



ADANI POWER PURCHASE AGAINST 'PUBLIC POLICY'

How could such a deal be signed?

ASIFUR RAHMAN

In 2015, with a flurry of power deals in the bag and overcapacity in existing production capacity, did Bangladesh need to sign another landmark deal? Statistics suggest no.

Perhaps, the raw exuberance surrounding the Bangladesh growth story then could justify the deal struck with Adani Power under the 2011 Indo-Bangla Framework Agreement for Cooperation on August 11, 2015 -- about two months after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maiden visit to Bangladesh.

But nothing explains the government's rationale for signing the power purchase agreement for the deal two years later: three

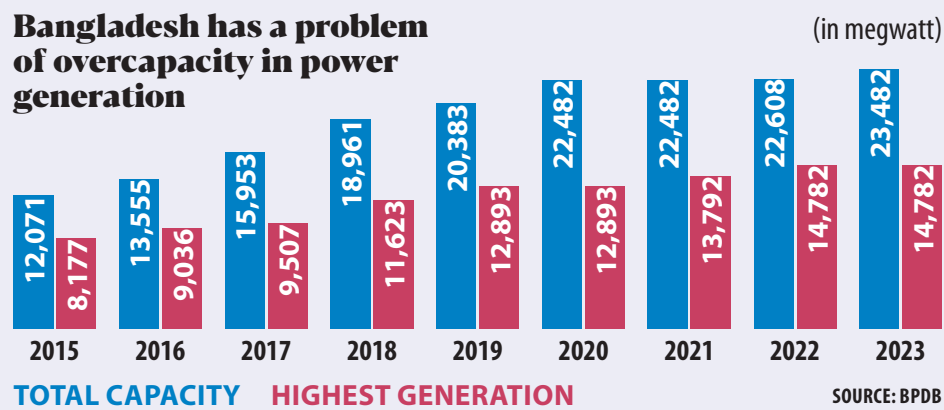


legal and energy experts at home and abroad who reviewed the contract at The Daily Star's request found it to be exceptionally expensive, overtly favouring Adani Power and ironclad.

"The way I would put it is heads Adani wins, tails you lose. The contract is so biased against the interests of Bangladesh to the point that one has to wonder why any sensible person would sign it on behalf of the Bangladeshi government," said Tim Buckley, an energy economist and founder of Sydney-based Climate Energy Finance Australasia.

The Daily Star contacted Mina Masud Uzzaman, who signed the deal in his capacity as the secretary of the Bangladesh Power Development Board then, on November 5, 2017 to learn of the government process in the lead-up to agreeing to the deal.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



How Adani PPA measures against others

	PAYRA	RAMPAL	GODDA
Minimum offtake	✗	✗	✓
Dependable capacity test retake	✗	✗	✓
BPDB to pay for repairs in case of damage	✗	✗	✓
Political event a force majeure	✓	✓	✗
Damages for BPDB delay	✗	✗	✓
Performance security deposit to BPDB	✗	✗	✓

"It is a punishable offence to sign such a contract -- we believe that our agencies have the ability to identify the corruption in this deal."

M Shamsul Alam
vice chairman
Consumers Association
of Bangladesh

What Adani Group has to say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star contacted Adani Group for clarifications on certain aspects of the PPA and we are publishing the emailed comment from the Adani Group headquarters in Ahmedabad in India ad verbatim.

Would Adani Power be charging BPDB for 6,000 kcal/kg coal but bringing in an inferior grade of 4,600 kcal/kg coal?

This question arises on account of misinformation spread by vested interests or a serious gap in understanding how energy cost is calculated.

Please note that energy cost would be billed only for the cost of actual kcal/kg coal proportionately adjusted with the global index that is published for 6,332 kcal coal. Thus, coal having a 4,600-kcal calorific value (as required

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

EC may get power to scrap polls after results



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The law ministry has agreed to the Election Commission's request to have the power to cancel an election even after the issuance of a gazette notification on results.

The commission had proposed that the EC be able to cancel an election, provided complaints made against the polls were proved to be true through probes.

"The RPO [Representation of the People Order] does not give the power to do what is required once the gazette has been issued. We made the proposal so that the EC has the power to do something even after the announcement of the official results," Election Commissioner Rashida Sultana said yesterday.

She said that the law ministry representative argued that section 91 of the RPO gave the commission the power to cancel elections. "But we made our arguments and they agreed on that issue."

The amendment proposal will not be discarded during the law ministry vetting, said Rashida.

It will be sent to the Cabinet Division before

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Health, edn to get chop in ADP

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Health and education are set to get the biggest chop in the revised development budget for this fiscal year, when the International Monetary Fund has stipulated more spending in the two sectors as part of its \$4.7 billion loan programme.

In the revised budget for fiscal 2022-23, which is scheduled to be approved tomorrow at the meeting of the National Economic Council, the allocation for the health service division is likely to be slashed by 38 percent to Tk 9,780.96 crore.

The budget for the ministry of primary and mass education would be brought down by 32.6 percent to Tk 7,784.68 crore and for the secondary and higher education division by as much as 48 percent to Tk 7,218.33 crore, according to the draft proposal prepared for the meeting.

Overall, the annual development programme would be trimmed by 7.5 percent to Tk 227,566.09 crore, with the foreign-funded projects shouldering the entire chop.

The allocation for foreign-funded projects would be reduced by Tk 18,500 crore or 19.89 percent.

The government has decided to go for an expansionary fiscal policy and hence the government's own funded projects were left untouched in the

The sectors getting the chop in the budget are health and education -- the two areas where the International Monetary Fund has stipulated higher spending as part of its \$4.7 billion loan.

revision, according to finance ministry officials.

This would revive economic activities and generate employment.

The reason the budgets for the health service division, ministry of primary and mass education and secondary and higher education division are being reduced is their implementation is low, said a finance ministry official requesting anonymity as he is not authorised to speak with media.

In the first seven months of the fiscal year, the health service division has managed to use 11.7 percent of its allocation, the ministry of primary and mass education 15.86 percent and the secondary and higher education

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



A group of people removing a boat from a dried-up waterbody after its lessee extracted all the water to catch the last remaining amounts of fish at the Pukaria beel in Sylhet Sadar's Baishitla area yesterday morning. Almost all the leaseholders of various waterbodies in the area have been doing this at the end of their leases, which is affecting the fish population and ultimately destroying the biodiversity. Environmental activists and citizens have placed blame on the authorities concerned for a lack of supervision.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

CPA rejoinder, our reply

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has sent a rejoinder to a report headlined "Ctg port's anomalies cost govt Tk 258 crore: CAG finds 26 counts of irregularities by CPA in three years" published in The Daily Star on January 3.

It denies the finding of the Comptroller and

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

BUSINESS

BB's dollar investment plunges

Bangladesh Bank's forex reserves invested in US dollars fell 34 percent to \$23.63b in February for the country's over-reliance on greenback for import payments.

STORY ON B1

আপনার দেখানো পথে ছুটে চলেছি
অবিচল লক্ষ্যের পানে।
এই পথচলায় আপনি আছেন
আমাদের মাঝে
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PM visiting president's Mithamain home today



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to have lunch at President Abdul Hamid's home in Mithamain upazila of Kishoreganj today.

The premier is scheduled to reach Mithamain around 10:00am. She will inaugurate Bir Muktijoddha Md Abdul Hamid Cantonment and see for herself the progress made in the development projects of the haor area.

Following that, she will go to the president's ancestral home in Kamalpara area and have lunch there. Hasina will attend a public meeting organised by the district Awami League at the Helipad Ground in Mithamain around 3:00pm.

A stage has been prepared there in the shape of a boat.

The district is in a festive mood and people from all walks of life have started gathering at the rally venue.

The streets have been adorned with arches, banners, and festoons to welcome the prime minister.

President Abdul Hamid and local AL leaders visited the rally venue yesterday.

"The prime minister has given a lot to the haor region. We don't need to ask for anything more from her. The people here are counting hours to see her just once," Kishoreganj-4 lawmaker Rejwan Ahmed Toufiq told reporters.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4



Argentine Foreign Minister Santiago Cafiero and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam cutting a ribbon to inaugurate the former's embassy building in the capital's Banani yesterday. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Respect for rights gone into reverse

Warns UN chief, calls for renewal of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

AFP, Geneva

Respect for human rights has gone into reverse, the United Nations chief warned yesterday, calling for a renewal of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 75 years after its signing.

Pointing to the war raging in Ukraine, and threats to rights from soaring poverty, hunger and climate disasters, Antonio Guterres said the declaration was "under assault from all sides."

"Some governments chip away at it. Others use a wrecking ball," he told the opening of the UN Human Rights

Council's main annual session, describing the disregard and disdain seen for human rights around the world as "a wake-up call".

He said the "Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered the most massive violations of human rights" being witnessed in the world today.

"It has unleashed widespread death, destruction and displacement," he said.

While the past century has seen astounding progress in human rights and human development, Guterres warned that now, "instead of continuing this progress, we have gone into reverse."

Russia's war in Ukraine loomed large

over the meeting, due to last a record six weeks, with calls for unity in condemning Moscow and extending a probe into war crimes in the conflict.

The session comes just days after the one-year anniversary of Moscow's full-scale invasion – which UN rights chief Volker Turk warned that 75 years after the world agreed on the universality of rights, "the oppression of the past can return in various disguises."

Turk cited "the old destructive wars of aggression from a bygone era with worldwide consequences, as we have witnessed again in Europe with the

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

BGB returns 2 firearms of BSF

BSF men left those behind after clashing with villagers in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Border Guard Bangladesh returned two firearms to Indian Border Security Force at Nirmalchar border of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila Sunday afternoon, hours after two BSF members and three Indian nationals intruded into Bangladesh territory and clashed with villagers.

Lt Col Sabbir Ahmed, commanding officer of BGB 1 Battalion, said the trouble began on Sunday morning when some locals were prevented from grazing their buffaloes in Nirmalchar by BSF and Indian nationals.

The BSF members entered Bangladesh territory with three Indian nationals and assaulted three Bangladeshis. Among the three are Firoz, 30, and Babu, 32.

As locals attempted to intervene, the BSF members attacked them as well, triggering a clash. At one stage, the BSF members and Indian nationals fled, leaving their weapons behind.

Informed by the locals, BGB members went to the spot, brought the situation under control, and recovered the weapons.

A rifle and a submachine gun were returned to BSF, said Lt Col Sabbir.

He said they held a battalion commander-level flag meeting with the BSF on Sunday afternoon and lodged a strong protest against the illegal intrusion by BSF men.

The BGB has beefed up patrol at the border.

Two journalists acquitted in ICT case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday acquitted two local journalists in a 6-year-old ICT case filed back in 2017.

Kazi Motaahar Rahman Babu, former editor of local newspaper Somayer Khabor, and one of its reporters Shohag Dewan were cleared of the charges as the allegations brought against them were not proven in the investigation.

On May 18, 2017, a report was published in the Bangla daily headlined "Complexities again in recruiting staff in Khulna Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court! President resigned".

How could such a deal be signed?

FROM PAGE 1

"I don't remember anything. It came through the chairman. I was the last step," said Mina Masud, who is now an additional inspector general at the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments.

Khaled Mahmood, who was the BPDB chairman from August 2016 to December 2019, declined to speak on the matter.

"I am not interested in talking about this. You realise that everything is vulnerable now," said Mahmood, who is now an independent director at Baraka Power.

What is unfortunate is there is virtually no scope for BPDB to get out of this contract for power purchase from the plant, which was built at an estimated cost of Rs 14,816 crore on 'unconditional and irrevocable' sovereign guarantee from the Bangladesh government that it would purchase the entire power generated for 25 years.

"If there is a material breach, you cannot terminate the contract. You have to seek for remedy and that description has to be in reasonable detail. And you have to give them time for remedy in all termination events," said a top corporate lawyer in Bangladesh, who specialises in drafting infrastructure contracts.

And even in the case of dispute resolution, the government has conceded ground: it waived off sovereign immunity, which would have given it an upper hand.

"It's a plain unfair contract. This is an agreement against public policy," said the lawyer on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

But it is not that the government did not have experience negotiating big PPAs before this: at The Daily Star's request, the experts also reviewed the Payra and Rampal deals and found those to be not ideal either but are much less predatory.

In so doing, Adani Power passed on the entire risks associated with its fixed and variable costs of the power plant, which was set up on a 68:32 debt-to-equity ratio, to BPDB and also line its pockets along the way.

In fact, this is the only PPA of Adani Power in which all variable costs are pass-through, making it a largely low-risk venture for India's largest private power company.

Major predatory aspects of the PPA with Adani Power, whose chairman Gautam Adani has longstanding ties with Modi, can be found in the pricing of coal and capacity charge.

Coal that would fire the 1,600 megawatt ultra-supercritical power plant located in the Indian eastern state of Jharkhand's Godda district would be calculated based on the average prices of benchmark coal with an energy value of 6,000 kilocalories per kg (kcal/kg) at the Indonesian coal index and the Australian Newcastle index for the relevant month.

"That means if Adani purchased coal from countries other than Indonesia and Australia at a lower

cost, they would be able to charge extra," said M Shamsul Alam, an energy expert who reviewed the 163-page document for The Daily Star.

While the PPA mentions that BPDB would be charged for 4,600 kcal/kg, there are significant gains to be made by Adani Power for deciding to arrive at the price based on the rates for higher grade coal.

The 4,600 kcal/kg coal is of inferior grade and trades at a fraction of the price of 6,000 kcal/kg coal.

"If you tie it to an index that is unrelated to the quality of coal Adani is using, how is that fair? It's probably the most generous coal PPA I have ever seen in the world in my decades of energy analysis," Buckley said.

While there is a provision in the Adani PPA to change the index based on which coal would be billed, it is almost impossible to explore that option, according to the lawyer.

"It can be deployed if any of the indexes is withdrawn, unavailable or inappropriate. But we do not know what constitutes inappropriate," he said.

Coincidentally, Adani Power's sister concern Adani Enterprises is India's biggest coal trader and owns mines in Indonesia and Australia – and the coal for the Godda plant will most likely be supplied by that vendor.

The entire transportation and logistics-related costs for coal are linked to the relevant global indices: Baltic Exchange Dry Index and Platts Oilgram Bunkerwire Singapore.

BPDB would also have to pay for the transport and logistics of the coal for the Payra and Rampal power plants, but this cost would be baked into the final price of the coal procured through the open tender. Subsequently, a competitive rate is expected that is immune from the vagaries of the indices.

The coal for the plant – located in an Indian village about 100 kilometres from the Bangladesh border – would be delivered to Odisha's Dhamra port, which is owned by another sister concern, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone.

Dhamra Port Company has been tasked with port handling including coal unloading, storage, loading onto railway wagons and port-related documentation. From there, coal would travel 695 kilometres in wagons of Indian Railways to the power plant.

It is not known whether arm's length pricing would be used for this leg of coal's journey.

Arm's length pricing is the price at which a willing buyer and a willing unrelated seller would freely agree to transact or a trade between related parties that is conducted as if they were unrelated, so that there is no conflict of interest in the transaction.

For Payra and Rampal, separate coal purchase agreements are signed through an open tender and with BPDB's vetting and provisions for discounts.

Their coal purchases would be based on the year-ahead notification given by BPDB about its electricity

purchase schedule. But the invoice would be as per the dispatch to BPDB.

If the coal purchase agreements have a minimum offtake guarantee and BPDB's dispatch is below that, there would be an additional invoice to make up the difference.

In the Adani PPA, BPDB must take and pay for at least 34 percent of the power generated by the plant every year. Failure to do so would entail reimbursing all the penalty, damages or compensation paid or incurred by Adani Power to its coal supplier, coal transporter and port operators.

There is no minimum offtake requirement for Payra and Rampal.

Another major point of difference between the Adani PPA with the other two is in the calculation of capacity payment, which, in essence, is the rent paid to the power plant for the contracted years regardless of how many hours the boiler, the turbine and the generator are run to generate electricity.

