R of 2.096 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Jhenaidah PBS.   | 753711        | 14:30                  | 14:30        |              |
| 22      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-322-01 | Construction of 0.184 Km New & Conversion of 16.628 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Magura PBS.  | 753712        | 15:00                  | 15:00        |              |
| 23      | MCEP/BREB/KD-W-322-02 | Construction of 0.428 Km New & Conversion of 17.064 Km Electrical Line under the Geographical area of Magura PBS.  | 753713        | 15:30                  | 15:30        |              |

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and BREQ Prequalification enrollment are required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents (TK-1000/-) from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered banks' branches up to 13/03/2023 at 17:00. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)). The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all the Tenders Proceedings without any Reason.

বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড  
BANGLADESH RURAL ELECTRIFICATION BOARD.  
বাপবিবো/জন (২৬০২-৬২) ২০২২-২০২৩

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CD-337

# Continued my father's legacy through 'Murir Tin'

TOWFIQUE

ANTARA RAISA

A bright star in Bangla rap, Towfique Ahmed started his musical journey in 2008. Towfique gradually carved his place in the Bangladeshi music scene, with his unique voice and delivery.

Recently, the first song of Coke Studio Bangla Season 2, *Murir Tin*, captivated the audience with its fusion of local dialects of Chittagong, Sylhet, and Khulna. In that song, Towfique sang in his native Khulna tongue, which gave the song a different vibe.

**How was the audience's response to the song *Murir Tin*?**

We got an outstanding response from the audience, which was really unexpected for me. I personally didn't think people would love and receive this song so positively. I have got messages from in and outside the country for this song. They all liked the song, because it represented their roots and culture.

**What was your experience of singing in your regional dialect?**

When we recorded the song, we had no idea that it would be the first song of Coke Studio Bangla season 2. As I always sing in proper Bangla, it was a different experience for me to sing in a particular dialect. If you listen to my rap songs, you will know that even in rap I don't use any other dialect. So, it was overwhelming for me when I saw that people really liked my part of the song.

**Tell us about your musical journey. When did you start rapping?**

My rap music started back in 2008 in the UK, when I was there for my

studies. I performed a freestyle rap at a Bengali festival in London in front of a big crowd, which boosted my confidence in rapping. Then, in 2010, I formed my band, *Rajotto*, and released my first self-titled album, *Rajotto* along with my bandmate Faisal Roddy. Songs like *Bidrohi* and *Protishshruti*,

**My father was a very popular leftist politician in our hometown, Khulna. He was so dedicated to his hometown that he never left Khulna in his entire life. As a son, I feel a certain responsibility towards my hometown too.**

among others, played a vital role in my musical career.

I always try to give a social message through my songs.

**What's your opinion on the rap music scene in our country?**

When I started rap music in our country, the genre was not very popular. I didn't get enough support from the brands. However, the present scenario is quite different from the past. Now, the corporate brands sponsor these types of songs and encourage the youth to try out different genres. Today's young generation sings a different style of rap, which I appreciate a lot.

**How did it feel to represent your dialect on such a great platform?**

My father was a very popular leftist politician in our hometown, Khulna. He was so dedicated to his hometown that he never left Khulna in his entire life and died there. As a son, I feel a certain responsibility towards my hometown too. Although, I haven't done anything like my father, but I tried to represent my Khulna dialect to the country through this song. It's a great deal for me. The people of my hometown are telling me that I am continuing my father's legacy, which makes me emotional.



PHOTOS: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED



## Shakib Khan receives recognition from YouTube

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

In a short video, Shakib Khan announced that he has received a golden play button and a silver play button for his two YouTube channels, SK Films, and Shakib Khan.

On the other hand, the YouTube channel of Shakib's production company, SK Films has crossed 1 million subscribers. The channel started its journey in 2018.

In this short video, Shakib Khan unboxed the golden and silver play buttons and expressed his love and joy to the audience. On the work front, Shakib Khan has three films titled, *Leader: Amie Bangladesh*, *Agun* and *Antoratta* in the pipeline.

## Puja Chery visits Boi Mela to buy Abdul Aziz's book

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Renowned Dhallywood actress Puja Chery recently took to her social media, and wrote a post, apologising to Jazz Multimedia and Abdul Aziz. Yesterday, the *Dohon* famed actress visited the Ekushey Boi Mela.

Puja was seen sitting in the bookstall which displayed Abdul Aziz's book of poems titled, *Priotoma Tomake Bolcchi*.

Previously on her social media post, the actress had mentioned, "Due to my childishness, I have wronged the place which gave me the platform to rise. I want to apologise to everyone as I have made a mistake. As your younger sister and also as a colleague, I want to apologise for my mistake and I hope you all can forgive me."

# NEWS

## President blasts big businesses

FROM PAGE 1

they only think about how to get rich overnight, leaving their ethics aside.

The same could be said about the government employees.

"They also bother only about how to own a car and a house after getting the job.

"They forget that they are the employees of the republic and servants of the people. For their own petty interests, they sometimes don't hesitate to undermine the bigger interests of the nation."

Mentioning that students are the future, Hamid said some will become politicians, some businesspeople, and some bureaucrats.

"Remember that a country moves forward on the path of development only with coordinated efforts of politicians, businessmen and bureaucrats. But any failure to do so brings on extreme danger for the country."

Referring to news reports of a SAARC country's bankrupt economy, he said, "Syndicates of bureaucrats, politicians and businesspeople have been blamed for the bankruptcy. The sinister nexus of such syndicates can spell danger for any country."

The president called upon every student to educate themselves with ethics, values and patriotism along with their institutional education and said a university is the main source of such knowledge.

"But the sad thing is that in today's politics, power and money is often the controlling force, and student politics is no exception.

"Because of encroachment and extortion, student politics is now viewed negatively unlike how it used to be treated with respect before. This is not good for our future generations," he said.

Hamid added that some vice-chancellors and teachers are busy attaining their privileges and benefits by misusing law.

"Each university is governed by its own laws. But unfortunately, in most universities, a section misuses the law to obtain privileges and benefits. They don't hesitate to use their universities and students to retain power."

Hamid further told the students that education cannot be compromised in any way and students can take part in politics, social services, and cultural activities

while properly maintaining their academic activities.

"It's sad but true that in most of the universities, more time is being given to non-academic activities. That is why the universities are not found in the top 1,000 universities in the world ranking. Development is not possible with only certificate-based education."

The president, also canceller of the university, added, "Recently, many negative news reports were published on the recruitment and tender business in different universities ... Stay away from such corruption and nepotism."

Chief Justice of Bangladesh Justice Hasan Foez Siddique spoke as the convocation speaker at the JU's sixth convocation.

A total of 15,219 of the 31,716 eligible graduates from the 39th to 47th batches of the university have been registered under the honour's, master's, M Phil, PhD, and MBA degrees and weekend courses.

The university awarded 15 graduates with the Asadul Kabir Gold Medal and the Sharafuddin Gold Medal at the convocation for their outstanding academic results.

## No comparison between the AL and the BNP

FROM PAGE 12

doesn't get any person, who is not convicted, to make its leader, adding Tarique Rahman was convicted in August 21, 2004 grenade attack, 10-truck arms haul and graft cases.

"The BNP itself doesn't maintain its party's constitution, law and rules. It is not right to compare the AL with the BNP. Some people are comparing the AL with the BNP, saying, both are two big political parties. They said two big parties, but, they are wrong," she added.

Referring to the 2008 election, in which, the BNP led 20-party alliance got only 30 seats out of 300 while the AL-led grand alliance secured the rest of the seats, she said, "So, how are the two parties the same?"

The premier said the country had become a haven of militancy, terrorism and corruption during the BNP government's tenure as grenade attacks took place and 500 bombs were exploded across the country in a day and Bangladesh became five times champion in corruption.

"They gave nothing to the people rather looted the public money and laundered those abroad. But, whenever the Awami League comes to power, the people of the country get something and their fate changes," she said.

AL General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader and its Presidium Member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, among others, spoke at the rally organised by the Kotalipara Upazila Awami League.

## Balancing act may get trickier

FROM PAGE 1

from the US, and if that is provided, there is a likelihood Russia will retaliate strongly. That will add a new dimension to the war," Muniruzzaman told this correspondent yesterday.

"We can see more and more militarisation in many countries as a result of the Ukraine-Russia war. Japan, for example, has significantly increased its defence budget," he added.

"Also, militarization is happening in European countries that have more sense of insecurity. Sweden and Finland are also trying to join NATO. The importance of NATO in Europe has increased manifold now -- in a policy shift from the Trump period when Europe sought to be independent of US influence in terms of security."

"Ukrainian president Zelensky is repeating that this is not a Ukraine war, but a European war. If there is an attack, even by accident, on a NATO member in Europe, the war will be expanded beyond Ukraine. If that happens, the war will take a serious turn," he said.

He said the war has also exposed a tendency that the West is losing its strategic weight. "For example, India is indifferent to the concerns of the US, especially when it comes to India buying energy from Russia. Also, Russia is finding new allies like Iran, North Korea, and Syria."

"Russia has definitely been affected by the US and European sanctions but not to the extent that was thought," Muniruzzaman said.

Another security analyst Maj Gen (retd) Abdur Rashid thinks that as US and EU are now stronger and

more united than before, Russia will be on the back foot, while Ukraine energised by new weapons may retake the areas still under Russia's control.

"US President Biden's surprise visit to Kyiv and Poland means a lot for Ukraine. Russia already faced colossal loss in terms of its army and weapons," he added.

Abdur Rashid said the visit of Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi and the upcoming visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Moscow may be significant efforts for peace.

"I am hopeful that Ukraine and Russia are going to sit for talks. That's what is the most needed thing we want to see."