Where Payra and Rampal's authorities arrived at the sum using a formula based on the capital cost, return of equity, the interest on debt, depreciation, interest on working capital and so on, Adani Power arbitrability slapped on a sum. In addition, it will factor in the US Consumer Price Index for the capacity payment calculations for the 25-year contract duration.

Subsequently, the electricity that would be purchased from the Adani Godda plant, which was built with a Rs 10,075 crore loan from Indian state-run lender Power Finance Corp. and its unit REC at a subsidised rate, will end up costing more than the others for BPDB.

However, the government could have landed a windfall had it approached this PPA with more gumption.

A little over a year after the PPA was signed, India's ministry of commerce and industry designated the 425 hectares of land on which the state-of-the-art power plant was emerging as a special economic zone. This meant Adani Power got tax and levy exemptions.

Naturally, the capacity payment, energy tariff and coal invoices would come down as those were originally calculated factoring in the taxes and levies.

But a clause in the PPA states that Adani Power is obliged to make adjustments only in the cases of taxes or levies or costs going up, in yet another example of the one-sided nature of the contract.

"This proposition is absurd. It is a clear example of duress. No sane person agrees to such clauses," the lawyer said.

The SEZ designation is saving Adani Power upwards of \$1 billion, according to Buckley.

Where in the other two PPAs, a political event like a strike or war or change in law is a force majeure, in the Adani PPA it is not.

If Adani Power is unable to supply power for a political event, it is not obliged to pay any liquidated damage to BPDB. But the converse is not true,

in yet another instance of the one-sided nature of the contract.

"You cannot catch him [Adani] for his failure to deliver for political events. However, if he invokes a political event, you have to continue to pay the capacity payment, energy payment and the other dues," the lawyer said.

A political event should be force majeure and as per law, during force majeure, both sides are exempted from each party's obligations.

"He will take money by doing nothing. This is another robbery. This is absolutely an illegal clause. It's hard to stay in the right mood after seeing such clauses," he said.

If the plant gets damaged for a political event, Adani Power would bill BPDB for repair works and restoration of normal service, in another unfair inclusion in the PPA.

This supplemental tariff, which was not used in the other two PPAs, can also be invoked in the case of costs going up for Adani Power.

Another favourable clause for Adani is the option to take a second test to check the dependable capacity – which is the total electricity the plant can supply to the grid – should it fail the first one.

As is standard practice in PPAs, the test is carried just once and that result is valid for 300 months. If the plant fails the test, it has to pay a penalty.

Should the Godda plant fail the test, Adani Power could carry out another test at its own cost.

If it gets the expected reading this time, it will supersede the previous one and the compensation paid by Adani Power to BPDB until then would be adjusted with future invoices.

"In every layer, there is a loophole – they are giving with one hand and taking it back with the other hand," the lawyer said.

Nasrul Hamid, the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources since 2014, and Tawfiq-e-Elahi Choudhury, the prime minister's energy adviser since 2009, declined The Daily Star's request for comment.

"It is a punishable offence to sign such a contract – we believe that our agencies have the ability to identify the corruption in this deal," said Alam, also the vice chairman of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh.

And cancelling the agreement will not solve matters. "We need to bring to book those who made such agreements."

It is highly unlikely that Bangladesh would be able to consume the 1,496 megawatts of electricity that would be produced by the Godda plant.

The dedicated transmission line from Godda would bring power to the northern part of Bangladesh, which is not an industries-dense region and hence the demand for electricity is not that much. "We will need to keep the power plant unutilised and keep spending dollars as capacity charges," Alam added.

"The whole contract is a gift by the Bangladesh government to the [previously] richest man in Asia," Buckley said.

What Adani Group has to say

FROM PAGE 1

for boiler and not really inferior) would be charged in proportion to the benchmark global index, as clearly defined in the PPA.

For instance, the reference HBA index for 6,332 kcal coal is \$197, as announced for March 2023 and since the plant would consume 4,600 kcal coal, the effective free-on-board price would be \$143 per metric tonne and not higher!

Would Adani Power not be passing on the benefits of the plant's SEZ designation?

Adani has not charged BPDB anything yet and hence all mischievous propaganda of vested interests.

It is pertinent to note that the cost of power from the Godda project would be lower than the comparable projects since PPA with Adani Power Jharkhand (APJL) provides for a lower freight.

As per the formula provided in the PPA, ocean freight for March would be \$10.4, which would be far lower than other similar power projects that would be charging almost close to double the freight cost owing to pass-through provisions.

Since the Godda project is at a designated SEZ, power consumers of Bangladesh will not have to pay for custom duty, taxes and Cess, as applicable per the current norms.

This makes the power tariff of the Godda project more competitive, compared to other contemporary stations, which would eventually contribute to the people of Bangladesh getting more competitive power.

Is there no formula behind the excessive capacity payment; was it was arbitrarily decided?

This is yet another case of misinformation. Unlike other power generation projects whose electricity bill includes taxes and other duties, APJL's bills shall be without such levies as rightly indicated by you that it has been granted some tax benefits.

Capacity charge, under the PPA with Adani Power, is competitive with other similar generating stations in Bangladesh such as Rampal, S Alam and Matarbari.

Additionally, Adani Power has also, on its own goodwill gesture, waived off fixed charges for being available and never billed any capacity charge until the grid station at Bogura and the associated transmission system becomes operational.

APJL would charge fixed costs as per the terms defined in PPA, once the power supply starts in the right earnestness as envisaged from March 2023.

As for the addition of the supplementary tariff and political

event clause that essentially protects Adani, please appreciate that all provisions of PPA in respect of the above aspects are the same as any other PPA that Bangladesh has signed with other contemporary and comparable stations such as Rampal Power Station, S Alam Power Plant and Matarbari Power Plant.

Is there no option for reconciliation at the end of the year?

BPDB executives have made arrangements for metering at Godda end (duly sealed by them) as also at their receipt end in Bangladesh and these are all data available online to the National Load Dispatch of Bangladesh.

Thus, the transaction is transparent and we request you highlight these facts.

There is an absolute right available to BPDB to have a metering counter check based on metering at sending and receipt end, which has been completely sealed and calibrated by BPDB engineers.

Moreover, PPA has adequate penalty provisions for failure in test readings and these are standard clauses similar in all PPAs like Rampal Power Station, S Alam Power Plant and others.

Would Adani Power be open to renegotiation on the PPA about some of the controversial aspects in it?

As clarified, the terms of the PPA are not only fair but also comparable with comparable power generation projects.

You would appreciate that PPA is a legally binding document drawn after much deliberations and negotiations by multiple stakeholders and lenders are party to the same.

However, we are committed to ensuring that the delivered tariff would either be competitive with peer stations like Payra and Rampal or lower.

This is being done because we are aware of its competitiveness, whereas vested interests have spread all kinds of miscommunications.

We would do all actions in the interests of the electricity consumers of Bangladesh.

Our gesture of not billing for fixed costs when transmission infrastructure to evacuate electricity has got delayed on the Bangladesh side demonstrates our commitment to the relationship with Bangladesh.

All the contractual clauses are palatable and equally embedded in the contract that already covers issues raised in your query.

Adani Power is a listed entity operating in a highly regulated environment and it will keep the concerned stakeholders posted from time to time with operational and financial details.

Apply innovative ideas to build a smart Bangladesh

PM tells BCS officers

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the BCS officers to utilise their innovative power and talents in building a smart Bangladesh.

The premier was addressing the certificate-awarding and closing ceremony of the 74th foundation training course of BCS officers at her office in the city.

She said the country witnessed a radical change in a short period and asked the new officers to continue this development trend.

Hasina said they will build the country as a smart Bangladesh by 2041 through making the population, economy and all social systems smart.

She described the fresh officers as the soldiers in the implementation of the "2041 Smart Bangladesh" vision as they will go to higher posts in the government services gradually in future.

The premier reiterated her call to the countrymen to show austerity in using resources including electricity, water and gas as it is not known when the Russia-Ukraine war will stop.

The price of every commodity and transport cost went up throughout the world due to the sanctions and counter-sanctions, she said.

The PM asked the administration to promote austerity in the use of resources and raise food production in the country to offset the global crisis.



Despite repeated accidents, the situation at rail crossings stays the same. People continue to ignore rules just to save some time. While visiting Dhaka Airport Railway Station yesterday, this photojournalist witnessed the chaos firsthand. Clockwise from left, commuters cross a rail track at the station despite a train approaching from a distance. Even though pathways exist for passengers, time and again, they choose a shortcut by getting on the tracks to reach other platforms. Sometimes, they even stand beyond the rail crossing and dangerously close to moving trains.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



'Choosing control over protection'

Speakers tell webinar on draft Personal Data Protection Act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The draft Personal Data Protection Act will lead more towards the control of citizens' data as opposed to its protection, said speakers at an online discussion yesterday.

"The draft law can be a threat to people's right to privacy," said Saimum Reza Talukder, senior lecturer at the School of Law, Brac University, adding that there is a risk of this law being used against critics of the government and those expressing difference of opinion.

The discussion was organised by the Forum for Bangladesh Studies.

He also commented that the law can threaten the cyber security of the state because it does not clearly define how it will ensure which of the different government organisations will have access to what category of data.

Talukder also commented on how the law promises the officers charged with implementing the law indemnity and protection from prosecution, stating, "In the eyes of law, everybody is the same."

Senior journalist Kamal Ahmed commented that the law is more about protecting the interests of the state and the government, protecting the state's sovereignty and cracking down on crime.

"It is less about the protection of personal data. While trying to prioritise security, the law overlooked the rights of the citizens," added Kamal.

"Where is the guarantee that power will not be abused?" he asked.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



The law can threaten the cyber security of the state because it does not clearly define how it will ensure which of the different government organisations will have access to what category of data.

Three more hospitalised with dengue

UNB, Dhaka

Three more people were hospitalised with dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Twenty six dengue patients, including 10 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals across the country.

So far, the DGHS has recorded 730 dengue cases, 695 recoveries, and nine deaths this year.



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

Ensure anyone can file case to save environment

Recommends JS body

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body yesterday recommended bringing an amendment to the "Environment Court Act" so that any citizen of the country can file a case over environmental damage, pollution, and different forms of irregularities.

The parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change also recommended adjusting the amount of fine to the gravity of environmental harm.

"Under the existing law, aggrieved citizens cannot just file cases over environmental damage, pollution or irregularities on their own. They need to do so through the Department of Environment, after getting permission of its director general," Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chief of the parliamentary body, told The Daily Star after emerging from the meeting.

The meeting was held at the DoE office in the capital's Agargaon. Saber, also an Awami League lawmaker, said the parliamentary watchdog has recommended dropping the provision of taking permission from the DoE's director general before filing a case.

About increasing fines, Saber said at present, the amount of fine is not proportional to the gravity of polluting the environment. Therefore, polluters prefer just paying the fine rather than addressing the issue.

For example, the committee chief said an owner of a tannery industry used to save Tk 5 to 10 lakh by shutting down the effluent treatment plant of his factory, as he only had to pay around Tk 20,000 for this crime.

ISSUES

Citizens need to go through DoE to file case

Fine not proportional to gravity of harm

Amount of compensation doesn't reflect damage

PROPOSALS

Dropping provision of taking DoE permission

Determining protocol, rule to fix compensation

"We have recommended the adjustment so that the fine can be in line with the intensity of the crime of polluting the environment," he said.

The parliamentary standing committee also recommended imposing compensation relative to the harm done to the environment. "At present, there is no clear cut instruction about how to fix the amount of compensation. We have recommended determining a protocol and rule in this regard."

The meeting was also informed that in the last 13 years, the Directorate of Enforcement has imposed compensation of Tk 484.75 crore from 11,883 organisations.

Environment Minister Md Shahab Uddin and State Minister for Environment Habibun Nahar were present at the meeting among others.

HC blasts govt for failing to curb air pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday blasted all departments concerned of the government for their failure to curb air pollution in Dhaka despite its repeated directives.

The HC bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Ali, while hearing a writ petition, said water is not spread sufficiently to reduce air pollution, and the mosquito menace continues.

"The two city corporations in Dhaka must look into this situation. The police will also have to take proper and adequate action to stop the emission of black smoke from vehicles and plying old vehicles expiring tenure," the court said.

The bench ordered the Department of Environment (DoE) to immediately shut down all the illegal brick kilns in Dhaka and surrounding five districts - Gazipur, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Gazipur and Manikganj.

It recommended legal action against the kiln owners and ordered DoE to submit a report after complying with the directives in two weeks.

Lawyer Manzill Murshid appeared for the petitioner, while DAG Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashir and lawyer Amatul Karim Swarna represented the government and DoE, respectively, and lawyer Zobair Hossain Sajib stood for DSCC during the hearing.

Khaleda seriously ill: physician

She will do politics when time comes, says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is seriously ill, said her physician AZM Zahid Hossain yesterday.

Hossain, also vice chairman of the party, said the medical board will get the reports today and then the next course of action would be taken.

He came up with the remarks while talking to reporters in front of Khaleda's house after the BNP chief reached home from the city's Evercare Hospital.

Amid the controversy surrounding whether she will be able to engage in active politics, she went to the hospital for health check-up. The former premier reached the hospital at 5:30pm as

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'We want global focus on Rohingyas'

Says Canadian Minister Harjit Sajjan; Momen invites Trudeau to Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Canada wants to bring the global focus back on the Rohingyas so that Myanmar takes the right measures to create conducive conditions so that the Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh can return to Myanmar safely, said Canadian Minister for International Development Harjit S Sajjan.

"When it is safe, they [Rohingyas] can go back home. Canada will be a strong supporter of Bangladesh," he said.

The minister went on to say, "We have increased our pressure on the Myanmar military. We support the Rohingya genocide case at the International Court of Justice. We also sanctioned Myanmar and now exploring new opportunities to bring back the focus of the Myanmar military regime."

Sajjan made the remarks after holding a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Migration crucial for country's development

Bangladesh needs to look at it as 'thrust sector', speakers tell dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh needs to closely examine the challenges and opportunities of migration, considering it as a thrust sector, and work to leverage them for a smooth transition from its status of a least developed country (LDC), said participants at a dialogue yesterday.

They said migration remains a key tool for the country's development, as remittance significantly contributes to the gross domestic product (GDP), which is crucial for the transition to the status of a middle income country by 2026.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) organised the daylong dialogue on "Migration in Bangladesh: Contribution Towards

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Workers installing underground cables on Satmasjid Road in Lalmatia yesterday. Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) is conducting the work.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

TIPU MURDER

DB gets 10th date to submit probe report

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked the Detective Branch (DB) of police to submit by April 16 the probe report in the murder case filed over the deaths of Awami League leader Jahidul Islam Tipu and college student Samia Afran Jamal Prity in Dhaka on March 24 last year.

Investigators have now taken 10 dates to complete the investigation into the murders.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury passed the order after Md Yasin Sikder, a DB inspector and also the investigation officer of the case, failed to submit any report yesterday.

We want global

FROM PAGE 3
meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at the state guest house Padma yesterday.

During his visit on February 24-27, he called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, visited Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, projects supported by Canada and held a meeting with the foreign minister.

Sajjan said Canada has recently authorised \$10 million for climate adaptation projects in Bangladesh and is eager

to expand cooperation in other areas, including agriculture, health etc.

Foreign Minister Momen said he has invited Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to visit Bangladesh after his upcoming visit to India in September this year.

In response, Sajjan said he endorsed the invitation and will let PM Trudeau know.

Momen said Canada has assured additional funding for the Rohingyas both in Cox's Bazar and Bhashanchar.

"The Canadian minister has positively responded when Bangladesh proposed that Canada provided GSP facilities up to 2029, after Bangladesh's LDC graduation in 2026," said the foreign minister.

Dhaka also sought Sajjan's help so that Bangladeshi students can get Canadian visas easily and quickly.

Foreign Minister Momen also spoke of repatriating Bangabandhu killer Noor Chowdhury who is sheltered in Canada.