Otherwise, the world will face further challenges of hunger, energy crisis and inflation, said the security analysts.

Bangladesh, like many other countries, is already paying the price of the war, he said, adding that, the countries whose internal financial management is good are able to handle the situation, but those who don't are now facing real trouble.

"If the war goes on, the West will be in recession and Bangladesh's economy will be further affected as much of its export is to the US and Europe," Abdur Rashid said.

"To avert any further economic upheaval, Bangladesh's financial management should be improved," he said.

## RMP finds

FROM PAGE 2

evening of February 12. He was confined to a torture cell in a two-storey building. The kidnapers demanded Tk 2 lakh as ransom, said the RMP additional commissioner.

Delwar was tortured until the afternoon of the following day. He was released that day after his family paid the kidnapers Tk 50,000.

The RMP official claimed that the gang had been operating for a long time, abducted several people, and extorted large sums of money from the victims' families.

## No restrictions

FROM PAGE 2

About the BNP chief engaging in politics, the minister said, Khaleda was released after her brother Shamim Iskandar had submitted a written application. "The application said Khaleda Zia is seriously ill and her life is at stake. She needs medical attention. In view of this application, the prime minister suspended her jail sentence on two conditions and released her on humanitarian grounds. The two conditions are: she will receive treatment in the country staying at her residence in Dhaka, and she cannot go abroad."

Nasirul Alam, president of Jamshepur High School management committee, presided over the function.

Former lawmaker from Brahmanbaria-4 Md Shah Alam, Law Ministry Secretary Golam Sarwar, Kasha Upazila Parishad Chairman Rashedul Kawsar Bhuiyan Jibon, and Kasha Municipality Mayor MG Hakkani were present, among others, as special guests.

## Indigenous woman raped in Bandarban

FROM PAGE 12

abducted the woman when she was plucking vegetables from a land next to her home, according to the case statement.

This incident, which occurred around 1:00pm on Friday in Fasiakhali union, came to light when the 24-year-old woman, was taken to Lama Upazila Health Complex Hospital yesterday morning for treatment.

Protasha Mallick, the hospital's duty doctor, confirmed the admission of the woman.

According to witnesses, Kaiser was beaten by the villagers as he was caught trying to flee the scene.

When they were going to hand him over to the police, Josna Akhtar, a union parishad member, arrived at the scene and took Kaiser to the office of Fasiakhali union chairman.

Chairman Noor Hossain Chowdhury sent injured Kaiser to a hospital and sent the villagers home assuring them of arbitration when the alleged rapist recovered, locals

added.

Noor said, "I was informed by the female member that it was a minor incident. The Mogh (indigenous) people beat up Kaiser in such a way that he could not even speak. So, I sent him to a hospital. We will settle the matter after he is released from the hospital."

When asked if he had the right to judge a rape case, the chairman said, "I asked the woman in public whether Kaiser raped her. She admitted in front of everyone that she was not raped."

Female member Josna Akhtar told The Daily Star she took Kaiser into her custody and requested the chairman to settle the matter.

When asked why she took Kaiser into her custody instead of handing him over to the police, Josna said, "I took Kaiser into my custody as the woman said she was not raped." Josna said she saw injury marks on the woman's face.

Meanwhile, the woman told The Daily Star that Kaiser indeed raped

her. "I felt ashamed when I was asked in front of everyone. So, I told them I was not raped," she said.

## Police constable

FROM PAGE 12

informed locals.

On information, police went to the spot and recovered the body and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said the ASP.

There were signs of injury marks on his throat and he might have been strangulated, suspected the ASP.

Police have already started investigating the incident, added the official.

## Teacher sent to jail

FROM PAGE 12

Anwara Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mirza Hasan said that the teacher was arrested in the case filed by the boy's mother and subsequently sent to jail via a court order.

"We are talking to students and teachers of madrasa to learn more about the incident," he added.

## Blinken to meet Asia 'Quad'

AFP, Washington

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will meet next week with his counterparts from India, Japan and Australia, on the heels of a flare-up in tensions with China.

Blinken will hold the talks with the so-called Quad on March 3 on the sidelines of a Group of 20 meeting in New Delhi, said Donald Lu, the top State Department official on South Asia.

The four will hold an hour-long public discussion as part of the Raisina Dialogue, a major Indian conference on geopolitics, he said.

The latest meeting comes weeks after Blinken scrapped a trip to Beijing after an alleged Chinese spy balloon flew over the US. He later held a meeting with China's foreign policy chief Wang Yi at the Munich Security Conference.



People hold banners as they gather to mark one year since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Times Square, New York City. The photo was taken on Friday night.

PHOTO: AFP

## Macron to visit China

REUTERS, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron said yesterday he will visit China in early April, in part to seek Chinese help with ending Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "The fact that China engages in peace efforts is a good thing," Macron told reporters at an agricultural fair in Paris. "China must help us put pressure on Russia so that it never uses chemical or nuclear weapons, (an effort) which China has already made, and that it stops its aggression as a precondition for talks," he added.

## Brazil storm death toll rises to 57

REUTERS, Sao Paulo

The death toll from heavy rains that devastated coastal areas of Brazil's southeastern Sao Paulo state have reached 57 people, official figures showed. Massive downpours have caused landslides and flooding in coastal towns of Brazil's richest state since last weekend. The city of Sao Sebastiao bore the brunt of the human toll, with 56 of the reported deaths. The Sao Paulo state government said in a statement on Friday that more rains were expected while search and rescue efforts continued with dozens still missing. More than 4,000 people were forced from their homes, it added.

## 'Tehran still seeking to kill Trump'

AFP, Tehran



An Iranian general warned his country is still seeking to kill former US president Donald Trump and his secretary of state Mike Pompeo in revenge for assassinating top commander Qasem Soleimani. Tehran has repeatedly vowed to avenge the killing of Soleimani, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' foreign operations, in a US drone strike on Baghdad airport in January 2020. "We hope we can kill Trump, Pompeo, (former US general Kenneth) McKenzie and the military commanders who gave the order" to kill Soleimani, General Amirali Hajizadeh, the Guards' aerospace unit commander, said on television late Friday.

## WHAT'S IN CHINA'S UKRAINE PLAN

China has released its position paper on the Russia-Ukraine war, in which it calls for a ceasefire and talks between the two parties. Conflict and war "benefit no one", China said on Friday in the 12-point paper.

### WHAT IS IN THE PLAN?

Released by the foreign ministry, the plan urges an end to Western sanctions against Russia, the establishment of humanitarian corridors for the evacuation of civilians and steps to ensure the export of grain after disruptions caused global food prices to spike last year. The proposal mainly elaborates on long-held Chinese positions, including that all countries' "sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity be effectively guaranteed". It said nuclear power

plants must be kept safe and the threat or use of nuclear weapons should be opposed. The plan also called for an end to the "Cold War mentality".

### HOW HAS UKRAINE REACTED?

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Kyiv needed to cooperate with China to put an end to the war. "It seems to me that there is respect for our territorial integrity, security issues."

### HOW THE WEST REACTED?

Western diplomats and experts reacted with scepticism and disappointment, noting that China is not neutral and has not condemned Russia's invasion. Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Beijing was not well-placed to negotiate an end to the war.

SOURCE: AGENCIES

## Nepal ruling coalition in fresh turmoil

Deputy PM and 3 other ministers quit

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Nepal's ruling coalition was in turmoil yesterday after the prime minister said he planned to support a presidential candidate from an opposition party, a decision that prompted the deputy prime minister and three other ministers to resign.

Political analysts said the moves did not suggest the fledgling government of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, a former Maoist rebel who goes by his nom de guerre Prachanda, was in immediate trouble as it still enjoys majority support in parliament. But they said the turmoil could lead a new coalition being formed.

Prachanda said on Friday he would support

Ram Chandra Paudel from the opposition Nepali Congress party in next month's presidential election, instead of the candidate of his coalition partner, the Communist Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) party.

Yesterday, Rajendra Lingden, the deputy prime minister who was also minister for energy, water resources and irrigation, resigned in protest, along with the ministers for urban development and legal matters, while a junior minister assisting Lingden also quit.

Prachanda's office confirmed the four ministers had resigned but did not say whether the resignations had been accepted.

Nepal is set to elect its third president on March 9, a ceremonial position which assumed a key role during past political crises.



Filipino activists carry an effigy depicting Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and Vice President Sara Duterte-Carpio during a protest commemorating the 37th anniversary of the 1986 People Power Revolution that overthrew the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, near the EDSA People Power monument, in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, February 25, 2023.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## PHILIPPINES' 'PEOPLE POWER' REVOLUTION ANNIVERSARY

# Marcos, son of ex-dictator, seeks unity, reconciliation

REUTERS, Manila

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr called for reconciliation and unity yesterday as the Southeast Asian nation marked the 37th anniversary of the "people power" revolution that toppled his dictator father.

Marcos, who was 28 years old when a helicopter whisked his family from the presidential palace in 1986, said he was one with the nation "in remembering those times of tribulation and how we came out of them united and stronger as a nation."

Marcos (65) clinched a landslide

victory in last year's presidential election on a simple message of unity. Despite its fall from grace, his family returned from exile in the 1990s and has remained a powerful force in local politics.

"I once again offer my hand of reconciliation to those with different political persuasions to come together as one in forging a better society - one that will pursue progress and peace and a better life for all Filipinos," he said in a social media post.

Marcos sent a wreath of flowers to the People Power Monument along a major highway in the capital Manila,

where millions of protesters had gathered demanding the ouster of his father amid allegations of plunder and human rights violations. The elder Marcos died in 1989.

The family has denied siphoning off billions of dollars of state wealth during the dictatorship, and has waged a decades-long campaign to resurrect its reputation.

The younger Marcos's "presidency is an insult to the sacrifices of those who fought for freedom and democracy", human rights advocacy group Karapatan said in a statement.

The family of late former President Corazon Aquino, who assumed power after the elder Marcos's ouster, issued a statement saying the spirit of the 1986 uprising "guards and protects our democracy, confronting those who attempt to deceive us and undermine our rights and liberties".

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE  
HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION  
CENTRAL MEDICAL STORES DEPOT  
30 SHAHEED TAJUDDIN AHMED SHARANI  
TEJGAON, DHAKA-1208  
[www.cmsd.gov.bd](http://www.cmsd.gov.bd)

## Invitation for Bid

IFB No. CMSD/JICA-2206/ICB/2022-23/Proc.D-2/39

Date: 22-02-2023 AD

Purchaser: Director (CMSD) & Line Director, Procurement, Storage & Supplies Management of Health Services (PSSM-HS)  
Country : Bangladesh  
JICA Loan No.: Loan No. JICA ODA Loan-P104  
Project Name : Health Services Strengthening Project  
Contract Name: Procurement of CR Machine under Package No. JICA-2206

1. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a loan from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) towards the cost of Health Services Strengthening Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payments under the contract for Procurement of CR Machine under Package No. JICA-2206.
2. The Director, Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD), Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction and completion of Procurement of CR Machine: CR Machine Quantity- 02 Nos. under Package No. JICA-2206.
3. Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the Bidding Document.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents from 9:00 to 17:00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.) at the Office of the Director, Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD). Address: 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208, email: [cmsdstore@dhaka.net](mailto:cmsdstore@dhaka.net). & Fax No. 880-2-912647
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of BDT, 4,000.00 (Taka four thousand) or US\$ 50.00 (US Dollar Fifty) only. The method of payment will be through Pay Order from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh. For overseas delivery, the bidder may obtain the Bidding Documents by instructing any international courier service to collect the same from the above mention address.
6. Bids must be delivered to the above address at or before 11:00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.) on 13/04/2023 and must be accompanied by a Bid Security of Bangladeshi Taka 2,80,000.00 or US\$ 2616.00. The bid security must be submitted through a scheduled bank in Bangladesh.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 11:00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.) on 13/04/2023 at the office of the Director, Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD). Address: 30, shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
8. A pre-bid meeting will be held on 07/03/2023 at the office of the undersigned at 11:00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST=GMT+6 hrs.). All Bidders (preferably having product knowledge) are requested to attend the meeting on time.

Md. Tofael Islam  
Director (Joint Secretary)  
Central Medical Stores Depot  
Health Services Division  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
Tel: 88-2-48115486; Fax: 9126547  
e-mail: [cmsdstore@dhaka.net](mailto:cmsdstore@dhaka.net)

GD- 347

## Why must Bangladeshis bear huge medical costs? Govt must invest much more and wisely in healthcare

Although we have been well aware that Bangladeshis, especially those in lower income brackets, have to bear an enormous financial burden when they seek healthcare services, to know that we are well behind our South Asian neighbours is a jarring wake-up call. A recent study by the World Bank found that out-of-pocket spending (OOPS) accounted for 73.9 percent of health expenditure in Bangladesh. Meanwhile Nepal's was 58 percent, India's 55 percent, Pakistan's 54 percent, Sri Lanka's 46 percent, and Bhutan had the lowest OOPS at 18 percent.

What this tells us is that Bangladesh has done precious little in terms of investing in primary healthcare, which is a fundamental element for a country's social development. The media has extensively reported on how overburdened and understaffed our public hospitals are, as well as on the pathetic state of the upazila health complexes that are supposed to provide citizens with primary healthcare. In remote areas such as the chars, the situation is even more frightening, with no emergency care for miles leading to avoidable deaths, especially of expectant mothers. As government hospitals are often inaccessible due to being overburdened, people seek healthcare in private clinics and hospitals and have to pay exorbitant bills, often by selling assets such as jewellery or land or by borrowing money. In fact, from 2000 to 2017, the OOPS more than quadrupled, says the WB study. The report further found that the eighth five-year plan concludes that "rising out-of-pocket spending undermines poverty reduction efforts."

We agree with the WB that the government must make major health financing reforms and significantly increase public financing for the health sector. It is disappointing that, while the government has embarked on huge, costly, infrastructural projects when it comes to developing the health sector, the efforts have been grossly inadequate.

Bangladesh should adopt the examples of other countries that have successful national healthcare systems and incorporate these models in our own health sector. As suggested, Indonesia is a good example where primary healthcare is part of a new national insurance system which makes basic medical care and facilities available to all citizens. But even within Bangladesh, there have been successful private models that can easily be replicated in a national health plan. Health facility budgets at upazila health complex facilities and union health and family welfare centres must be ensured and increased according to the needs of the local population. As recommended by the study, the government can also explore a capitation payment model in primary healthcare where a fixed remuneration is given in advance to the provider for each patient and per unit of time, regardless of the extent or amount of healthcare services the patient avails.

Access to healthcare is a basic right of all citizens. It is unacceptable that people either suffer in silence when they are sick or are forced to sell their limited assets or borrow money to pay hospital bills. By investing in a functional, efficient, and corruption-free healthcare system, the government will gain unprecedented boosts to its developmental goals – which we desperately need.

## AL needs to hold accountable its members

### Ruling party affiliation should not place anyone above the law

That a section of Awami League (AL) leaders and its associate bodies, whose names came up in the illegal casino business scandal, are out on bail and reportedly have become active in politics again is a perfect example of how lack of accountability has become the norm within the ruling party. Despite drumming up a tremendous amount of hype about its "anti-corruption" drive – which led to the so-called crackdown on gambling, extortion, land grabbing, and other forms of corruption with raids at five sporting clubs – the government ultimately seems to have done all these as an eye-wash.

After a series of raids in 2019, more than 250 people, including at least 11 leaders of different organisations affiliated with the ruling AL, were arrested. Most of the top leaders who were allegedly involved with such crimes, however, are now out of jail. And although they are yet to be restored to their previous political posts, they are still carrying out political activities and lobbying top AL leaders to regain their level of influence. Some of these individuals who had amassed huge amounts of questionable wealth, as discovered by law enforcers, are having their loyalists appointed as top leaders of the ruling party. Essentially, they have indirectly reclaimed their influence within the ruling party.

What messages are these incidents supposed to send to the people of this country? That no crime is punishable as long as one is affiliated with the ruling party, as that supposedly places one above the law? Every day now, we see news reports of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) beating people up and being involved in various types of atrocities, as well as criminal activities. Is it any wonder how BCL members are regularly committing such crimes? When the message they receive is that those involved in criminal activities from within the party can get back to politics one way or another and not be punished in any way shape or form, why wouldn't that embolden criminal elements from within the BCL to run amok?

The ruling party's willingness to allow BCL members who commit atrocities against the general public to get away scot-free will no doubt create significant amounts of resentment among the populace. Additionally, not holding to account the AL leaders who were directly involved with – and in some cases, masterminded – gambling, extortion, land grabbing, etc will also alienate the public and set a terrible precedence in terms of upholding the law of the land.

Before the general election, the any party should look to win the hearts and minds of the people. And for AL, one of the best ways of doing that would be to cleanse its ranks of all criminal elements. There must be accountability for ruling party affiliates who commit crimes.

# Our chronicle of shoddy gas exploration



Dr Badrul Imam is honorary professor at the Department of Geology, University of Dhaka

BADRUL IMAM

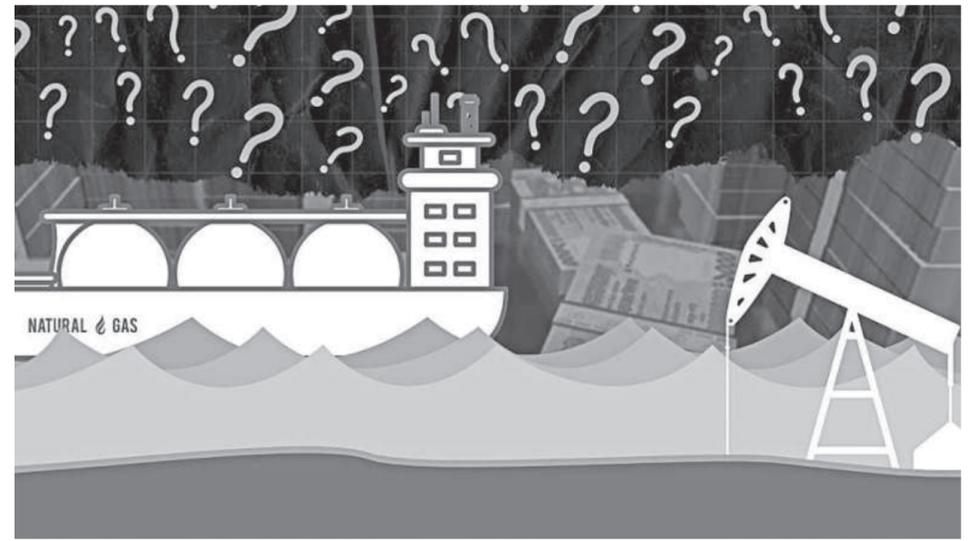
In the 1960s, the discoveries of five large gas fields, by international oil company Shell, placed Bangladesh in the list of gas-rich provinces. However, this was not followed by similar exploration successes in later years. Exploration remained behind for decades to follow. Chronically poor exploration in a prospective gas-rich country means the gas supply remains below demand and the industrial and economic growth are consequently held back. And, in the 22 years after 2000, Bangladesh drilled 26 exploratory wells – a mere one well per year on average. The above record has given way to one of the least explored hydrocarbon basins in the world.