FATULLAH FIRE

Wife dies, husband fighting for life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One of the five people who suffered burns in a fire reportedly caused by a gas-line leak in Narayanganj's Fatullah on Sunday died at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday.

Sukhi Akter, 25, breathed her last around 6:00am at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, said SM Ayub Hossain, resident surgeon.

She had 98 percent burns on her body, he added. Her husband Al Amin Hossain and Md Rafique are being treated there with 95 and 12 percent burns.

Choosing control

FROM PAGE 3

Kamal also said the data protection office, which will be in charge of implementing this law, must be an independent commission.

Speakers also added to this by saying that if the office is a part of the government's bureaucracy, there is little chance of it being able to act independently.

They also expressed concern about sections in the law that will grant the government full access to the data of any citizen or

organisation.

Senior journalist Saleem Samad called it a law only meant to increase the power of the government, while columnist Faiz Taiyeb commented that the law enforcers are being let off the hook from protecting the rights of citizens with this law.

Speakers also opined that attempts at data localisation will ultimately lead more to data control.

The webinar was moderated by journalist Monir Haider.

Migration crucial

FROM PAGE 3

Graduation from LDC Status" at a city hotel.

Migration experts, UN officials, development practitioners, economists, and government officials took part in the event.

According to an IOM fact sheet provided at the event, migration originating from 46 LDCs totals to around 17 percent of the global migrant population, while these countries host only four percent of migrants.

Addressing the opening session, former foreign secretary Shahidul Haque said migration is now recognised as an integral component of sustainable development.

Pointing to migration also being a geopolitical and geo-economical phenomenon, Shahidul said states cannot just consider it to be a labour phenomenon, underestimating its role in "bigger politics".

Now a senior adviser of IOM Bangladesh, Shahidul stressed shifting focus exclusively on areas such as mobility, remittance, and governance.

At a working session, ILO Bangladesh Chief Technical Adviser Laetitia Weibel Roberts said the

status of a middle-income country will increase investment and job creation in Bangladesh and may also see a raise in the minimum wage.

She added that once minimum wage is raised, aspirant migrants would be debating whether they are going overseas for a wage that could still be competitive as per the domestic market.

At the opening session, Anowarul Haq, assistant representative (democratic governance portfolio) of UNDP Bangladesh, said the prospects of Bangladesh nearing LDC graduation bring to light certain challenges that the country must overcome to ensure a smooth transition.

Nurul Islam, a technical and vocational training specialist at the government's Skills for Employment Investment Programme, said strengthening reintegration programmes for returnee migrants should be an approach during the LDC graduation.

Christopher David Foulkes, officer in charge of IOM Bangladesh, among others, attended the dialogue.

Khaleda will

FROM PAGE 3

Zahid said the board will decide her next course of treatment after assessing her health condition and test reports.

Meanwhile, the party yesterday alleged that the ruling Awami League is staging drama over the issue of Khaleda's scope to do politics.

"Khaleda Zia has been kept under house arrest, and she is very ill. The government has started staging various dramas about her. Some ministers said Khaleda is not allowed to do politics. Another minister said she has no obstacle to doing politics," said Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the party.

Addressing a discussion organised by Jatiyatabadi Tanti Dal to mark its 43rd founding anniversary at the

capital's Jatiya Press Club, the BNP leader said the ruling-party leaders need not talk about the issue, as the BNP chief herself and her party will decide whether she will engage in politics or not.

He questioned why the AL leaders have become so desperate to talk about this. "Their intentions are absolutely evil. They want to confuse the people and divert their attention to something else."

The BNP leader said Khaleda will do politics when the suitable time comes. "She will surely do politics, no matter where she stays as she is the most popular leader in the country."

Fakhru said the government can release Khaleda without any condition if it wants her to return to politics.



World Health Organization
Bangladesh

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)


The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

1. RFP/BAN/2023/007: Development of training materials and conduction of training courses on Climate Informed Hospital Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan.

Deadline for the submission of RFP: **14:00 hrs, 13 March 2023.**


Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP documents from: <https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice>.

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Country Office for Bangladesh, House-SW(1)1/A, Road-8, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.



“বিজয়পত্রী”

আগামী ০৩/০৩/২০২৩ খ্রিঃ তারিখ, রোজ শুক্রবার-এ অনুষ্ঠিতব্য পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতির মিটার স্টেশন পদের নিয়োগ পরীক্ষা অনিবার্য কারণ বশতঃ স্থগিত করা হলো। পরীক্ষার পরিবর্তিত তারিখ পরবর্তীতে জানানো হবে।



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সদর দপ্তর ভবন, নিকুঞ্জ-২
বিলকোত, ঢাকা-১২২৯।

GD 383



Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 8181658-61, Fax: 8181678, Website: <http://www.pksf.org.bd>

Memo No. 53.23.0000.01.03.013.23.1247 Date: 27.02.2023

Request for Expression of Interest for Selection of Individual Consultant

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for Implementing the Bangladesh Rural Water, Sanitation & Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the 'Individual Consultant' services.

The Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), now invites eligible applicant ("Consultant") to indicate their interest in providing the Services as 'Individual Consultant'. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualification and relevant experience to perform the Services as follows:

Contract Package Number	Name of the Position	No.	Required Minimum Qualification, Experience and Job Responsibilities
Package No: RWSSP-SD-01.1	Program Support Consultant	01	<p>a. Qualification: The ideal candidate will be a Post-graduate in Social or Environmental Sciences or Business Studies and have specialized knowledge of project operation, finance and management; respective policies of GoB</p> <p>b. Experience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum fifteen (15) years of general experience in social development sector especially in WASH sector, out of which at least ten (10) years of working experience in Project management team having dedicated/core leadership role against the designated post. Experiences in the projects of World Bank, AIIB or other Bilateral/Multilateral development partners will be preferred. Should have strong interpersonal and communication skills. Ability to work individually or in a team to deliver services with strict deadlines and in a cross cultural environment. Experience related to preparation of policies, reports, presentation and documentation. Managing work plan and budget implementation, off-site and on-site monitoring. <p>c. Detailed job responsibilities are given in the ToR.</p>

The Applicants are invited to provide information in details indicating their qualification to perform the services (complete CV along with description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions and general qualifications).


The Consultants will be hired and contracted as per the "Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)" method of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers", Fourth Edition, November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"). Duration of the consultancy services will be approximately for 33 months or project closing date, whichever is earlier. The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignments can be found at the following link: tender.pksf.org.bd

Expressions of interest must be submitted in a written form to the PKSF office (in person, or by mail) in a sealed envelope along with a softcopy (CD/DVD/Pen-drive) by **15 March, 2023 within 3:00 PM** and clearly marked "Expression of Interest", contract package number, name of the position applied for and name and address of the individual consultant.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the EOIs or cancel the EOI process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected applicant(s).

For Further information and clarification, intending applicant may contact the PKSF office during **9:30 am to 3:30 pm** (except holidays) or through email to rwshpksf.proc@gmail.com.

(AQM Golam Mawla)
Deputy Managing Director & PE



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
জনস্বাসন মন্ত্রণালয়
জাতীয় পরিকল্পনা ও উন্নয়ন একাডেমি (এনএপিডি)
নিকুঞ্জ, ঢাকা-১২০৭
www.napd.gov.bd

প্রশিক্ষণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

কোর্সের নাম	Research Methodology
বায়	১৫মাস
সেতার	১০ কার্যদিবস (১২-২৩ মার্চ ২০২৩)।
ক্রমের সংখ্যা	৫৫তম
কোর্সের ফি	৩০,০০০.০০ (ত্রিশ হাজার টাকা মাত্র)।
প্রশিক্ষার্থীর পত্র	স্বাক্ষরিত, স্বাক্ষরপত্র, স্বাক্ষরিত, সেরকারি, স্বাক্ষরিত ও স্বাক্ষরিত প্রতিলিপ
নিষ্পত্তি কোড	৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫
নিষ্পত্তি কোডের ক্রম	৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫৫

স্বাক্ষরিত পত্র www.napd.gov.bd এ প্রেরণ করা হবে।


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NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

TENDER NOTICE

Tender No. NSU/22-23-T09

North South University is inviting sealed offer from bona fide firm/ reputed organization/ distributors/ business partners/ agents for supplying email account and cloud storage capacity for North South University as described in the tender schedule.

Interested bidders may collect schedule of tender from Southeast Bank Ltd. Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on all working days till **March 19, 2023** by paying non-refundable amount of Taka 1,000.00 (One Thousand) in cash for each schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the quoted price in the form of Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favor of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **March 20, 2023** by 2.15 p.m. at the office of the undersigned. The offers will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on the same day. Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

Director, Internal Affairs
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229
Phone : +88-02-55668200, Ext. 1204, Fax: +88-02-55668202
E-mail to: procurement@northsouth.edu, www.northsouth.edu


INVITATION FOR TENDER

Pubali Bank Limited, the largest private commercial bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate in any or all of the following tenders, but in separate envelope as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned works as per terms & conditions stated below:

- Civil & Electrical works** at our proposed Godown of (BIWTC Bhaban, 5th floor), Dhaka.
- Supply & fitting of furniture** at our ADC Division & QAT unit of ICT Operation Division at BIWTC Bhaban, (4th floor), 5, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.
- Rate fixation for supply of 12 Bore Shotgun** (Brand new) with Cartridges at different Branches/Upshakhas of our Bank.
- Supply, installation & commissioning of 114 sets Smart Queue Management System** at different Branches of our Bank (All over Bangladesh).

Please visit our web site, <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for details. Interested Parties may purchase the Tender document of **Sl. 1, 2 & 3 by 09 March, 2023** and Tender document of **Sl. 4 by 14 March, 2023**. They may duly fill up all requirements and submit their offer of **Sl. 1, 2 & 3 by 12 March, 2023** at 11.00 AM and **Sl. 4 by 15 March, 2023** at 11.00AM.

Dilip Kumar Paul
General Manager & Division Head
পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড ESTD. AND GENERAL SERVICES DIVISION
PUBALI BANK LIMITED Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.



Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Dhaka-1207
Telephone: 880-2-8181658-61, 8181664-9, 8181169 Fax: 880-2-8181671, 8181678
e-Mail: pksf@pksf.org.bd; www.facebook.com/PKSF.org

Ref. No: 53.23.0000.001.03.012.23-1224 Date: 23 February 2023

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

A. Basic Information (Procuring Entity, Assignment, Procurement Method, Source of Fund, etc) for the Consulting Firms:	
1 Name of the Organization	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
2 Procuring Entity Name & Designation	AQM Golam Mawla, Deputy Managing Director
3 Expression of Interest for Selection of	A consulting firm for conducting the 'Final Impact Assessment' of Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises (PACE) project of PKSF.
4 EOI Ref No	53.23.0000.001.03.012.23-1224
5 Package No.	PKSF/PACE/SD-02
6 REOI Publishing Date	28 February 2023
7 Procurement Method	Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS)
8 Source of Fund	GoB, PKSF, and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
9 Development Partner	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
10 Project Name	Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises (PACE) project
11 EOI proposals submission closing date, time, and place	Date: 14 March 2023; Time: 2:30 PM; PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Agargaon, Dhaka.
B. Key Information for the Consulting Firms:	
12 Brief description of the assignment	
13 Experience, resource, and delivery capacity required of the Consulting firm	Please find the detailed REOI in the following website: https://pksf.org.bd/tender/
14 Other Details	
C. Procurement Entity Details	
15 Name of the Official Inviting EOI	AQM Golam Mawla
16 Designation of Official Inviting EOI	Deputy Managing Director
17 Address of the Official Inviting EOI	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
18 Contact Details of Official Inviting EOI	Telephone: 880-2-8181658-61, 8181664-9, 8181169 Fax: 880-2-8181671, 8181678 e-mail: mawlapksf@gmail.com www.pksf.org.bd , www.facebook.com/PKSF.org

The Procurement Entity reserves all the rights to accept or reject all EOI proposals.

(AQM Golam Mawla)
Deputy Managing Director & PE

GUN ATTACK ON AL LEADER Case filed accusing 6

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Narsingdi

A case was filed yesterday over the gun attack on Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila chairman Harunur Rashid, accusing six people including Arif Sarkar.

In the case, filed by the victim's son Amminur Rashid Khan, Arif is mentioned as the mastermind behind the attack, which took place on Saturday. But the complainant did not mention any motive for it.

The other five accused are Mohsin Mia, 32, Iran Mia, 30, Shakil Mia, 35, Humayun, 32, and Nur Mohammad, 48.

Firoz Talukder, officer-in-charge of Shibpur Police Station, said, "We seized a car and unregistered motorcycle, which were used during the attack on Harunur, from the possession of four detainees."

"We produced them before a court in Narsingdi seeking a five day remand, but it granted one day. We hope we will get information about the motive behind the attack."

The OC said, "Primarily, we are suspecting that the attack was carried out due to political reasons."

Hasan Sani Alich, chairperson of Puthia Union Parishad and the union's AL president, said, "Arif Sarkar has no involvement with Awami League or its associated bodies."



Banners were burnt and people were hurt as two rival factions of the ruling party locked horns in a clash in Tangail's Ghatail upazila yesterday. The opposing groups were later dispersed when police intervened. PHOTO: STAR



10 hurt as AL factions clash in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

At least 10 people, including two journalists, were injured in a clash between two rival factions of Awami League in Tangail's Ghatail upazila yesterday.

According to party sources, the clash ensued because of a dispute over the party's newly-formed upazila committee.

Police and witnesses said the clash took place at Ghatail Bus

Stand area on Tangail-Mymensingh highway in the afternoon. At that time, traffic came to a halt.

Ghatail upazila AL committee was formed on January 28. Committee president and Ghatail upazila parishad chairman Shahidul Islam Lebu announced the committee.

Alleging that the committee was formed by keeping BNP-Jamaat men, the followers of local lawmaker Aatur Rahman Khan rejected the committee and held a

press conference and protest rally on Sunday.

Tensions reached their peak when both the rival factions announced a programme at the same venue yesterday.

At one stage, the supporters of both groups locked into a clash.

Contacted, Azharul Islam Sarkar, officer-in-charge of Ghatail Police Station, told The Daily Star that police dispersed the AL activists as soon as they could.

The clash ensued because of a dispute over the party's newly-formed upazila committee, between supporters of upazila parishad chairman Shahidul Islam Lebu and local lawmaker Aatur Rahman Khan.

Book on language hero Syed Abdul Hannan launched

CITY DESK

A memorial book on the life and works of Language Movement veteran and organiser of the Liberation War Syed Abdul Hannan was launched at a ceremony at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka on Saturday.

It features writings of over 50 writers commemorating Hannan, also a former principal of Sherpur Government College and an educationist of Sherpur district. Jatiya Sangsad whip Atiur Rahman Atik was virtually present as chief guest. Akker Patrika Editor Golam Rahman chaired the event.

Hannan passed away on January 8, 2019, at the age of 87.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Nilphamari
Email: rhdnil@gmail.com

Memo No. 35.01.7364.456.07.012.22.310

Date: 27/02/2023

e-Tender Notice No. 25/2022-2023 (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the following public procurement:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Tender document last selling date and time	Tender closing date and time
1.	795856	Surfacing of Pavement with DBS Wearing Course including repair of Pavement distresses at 1st Km (p) of Saidpur-Parbatipur Road (Z-5011) under Road Division, Nilphamari during the FY 2022-2023.	15-Mar-2023 16:30	16-Mar-2023 11:00

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

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branch up to particular date and time specified on the Tender Notice.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and also can be obtained from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). For more details please contact e-GP help desk contact numbers.

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Mohammed Zahurul Islam
ID No. 601992
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Nilphamari

GD-373

CPA rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 1

Auditor General (CAG) that it violated rules during the procurement of a high-power tugboat.

The Anti-Corruption Commission too found no anomalies during the procurement of the tugboat, CPA said in the rejoinder.

Due diligence and compliance with applicable laws, rules and procedures were observed strictly at every step of the tender procedure. No financial loss was incurred by CPA or the government in this procurement process.