Realising that increasing dependence on imported LNG renders gas supply vulnerable to unpredictable economic shocks, the government has lately decided to ramp up exploration and development of its own gas in the country. This move, late but better than never, is welcome because of the fact that geoscientists have long been suggesting that significant gas resources still remain underground in the country, and the present gas demands may well be met through extracting our own gas. Experts opine that Bangladesh could stay put on the import of LNG for several years until its own gas resources are exhausted.

In August 2022, Petrobangla, the government agency for oil and gas exploration, production, and transmission, announced a programme for drilling 46 wells in three years (from 2022 to 2025). These include 17 exploratory wells, 12 development wells, and 17 workover wells. When drilled, these wells could reportedly produce 618 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf/d) by 2025. This is equivalent to the amount of gas imported in the form of LNG at present.

To put it simply: a) an exploration well, if successful, adds new gas fields and reserves to the country; b) a development well refers to a well drilled in an already known gas field to enhance the gas production of that field; and c) the workover well refers to a discovered but abandoned well that stopped production previously but will now be "worked over" to extract any leftover gas using repairment and readjustment.

In February 2023, just six months



VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

after its announcement, Petrobangla rescheduled the programme of drilling the 46 wells by reducing its timeframe by one year – meaning the 46 wells will now be drilled over two years instead of three years. So, five of the exploratory wells will be drilled in 2023 and 12 will be drilled in 2024. Given that Bangladesh currently drills about one well per year, aiming to drill 12 exploratory wells in a year is certainly ambitious. One may well wonder what's so wrong with being ambitious.

It was some time ago that Petrobangla had announced another programme of drilling 108 wells in the five years between 2016 and 2021. Among these, 55 wells were supposed to be exploratory (meaning 11 exploratory wells per year). But this programme, which received a lot of media attention, has failed to be implemented and was scrapped.

Bapex, the exploration wing of Petrobangla, has the capacity of drilling three wells per year under its present logistical and technical manpower support. So, to drill 12 exploration wells in one year, the programme plans to outsource the drilling job. This may seem logical, but how practical would it be to outsource the drilling of so many wells in a single year? There were

managerial issues that went seriously wrong during the previous round of outsourcing the drilling of wells. Often, the arrangement ended in conflict, complaints, and even with international lawsuits running for years.

The drilling of the Begumganj-4 well, for instance, was outsourced to the state oil company of Azerbaijan, Socar. The latter entered into financial

drilling 46 wells to complete in only two years is not considered well or practical by technical people in Bapex. Such decisions are presumed to be imposed on Bapex by people from higher up in the administration who do not have a good idea of the practicality of these decisions at the ground level. There are risks of failure when hastily drilling large numbers

and managerial conflict with Bapex and the situation turned so bad that Socar left the country without drilling the well and both parties ended up at international court against each other. The case is still pending and the Begumganj well cannot be drilled by Bapex until the case is resolved. A similar lawsuit is active at the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) between Bapex and Canadian company Niko with respect to drilling in Chattak gas field. Niko carelessly blew up the well and Bangladesh took the company to court for compensation. This case has been running for 17 long years, with Bapex not being able to produce gas from the Chattak field until the case is settled. This is despite the fact that Bangladesh is quite starved for gas and has had to resort to buying from the very expensive LNG market.

Another criticism of outsourcing well-drilling is that foreign companies are often given undue privilege by Bangladesh. Gazprom, for example, is engaged in drilling several of Bapex's wells at a cost more than double what it would have cost for Bapex to drill the wells.

Rescheduling the programme of

of wells in too short a period of time. Besides, an extra year is insignificant when the country has been suffering from gas shortages for so many years.

Now that Petrobangla plans to ramp up onshore gas exploration, there is an urgent need to launch offshore gas exploration programmes in earnest as well. In 2014, the country was awarded territorial and economic rights over a vast offshore area in the Bay of Bengal following the settlement of maritime boundary disputes between Bangladesh, India, and Myanmar. While we really enjoyed marvelling over the idea of a blue economy, we did little to unravel its potential. Years of delay in opening up the offshore for international oil companies (IOC) put Bangladesh way behind its neighbours Myanmar and India, who have experienced successful gas exploration.

Petrobangla had planned to launch the Bangladesh offshore block bidding by December 2022. But the slow pace of administrative steps has apparently delayed this from happening still. A revised model PSC has been formulated to better attract IOCs. It is high time that this is launched immediately to begin offshore exploration in earnest.

## PROJECT SYNDICATE

# Who stands for freedom?



Joseph E. Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate in economics, is professor at Columbia University and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ

The Republican Party has long wrapped itself in the American flag, claiming to be the defender of "freedom." The GOP believes individuals should be free to carry firearms, spew hate speech, and eschew vaccines and face masks. The same goes for corporations: Even if their activities destroy the planet and permanently change the climate, the "free market" should be trusted to sort things out. Banks and other financial institutions should be "liberated" from regulation, even if their activities can bring down the entire economy.

Following the 2008 financial crisis, the pandemic, and the acceleration of the climate crisis, it should be obvious that this conception of freedom is far too crude and simplistic for the modern world. As the great twentieth-century philosopher Isaiah Berlin put it: "Freedom for the wolves has often meant death to the sheep." Or, put another way, freedom for some is unfreedom for others.

In the United States, the freedom to carry guns has come at the expense of the freedom to go to school or the store without being shot. Thousands of innocent people – many of them children – have died so that this particular freedom can live. And millions have lost what Franklin Delano Roosevelt thought was so

important, the freedom from fear.

There is no such thing as absolute freedom within a society. Different freedoms must be balanced against each other, and any reasoned discussion among typical Americans would inevitably conclude that the right to an AR-15 is not more "sacred" than others' right to live.

In complex modern societies, there are innumerable ways that one's actions can harm others without one having to bear any consequences for it. Social-media platforms constantly pollute our "information ecosystem" with disinformation and content that is well-known to cause harm. While the platforms present themselves as neutral conduits of information that is already out there, their algorithms are actively promoting a socially harmful substance. But, far from paying any costs, the platforms are reaping billions of dollars in profits every year.

The US tech giants are shielded from liability by a 1990s-era law that was originally designed to foster innovation in the inchoate digital economy. The US Supreme Court is now considering a case involving this legislation, and other countries around the world are also questioning whether online platforms should be able to avoid accountability

for their actions.

For economists, a natural measure of freedom concerns the range of things one can do. The greater one's "opportunity set," the freer one is to act. Someone on the verge of starvation – doing what they must just to survive – effectively has no freedom. Viewed this way, an important dimension of freedom is the ability to realise one's potential. A society in which large segments of the population lack such opportunities – as is the case in societies with high levels of poverty and inequality – is not really free.

Investments in public goods (such as education, infrastructure, and basic research) can expand the opportunity set for all individuals, effectively enhancing the freedom of all. But such investments require taxes, and many individuals – especially in a society that valorises greed – would rather free ride, by avoiding paying their fair share.

This is a classic collective-action problem. Only through coercion, forcing everyone to pay their taxes, can we generate the revenue needed to invest in public goods. Fortunately, all individuals, including those who have been forced against their will to contribute to society's investments, may be better off as a result. They will live in a society where they, their children, and everyone else has a larger opportunity set. In such circumstances, coercion is a source of liberation.

Neoliberal economists have long ignored these points and focused instead on "freeing" the economy of what they view as pesky regulations and taxes on corporations (many of which have benefitted massively from public expenditures). But where would

American business be without an educated labour force, the rule of law to enforce contracts, or the roads and ports needed to transport goods?

In their new book, *The Big Myth*, Naomi Oreskes and Erik M Conway show how business interests managed to sell the American public on the staunchly anti-government, "free market" vision of capitalism that emerged in the decades after World War II. The rhetoric of "freedom" was key. The captains of industry and their academic servants systematically re-characterised our complex economy – a rich matrix of private, public, cooperative, voluntary, and not-for-profit enterprises – as simply a "free enterprise" economy.

In books like Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* and Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, capitalism was crudely equated with freedom. Central to this vision of capitalism is the freedom to exploit: Monopolies should have unfettered power to trample potential entrants and squeeze their workers, and firms should be free to collude to exploit their customers. Whatever we call it, it is not an economy that we should want; it is not one that promotes broadly shared prosperity; and the greedy, materialistic individuals that it rewards are not who we should want to be.

Yes, we desperately need free markets, but that means, above all, markets that are free from the stranglehold of monopoly and monopsony, and from the undue power that big businesses have amassed through ideological myth-making.

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VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

## Making room for Bangla in our public schools

Dr Jasimuz Zaman and Matilal Pal are co-authors of 'Quality Education for Rural Bangladesh,' a book based on their work with rural high schools over the last decade.

JASIMUZ ZAMAN and MATILAL PAL

Though language helps us get to the root of finding meaning in our existence, we have long neglected learning Bangla properly in Bangladesh's education system. The rapid decline in the quality of education in the country after liberation led to a rise in people moving towards a separate system of private education with English as the medium of instruction. Later, even the government joined the bandwagon by launching an English version of the national curriculum. But research has shown that the use of a language different from one's mother tongue at the primary level acts as a barrier for a child's cognitive development and their enjoyment of learning. Unesco has found the use of one's mother tongue as being crucial for avoiding knowledge gaps and for increasing the speed of learning and comprehension in children.

Education which does not accommodate one's mother tongue in the early years can be unproductive, ineffective, and can have a negative impact on children's overall education. The new initiative of the government for reforming the education system has not addressed the urgent need of the country for having an effective medium of instruction. In actuality, it has exacerbated the problem by putting more emphasis on improving students' English skills at the primary level. This will act as a hindrance to the intellectual development of children in the public education system. It is also widely recognised that a child can pick up a new language quite well if it is introduced to them during primary school. In fact, mastery over one's mother tongue helps to learn a new language rapidly and more effectively.

Teaching Bangla has historically not been given adequate importance in the Bangladeshi school system and, consequently, there is an acute lack of ability amongst the youth in expressing and writing in Bangla. Students entering high school

thus do not have good command over Bangla, often lacking reading and pronunciation skills. As such, they also struggle to properly comprehend the study materials of different subjects from Class 6 onwards. The situation is made worse by the widespread habit of not reading books outside the school's curriculum. Besides, many underprivileged high schools, particularly in rural areas, lack any library facilities. The abysmal condition of Bangla writing on social media platforms exemplifies the enormity of this problem perfectly.

Increasingly, there has been less and less literature of high quality in the Bangla curriculum. The new curriculum for Bangla in Classes 6 and 7 did put emphasis on learning Bangla through a functional approach, but it lacks strength in terms of its Bangla literature

Students should be taught Bangla from Class 1 to Class 5, with emphasis on all aspects of the language – vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The textbooks should be designed using materials that young learners can absorb with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

Bangla learning in Classes 6 to 10 should involve teaching essays, stories, and poems of increasing difficulty. The content in the curriculum should include Bangla translations of pieces of literature from other languages as well. This will help open up the imagination of students, giving them a glimpse of the world outside.

In order to teach Bangla, teachers must have a good grasp on language teaching. The success of the curriculum demands immediate training on the right pedagogy

**Teaching Bangla has historically not been given adequate importance in the Bangladeshi school system and, consequently, there is an acute lack of ability amongst the youth in expressing and writing in Bangla. Students entering high school thus do not have good command over Bangla, often lacking reading and pronunciation skills. As such, they also struggle to properly comprehend the study materials of different subjects from Class 6 onwards. The situation is made worse by the widespread habit of not reading books outside the school's curriculum.**

syllabus. Literature invokes thought, develops creative thinking, and often requires careful reading so that students can properly comprehend the author or poet's meaning.

In addition to the creative and developmental roles of language studies, there is a practical need for every educated person to be well-versed in their own language. Bangla is now the medium of instruction in the public education system at all levels, though English is more required for acquiring advanced degrees in different disciplines. There are not enough materials available in Bangla at those levels.

In order to overcome the shortcomings related to Bangla in our public education system, at least up to Class 10, there are some specific steps that can be taken.

to suit the new curriculum. An innovative and compact method of training that empowers teachers to conduct classes in an effective manner has to be designed.

While augmenting the teaching of Bangla up to Class 10, the government should undertake a mega-project inviting authors to produce Bangla versions of advanced level books from different disciplines which are in other languages (particularly in English), or write their own books in Bangla.

The changes in the curriculum should play a positive role in developing students' skills in Bangla. However, adequate training for teachers has been missing. The crucial role played by Bangla in the intellectual development of children must therefore be duly recognised.

## South Asia's human capital is the resilience it needs



Martin Raiser is the World Bank vice president for South Asia.

MARTIN RAISER

The last few years have ushered in a harsh new reality where crises are the norm rather than the exception. Pandemics, economic slumps, and extreme weather events were once tail-end risks – but all three have hit South Asia in rapid succession since 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic alone has put millions of lives and livelihoods at risk, and its impacts have so far undermined decades of development gains.

This is deeply distressing because the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate – their human capital – is a critical source of the resilience that countries rely on for recovery. To strengthen resilience and protect the well-being of future generations, governments across South Asia need to take urgent policy action and invest in human capital.

South Asia's people are its biggest asset, but they remain wastefully underutilised. With nearly half its population under the age of 24 and over one million young people set to enter the labour force every month until 2030, the region could reap an enviable high demographic dividend. But South Asia is also home to over one-third of the world's stunted children.

South Asian governments on average spend just one percent of their respective GDPs on health and 2.5 percent on education. In comparison, the global average is 5.9 percent on the former and 3.7 percent on the latter.

Against this background, the Covid-19 pandemic, which pushed an additional 35 million people across South Asia into extreme poverty, dealt an unprecedented blow to the region's human capital. Among

its most woeful impacts is a rise in learning poverty, or the inability to read and understand a simple text by age 10. While around the world, on average, schools remained closed for in-person learning between 2020 and 2022 for 141 days, in South Asia they were shut for 225 days. Coupled with ineffective remote instruction, this increased South Asia's learning poverty from 60 percent to 78 percent.

The poorest and most vulnerable people fell further behind. For example, in Bangladesh, the poorest students lost 50 percent more in terms of learning than the richest students. Several countries still show little to no signs of recovery, and South Asia's students could lose up to 14.4 percent of their future earnings.

While the outlook is grim, it is important to remember that properly designed and implemented interventions can make a difference if governments act fast. Recent evidence suggests that even simple and low-cost education programmes can lead to sizable gains in skills. In Bangladesh, for example, attending a year of additional preschool through two-hour sessions significantly improved literacy, numeracy, and social development scores. Meanwhile, in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, six months of extra remedial classes after school helped students catch up on about two-thirds of lost learning linked to 18 months of school closures. And in Nepal, government teachers ran a phone tutoring programme that helped increase students' foundational numeracy by 30 percent.

Given the high returns to human capital, the huge losses inflicted

by the pandemic, and the region's vulnerability to a variety of shocks, even with constrained government budgets, scaling up these interventions should be a no-brainer.

Globally, countries that have systems in place to support individuals and families before a crisis strikes can better protect their citizens during the crisis. A new World Bank study, "Collapse and Recovery: How COVID Eroded Human Capital and What to Do About It," which analyses the pandemic's impacts on young people, stresses the multi-dimensional and complementary nature of human development. The health, education, and skills people acquire at various stages of their lives build and depend on each other. To be effective, human development systems must recognise and exploit these overlapping connections. In other words, they should be agile, resilient, and adaptive.

Such systems will help countries better respond to future shocks as well. Crises are unpredictable and often present rapidly changing circumstances. A well-functioning system is one that can spring into action the moment a shock strikes, ensure that essential services such as healthcare and learning remain uninterrupted, and have the flexibility to evolve as needs change (such as social protection systems that ramp up to meet urgent needs). Since services are provided by different individual sectors, human development systems must be able to coordinate efficiently across sectors. Lastly, as data and technology play a crucial role in the delivery of services, human development systems should ensure they are effectively used.

The road ahead for South Asia is rocky. The next crisis may be just around the corner. A robust human development system would not only mitigate the damage, but also help ensure lives and livelihoods are protected. It could provide the resilience South Asia needs to prosper in an increasingly volatile world.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Inspector General  
Bangladesh Police  
Police Headquarters, Dhaka

### Invitation for International Re-Tender

Memo No. 44.01.0000.058.07.142.22/329 Date: 25/02/2023  
Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Manufacturers/ suppliers in their official pad for supply of following items as required by Bangladesh Police in FY 2022-2023.

|   |                       |  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Ministry/Division     | Ministry of Home Affairs.                                    |
| 2 | Agency                | Bangladesh Police.   |
| 3 | Procuring entity name | AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police.                  |
| 4 | Invitation for        | To purchase Polycarbonate Riot Shield for Bangladesh Police. |
| 5 | Incitation Ref. No.   | 44.01.0000.058.07.142.22/23 (2022-2023)                      |
| 6 | Date                  | 25/02/2023   |

**KEY INFORMATION**

|   |                    |   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| 7 | Procurement method | One Stage Two Envelope (International Re-Tender). |
|---|--------------------|---|

**FUNDING INFORMATION**

|   |                            |                       |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8 | Budget and source of funds | Revenue Budget (GOB). |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|

**PARTICULAR INFORMATION**

|    |   |                            |
|----|---|----------------------------|
| 9  | Tender publication date                             | 26 February 2023           |
| 10 | Tender last selling date                            | 27 March 2023              |
| 11 | Tender closing date and time                        | 28 March 2023 at 12:00 hrs |
| 12 | Tender opening date and time (Technical offer only) | 28 March 2023 at 12:30 hrs |

**NAME & ADDRESS OF THE OFFICE**

|    |                              |   |
|----|------------------------------|---|
| 13 | Name & address of the office | Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, 6, Phoenix Road, Fulbaria, Dhaka.                                   |
|    | Selling tender document      | AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.                                     |
|    | Receiving tender document    | AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.                                     |
|    | Opening tender document      | NCCOM Building (Mini Conference Room 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka. |

14 Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)  
05 March 2023, at 11:00 hrs. NCCOM Building (Mini Conference Room 5<sup>th</sup> Floor), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.

**INFORMATION FOR TENDERER**

|    |                         |  |
|----|-------------------------|--|
| 15 | Eligibility of tenderer | 1) Up-to-date export license 2) Written confirmation authorizing the signatory of the tender in accordance with the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association of the Principal 3) Affidavit confirming the legal capacity and financial capability 4) Original full brochure of products of the principal 5) Other requirements described in the standard tender document (PG 5A). |
|----|-------------------------|--|

| Sl No. | Description of goods      | Quantity   | Price of tender document (non-refundable) | Tender security in (USD) | Completion time               |
|--------|---------------------------|------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1.     | Polycarbonate Riot Shield | 10,000 Pcs | 5,000/-                                   | 14,000.00                | 120 days from LC opening date |

**PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS**

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 17 | Name of official inviting tender                | Md. Moniruzzaman.   |
| 18 | Designation of the official inciting tender     | Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition).  |
| 19 | Address of official inviting tender             | Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition), Room No. 306 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor), 6, Phoenix Road, Police Headquarters, Dhaka. |
| 20 | Contact details of official inviting the tender | Phone: 02-471120270, Fax: 02-55101641<br>E-mail: aigarmsbd@gmail.com & aiga_a@police.gov.bd   |

21 The tenderers shall submit their Technical and Financial offer in separate sealed envelope. Furthermore both envelopes shall be covered by an outer envelope which is sealed.