CPA said it has withheld 30 percent of the contracted price to the builder amounting to Tk 11.32 crore and will clear it if the tugboat performs satisfactorily

after deducting liquidated damages.

It also maintains that there were no anomalies in the docking and repairing of MT Kandari-1 by Chittagong Dry Dock.

The port authority maintains that it deducted income tax from the bill of berth operators as per section 52A of the income tax ordinance 1984 from fiscals 2017-18 to 2019-20.

"So, no loss occurred for the government," it said.

CPA said it gave incentive bonuses to its officers and staff in fiscal 2019-20 as per the shipping ministry's refixed target.

It, however, did not dispute that it was an outstanding amount in rent. However, the amount is Tk 25.36 crore and not Tk 30

crore, as mentioned in the CAG report.

Due to pending litigation with the private lessee, the outstanding amount could not be realised in proper time.

"Collection of outstanding dues is a continuous process. CPA is taking effective measures for timely collection of those dues."

There was no financial irregularity during CPA's rental of cars and minibuses.

There was also no deviation from government rules regarding CPA officials and staff's foreign tours.

"After completion of the visit, all officers and staff have to submit their TA/DA bills including air ticket as per government rules,

which has been followed in every visit programme."

CPA, however, acknowledged that it has outstanding dues in its share of sales proceeds of auctioned goods between fiscal 2017-18 and fiscal 2019-20.

As of December last year, the outstanding amount is Tk 1.3 crore.

"Despite repeated requests (verbally and written), Custom did not pay CPA's share. However, CPA is pursuing the matter with Custom."

Our reply
The Daily Star report was based on the CAG report that found 26 counts of irregularities by the CPA between fiscal 2017-18 and 2019-20. As such, we stand by our report.

Health, edn to get chop in ADP PM visiting

FROM PAGE 1

division 13.58 percent.

Economists are not in agreement with the government's line of thinking.

"This is going the opposite direction to what the current economic circumstances demand," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The ADP is a formidable weapon in the government's arsenal against the raging dollar crisis and high inflation. But the government wasted it.

As of February 22, foreign currency reserves stood at \$32.4 billion, enough to cover about four months' imports,

according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

The average inflation in the first seven months of the fiscal year is upwards of 8 percent, comfortably overshooting the budgetary target.

"The government-financed import-intensive projects must be cut or else, the dollar crisis will not go away."

In fact, it will make the situation worse as more dollars would be needed for imports on the government's own-funded projects, he said.

"We simply can't use foreign funds effectively and speedily. Regrettably, we needed to use the foreign funds the most, which would take away the pressure on reserves. We

are doing the opposite," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.

At the same time, to bring down the high inflation, the government-financed projects should have been condensed, Hussain said.

"Those create demand and fan inflation. There is no point in pouring money into the economy -- that money has to enter the production system. Because of the dollar shortage, the economy is stalling. Because of inflation, people cannot buy things. If you bring down inflation, with the same income the people would be able to buy more," he added.

FROM PAGE 2

The security in the areas where the PM will visit, including the Helipad Ground, has been beefed up.

AL leaders believe the public rally would be attended by over 2 lakh people.

Last time Hasina visited the district was in 1998.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had addressed a public meeting in Kishoreganj in 1970.

Respect

FROM PAGE 2

senseless Russian invasion of Ukraine."

Following the speeches by the UN top brass, nearly 150 ministers and heads of state and government are due to speak, virtually or in person, during the first four days of the session.

Among them will be the foreign ministers of the United States, China, Ukraine and Iran.

Moscow will send Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov to address the council in person on Thursday.

Despite calls from NGOs, observers said it was unlikely there would be a walkout like the one many diplomats took part in when Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's video played in the council last year.

EC may get power

FROM PAGE 1

being placed as a bill in parliament.

On another amendment proposal sent to the law ministry, Rashida said that the law ministry said some voters being allowed to vote when their fingerprints do not match with the ones in the EC database need not be included in the proposals.

"Representatives of the law ministry said these powers could be given to the election officials through

rules," she said while talking to reporters at her EC office.

Now, the commission issues circulars to give the presiding officers and assistant presiding officers the power to allow up to 1 percent of the voters in a polling booth to cast their votes via EVMs after fingerprint mismatch.

A few months ago, the EC asked the law ministry to include this in the RPO, the law that regulates the national election.

On August 8 last year, the commission sent the proposals for amendments to the RPO. As the law ministry's Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division did not respond, the EC wrote again seeking an answer on September 28 and then again on October 10.

The EC on November 27 said the law ministry was yet to respond to its letters regarding the proposed amendments.

BANGLADESH CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION

BCIC Bhaban, 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000
www.bcic.gov.bd

Invitation for Tender (Non-Consulting Service)

1. Brief on Invitation	Sealed tender are hereby invited from the reputed service providers for outsourcing service.
2. Ministry/Division	Ministry Of Industries.
3. Agency	Not applicable.
4. Procuring Entity Name	Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC)
5. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6. Invitation For	Procurement of outsourcing Service for the different category 92 (Ninety Two) posts as described in the tender documents.
7. Invitation Ref No	36.04.0000.121.11.101.23.33
8. Date	Date: 26/02/2023

KEY INFORMATION

9. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (Non-Consulting Service)
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FUNDING INFORMATION

10. Budget and source of Funds	BCIC's own Source
11. Development partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12. Project/Programme (if applicable)	Not Applicable
13. Project Name (if applicable)	Not Applicable
14. Tender Package No.	36.04.0000.121.11.101.23.33
15. Tender Package Name	Procurement of outsourcing Service for the different category 92 (Ninety Two) posts as described in the tender documents.
16. Tender Publication Date	28/02/2023
17. Tender Last selling Date	27/03/2023
18. Tender Closing Date & Time	28/03/2023 Time 11.00 AM. (BST)
19. Tender Opening Date & Time	28/03/2023 Time 11.30 AM. (BST)
20. Name and Address of the Office (s)	Address:

i) Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Controller Of Accounts, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban, (6 th Floor), 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.
ii) Selling Tender Document (Others)	(A) Chief of Personnel, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban, (5 th Floor), 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. (B) ShaSha. BCIC-1 Branch, 4 th floor, Room No. 521, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Industries, 91, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
Receiving Tender Document	(A) Chief of Personnel, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban, (5 th Floor), 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. (B) ShaSha. BCIC-1 Branch, 4 th floor, Room No. 521, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Industries, 91, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
Opening Tender Document	Office of the Chief of Personnel, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban, (5 th Floor), 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. (In presence of the bidders or their authorized agents who would wish to be present)

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

21. Eligibility of Tenderer	Necessary paper to be submitted complying the conditions mentioned in the tender document.
22. Brief Description of Services	Providing Physical Services for the Different category 92 (ninety two) posts as described in the tender documents.
23. Price of Tender Document (TK)	2000/- (Two Thousand) tk only
24. Location Of Services	Dhaka Metropolitan Area.
25. Tender Security Amount (TK)	1,00,000/- (One Lac) tk
26. Completion Time in Weeks/Months	24 (Twenty Four) months,

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

27. Name of Official Inviting Tender	Mohammad Zakir Hossain.
28. Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Chief Of Personnel, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban, 5 th Floor, 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.
29. Address of Official Inviting Tender	Office of the Chief of Personnel,
30. Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone-223381809 Mobile:01550042918 e-mail: cop@bcic.gov.bd
31. a. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or rejects all Tenders at any time without assigning any reasons. b. The Procurement process will be done in accordance with the PPA-2006, PPR-2008 and outsourcing Regulations-2018.	

BCIC-331, Date- 27.2.23

(11"x4c)

Mohammad Zakir Hossain
Chief of Personnel
BCIC, Dhaka.
phone: 02-223381809
e-mail: cop@bcic.gov.bd

GD 369

'When I came to Dhaka, I had nothing'

20 years ago, Sharmin Sultana Sumi came to Dhaka from Khulna with very few things to her name. During her time in Dhaka University, the vocalist, along with some talented musicians, would form Chirkutt. Making music her only strength, the band quickly rose to fame with their poetic lyrics and unique compositions, eventually going on to earn international acclaim.

ANTARA RAISA

How does it feel that your band, Chirkutt, just celebrated their 20th anniversary?

You know when you reach the peak of a hill, after climbing it for a long time, and it feels that you could now die in peace? Well, that is exactly how I feel right now. I never thought we would complete 20 long years, but here we are. Everyone deserves credit, from the person who used to give us tea every day to the person who patted our backs and motivated us. I am overjoyed that I have been able to do what I love for the last 20 years. Not many people have this type of opportunity.

Looking back, how has your journey been?

In all these years, I have gone through many struggles and hardships. However, one thing I learned is to never

complain about these things. Never glorify your struggles. I swallowed every hurdle that life gave me and made it my strength. Sometimes, it was the people closest to us—our friends and fellow musicians—who hurt us the most. However, I forgot those things and moved on. I am grateful to my amazing team, without them, none of this would be possible.

What is it like to be the female vocalist of a leading band?

I don't see myself as a female vocalist in the band. Rather, I see myself as an artiste, irrespective of my gender. It feels great to see girls and women being motivated by my work. When a teenage girl from a village hugs me and tells me that she has been inspired by me after seeing me perform on television, it makes my journey worthwhile. Being able to inspire thousands of women with my work is really beautiful.

When you started Chirkutt, did you

think the band would still be here 20 years later?

I never plan for anything. When I started the band, I did it because I felt like it. I have grown up in a musical family, where the craft was my only inspiration. When I came to Dhaka from Khulna, I had almost nothing to my name. When I love something, I feel like an invisible power guides me. So, when I came to Dhaka, I started writing and composing my songs. I didn't even know any musical grammar or have institutional training. But I still started anyway.

As a female artiste, did you ever face any discrimination in the Bangladeshi music industry?

I have faced a lot of challenges as a female artiste in the music industry, but I don't want to glorify myself by talking about them. I am a solutions-based person. Whenever I am hurt and face any hurdles, I try to find the positive side of the problem and make it my inspiration. However, one thing that I always faced was that I had to prove my excellence in every step I took, compared to my male counterparts. As a woman, I always had to prove myself.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



PHOTO: SHAHBAZ NAHIAN

SAG Awards 'Everything Everywhere All at Once' dominates ahead of Oscars

The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards witnessed a massive win for *Everything Everywhere All at Once* as it dominated the ceremony with four wins—including Michelle Yeoh taking home the



award for Female Actor in a Leading Role; the award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture; the award for marquee Ensemble in a Motion Picture and Best Supporting Actor awards for Jamie Lee Curtis and Ke Huy Quan.

Meanwhile, Brendan Fraser won the award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading Role for *The Whale*.

The movie *Everything Everywhere All at Once* has broken the record for most SAG Awards by a single film. Only four films have won three SAG Awards since the ceremony began in 1995.

Puja Chery drifts further apart from Shakib Khan

In recent times, Puja Chery has decided to distance herself from Shakib Khan. The actress was initially slated to star opposite Shakib in the government-granted project, *Maya*. However, Puja has now seemingly withdrawn from the film.



Puja Chery took to her verified Facebook account to write, "The production house had initially approached me to star in the project. I have seen many people talking about me being in the film, *Maya*. I just wanted to tell everyone that I have no agreement to be in the movie. For me, if I like a film's story, I will definitely want to work in it. For me, the story is more important than the co-star."

Earlier, Shakib Khan and Puja Chery had worked together in the government-granted film, *Golui*. At the time, there were rumours that the two co-stars were dating while working on the film.

NEWS

Argentina reopens

FROM PAGE 12
Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen welcomed Cafiero at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 8:00am.

In the evening, the two ministers held a meeting and Momen later hosted a dinner for the Argentine delegation.

Cafiero, who is leading a 20-member business delegation, will meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi today.

Argentina recognised Bangladesh in 1973 and then opened its embassy a year later. However, in 1977, an Argentine dictator closed the embassy.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Shahriar Alam said Bangladesh is the world's 35th economy which definitely attracted Argentina to reopen its embassy here, but the love of Bangladeshis for Argentine football also was a triggering factor.

Immediately after the World Cup, Hasina congratulated the Argentine president.

"Reopening the embassy is not only a diplomatic gesture but an emotional one as well. It is a reflection of the strong bond that exists between our peoples," Shahriar said.

In 2022, the bilateral trade between the two nations was \$765 million. Argentine exports reached \$742.9 million and imports from Bangladesh totalled \$22.1 million.

Cafiero said while trade is definitely an issue why Argentina is reopening its embassy, it is the love and dignity for people that are especially needed in times of war and austerity.

"Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service... Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might," Cafiero read stanzas from Tagore, before ending his address.

Bangladesh and Argentina signed a visa exemption agreement for diplomatic and official passports, an agreement to facilitate football training and cooperation, and a memorandum of understanding between the foreign service academies in the field of diplomatic training.

"I am confident the agreements will lead to fruitful cooperation," Foreign Minister Momen told reporters after a meeting at the state guest house Jamuna.

Momen told the Argentine minister that Bangladesh improved its infrastructure, and streamlined regulations and that the country's location, skilled workforce, and natural resources make it an attractive destination for business and investment.

CPJ urges govt

FROM PAGE 12

"Islam's work, for which she received the United States Department of State's Anti Corruption Champions Award in 2022, is a public service, not a crime, and should be protected under Sections 4 and 5 of the Disclosure of Public Interest Information [Protection] Act," it says.

The CPJ and rights groups urged the Bangladesh authorities to respect and protect the journalist's human rights.

"We urge the authorities to fully respect and protect the human rights of journalist and human rights defender Rozina Islam, including her right to a fair trial, and to immediately cease all forms of judicial harassment against her, facilitating the return of her passport from judicial custody, and ensuring that she is not subjected to further retaliation for her work."

Rozina, a special correspondent of the Bangla daily Prothom Alo, wrote several in-depth reports on corruption in the health sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.

HC orders the ACC to probe

FROM PAGE 12

submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC seeking its directive on authorities concerned to probe allegations against Abdus Sobhan Miah Golap of purchasing multiple homes in New York and amassing huge illegal wealth at home and abroad by abusing his power, position and through any other means, and concealing information about his wealth in his election affidavit in 2018.

Sayedul Haque Suman submitted the petition based on a report published in The Daily Star on January 16 this year under the headline "AL MP Golap owns nine properties in New York City".

The report said, "Awami League lawmaker Abdus Sobhan Miah Golap concealed information about being an American citizen and owning nine properties in New York City in his election affidavit in 2018, found an investigation by a global media agency—raising questions about his seat in the parliament."

"Golap, who was given the post

She was confined to the health ministry inside the Secretariat for more than five hours on May 17, 2021, before being handed over to Shahbagh Police Station.

The journalist walked out of jail on bail almost a week after her arrest.

The organisations that signed the public letter include Amnesty International, Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network, Capital Punishment Justice Project, Coalition For Women in Journalism, Committee to Protect Journalists, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma Free Media Movement, Front Line Defenders, International Federation for Human Rights, International Federation of Journalists, International Women's Media Foundation, Overseas Press Club of America, Pakistan Press Foundation, PEN America, PEN Bangladesh, PEN International, Reporters Without Borders, Robert F Kennedy Human Rights, South Asian Journalists Association, and World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

of central committee's publicity and publication secretary in the AL's national council last month (December last year), bought the properties between 2014 and 2019, according to a report by the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), a global network of investigative journalists," The Daily Star report said.

"Of the nine properties, which cost Golap about \$4 million, eight were bought with upfront cash payments. His last purchase—a semi-detached house in Jackson Heights that cost \$1.18 million—was made through a small mortgage and cash in 2019, after he became an MP, according to the report, published on Friday (January 13)," the report said.

Petitioner Sayedul Haque Suman himself moved the petition, while Senior Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan and Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the ACC and state during the petition's hearing yesterday.

Govt moves

FROM PAGE 12

10kg of rice to each of over one crore families under the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme during the upcoming Ramadan.