**Special instructions**

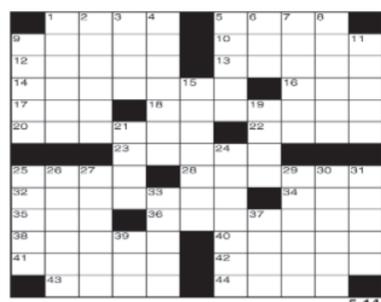
22 a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date.  
b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason.  
c) The procuring entity also reserves the right to omit, increase and/or decrease the quantity of any item(s) of the tender.  
d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue.  
e) Evaluation will be on item by item basis.  
f) Date of financial offer opening will be duly informed to the Technically Responsive Tenderers and their local agents.  
g) The tenderer must comply with all requirements as the tender data sheet provided with the tender schedule.  
h) The Tender Security shall be in the form of an irrevocable bank guarantee issued by an internationally reputable bank and shall require to be endorsed by its any correspondent bank located in Bangladesh.  
i) The procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2008.

*Md. Moniruzzaman*  
25.02.23  
Md. Moniruzzaman  
BP-7806119738  
Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition)  
For Inspector General, Bangladesh Police  
Police Headquarters, Dhaka  
Phone: 02-471120270 Fax: 02-55101641  
E-mail: aigarmsbd@gmail.com & aiga\_a@police.gov.bd

GD-350

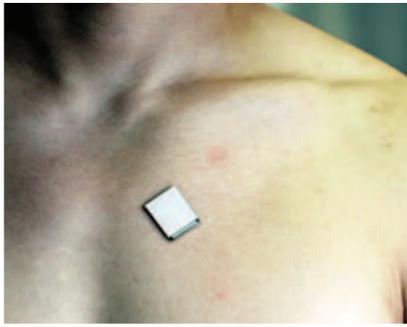
### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Stir up
  - 5 Hip-hop songs
  - 9 Kidney-related
  - 10 Island greeting
  - 12 "... to fetch – of water"
  - 13 Blue Grotto setting
  - 14 De Sade novel
  - 16 Comic Caesar
  - 17 Noshed
  - 18 Rome's – Chapel
  - 20 Bully
  - 22 Printer's supplies
  - 23 Smyth sight
  - 25 Scorch
  - 28 Cast make-up
  - 32 Ordinary
- DOWN**
- 1 Good name
  - 2 "Be right with you"
  - 3 Milk, to Marcel
  - 4 Writer Ralph
  - 5 Indy events
  - 6 Menu phrase
  - 7 Visits un-
  - 8 Become smaller
  - 9 Prince of India
  - 11 Staffers
  - 15 Grunge group
  - 19 Pinball no-no
  - 21 Bakery buy
  - 24 Onetime Danish province
  - 25 Wave's top
  - 26 Seuss pachyderm
  - 27 Dawn goddess
  - 29 Jim Palmer, once
  - 30 Jimmy's successor
  - 31 Prophetic ones
  - 33 Keys
  - 37 Corner
  - 39 Sphere



### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS





The wearable ultrasound sensor is roughly the size of a postage stamp, can be worn for up to 24 hours, and works even during strenuous exercise.

## Wearable cardiac ultrasound device allows measurements during stress testing

Increasingly, the miniaturisation of electronic technology allows tiny microsensors attached to the skin to take continuous physiological measurements — heart rate, oxygen saturation, and even blood pressure.

Now, researchers describe a thin (8 µm), stretchable strip of sensors that can be applied to the chest to obtain continuous cardiac ultrasound images — in multiple orientations — that are equivalent to those produced by current commercial ultrasound. The device sends data to a computer which generates real-time estimates of stroke volume, cardiac output, ejection fraction, wall-motion abnormalities, and chamber size; these estimates compare favourably to those of current ultrasound devices.

The principal utility of the device is that it can obtain ultrasound images not only before and after, but also during, cardiac exercise stress testing. This concurrent collection avoids false negative results that can occur when pathological changes generated by exercise have returned to normal by the time the postexercise images are obtained.

More experience with this remarkable technology will be required to determine its clinical value during exercise testing, its potential for ambulatory monitoring, and its possible role in evaluating other conditions such as aortic aneurysms or pleural effusions that threaten to expand. It represents another potentially important step in real-time physiological monitoring and another example of the increasingly important marriage of bioengineering and medicine.

# DO NOT SCRATCH!

## What to do when your eczema itches?

### STAR HEALTH DESK

Atopic dermatitis (AD) can be a long-lasting condition that causes severe, itchy rashes. At times, you may feel like you cannot stop scratching, which can lead to other problems.

With scratching, breaks in the skin can also get infected, causing impetigo, blisters, and swelling. These blisters can ooze fluid or crust over time, causing rough areas and scabs on the skin.

Here is what you can do to help your skin heal and try to prevent infections. When your skin is damaged or broken:

**Try not to scratch:** Some people scratch so much they bleed, and that is a setup for infection. Instead of scratching with your nails, try to press the area with your fingertips. Keeping your nails short will help. You can also try to cover your inflamed skin. You may be less tempted to scratch if you cannot see it.

**Mirror scratching:** Try this when the itch is on just one side of your body. It may sound like a magic trick, but it is more than an optical illusion. Say your left arm itches. Look into a mirror and focus on your reflection's left arm, which is actually your right. Scratch there as you watch, and your brain gets the message that your eczema itch was taken care of.

**Moisturise your skin:** Damaged skin has a hard time holding onto water. Applying a thick emollient multiple times a day can protect and soothe cracked skin while sealing in moisture. Greasy ointments like mineral oil and petroleum jelly often work best, but find a product that you like. You may need to try a couple to see which brands help your skin the most.

**Oils from the pantry:** One study found that sunflower seed oil does more to soften skin than a popular cream — and it is a lot cheaper.



Coconut oil nourishes and helps lessen inflammation. Look for the word "virgin" on the label. That means it was processed without losing its natural healing properties. As good as olive oil is for cooking, though, it is a no-go for your itchy skin.

**Soak in an oatmeal bath:** Colloidal oatmeal (finely ground oatmeal) has special compounds that can help strengthen your skin barrier. Add the oatmeal to a lukewarm — not hot — bath and soak for 10 to 15 minutes. When you get out, gently pat your skin dry and apply moisturiser right away.

**Apply wet wraps:** During a severe flare, a wet wrap can soothe inflamed skin and help lock in moisture. Dampen a clean gauze or a cotton cloth with warm water, then gently press it onto your skin. Cover it with a layer of dry cloth or gauze. For best results, keep the wraps in place for

several hours or overnight. Try not to let them dry out.

**Take allergy meds:** When your itching is intense, an over-the-counter antihistamine can give short-term relief.

**Topicals:** Menthol has a cooling effect that cancels out itch, but higher than a 1%-3% concentration could irritate. Store your topicals in the fridge.

Know when to ask for more help. Call your doctor if you:

- Condition gets in the way of your daily routine or keeps you from sleeping.
- Skin shows signs of an infection (like pus, red streaks, or yellow scabs).
- AD does not improve even after you try different home remedies.
- AD is severe or covers a lot of your body.

### HAVE A NICE DAY

## Our second brain

DR RUBAUL MURSHED

From our immune system to our mood, our gut affects everything. My father used to say that most diseases started in the gut. Scientists call the gut-regulating enteric nervous system (ENS) the 'little brain' or 'second brain.'

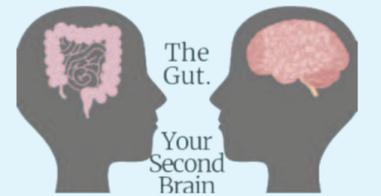
Researchers found 'gut brain connection' or 'brain theory'. They explained that a lesser-known nervous system in our guts (second brain) communicates with the brain in our head. Together, 'our two brains' play a key role in certain diseases in our bodies and overall health and wellbeing.

The ENS is our 'gastro-intestine' nervous system. Through an extensive neural circuit this complex network works with the body's central nervous system (CNS) to control our digestive system. Researchers first called the gut a second brain because it communicates via neurons and neurotransmitters. That means basically, our gut sends signals to our brain, and our brain sends signals to our gut. The 'fight or flight' response concept, the brain to send signals to the gut, causing gastrointestinal issues. Likewise, irritation in the gastrointestinal system will send signals to the brain causing mood changes.

Serotonin, the 'feel-good hormone,' stabilises our well-being and happiness.

So, we might think that it is mainly produced in the brain. But the digestive tract produces about 90 percent of this well-known brain neurotransmitter. While we usually concentrate our focus on diet and exercise to improve our health, we often overlook sleep. It can restore energy levels and heals both physical and cognitive damage. There is a strong connection between diet and sleep. Low-fiber, high-saturated-fat diets may impair sleep.

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## United Kingdom (UK) soft drink taxes associated with decreased obesity in girls

### STAR HEALTH REPORT

Study tracking childhood obesity in England from 2014-2020 found 8% reduction in obesity among 10-11 year old girls coinciding with 2018 soft drinks industry levy.

The implementation of the



decades, with around 10% of 4-5 year old children and 20% of 10-11 year old children living with obesity in 2020. There is strong evidence that consumption of sugar sweetened beverages increases the risk of obesity and other serious diseases. In April 2018, the UK soft drinks industry levy (SDIL) went into effect to incentivise soft drinks makers to reduce the sugar content of drinks.