Contacted, commerce ministry Senior Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh said they will hold a meeting with the food ministry as the OMS programme is run by them.

"We will discuss how the essentials can be distributed among the people under a package," he said.

Yesterday, the cabinet also passed a proposal on issuance of a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) by the Security Services Division, that would enable Bangladeshis to acquire citizenship (dual citizenship) of 44 more countries, including Brazil and Argentina.

Bangladeshis currently can obtain citizenship in 57 countries. After the issuance of the SRO, the figure will go up to 101.

Among the 44 new countries, 19 are African, 12 South American, and 12 Caribbean island countries. The other country is from Oceania.

The African countries are Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, Ghana, Rwanda, Burundi, Tunisia, Sierra Leone, Libya, Congo, Liberia, Central African Republic, Eritrea, The Gambia, Botswana and Mauritius.

Twelve countries of South America are Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Suriname, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Uruguay and Guyana.

Bangladeshis will also be able to become citizens of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Saint Vincent, and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Fiji.

The cabinet approved in principle the draft of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (Amendment) Act 2023. The proposed law seeks to bring some changes to the existing law, including extensions of the tenures of BSMU vice chancellor, pro-vice chancellor and treasurer to four years from three years.

The meeting cleared the draft of Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan 2022-2041 putting emphasis on the climate change issues.

A fund of about \$80 billion will be required to implement the plan, said the cabinet secretary.

5 BCL leaders, activists

FROM PAGE 12

The committee found the five BCL leaders and activists guilty.

Prime accused Sanjida was the vice-president of the university BCL and a student of the statistics department.

The other accused are Halima Akhtar Urmi of the fine arts department; Israt Jahan Mim of the law department; and Tabassum Islam and Muabia Jahan of the banking and finance department.

"This is an initial step we have taken following the probe body's recommendations. We submitted the report to the university authorities. It will be forwarded to the High Court. We will act as per the High Court directive," Professor Shamsul Haque told The Daily Star.

Phulpori, a first-year non-residential student, alleged that Sanjida and other BCL activists tortured her on the night of February 12 for staying at the Deshratna Sheikh Hasina Hall without their "permission".

They allegedly tortured her from 11:00pm till 3:30am.

On February 14, the victim lodged a complaint with the university proctor, student adviser and the hall provost.

The next day, the university authorities formed a three-member probe body, headed by Prof Reba Mandol of the law department, and the hall administration formed a separate committee.

Following an earlier High Court directive, Kushtia district administration also formed another three-member body, comprising Kushtia Additional District Magistrate ANM Abuzar Giffari, Kushtia Senior Judicial Magistrate Mahmuda Sultana and the university's Assistant Professor Shahub Alam.

The university authorities' and hall authorities' probe bodies submitted separate reports to the acting registrar.

The two reports were then submitted together to the Attorney General's office yesterday to place before the High Court.

The district administration also submitted its report to the Attorney General's office yesterday.

"I have received two enquiry reports, one from the deputy commissioner

of Kushtia and another one [joined reports of the hall authorities and university authorities] from Islamic University this [yesterday] afternoon. I will submit them before the High Court tomorrow [Tuesday]. Both the reports are intact and so I can't say what the contents are," Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy told The Daily Star yesterday.

Contacted, Sanjida told the Daily Star that they will go to court regarding the decision taken by the hall authorities and have nothing to say regarding the probe report. "But we want justice and that is why we will go to court."

Phulpori expressed contentment with the first course of action and wanted her torturers to be punished appropriately.

BCL PROBE BODY
Meanwhile, the four-member probe body of the university BCL has found "some truth" in the allegations of Phulpori being tortured.

The committee, headed by the IU BCL Vice-President Munshi Kamrul, submitted its report to the BCL central committee on Sunday night.

"We have found evidence that Sanjida [the accused] and her followers misbehaved with Phulpori, verbally abused and intimidated her, even though the girl had stayed at the hall after consulting the provost. We also found evidence that the incident was videotaped," said a probe body member, seeking anonymity.

"Sanjida had gone too far with Phulpori. What happened with the girl is not acceptable. What happens and who stays at the halls is not BCL's to see," said another member of the committee.

'Forbidden planet'

FROM PAGE 12

(3,127 degrees Celsius) in temperature compared with the sun's blazing average of 9,980 F (5,527 C).

An M dwarf star is smaller, cooler and redder than our sun. These dim stars are some of the most common in the universe, and in recent years, astronomers have discovered that M dwarf stars are more likely to have planets orbiting them.

But astronomers weren't expecting such small stars to host giant planets—and that's exactly what they found when they took a closer look at the TOI-5205 planetary system.

Palestinians count cost of Israeli reprisals

Dozens of cars, homes set ablaze in West Bank overnight after two settlers were killed

AFP, Huwara

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank yesterday counted the cost of deadly violence and arson by Israeli settlers targeting a town where two Israeli brothers were killed.

Dozens of Israeli settlers set homes and cars ablaze in the northern town of Huwara overnight, after a day of Israeli-Palestinian talks in neighbouring Jordan aimed at quelling a surge in violence in the Palestinian territory.

More than 350 Palestinians were injured, most suffering from tear gas inhalation, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said.

The Palestinian health ministry said Sameh Aqtash, 37, was shot dead during an attack by Israeli forces and settlers on the nearby village of Zaatara.

The violence came hours after two Israeli settlers — brothers Yagel Yaniv, 20, and Hallel Yaniv, 22 — were shot dead Sunday as they drove through Huwara.

Yesterday, an AFP photographer saw damaged homes blackened by fire, long lines of charred cars, burned trees and smashed windows in the town.

"They burned the cars and the houses and destroyed everything," Huwara resident Diaa Odeh said.

"Whenever we started to push the settlers back, the army was firing tear gas at us," added the 25-year-old.

Wajeh Odeh, a member of the town's municipality, said 30 houses were burned and damaged while more than 100 cars were torched.

Abdel Moneim Aqtash said he and his brother were standing outside a blacksmith's workshop when they were attacked by Israeli settlers.

"They left the area and then came back with the occupation (Israeli) army... The army shot my brother, not the settlers," he told AFP.

The military told AFP that Aqtash "was not shot by an Israeli soldier".

Yoav Gallant, defence minister in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new right-wing coalition government, said he expected "difficult days ahead" and had ordered troops to be reinforced.

"With this being said, I call on everyone to restore calm... We cannot allow a situation in which citizens take the law into their (own) hands," he said.

The Israeli military told AFP no-one had been arrested over the arson or killing of Aqtash.

The search for the gunmen who fired on the two brothers was ongoing.



PHOTO: AFP

Rescuers carry on search operations among the rubble of collapsed buildings in the Yesilyurt district of Malatya yesterday, after a 5.6 magnitude earthquake hit eastern Turkey, killing one person and wounding dozens others while causing some damaged buildings to collapse, the government's disaster agency said.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

BJP to win big in Tripura

Show exit polls

AGENCIES

The BJP will easily gain majority in Tripura and its alliance government will come to power in Nagaland, according to exit polls. The BJP, according to India Today, will win between 36 to 45 seats in Tripura.

The majority mark in the 60 seat assembly is 31. Zee News-Matrise has predicted the BJP-NDPP alliance will win 35-43 of Nagaland's 60 seats.

In Meghalaya, Conrad Sangma's NPP is likely to emerge as the single largest party, predicted Zee News-Matrise. Polls across 60 assembly seats in Tripura concluded on February 16.

NEPAL PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

Communist rift plunges coalition into crisis

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Splits within Nepal's communist-dominated coalition plunged the Himalayan nation into crisis yesterday as a Marxist-Leninist party said it would withdraw support after the Maoist prime minister backed an opposition candidate for the presidency.

Nestled between China and India, Nepal has had 11 governments since it abolished its 239-year monarchy in 2008 and became a republic. The current prime minister, a former Maoist guerrilla leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal has held the post three times.

Elected in December, the prime minister, who still goes by his nom de guerre Prachanda, formed a seven-party coalition comprised of his own Maoist Centre party, the Communist

Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) party and five other smaller groups.

Last week, Prachanda infuriated the UML by pledging support for the opposition Nepali Congress party's presidential candidate, Ram Chandra Paudel.

Prachanda had earlier agreed to support a UML candidate for the presidency, according to politicians in the coalition.

Members of both houses of parliament and members of seven provincial assemblies will cast their votes on March 9 to elect the president.

Bishnu Paudel, deputy prime minister in charge of finance, and a senior UML leader, said he and all eight ministers of his party will resign as Prachanda failed to "honour the consensus" that was reached while forming the government.

Use of lethal force

FROM PAGE 12

They noted that at least four protesters died while many were injured, including BNP leader Tabith Awal.

They said that this is a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as well Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT).

The letter was also signed by the special rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

"Failure to take all precautions practically possible in the planning, preparation and conduct of law enforcement operations with a view to avoiding unnecessary, excessive or otherwise unlawful use of force contravenes a state's obligation to prevent acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment within its jurisdiction," read the letter.

The letter also noted that activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League attacked protesters of Bangladesh Chhatra Odhikar Parishad while they were holding a vigil remembering slain Buet student Abrar Fahad.

"We are also concerned that supporters of one political party have been able to attack members of another political party... without police intervening to protect the individuals

or to investigate potential criminal liability," said the letter.

"Law enforcement has a responsibility to prevent harm to others, and failing to do so is a contravention of a state's obligation of due diligence to protect citizens from harm," it added.

The letter also addressed how BNP activists have been facing arbitrary arrests, detention, and cases.

The UN is concerned by the "allegations of arbitrary arrests and detention of individuals, and the use of false charges, including against opposition political leaders and independent civil society groups, in relation to their participation in peaceful protests and their membership in an association."

"We are further troubled by reports that individuals faced physical violence from the authorities while in detention, and were also denied medical treatment," read the letter.

All of this will negatively impact Bangladesh's ability to provide free and fair elections in 2023, said the letter.

They urged the government to halt such violations and initiate investigations. The letter was also signed by the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and the working group on arbitrary detention.

US warns China

FROM PAGE 12

Kyiv is eyeing a counter-offensive with advanced Western weapons, including battle tanks, pledged over the coming months.

CIA Director William Burns said at the weekend the US intelligence agency

believed Beijing was considering military aid to Russia though it had not reached a final decision.

"If it goes down that road it will come at real costs to China," US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told CNN on Sunday.

DHAKABANK

L I M I T E D

Roads of Silk

Because you've earned it

The silk of service awaits you at premium locations at home and across the world.



Lounge
KEY
ACCESS TO 1000+ AIRPORT LOUNGES



CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS



MEET & GREET SERVICE



BO GO
BUY ONE GET ONE



EXTRA MILEAGE POINTS



2FA FOR E-COMMERCE TRANSACTION



0% EMI



DISCOUNT PARTNERS



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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Failure to control prices is not an option

Govt measures have to be effective, not just for show

Before every Ramadan, we see prices of essentials rising in our kitchen markets, in ways that defy logic. At a time when commodity prices are already sky-high, and people are suffering at an unprecedented level economically, the government needs to implement well-thought-out measures to curb commodity prices from rising any further. It is in such a context that the president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) recently commented that deployment of joint forces to keep watch on the essentials market during Ramadan would not yield the desired results. We believe that his comment should be taken seriously by the government in the interest of both consumers and the business community.

The joint forces were engaged in monitoring the market during the tenure of the last caretaker government. We understand that the business community is genuinely apprehensive about being harassed in the name of market monitoring. But at the same time, and more importantly, the tendency to artificially increase prices of essentials right before and during Ramadan must be addressed.

The government needs to conduct careful and detailed market analysis to solve the problem, instead of spewing arbitrary measures, hoping they would work. As the business community has said, to control prices from rising exorbitantly, the government must ensure the adequate availability of all items in the market. For that, import of essentials and their supply chains have to be made smoother. If the price of the dollar rises quickly, it is most likely that the businesspeople will transfer the additional costs onto consumers. The government, particularly the commerce ministry, has to keep a close eye on that.

Extortionists often push up the prices of commodities in our markets. Such disruptive behaviours have to be reined in by the government. The hoarding of goods to fabricate their shortage must be stopped. Collusion among monopolists is another major reason why prices often go up more in the domestic market, as compared to the international market. The government has to try and increase the number of suppliers and increase competition to ensure commodity prices stay reasonable. Consequently, the government also has to make sure that its market monitoring mechanisms are well targeted. There have been times where we have seen traders colluding to artificially push prices up. Instead of harassing honest traders, the government's market monitoring objectives should be to identify such collusive behaviour and to punish those traders who try to manipulate the market.

The government does not have an easy task at hand here. Given our current reality, to prevent prices of essentials from increasing further, the government has to come up with a holistic approach. It should, therefore, involve experts, members of the business community, and all other stakeholders to come up with a comprehensive programme that takes all necessary factors into consideration.

Why can't children access Dhaka's playgrounds?

Create more open spaces, not restrict them

Playgrounds are necessary for the sound development of our future generation. However, due to various reasons such as occupation, renovation, and repurposing, Dhaka city has been fast losing the few playgrounds it has. Take the Lalmatia Block D playground, for example. Reportedly, for the past three months, the contractors in charge of its renovation have been saying that it will be open for all soon, but that day has yet to arrive. The deadline for finishing the project was June 2022. However, the subcontractors say that they have missed the deadline because of the pandemic. Currently, the caretaker of the playground refuses to let children in to play at the park.

Additionally, three other parks – Trikona Park in Lalmatia near Town Hall, Shahid Park, and Sonali Playground in Mohammadpur – are also “under renovation.” The project director had said that these three parks would be activated in the last week of February. However, when our reporter went to visit Trikona park recently, he found that development work was going on. The project director said that the delay was caused due to planning complexities. But, as the planners used up time pondering whether or not to build a footbridge, the children of the area (who came to know of this spot as their primary place for sports and recreation) suffered. Only the Sonali playground is now partly operational, giving some scope to the area's children for play.

Opportunities for sports and recreation are instrumental in the development of children. Without access to playtime, the physical and mental growth of children can be severely hindered. This has become worse due to the pandemic. Yet, 25 out of 75 wards under Dhaka South City Corporation and 10 out of 55 wards under Dhaka North City Corporation do not have a single park or playground, according to the new detailed area plan (DAP). Even where there are parks, there are also efforts to snatch them away. For example, last year, the Tetultala playground in the capital's Kalaban was being planned to be used for constructing a police station. Thankfully, the higher authorities stepped in due to vehement protests by locals. But is this sustainable? Do children and other locals have to go on strike every time a new decision of eating up an open space comes about?

One of the major reasons for urban planners and psychologists of saying that Dhaka is unsuitable for children is the city's lack of playgrounds. In the last 22 years, however, the number of playgrounds in Dhaka has come down from 150 to only 24. We urge authorities to save the playgrounds that are currently in danger and to also create more spaces where our children can play freely.

No change in tune for the EC in its first year



Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His Twitter handle is @ahmedkai

KAMAL AHMED

It has been a year since the new Election Commission (EC) was constituted according to a law that has stipulated the qualifications of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and other commissioners, as well as their recruitment process – although the law itself is not above controversy. Since the new EC's appointment, the government and the ruling party have been relentlessly trying to pursue and convince everyone within the country as well as the interested international observers that this institution has the capacity and authority to conduct all elections in Bangladesh independently, ensuring fairness.

However, the functioning and the activities of the new EC, including the election of the new president, local government (zilla parishad) elections and a few parliamentary by-elections during the last one year, have been the least convincing of that idea. The lone issue where the commission has proven its resolve is its tireless but irrational



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRIYAR

AL promptly argued that the decision proved the EC had always been in control of elections and the BNP's demand for a caretaker government was unjustified. The EC, however, ditched the CCTV project citing lack of resources, which only requires a fraction of the highly ambitious and exorbitantly expensive EVMs.

push for procuring Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), even in the middle of a severe economic strain that the nation has been facing. It appeared to be an attempt to please the ruling Awami League, which had been insisting on using EVMs instead of paper ballots in the next parliamentary election until

they, too, accepted the reality that there was no money for it.

Putting this EVM debate aside, let's look at the records of the elections the new EC has presided over so far. It must be noted that the EC's firm handling of the botched by-election to Gaibandha-5 constituency on October 12, 2022 showed some encouraging bravery on its part, when it suspended voting amid widespread irregularities four hours after it started. Those irregularities included people either illegally supporting or forcing voters to cast ballots, polling agents wearing clothes bearing the symbol of their nominees, and illegal entry into restricted rooms. CEC Kazi Habibur Awal and his fellow commissioners watched all these violations taking place from the EC office, Nirbachan Bhaban, in Dhaka, hundreds of kilometres away on big monitors through CCTV feeds.

Though the Awami League leadership questioned the EC's decision, they promptly argued that the decision proved the EC had always been in control of elections in the country and the BNP's demand for a poll-time caretaker government was unjustified.

The EC, however, ditched the CCTV project to monitor elections real time in all subsequent elections citing lack of resources, which only requires a fraction of the highly ambitious and exorbitantly expensive EVMs. Reports of widespread irregularities and malpractices in the recently held by-elections in Brahmanbaria, Bogura and Chapainawabganj were simply

overlooked by the EC, which was a complete reversal of Gaibandha in 2022.

One of the worst failures of the EC, however, was not investigating the alleged disappearance of a candidate in Brahmanbaria and his agent. The alleged victim, Asif Ahmed, later told journalists that members of the ruling party were the people who would be able to explain his mysterious disappearance. The EC, however, chose to look away.

Before that, the disappearance of a contestant ahead of election day was unheard of in any election in the country. There are considerable concerns among observers and opposition parties that enforced disappearances for a shorter term could be a new tactic to be deployed in the coming general election. After all, from what the past experiences show, victims of enforced disappearance get so traumatised that they never dare to speak about their ordeals.

If these failures do not make one realise the new EC's inability to rise above partisan bias and its subservience to the government of the day, look at its latest goof-up in the election process

on February 13. Nobody is suggesting that the president elect would have pulled out of the race at that stage, but the question of complying with its own time frame by the EC is not a trivial matter. The EC and returning officers are bound by the schedule, even if the election is uncontested. As the Representation of the People Order (RPO) provides the basic guiding principles for all elections in the country, strict abidance of the schedule is quite crucial.

What prompted such a technical but legally crucial failure on the EC's part? Doesn't it reflect badly on their competence? Was it their excitement for having an uncontested election for the top job of the republic? If ignoring election rules was not the result of negligence of its duty, the only other explanation that comes to mind is partisan behaviour.

Regaining public confidence and trust in the Election Commission, which have been systematically destroyed by two previous commissions, is undoubtedly a tough task. Unfortunately, it seems the current EC, too, is failing us miserably.

All hands on deck needed to beat poverty

ASM Rabbane is senior assistant coordinator of the Development Programme at SAJIDA Foundation.
Dr Arif Ul Haque is head of the Development Programme at SAJIDA Foundation.

ASM RABBANE and ARIF UL HAQUE

Over the years, alongside sustained economic growth, Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in reducing poverty. The international poverty line is set at \$2.15 per person per day based on 2017 prices. This means that anyone living on less than \$2.15 a day is in extreme poverty. Based on the World Bank report titled Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2018, the poverty line rate in Bangladesh decreased to 20.5 percent, while the below-poverty line rate decreased to 13.8 percent. Hence, life expectancy, literacy rates, and per capita food production have all concurrently increased.

The Bangladesh government has set different milestones for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. In its 8th Five-Year Plan (8FYP), the government has targeted an eight percent average growth rate during the July 2020-June 2025 period, set the goal to reduce the poverty rate from 20.5 percent to 15.6 percent, and aims to further strengthen the existing social security system while eliminating poverty and narrowing inequality. Furthermore, it plans to increase public spending in healthcare from one percent to two percent of the GDP. The Perspective Plan (2021-2041), released in 2020, outlines the government's goal of bringing down poverty to less than three percent and its vision to achieve

a “Smart Bangladesh” by 2041.

Despite these achievements, the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, the consequent price hikes and the global economic crisis have impeded the progress towards these goals. Moreover, the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that a third of the global economy will be in recession this year.

Due to the pandemic and the new socioeconomic crisis, the poverty rate almost doubled from 20.5 percent in 2018 to 42 percent in 2022, while the below poverty rate tripled from 13.8 percent to 28.5 percent. The rate tripled in both rural (33 percent) and urban (19 percent) areas compared to their respective rates in 2018, which also had a spillover effect on healthcare. The poor and disadvantaged have faced additional medical costs, poor management and negligence of healthcare facilities, which paint a bleak picture of the overall healthcare landscape of the country.

Additionally, most of the poor suffer from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and asthma/chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD). With the disadvantaged already suffering from economic vulnerabilities, the additional economic burden of having to avail medical treatment led to a crisis of catastrophic proportion. In recent years, the percentage of out-of-pocket expenditure (OOP) in healthcare has increased to about 73 percent from 67 percent. This indicates that they are mostly taking medical treatment from village or local quacks or pharmacies. More often than not, they consume an excessive amount of antibiotics, which invariably leads to antibiotic

resistance.

This paints a truly concerning portrait of the dual stresses afflicting the poor – financial and healthcare – brought on by the pandemic and the new socio-economic crisis. This has led to the creation of a new group called the “new poor.” Presently, their existing coping mechanisms against

Most of these people remain poorly underserved by government services. Lack of livelihood skills and training, educational opportunities, inadequate and/or poor quality health and nutrition services all impose multiple burdens on the population that are already at or below the poverty line, and keep them trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty.

this new crisis include selling off their assets, working extra hours, dipping into their savings, and taking on the burden of debts. Failure to manage the basic necessities for survival has driven numerous poor families to leave the capital city and other urban areas and relocate to their village homes.

Most of these people also remain poorly underserved by government

services. Lack of livelihood skills and training, educational opportunities, inadequate and/or poor quality health and nutrition services all impose multiple burdens on the population that are already at or below the poverty line, and keep them trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty.

To mitigate this situation, the government and policymakers are trying to explore and implement new paths and strategies to improve the lives, livelihoods and healthcare of this vulnerable segment of population. Despite some laudable government efforts, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the private sector actors need to be called on for short-to-mid-term solutions, approaches and strategies with integrated interventions.

Increasing social safety net coverage and ensuring accessibility to the poor via service linkage would be a good start to this end. Equally critical are incentivising and providing opportunities for savings, disseminating direct grants or asset transfers, disbursing soft or interest-free loans to create new employment opportunities or facilitate recovery of existing livelihoods, and creating avenues to build livelihood skills. Furthermore, assuring holistic healthcare solutions, providing community-level healthcare, and adopting initiatives to ensure access to affordable, quality healthcare and reducing OOP expenditures will all play vital roles.

These integrated initiatives could facilitate quick recovery of the poor, not only enabling them to develop safety nets against current and upcoming socioeconomic crises, but also helping them achieve economic resilience, receive adequate health coverage, and lead improved lives.

COKE STUDIO'S 'MURIR TIN'

A testament to working class (men's) struggles



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NAFISA TANJEEM

Season 2 of Coke Studio Bangla opened with an innovative, colourful, and vibrant song: *Murir Tin*. It's a phenomenal creation for so many different reasons. It challenges our educated, elite obsession with "standardised Bangla" (*promito* Bangla), which has long been considered an indicator of socio-economic-cultural capital. Any deviation from the standardised Bangla or any regional accent has often been deemed "unacceptable" and "inappropriate." As someone whose parents migrated from Rangpur to Dhaka and who grew up in the capital, I never learnt how to speak the Rangpur dialect. My father has a strong regional accent. While growing up, I was taught to believe that my dad's accent was not cool and the right way to speak was in my "standardised" Bangla that I learnt in school and from watching mostly BTB. As an adult, I now lament the loss of a part of my Rangpur heritage. *Murir Tin* blew my mind when I saw these young men writing songs and singing in their own regional dialects. They nurtured their heritage and made a conscious effort to circulate it.

Bangla music is increasingly getting more and more transnational. *Murir Tin* is a creative fusion of local tunes and American bluegrass and rap music. Bluegrass music originated from the struggles of white working-class communities living in the Appalachian region of the US during and after the Great Depression in the 1940s. Bluegrass composers and listeners come from both conservative, old, white communities and progressive, young, diverse communities. The progressive turn in bluegrass music incorporated stronger themes around

working-class concerns and criticism of powerful institutions. Whereas most of the bluegrass musicians and listeners are white, rap – which is a part of the larger hip-hop culture in the US – originated in African-American and Afro Caribbean as well as in some Latinx communities struggling with drug and gang-related violence in the 1960s and 1970s. With the advancement of globalisation, hip-hop culture has gone global and been localised to regional socio-economic-political struggles. Central to global rap music has historically been amplifying concerns of marginalised and minoritised communities.

It is not surprising that a song like *Murir Tin* that borrows inspiration and style from two prominent global working class focused musical genres would highlight class struggles. *Murir Tin* talks about old, broken, crowded local buses and deplorable public transportation in general, the unbearable traffic that kills hours after hours, roads filled with potholes and defects, fighting over getting a seat especially for female passengers, as well as the daily struggles of workers in the transportation system. As Shayam Chowdhury Arnob rightly points out, "The traffic is so stressful that humour is the only tool to cope with the stress."

Since 2018, Bangladesh has observed a series of road safety protests led mainly by students and the youth. The protests called for attention to our failing road and transportation system, crashes, and fatalities that take away thousands of precious lives every year. Therefore, the song *Murir Tin* is not just a testament to the historical clunky local buses roaming the streets in the 1980s. The public transportation system in Dhaka started with *Murir Tin* (literal



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRIYAR

meaning: "a can of puffed rice") buses. After World War II, the leftover army trucks were sold in auctions at a lower price to wealthy, local business owners. The business owners covered the wooden structure of these trucks with tin and converted them into local buses. These buses were satirically called "*murir tin*" because of the rattling noise they made and the way they packed passengers to an extreme – just like a can full of puffed rice. As years passed, any bus that was old and crowded got the tag "*murir tin*" by the common public. The song *Murir Tin* moved the nation not just because it brought forward a historical tradition and nostalgia. So many people were able to personally relate to the song because it is a testament to the continuing struggles of working class people with public transportation.

Nevertheless, *Murir Tin* specifically covered working class men's experience. Almost all the characters featured in the "*Murir Tin* | Behind

the Magic" video were men – except the Harmonica player and three backing vocalists. The lyrics were also composed by men based on their personal experiences, as mentioned in several interviews. Therefore, it's not surprising that *Murir Tin* talked about women's experience only in terms of "ladies' seats" being occupied by men. A 2022 survey found that 87 percent of women faced some form of harassment, including sexual abuse, in public transport at least once, and 36 percent experienced sexual harassment regularly in public transport.

Violence against women in public transport is not just a Bangladeshi problem. The 2012 Delhi gang rape in a bus and the feminist protests around the incident brought forward how unsafe public transport and public spaces have always been for women – something that was largely invisible in

The Coke Studio Bangla's YouTube

channel describes the *murir tin* bus as a "melting pot where the cultures and the people of Bangladesh come and go. Amid a crowd of common people, there lies #RealMagic." It further says that *Murir Tin* is a unifying space for the people of Bangladesh where all share the same experience in terms of "the journeys we take, the people we meet, the situations we encounter." Is women's experience of sexual harassment in a *murir tin* shared by men? Do men encounter the situations women face in public transport?

As a middle-class woman who occasionally used local buses in Dhaka, my experience was not as joyful and vibrant as the vibe the *Murir Tin* composition shared on stage. I did not have to rely on local buses all the time because of my class privilege. However, on some occasions, when I had to take local buses, the first thing I had to consider was how to save my body from unwanted touches, which meant

trying to secure one of the very limited number of seats assigned for women, or trying to shield my body with my purse or backpack, or riding the bus with a group of friends who kept an eye on each other and protected each other if needed. Sitting in the last row and writing a song ("*pisur sidut boi ene lehir ei gaan*") would have been the last thing on my mind while riding a *murir tin*.

Both bluegrass and rap have a male-dominated historical tradition. During bluegrass festivals, male musicians used to play tunes while their wives watched them from the sidelines. The bluegrass lyrics traditionally had a "Madonna-whore" complex that idealised mothers and maternal figures and justified violence against women committing adultery and/or anything that went against the norm of being a "good woman". Later, some prominent women singers challenged the glass ceiling of bluegrass, and aspired to occupy the stage as bluegrass musicians.

Similarly, the rap industry has been historically male-dominated. Even though it brought forward class struggles, it primarily focused on men's struggles and involved hypersexualisation of and violence against women. Hypermasculinity, and often toxic masculinity, have been integral to being a male rapper. Many Black hip-hop feminists and singers have been trying to address this disparity and find a way to engage hip-hop sensibility with intersectional struggles.

I was not surprised to see that *Murir Tin* – a composition inspired by bluegrass and rap music tradition – glamorised the hypermasculine performance of male rappers or ignored women's everyday struggles in public transport. However, the larger problem lies in the fact that major music roles in the industry – songwriting and production, in particular – are mostly occupied by men. The corporatisation of the local music industry has made it extremely difficult to bring radical changes within the existing structure that has already been profitable for music producers and their sponsors.

The world must not turn away from the Rohingya plight



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DOREEN CHOWDHURY

The World Food Programme (WFP) recently decided to cut rations for the Rohingya refugees living in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, announcing that it would cut the monthly allotment by 17 percent from March 2023 onwards.

For the past few years, there has been a visible declining trend in aid supply for the Rohingya. Such a worrisome trend is detrimental to the well-being of the refugees living in the camps for the last five and a half years. Owing to their vulnerability, the declining funds also have worrying implications for regional security.

WFP decided to cut the rations from the current \$12 to \$10 from March onwards, citing a budget shortfall. It has also requested a \$125 million immediate fund from its donors to meet the deficit. Such a budget cut means that a Rohingya refugee living in the camps must live on just \$10 every month, which is likely to make life more difficult considering the soaring prices of commodities amid skyrocketing inflation.

However, this is not the first time WFP has reduced ration. In 2020, the organisation cut ration for Uganda's refugees. After two years, it seems the result has been devastating due to widespread malnutrition and hunger. Many refugees are now deciding to go back to their homes even though the situation there has not improved yet.

It is also not the only instance of declining funds for the Rohingya refugees. For the past few years, funds under the Joint Response Plan (JRP) have been on the decline, increasing the shortfall. In 2022, only \$553 million of the required \$881 million was received under JRP with a shortfall of 37 percent. In 2021, the shortfall was 28 percent, and in 2020 it was 40 percent.

Such a decline in aid for the Rohingya is increasing pressure on Bangladesh as it has to maintain the camp with inadequate funds. Moreover, it is also not sustainable for the host country to increase its own budgetary support for the Rohingya since the country is already facing an economic downturn fuelled by the war in Ukraine. Skyrocketing inflation, negative balance of payment and fluctuating forex reserves are already hurting the economy. Yet, Bangladesh is hosting Rohingya refugees in Bhashan Char under its Ashrayan initiative.

The impact of the aid deficit will be dangerous for the refugees. Already, 45 percent of the



Aid deficit will further exacerbate the inhumane situation the Rohingya refugees are living in right now.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

refugees could not avail a balanced diet with \$12 per month. Before the ration cut, already 40 percent of Rohingya children have stunted growth and 40 percent of pregnant and breastfeeding women are anaemic, according to the WFP's own calculation.

UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food Michael Fakhri and Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Tom Andrews warned about "devastating consequences" due to the ration cut: more malnutrition, more disease, fewer services, and increased insecurity in the camp.

The budget shortfall and ration cut have implications for regional security. There is a common proverb: "Necessity knows no law." To meet their individual and family needs, the Rohingya refugees are likely to seek alternative sources of income. Ultimately, their needs will compel them to be involved in criminal activities, including drugs and arms peddling, human trafficking, kidnapping and extortion, and many more. Already, many Rohingya have

been detained on charges of drugs and arms trafficking. There are several gangs operating in the Rohingya camps, involved in many crimes within and around the camp areas, according to media reports.