In the new study, researchers followed students in state-maintained English primary schools, aged 4-5 and 10-11 over time between September 2013 and November 2019. The researchers compared the obesity levels 19 months following the SDIL with predicted obesity levels had the SDIL not happened, controlling for each child's sex and the level of deprivation of their school area.

In 10-11 year old girls, there was an absolute reduction in the obesity rate of 1.6 percentage points. The greatest reductions were seen in girls in the most deprived quintiles (any of five equal groups into which a population can be divided according to the distribution of values of a particular variable), with an absolute reduction of 2.4 percentage points in obesity occurrence in the most deprived quintile.

In 10-11 year old boys, there was no overall change in obesity rates, and no obvious pattern of changes in relation to deprivation, though a 1.6% absolute increase in obesity rate was observed in the least deprived quintile (equivalent to a 10.1% relative increase). In younger children, no overall associations were found between the SDIL and obesity levels.

"Our findings suggest that the UK SDIL led to positive health impacts in the form of reduced obesity levels in girls aged 10-11 years," the authors say. "Further strategies are needed to reduce obesity prevalence in primary school children overall, and particularly in older boys and younger children."



two-tier soft drinks industry levy in the UK in 2018 was associated with an 8% reduction in obesity among 10-11 year old girls, with the greatest reductions seen in those living in the most deprived areas, according to a new study published on 2023 in open accessed PLOS Medicine by Nina Rogers of University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine, UK, and colleagues.

Childhood obesity rates in England have risen in recent

## Does a healthful eating pattern extend life?

Nearly everyone believes that an unhealthy diet has adverse consequences, including heightened risk for early death. A prospective cohort study was conducted to examine the associations of dietary scores for 4 healthy eating patterns with risk of total and cause-specific mortality, which was published in the JAMA Internal Medicine recently.

Analysis showed that, for each eating pattern, participants in the most healthful quintile had significantly lower risks for death (14%-20% lower) than participants in the least healthful quintiles.

Healthful eating also was associated inversely with death due to cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease, and neurodegenerative disease. Similar results were obtained among various racial and ethnic groups.

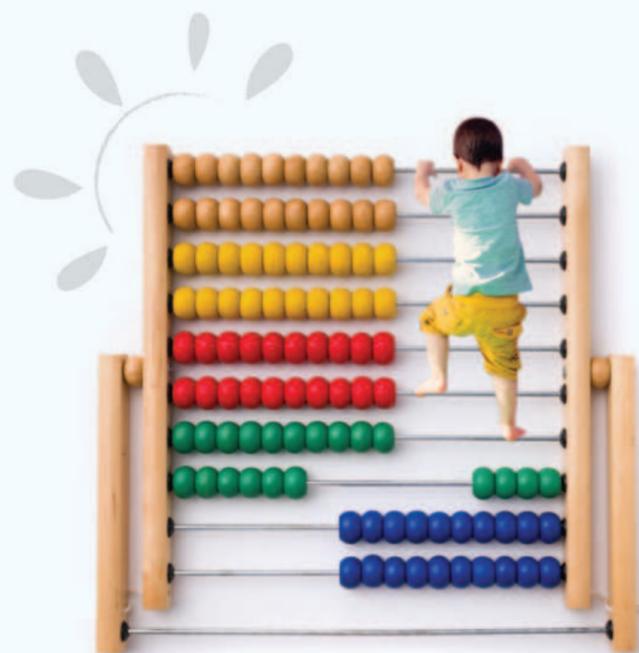


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## Shadman's 10th ton powers South

SPORTS REPORTER

South Zone opener Shadman Islam starred as he struck his 10th first-class ton on the first day against Central Zone in one of the Bangladesh Cricket League's final round of fixtures at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura, helping his side post 281 for seven after being asked to bat.

The left-hander put away 17 fours and a six, batting throughout the day for his 130 off 240 balls before being castled by Central Zone pacer Abu Hider Rony in the 85th over in a game that is a prelude to the tournament's final.

South Zone started proceedings on the back foot as opener Pinak Ghosh was bowled by Rony off the very first delivery of the innings on a surface in Bogura that is said to aid the fast bowlers.

Shadman steadied the ship, stitching a 49-run stand with Anamul Haque and then forging an 81-run partnership with Amite Hasan. Anamul was sent back courtesy of a run out while Amite fell to the leg-break of Roqibul Hasan, leaving South Zone at 130 for three.



PHOTO: BCB



England had their first training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on Saturday ahead of their white-ball series against Bangladesh. All-rounder Moeen Ali, who won the recently concluded Bangladesh Premier League with Comilla Victorians, will look to put his experience in the country to good use and would have had some insights to share with his skipper Jos Buttler.

## No longer 'best friends'

SPORTS REPORTER

The bitter relationship between 'best friends' Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal has been festering for quite some time now and has remained something of an open secret in the nation's cricket fraternity, but the topic came squarely to the forefront after Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon admitted that the relationship between the two national stalwarts was strained during an interview with Cricbuzz on Saturday.

His quotes spread like wildfire, leaving many to question whether the frosty relationship between two of the biggest egos in Bangladesh's dressing room would seep into the environment. But Papon asserted that the players had assured him they would not let their issues affect the team, especially on the field.

"This is not a healthy dressing room, that I can guarantee you. This thing [rift between Shakib and Tamim], it's not that I have not tried to sort it out. I spoke with both of them but I felt that it would not be easy to settle the issue at the moment. Both of them have been given the same message: 'we don't know what is going on between you, but during a game or series, these differences cannot come out'. Both of them assured me that it would not be there during the game," Papon was quoted as saying.

The Daily Star contacted the BCB boss and he admitted that the tension between the two players had become prevalent but he could not get to the bottom of an issue which he believed would harm the next generation of players, many of whom idolise one or the other of Bangladesh's finest.

It appears that things have deteriorated much more than previously portrayed and become so intense that the two have even sought opportunities to skip playing under each other.

There have been numerous incidents in

recent times when Tamim and Shakib have skipped international series, citing injury concerns or various reasons. There were even occasions when the two had opted not to face each other despite being present in

"First of all, I am unaware of any such issues between Shakib and Tamim. But if I take it as a case study, I would say such a gap between two cricketers in the team needs to be sorted out. Regardless of



the same programme, raising questions about their relationship.

Both players, who once used to publicly fawn over their friendship, have moved away from their previous statements. In the past, Shakib has told the media that his best friend within the dressing room was Tamim Iqbal. Curiously, on many occasions in recent times, both parties denied it, saying that their friendship was created and hyped up by the media.

Although the two stalwarts have made immense contributions to Bangladesh cricket, the rift has undoubtedly affected the dressing-room environment, with insiders claiming there is a huge divide in a national camp.

personal relations, it is important to set everything aside for the greater interests of the team," Shakib and Tamim's mentor and prominent coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, according to another cricket official also requesting anonymity, the issue was too sensitive to be disclosed so publicly by the BCB boss.

But since the rabbit is already out of the hat, it will be important for both Shakib and Tamim to settle things for the sake of the nation. Even if they cannot be the best of friends as they seemed to be in the past, they can surely portray that they are far from the biggest enemies and, most importantly, good teammates.

## Kings' title to lose

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bashundhara Kings have opened up a nine-point lead at the top as the first phase of the Bangladesh Premier League came to an end yesterday.

The three-time champions have been in marauding form this season, winning all 10 of their first-phase matches, and barring some miracle, they look set to add a fourth consecutive league title to their growing trophy cabinet. Their closest rivals for the title, six-time professional league champions Abahani, are nine points behind in second position and were subjected to a 2-1 defeat by the champions last week.

While the title-race seems done and dusted already, there is fierce competition for the next couple of positions which might have some ramifications for Asian club competition participation. Abahani have a five-point lead over third-placed Bangladesh Police, who were held to a 1-1 draw by Chittagong Abahani in one of the two matches on Saturday.

Police took the lead in the fifth minute at the Rafiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh,



with Almazbek Malikov scoring from the spot. Chittagong Abahani, who started the day in 10th position with seven points, found the equalising goal in the 43rd minute, with David Ojukwu heading home Candy Augustine's freekick.

Sheikh Russel had the chance to reclaim the third position, but they were subjected to a 1-0 defeat by Muktiyoddha Sangsad at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj. Aminur Rahman Sajib's 62nd minute header off a freekick from Najem Junior earned Muktiyoddha their third win of the season. The win lifted the All Reds to eighth position with 10 points while Sheikh Russel remained in fourth position with 14 points. Sheikh Jamal, with 14 points, were occupying the fifth position.

At the opposite end of the table, newcomers Azampur FC of Uttara look destined for the drop as they have only two points from 10 matches, six behind Chittagong Abahani.

### BPL POINTS TABLE

| Team        | M  | W  | D | L | G/D | Pts |
|-------------|----|----|---|---|-----|-----|
| Bashundhara | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 | +20 | 30  |
| Abahani     | 10 | 6  | 3 | 1 | +15 | 21  |
| Police      | 10 | 4  | 4 | 2 | +6  | 16  |
| Sk Russel   | 10 | 4  | 2 | 4 | +1  | 14  |
| Sk Jamal    | 10 | 3  | 5 | 2 | -1  | 14  |
| Mohammedan  | 10 | 3  | 3 | 4 | +3  | 12  |
| Fortis      | 10 | 2  | 6 | 2 | -1  | 12  |
| Muktiyoddha | 10 | 3  | 1 | 6 | -5  | 10  |
| Rahmatgonj  | 10 | 2  | 3 | 5 | -6  | 9   |
| Ctg Abahani | 10 | 1  | 5 | 4 | -8  | 8   |
| Azampur     | 10 | 0  | 2 | 8 | -24 | 2   |



Paris Saint-Germain forward Lionel Messi will be chasing a milestone of his own when his side take on arch-rivals Marseille in a pivotal game in the fight for the Ligue 1 title on Sunday. A goal from Messi in the tie could make him only the second footballer after Cristiano Ronaldo to join the 700-goal club in European club football.