When Bangladesh opened its border on humanitarian grounds and hosted the Rohingya refugees in 2017, the international community pledged to provide the necessary

budgetary support and ensure quick repatriation. Five and a half years on, the international community must not forget their commitment. They must play a more active role as they had pledged to do in 2017. While quick and swift repatriation should be at the centre of the commitment, the budget shortfall must be avoided as long as the Rohingya live in temporary shelters in Cox's Bazar.

The Rohingya already live in inhumane conditions in the camps. The reduction in aid means further worsening the situation. Therefore, budgetary support should increase with time instead of declining. The US recently announced an additional \$75 million fund in Rohingya support. Apart from the US, Japan, and the EU have announced funds for the Rohingya. Such initiatives are welcome, but these are not enough to meet the budget shortfall Bangladesh is facing every year. Therefore, the international community must live up to their commitments they pledged at the onset of the crisis.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Email: principal.gopalganj@gmail.com

e-Tender Notice

Memo No. 57.03.3532.304.07.001.23.5

Date: 26/02/2023

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of goods	Procurement method	Publishing date & time	Last selling date & time	Tender opening & closing date & time
1	794952	Supply and Installation of Engineering & other Accessories for Computer Lab	OTM (e-GP)	28/02/2023 08:00	15/03/2023 10:00	15/03/2023 11:00
2	794953	Supply and Installation of Engineering & other Accessories for Computer, Electrical & Electronics Lab	OTM (e-GP)	28/02/2023 08:00	15/03/2023 10:30	15/03/2023 11:30
3	794954	Supply and Installation of Engineering & other Accessories for RAC & Food Lab	OTM (e-GP)	28/02/2023 08:00	15/03/2023 11:00	15/03/2023 12:00
4	794955	Supply and Installation of Office Accessories	OTM (e-GP)	28/02/2023 08:00	15/03/2023 11:30	15/03/2023 12:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender documents will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline or hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is mandatory. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branch. Further information & guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal & from the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Mainul Ahsan

Principal
Gopalganj Polytechnic Institute
Chandradhigalia, Gopalganj

GD-364

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
DPHE, Lalmonirhat District, Lalmonirhat
www.dphe.lalmonirhat.gov.bd



Invitation for e-Tender Notice

1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division.
2	Implementing agency	Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE).
3	Project/program name	Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-4).
4	e-Tender IDs (with package number)	793401 (PEDP4-WB-1468), 793420 (PEDP4-WB-1469), 793423 (PEDP4-WB-1470), 793425 (PEDP4-WB-1471) and 793431 (PEDP4-WB-1472).
5	Description of works	PEDP4-WB-1468: Construction of 06 Nos. 2-storied RCC WASH Block at Hatibanda and others upazilas in Lalmonirhat FY 2022-23. PEDP4-WB-1469: Construction of 06 Nos. 2-storied RCC WASH Block at Hatibanda and others upazilas in Lalmonirhat FY 2022-23. PEDP4-WB-1470: Construction of 06 Nos. 2-storied RCC WASH Block at Hatibanda and others upazilas in Lalmonirhat FY 2022-23. PEDP4-WB-1471: Construction of 06 Nos. 2-storied RCC WASH Block at Hatibanda and others upazilas in Lalmonirhat FY 2022-23. PEDP4-WB-1472: Construction of 06 Nos. 2-storied RCC WASH Block at Patgram and others upazilas in Lalmonirhat FY 2022-23.
6	Name & designation of official inviting tender	Engr. Md. Abdul Alim Gazi, Executive Engineer, DPHE, Lalmonirhat District.
7	This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Web Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	

Engr. Md. Abdul Alim Gazi
Executive Engineer
DPHE, Lalmonirhat District

GD-365



বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
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Memo no. 12.21.0000.010.41.468.20.995 Date: 20.02.2023

e-TENDER NOTICE

Tender is invited Through National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of following works:

Sl no	Tender ID No.	Tendering Method	Description of works	Online (e-GP system) tender publication date & time	Online (e-GP system) tender closing date & time
1.	791938	LTM	Repairing and Renovation of Shown-4 at BARI, Gazipur	16-Feb-2023 15:30	05-Mar-2023 12:45
2.	Re-Tender 786271	OTM	Repairing & Renovation HBB Road and Gate through BINA at RSRS, BARI Magura	16-Feb-2023 15:30	28-Feb-2023 12:00

This is online tender, only e-Tender will be accepted in National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. Registration is essential to submit e-Tender.

Fees have to be deposited for downloading the tender documents from e-GP Portal through any registered bank. For further information please contact e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Source of Found: GoB

Engr. Md. Feroz Rahman
Superintending Engineer (In-charge)


GD- 370

Request for Expression of Interest (Eoi) for Selection of a Firm

Item No.	Item	Description
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges / Road Transport and Highways Division.
2	Agency	Roads and Highways Department (RHD).
3	Procuring entity name (if applicable)	Office of the Senior System Analyst, RHD, Management Information Cell, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
4	Procuring entity code (if applicable)	Not applicable.
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Consulting Firm
7	Title of Service	Maintenance and Operation of RHD MIS.
8	EOI Ref. No.	35.01.0000.167.32.002.23.702, Dated: 27/02/2023
9	Date	27 February 2023
KEY INFORMATION		
10	Procurement sub-method	Consulting Firm Selection by Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method in accordance with PPR-2008 and PPA-2006.
FUNDING INFORMATION		
11	Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget, GoB.
12	Development partners (if applicable)	Not applicable.
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
13	Project/programme name	Maintenance and Operation of RHD MIS.
14	Project/programme code	N/A
15	EOI closing date and time	2.00pm, 28 March 2023.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
16	Brief description of assignment	Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) will provide fund for Maintenance and Operation of RHD MIS in the RHD by engaging consulting firm (National) for 24 (twenty-four) months. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges (hereinafter referred to as the 'Client') now invite Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed consulting firm or firms in Joint Venture/Association for short listing of the consulting services for Maintenance and Operation of RHD MIS in the RHD. The Services Include: Providing Operation, maintenance and development of all MIS software components of RHD required for the computerized database, websites, application software at RHD head office and field offices in satisfactory operating condition and providing appropriate local MIS/ICT/e-Government training to the RHD personnel related to the MIS/ICT maintenance service as determined by the Client. Senior System Analyst, Management Information Cell, RHD now invites eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing the services
17	Experience, resources, and delivery capacity required	The interested firms/Joint Venture firms must meet the following minimum criteria for short listing: 1. Brochures submitted by the Applicants summarizing their facilities and areas of expertise; 2. Descriptions of similar assignments; 3. Experience in similar operating environments and conditions; 4. Availability of appropriate experience and professional qualifications among Applicant's staff and adequate resources to carry out the assignment; and 5. Managerial strength and financial capacity. The firms/Joint Venture firms meeting the above criteria are requested to submit EOI along with company registration, up-to-date trade license, tax clearance paper, audit reports, bank solvency certificate, credit facility, and company certification. Interested firms are also requested to include a write-up about the proposed service and its technology architecture with their EOI.
18	Other details (if applicable)	Interested firms may obtain further information from the Management Information Cell of RHD between 11.00am to 1.00pm prior to the closing of EOI. EOI with supporting documents shall be submitted in a sealed envelope (2 copies) clearly marked "Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Maintenance and Operation of RHD MIS" and delivered to the address mentioned herewith. The EOI may be submitted by hand-registered post or courier service and the firm shall be responsible for safe delivery on time. The procuring entity shall not be responsible for expenses incurred by the firms in connection with the preparation or delivery of the EOI.
19	Association with other firms	Consulting firm may associate or form a consortium with another consulting firm(s) as a joint venture to participate in this Consultancy Service
20	Phasing of services	Not applicable.
21	Confidentiality	The firms shall maintain the confidentiality of the information captured by the system and shall not share the same with others for any purpose without the permission of the concerned authority of RHD.
22	Method of contract	The contract will be made by using the standard document of lump-sum contract issued by CPTU
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
23	Name of official inviting EOI	Kazi Sayeda Momtaz, ID No. 000903
24	Designation of official inviting EOI	Senior System Analyst, RHD, Management Information Cell, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
25	Address of official inviting EOI	Office of the Senior System Analyst, RHD, Management Information Cell, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
26	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Phone: 8879330 Email: ssa@rhd.gov.bd
27	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all the Expression of Interest (EOI) without assigning any reason.	

Kazi Sayeda Momtaz
ID No. 000903
Senior System Analyst
Management Information Cell
Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka

GD-368



Chattogram Fish Harbour
Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation

Ref. No-33.03.1561.008.07.001.21.390
Date: 26/02/2023

e-Tender Notice

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

Ser.	Tender ID	Name of Goods	Tender Publication Date	Last Selling, Closing & Opening Date
1.	794678	Required Raw Materials For Fabrication Of Green House Mechanical Dryer.	26.02.2023	12.03.2023

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no Offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading e-tender document from the national e-gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches by 13:30 hours on 12.03.2023.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) contact No. BFDC, Ctg Fish Harbour (01716169062 and 01719319043)

GD- 367 General Manager

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Department of Immigration and passports
Security Services Division
Ministry of Home Affairs

Invitation for Tenders

1	Ministry/Division	Security Services Division, Ministry of Home Affairs	
2	Agency	Department of Immigration and Passports	
3	Procuring Entity Name	Director General	
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present	
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka	
6	Invitation for	For Procurement of 1.5 Million Machine Readable Passport Booklets and 2 Million Lamination Foil	
7	Invitation Ref No	58.01.0000.102.55.001.20(part-2)-111	
8	Date	26 th February 2023	
KEY INFORMATION			
9	Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10	Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh (GoB)	
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12	Project / Programme Code (if applicable)	Not Applicable	
13	Project / Programme Name (if applicable)	Not Applicable	
14	Tender Package No.	Single	
15	Tender Package Name	Not Applicable	
Date			
16	Tender Publication Date	27 th February 2023	
17	Tender Last Selling Date	09 th April 2023 (Office Hour)	
Date			
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	10 th April 2023	01:00 PM BST
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	10 th April 2023	02:00 PM BST
20	Name & Address of the office(s) - Selling Tender Document	Address Assistant Director Procurement Procurement Section Room No. 9004, Department of Immigration and Passports 8 th Floor, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.	
NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS			
- Receiving Tender Document		Deputy Director (Procurement) Room No.9003, Department of Immigration and Passports, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.	
- Opening Tender Document		Room No: 6002 (Conference Room) Department of Immigration & Passports, E-7, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.	
21	Place / Date / Time of Pre-Tender Meeting	Room No: 6002 (Conference Room) Department of Immigration & Passports, E-7, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.	
Date			
22 nd March 2023			
Time			
11:00 AM BST			
22	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	1. The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 05 (Five) years of specific experience in the manufacture and/or supply of Passport booklets and manufacture or supply of Laminates for personalisation of Machine Readable Passports (MRP) as per International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standard. 2. The Tenderer shall also have experience in manufacturing and supplying the above items to minimum Two (02) countries other than home country in last Five (05) years. 3. The satisfactory completion of manufacture and supply of Machine Readable Passport booklets and supply of Laminates of minimum 05 (Five) million USD equivalents under a single contract in the last 3 years. i.e. years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper. The minimum supply and/or production capacity of Goods is/ are: a. 05 (Five) million Passport booklets in a year in its own manufacturing plant. b. The Tenderer shall also have the capacity to produce or supply minimum 05 (Five) million Laminates in a year. c. The Tenderer shall have its own manufacturing plant for producing secure passport booklets and security papers. d. The Tenderer shall have experience to have produced and supplied minimum 25 (Twenty Five) million passport booklets and to have produced or supplied 25 (Twenty Five) million Laminates. e. The Tenderer must have the capability to incorporate visible and invisible security printing for passport booklet which includes - Guilloche printing, Intaglio printing with 3D technique, Micro text, Latent Image of 3D technique, Relief printing, Rainbow printing, UV inks, Duplex printing, Anti scan patterns, Deliberate spelling error, raster printing, registered water mark, OVI, OVD, plainchants etc. f. The Tenderer shall have its own testing lab with ISO standard equipment's to test Bending, Durability, Thermal cycling, Mechanical stress, torsion, abrasion, stamping etc. g. The Tenderer must have Intergraph CWA certificate for high security management system for secure printing. It shall also have certifications ISO 9001, ISO14001, ISO18001	
23	Brief Description of Goods and Related service	For Procurement of 1.5 Million Machine Readable Passport Booklets and 2 Million Lamination Foil	
24	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	20,000Tk	
Lot No			
Identification of Lot			
		Location	Tender Security Amount (USD)
25	Single	1.5 Million Machine Readable Passport Booklets and 2 Million Lamination Foil	Dhaka 120,000 (One Hundred and Twenty Thousand)
		Completion Time in Weeks / Months	
		Total 1.5 Million Machine Readable Passport Booklets and 2 Million Lamination Foil have to be supplied at the final destination in 75 (Seventy Five) Weeks.	
26	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Director General	
27	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director General	
28	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Department of Immigration and passports, E-7, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.	
29	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	+8802 48119850	+88029123399 dgdir@passport.gov.bd
30	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings		

(Abu Nayem Masum)
Deputy Director (Procurement)

GD- 366

In a touching, widespread donation to children impacted by the earthquake in Turkey and neighbouring Syria, Besiktas fans threw thousands of stuffed toys onto the pitch during Sunday's match against Antalyaspor. The Turkish Super Lig game, which ended 0-0, was paused after four minutes and 17 seconds to allow fans to throw the gifts onto the pitch. The earthquake first struck Turkey at 04:17 local time on 6 February.



PHOTO: BESIKTAS

England series pivotal for Riyad

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahmudullah Riyad looked comfortable in the nets against the bowling machine, timing his shots as Jamie Siddons kept close watch. But those deliveries were not as challenging as the ones Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman and Hasan Mahmud were testing Mushfiqur Rahim, Tamim Iqbal and Najmul Hossain Shanto with.

When Mahmudullah's turn to face spinners came, he did not look at his flowing best. Something was off as he looked to gain control.

Circumstances have not been in his favour since being dropped from the T20 set-up last year ahead of the series against Zimbabwe, shorn of captaincy. He opted to retire from Test cricket under peculiar circumstances and, in the recent BPL, could not play the kind of impact innings that Fortune Barishal had hoped for.

But in the ODI format, the only format that he is active in, his scores should have kept away the doubters. But those voices are growing louder.



Papon mentioned in a recent interview that coach Chandika Hathurusingha was worried about Bangladesh's fielding. "He said that he could hide one or two cricketers, but how can he hide five to six fielders."

He added on Mahmudullah's fielding woes: "I don't have any problem with Mahmudullah's batting, but so far the complaints or negatives that I have heard about him from others are about his fielding."

Papon had added: "With age, a lot of things change, like reflexes, eyesight and reaction time."

Batting has not been an issue, with the 37-year-old producing 77 runs against India during an important partnership with Mehedi Hasan Miraz. Despite that, it was revealed during the course of the interview that the BCB president had asked when he wanted to retire. "I called Mahmudullah a couple of days back and said to him, 'if you have any retirement plans, please tell us, because we are ready to have a situation where you can retire after playing a series.'"

While other players have struggled with retirement in the past, the BCB president asking for a plan would not have boosted Mahmudullah's confidence levels.

Ahead of an important series, the pressure is once again on the veteran. A hero of many victories, the England series could prove pivotal given recent suggestions.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

After returning from the USA, Bangladesh's star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan joined the team yesterday ahead of the Tigers' crucial white-ball series against England next month. Despite Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan Papon confirming the rumoured rift between Shakib and ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal, both cricketers looked their usual selves during training.

'Must reflect where we stand'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's first-ever ODI captain Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu opined that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon could have waited till the end of the upcoming England series to give rise to the new talk of the town, relating to the previously assumed strained relationship between two Bangladesh stalwarts - Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal.

The BCB boss, in his recent interview with Cricbuzz, has apparently opened a can of worms. Lipu thinks such revelation "should not have come out to public, especially from the board president" who he believes had "spoken out in frustration from the fact that he could not find a solution."

"I think that the president could have been careful about letting such information out before the [England] series. At the end of day, we wouldn't want two of our legends to reach such a situation," he said during an episode of Non-Striker's End, The Daily Star's multimedia programme.

The former captain, however, is still not willing to draw any conclusion on the matter, and he believes "conflict of ideas is bound to happen in every sphere of life."

"Look, have we heard from Shakib or Tamim that their relationship deteriorated? Has anyone ever witnessed on the field that, at any point, Tamim dropped a catch to deny Shakib a wicket? Or that they ran the other out?"

"They gave their 100 per cent whenever they played. When players engage on a constant basis, it's quite normal that

discussions about off-field matters take place, and everyone experiences it, more or less," he added.

England captain Jos Buttler said that his side are eager to thrive in Bangladesh conditions, which he assumes to be similar to what teams will face in the ODI World Cup in India later this year. Asked if Bangladesh should do the same, Lipu recommended that it would be wise to focus on one series at a time and that



the expectations from the Tigers should be kept in check as their stars have approached the twilight of their careers.

"Look, if you see things from a bigger perspective, yes, we should prepare with the World Cup in mind. At the same time, it seems we'll be content on making it to the semifinals and there is the challenge of the knock-out stage. But we must reflect where we stand at present."

"Our best players have aged and alongside them, new faces made their way in. So, with this sort of team, it is not fair

to expect too much from the upcoming World Cup."

In addition, he thinks the BCB "has set some short-term goals", and admitted that he has not witnessed prior evidence of anything beyond the short-term.

The culture, or the apparent absence of it, in Bangladesh cricket has been often talked about. Lipu recalled the 80's and the 90's and lamented how the vision that was established in the initial days, have derailed. The development is focused on the national team, tournaments like Bangladesh Premier League, High Performance events and so on, leaving the grassroots infrastructure ignored to many extents.

Speaking further on the culture, Lipu said it is "not a good practice by any means when players go straight to the president" instead of going to the ones in charge at the Cricket Operations Committee, for instance.

"Those who have been bestowed with the responsibility of taking care of the national cricketers for the last ten to fifteen years in the Cricket Operations [Committee] chairman post, the likes of Akram [Khan], [Naimur Rahman] Durjoy and Jalal [Yunus] bhai at present, all quite capable, I think they should be given the scope to play a role [in their post]."

"And if they fail, then the board president could always intervene."

"But if players bypass them [the ones at Cricket Operations], the coach and go directly to the president, it's not a very good practice," said Lipu, who was also the team manager during Bangladesh's maiden World Cup appearance in 1999.

Ten Hag's United 'happy but not satisfied'

REUTERS, London

Manchester United's near six-year trophy drought was almost overlooked in the build-up to the League Cup final as Newcastle United's wait for major silverware spanned nearly seven decades.

A clinical 2-0 victory at Wembley got the Old Trafford trophy cabinet door swinging open again though and, perhaps more importantly, gave a glimpse of greater things to come under astute Dutch manager Erik ten Hag.

The former Ajax Amsterdam boss arrived at Old Trafford with the club in a state of some turmoil on and off the pitch after finishing in sixth place in the Premier League last season.

But while there is little he can do about the future ownership of the 20-time English champions, which the American Glazer family have expressed a wish to sell, on the pitch he is shaping a team that looks capable of reviving the glory days.

A season that began under a Cristiano Ronaldo-shaped cloud has been transformed since the Portuguese talisman was finally shown the door after a toxic fall-out.

Ten Hag has quietly gone about his business, moulding an intelligent team that works tirelessly and is beginning to make winning a habit. A sixth League Cup triumph



turned into a world-beater and the signing of midfielder Casemiro has looked like a stroke of genius.

A defence built around the terrier-like Lisandro Martinez and the cultured Raphael Varane snuffed out Newcastle on Sunday, winger Antony is becoming a fan favourite and even old-fashioned centre forward Wout Weghorst, a puzzling signing at the time, looks as though he would run through brick walls for Ten Hag.

It is not so much about individuals though. For Ten Hag the key is having every player pulling in the same direction.

"Winning a trophy shows that its worth to suffer and sacrifice to give every day your best," he told reporters. "If you want to prove something you have to win something."

"This shows we are on a good pathway and it's going in the right direction. We will be happy for 24 hours but we will not be satisfied because satisfaction leads to laziness."

Ten Hag said the confidence of Sunday's win could be a key for the rest of the season.

"I hope this is a big inspiration, but you can't look too far ahead," he said. "It's a big win this and we are really happy tonight. Winning breeds confidence as long as you don't go over the top and keep doing the right things."

Amite ton propels South

SPORTS REPORTER

Thanks to a ton from Amite Hasan, South Zone managed to take a commanding lead against Central Zone on the third day of their Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) game at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura on Monday.

Amite hit 18 boundaries and remained unbeaten on 112 at stumps to give his side a 276-run lead heading into the fourth and final day.

Central pacers Abu Hider Rony and Mushfiq Hasan inflicted some early damage to leave South three down for 28 runs but Amite stitched a crucial 192-run stand with Fazle Mahmud to steady the ship. Fazle, however, missed out on a ton for just 10 runs.

Meanwhile, at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar, North Zone took a 113-run lead after bundling out East Zone for 403.

East skipper Jahurul Islam scored his 17th first-class ton to help his side take a slender 25-run lead in reply to North's 378 for five in the first innings.

Djokovic scales another peak

AGENCIES, Dubai

Novak Djokovic achieved another historic milestone yesterday, overtaking Steffi Graf's record for most weeks as World No. 1 in tennis history.

The Serbian already held the record for the most weeks as No. 1 in the history of the men's rankings (since 1973) when he surpassed Roger Federer's mark of 310 weeks in March 2021. Now he has moved past Graf by beginning his 378th week on top of tennis' mountain.

Djokovic returned to No. 1 last month for the first time since last June by winning a record-extending 10th Australian Open crown.

"Of course with your love and great strength that you have given me over the years, I've managed to achieve many fantastic achievements throughout my career," Djokovic said in a video for the fans. The Serb will spend his 378th week at the top of men's tennis competing in Dubai, where he will play his first tournament since capturing a record-equalling 22nd Grand Slam title last month. "I still want more achievements," Djokovic told reporters on Sunday.



Bangladesh all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz received a cap from the ICC yesterday for claiming a spot in the ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year for 2022 earlier in January this year. The all-rounder, who impressed with 24 wickets and 330 runs at a stunning average of 66 in 15 games last year, will hope to continue his good form this year as well, starting from the Tigers' upcoming home series against England.

PHOTO: BCB

VARENDRA UNIVERSITY

Join Our Team as
Vice Chancellor
Shape the Future of Higher Education

Varendra University (VU), the first private university in the northern region of Bangladesh, has been established in 2012 in the city of education, Rajshahi. To produce graduates of international standard by providing updated and scientific instructions, VU now runs with more than 6000 students. In this year the university is going to be shifted to its Permanent Campus with the state-of-the-art facilities of modern teaching and learning system.

In this situation, The Board of Trustees of Varendra University is inviting applications for a Proficient Vice Chancellor. He/She will fulfill his/her responsibilities according to the Private University Act, rules and regulations of the University and report to the Chairman of the Trustees. He/She will engage with key stakeholders including the UGC, Ministry of Education, Alumni, Recruiters, Donors, Industries, Parents etc. and will closely work with the 'Trustee Board' to execute the mission and vision of the university.

The eligible candidate will have to meet the minimum qualifications as specified in the section 31 of Private University Act 2010. The candidate should be a Professor with a PhD degree from a renowned university. Experience as a Vice Chancellor or Pro-Vice Chancellor in an internationally recognized University will be an advantage.

The Trustee Board reserves the right to relax the necessary qualifications for an exceptionally suitable candidate. Interested candidates are welcomed to send a complete CV with relevant documents on or before 30 March, 2023 to the following address:

Chairman
Varendra University Trust | 138/1, Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka-1208
e-mail: chairman@vu.edu.bd | Website: www.vu.edu.bd

February 28, 2023

OMS PROGRAMME

Govt moves to introduce cards to ease hassles

Bangladeshis can have dual citizenship in 44 more countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the authorities to introduce cards for distribution of essentials under the Open Market Sale programme to ease hassles faced by the beneficiaries.

"The government has noticed lack in the OMS management. The issue was discussed today [yesterday]. The prime minister has instructed the authorities to improve the management," Cabinet Secretary Mahub Hossain said yesterday.

He was briefing reporters at the secretariat after a cabinet meeting at the Prime Minister's Office, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) sells essentials to one crore poor families at fair prices against family cards issued by the TCB.

The cabinet secretary said the PM has directed the authorities to introduce cards for OMS also. This would help ensure discipline as people won't have to wait for hours in queues, he added.

Mahub said that the Cabinet Division was working on this. The OMS programme is run by the Directorate General of Food under the food ministry.

Earlier this month, Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder said the government was planning to provide

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



People queue up in front of an OMS truck to buy rice and flour at subsidised prices in the capital's Zigatola Bus Stop area yesterday. Each of them was allowed to buy five kgs of rice at Tk 30 per kg and five kgs of unpackaged flour at Tk 24 per kg. The buyers had to wait for about two hours.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Argentina reopens embassy after 45yrs

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Overwhelmed by Bangladesh's support for the Argentine football team that went on to win the FIFA World Cup 2022, Argentina reopened its embassy in Dhaka yesterday, 45 years after it had closed it.

"The people of Bangladesh never forgot to show love for Argentina. So, we today humbly came here and reopened the embassy in Bangladesh as a new channel to cement our relations," Argentine Foreign Minister Santiago Cafiero said, inaugurating the embassy in the city's Banani in the afternoon.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam and Cafiero raised the flags of Bangladesh and Argentina and sang the national anthems before cutting a ribbon to inaugurate the embassy building.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

CRACKDOWN ON BNP PROTESTS

Use of lethal force deeply troubling

UN rapporteurs wrote govt in Dec

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, as well as four other special rapporteurs and working groups, had written to the government expressing deep concern following the crackdown on BNP rallies and protests across the country.

The letter, issued on December 27, 2022, was made public by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights yesterday.

"We are deeply concerned by the apparent use of excessive and lethal force by security forces against peaceful protesters across various districts in Bangladesh, including the use of teargas, live ammunition and birdshot, resulting in injuries of several protesters and the death of at least five individuals," read the letter.

"We are also deeply concerned at the allegations that live ammunition may have been used against protesters," it added.

"Firearms or lethal force may only be used in self-defence or in defence of others against imminent threat of death or serious injury and there must be no other feasible option. Based on the information received, it does not appear that the circumstances of these protests reached this threshold to make the use of force necessary and proportional," read the letter.

They listed the actions of law enforcers during the BNP rallies held nationwide, including in Bhola, Narayanganj, Dhaka, Munshiganj, and elsewhere, between July and December last year.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

US warns China against arming Russia

Beijing urges dialogue, peace for Ukraine; Moscow escalates shelling, infantry assaults in Luhansk

AGENCIES

The United States has warned China of serious consequences if it provided arms to support Russia's invasion, as Beijing sought dialogue and peace for Ukraine.

Air raid sirens blared in the capital Kyiv and other cities overnight and a Russian missile killed one person in the western town of Khmelnytskyi, Mayor Oleksandr Symshyshyn said on the Telegram messaging app yesterday. The all clear sounded after daybreak.

On Friday, the first anniversary of the war, China published a 12-point plan calling for a ceasefire and gradual de-escalation by both sides, warning against the use of nuclear weapons and saying conflict benefited no one.

Kyiv struck a receptive tone while reiterating there can be no peace without a total Russian withdrawal - a non-starter for Moscow - but

Beijing's proposals cut little ice among Ukraine's Nato military alliance supporters.

Yesterday, China said it had kept contact with all sides in the crisis including Kyiv and its position was clear.

"The core is to call for peace and promote dialogue and a political solution to the crisis," foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a news briefing in Beijing.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday the Chinese plan should be analysed in detail and account for the interests of all sides, but for now Moscow saw no signs suggesting a peaceful resolution was feasible.

Nato allies say they are trying to dissuade China from supplying lethal aid to Russia, possibly including drones. Moscow's forces are struggling to make gains in east Ukraine while

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

CPJ urges govt to 'stop harassment' of Rozina

STAR REPORT

Thee Committee to Protect Journalists and rights groups have called upon the Bangladesh authorities to "stop harassing" Prothom Alo journalist Rozina Islam.

They made the call in a letter published on the CPJ website on Sunday.

The letter was also sent to Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Health Minister Zahid Maleque, Law Minister Anisul Haq and Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, reports UNB.

The letter reads, "We, the undersigned press freedom and human rights groups, write to seek your leadership in ensuring an immediate end to the harassment of Bangladeshi journalist and human rights defender Rozina Islam."



SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

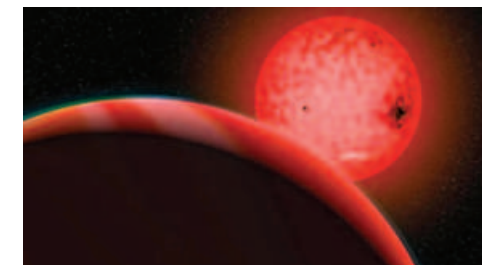
'Forbidden planet' discovered outside our solar system

CNN ONLINE

Astronomers have found an unusually large planet orbiting a small star, located about 280 light-years from Earth.

The unexpected size of the newly discovered world, called TOI 5205b, has led researchers to call it the "forbidden planet."

About the size of Jupiter, it was spotted by researchers using Nasa's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, or TESS. Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system.



The planet-hunting mission, launched in 2018, surveys the light of the nearest and brightest stars to spot dips in starlight, which suggests those stars have planets orbiting them. The TESS mission has found thousands of potential planets.

The exoplanet orbits a red dwarf star called TOI-5205, which is about 40 percent the size and mass of our sun, and about 5,660 degrees Fahrenheit

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

AL MP GOLAP

HC orders the ACC to probe graft allegations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the Anti-Corruption Commission to conduct an inquiry into allegations that Awami League lawmaker Abdus Sobhan Miah Golap bought multiple homes in New York and amassed illegal wealth by abusing his power and position.

The court also asked the ACC to submit the probe report on the allegations against the Madaripur-3 MP to this court through the Supreme Court registrar general in four months.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat Lizu passed the order following a writ petition filed by SC lawyer Syed Sayedul Haque Suman seeking necessary directives on this issue.

On Sunday, Suman

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia leaves her Gulshan home for Evercare Hospital in the city yesterday. The former prime minister underwent health check-ups at the medical facility as per the advice of the medical board constituted for her treatment.

PHOTO: BNP

TORTURE AT IU

5 BCL leaders, activists asked to leave hall

BCL probe body finds 'some allegations' true

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Five BCL leaders and activists, including Sanjida Chowdhury, the prime accused in the torture of a female student in Kushtia's Islamic University, have been asked to leave the dormitory by tomorrow.

The authorities of the university's Deshratna Sheikh Hasina Hall yesterday took the decision after a probe body found the allegations of torture to be true.

The decision came at a meeting in the presence of hall provost Professor Shamsul Haque and other house tutors. According to the meeting minutes, the five BCL leaders and activists are directed to leave the hall by 12:00pm on March 1.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the minutes signed by Professor Shamsul Haque.

"The probe committee formed by the hall provost has found proof of the allegation filed by Pulpori Khatun [Finance and Banking Department, Session: 2021-2022] of being mentally and physically tortured in the name of ragging," said the minutes.

The four-member probe body, which was headed by Prof Dr Ahsanul Haq, a teacher of the information and communication technology department, submitted its report to the university's acting registrar on Sunday.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5