PHOTO: PSG

## Can Proteas emerge victorious in uncharted territory?

AFP, Cape Town

South Africa's women cricketers will go where none of their male counterparts have gone when they contest their very first World Cup final at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday.

No South African team, men or women, had previously gone beyond the semifinals of either a 50-overs or T20 World Cup. So far, the South African teams had played a combined eleven semifinals at ICC World Cups, failing to win all of those.

The hosts reached the final of the women's T20 World Cup with a thrilling six-run win over England but now they will be up against Australia, a team of proven World Cup winners, who have won five of the previous six T20 finals.

The Aussies also had a tight semifinal when they edged past India by just five runs but they are loaded with experience which their captain Meg Lanning believes will help them in the pressure moments.

"Having been in pressure situations before helps a lot," said Lanning on Saturday.

"We're not going to be the team that everyone's cheering for.

"We're expecting South Africa to

come out to play to their full strength and they're riding a wave of emotion as well.

"I expect an incredible atmosphere and an incredible game at an amazing venue. It's a World Cup final and there's nowhere to hide."



Lanning said there would be pressure on both teams.

"It comes down to holding your nerve under pressure," she said.

"We've always known we had the ability to get to a final, I think it was just to get through that semifinal," said South African captain Sune Luus.

While Australia stormed through the group stages before being pushed all the way by India in the semifinals,

South Africa lost two of their first three games.

They looked anything but championship contenders when they lost the tournament opening match against Sri Lanka and they went down by six wickets in a group match against Australia in Gqeberha.

Luus said South Africa had a strong pace bowling attack and she expected an "even contest" between her bowlers and the Australia batters.

"It's going to be the best in the world against the best in the world."

Luus, 27, said the discussion before the semifinal had been on how to handle the big occasion.

"Everybody was hyped up and excited but we said before the game that the team that is the calmest is going to get over the finish line. I think tomorrow is going to be no different."

Tazmin Brits, 32, who until the retirement of big hitting Lizelle Lee last year was not an automatic choice for the team, made herself a national heroine by hitting top score of 68 and holding four catches in a remarkable display of big-match temperament.

"She's got a lot of self-belief. It's been years of hard work that finally came together," said coach Hilton Moreng.

# No comparison between the AL and the BNP

Hasina tells Kotalipara rally

**BSS, Gopalganj**  
Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said there is no comparison between her party and the BNP.



"The BNP doesn't want people's welfare. They burnt people alive and played ducks and drakes with their fate. But, the AL is a party of this soil and its people and it works for countrymen. So, no comparison can be drawn between the Awami League and the BNP," she said.

The premier was addressing a grand rally after inaugurating 43 development schemes and laying foundation stones of five others involving Tk 329 crore by unveiling a plaque at the Talimpur Telihati High School ground in Sadullapur union in Kotalipara.

She said people formed the AL for achieving their rights and through struggle, while the BNP was formed illegally by military dictator Zia who grabbed state power unlawfully after breaching country's constitution.

Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman were made the BNP's leaders despite both of them are convicted, she said, adding, "The BNP's organogram even doesn't allow making leader of any convicted person. But, both Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman are convicted."

The premier posed a question that whether the BNP

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



A child peeling the shells off shrimps to turn them into "shutki" (dried fish) on a small island called Dhaal Char in northern Bhola, where the Meghna meets the Bay of Bengal. School children sometimes join the adults in the work of drying the fish, even though they are not officially paid for it. On some occasions, they take a few of the fish or shrimps, and sell them to the market by themselves to earn a few hundred taka. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MONIR UDDIN ANIK

# Rohingya imam found dead after abduction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Police recovered the body of a Rohingya imam from a refugee camp in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

A group of masked men abducted Samsu Alam, 38, around 8:00pm on Friday. His body was found around 10:00am yesterday, said police.

Samsu, imam of a mosque at Palangkhal refugee camp, was an inhabitant of Block-C at Camp 17, said Sheikh Mohammad Ali, officer-in-charge of Ukhiya Police Station.

Seeing the body, inhabitants of the camp informed the Armed Police Battalion. Later, a team of Ukhiya Police Station recovered the body.

There were several stab marks on the body, he said, adding that the body was sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

# BARBARIC TORTURE Teacher sent to jail for abusing boy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A madrasa teacher was sent to jail yesterday for torturing a 12-year-old boy using barbaric methods in Chattogram.

Abu Hanif, 30, used a blade to cut a student in the back and then put chilli powder on the wounds, said a complaint made by the boy's mother.

Following the complaint, police on Friday night arrested Hanif of Imam Azam (R) International Hizful Quran Academy in Anwara upazila.

According to the complaint, Hanif first beat the boy with a cane when he could not memorise his lessons last week.

On another day, Hanif used a razor blade to cut the boy on his back before pouring chilli powder on his wounds to further punish him.

The boy, who is a resident student at the madrasa, returned home on Thursday and showed his mother and brother his wounds.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

# Five held with mortars, AK-47

Army says they are members of 'Mogh party'



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Bangladesh Army detained five suspected militants and seized mortars, foreign-made firearms, and ammunition in Khagrachhari Manikchhari upazila.

The operation was conducted Friday night by army personnel from the district's Sindukchhari zone.

On information, they conducted a raid at a house and detained the five.

Four mortar and shells, one AK-47 rifle, one MI rifle, one LG (local gun) short barrel, one LG long barrel, one China-made pistol, two walkie-talkies, Indian rupees, and 67 bullets were recovered from the house.

The detainees were involved in various criminal activities and were active members of the militant group named "Mogh Party", the army claimed at a press conference held at Manikchhari army camp yesterday.

The army said militants held the house owner hostage and were using it as a hideout for their criminal activities.

Talking to The Daily Star, Fatikchhari Police Station Officer-in-Charge Masud Ibne Anwar said, "Army personnel handed the five detainees to us. Legal steps will be taken against them soon."

This is the first instance that members of the "Mogh Party" have been apprehended in Khagrachhari.

# Indigenous woman raped in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A woman from the Marma community in Bandarban's Lama upazila was raped by a man on Friday afternoon, said a police complaint.

Her family members said they could not file the case with police until 9:30pm yesterday as they were kept waiting for hours.

The duty officer at Lama Police Station, Hafizur Rahman, had told The Daily Star that the case would be filed once Officer-in-Charge Shahidul Islam arrived.

"We have recorded the case and will send the woman for a medical test to Bandarban General Hospital tomorrow morning," the OC said when contacted around 10:30pm yesterday.

"Police are trying to arrest the accused, a Bangalee man," he added. However, Shahidul hung up when the correspondent asked him about the delay in recording the case.

One Md Kaisar, 36, of Hargaja Futer Jiri area, abducted the woman

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

# Webb Telescope finds huge galaxies that 'shouldn't exist'

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Nasa's James Webb Space Telescope has found a set of massive galaxies that should not exist.

The equipment was used to observe a set of massive galaxies that formed around 500-700 million years after the Big Bang, when the universe was only three per cent of its current age. Those galaxies have stellar masses as high as ten billion times that of our Sun, and one that could be as massive as 100 billion of our Sun.

In all, scientists found six galaxies, which together threaten to change what scientists know about the beginnings of galaxies in our universe. Researchers say they refer to the objects as "universe breakers" and that they are in tension with 99 per cent of existing models of the universe.

Such galaxies should not be expected to be so big so soon after the beginnings of the universe, the researchers say. The mass of the stars examined in the new research are as much as 100 times greater than researchers had previously thought.

"These objects are way more massive than anyone expected," said Joel Leja, assistant professor of astronomy and astrophysics at Penn State, who modeled light from the galaxies, in a statement.



# Police constable found dead in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police recovered the body of a constable from a Mahogany plantation in Mymensingh's Nichkolpa area yesterday afternoon.

The victim was identified as Saddam Hossain, 27, son of freedom fighter Rezaul Karim of Bagerkanda area, reports our correspondent quoting the police.

Saddam was posted at the Police Lines in Sunamganj and recently came home on leave, said police.

Quoting family members, Md Shahinul Islam, additional superintendent of Police of Mymensingh Sadar Circle, said Saddam went out after dinner around 10:00pm on Friday and did not return home.

Around 3:00pm yesterday, a woman discovered the body and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Despite a High Court order on February 6 to remove all posters and graffiti from flyovers in the capital within two weeks, the pillars and walls under the Moghbazar flyover can barely be seen as they are covered from top to bottom by political posters and banners. Poster sticking and graffiti writing were made punishable offences in a 2012 act.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# TURKEY-SYRIA QUAKE Death toll tops 50,000

Ankara begins to rebuild for 1.5m left homeless

REUTERS, Antakya/Ankara

Turkey has begun work to rebuild homes following this month's devastating earthquakes, as the combined death toll in Turkey and Syria surpassed 50,000.

More than 160,000 buildings containing 520,000 apartments collapsed or were severely damaged in the Feb. 6 earthquakes that killed tens of thousands in Turkey and neighbouring Syria.

The Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) announced the death toll in Turkey rose to 44,218 on Friday night.

With Syria's latest announced death toll of 5,914, the combined death toll in the two countries rose to above 50,000.

Facing an election within months, President Tayyip Erdogan has pledged to rebuild homes within a year, although experts have said the authorities should put safety before speed. Some buildings that were meant to withstand tremors crumbled in the latest earthquakes.

"For several projects, tenders and contracts have been done. The process is moving very fast," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity, adding there would be no compromise on safety.

Authorities say tents have been dispatched for the many who are homeless, but people have reported trouble

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4