



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Saluting tomorrow's leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Loud cheers and an air of euphoria filled the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium yesterday as The Daily Star celebrated the nation builders of tomorrow by honouring 2,617 O- and A-level students for their outstanding achievements.

Speakers at the event urged the bright students to work hard to make Bangladesh a better place for all.

The high-achieving students' sparkling eyes spoke of their dream of conquering the world as they accepted the honour in the presence of their teachers and families, who worked behind the scenes to make the moment possible.

Students expressed their happiness while renewing their vow to do more as the nation builders of tomorrow.

Awardees from 109 English medium schools of academic sessions October/November 2021, January 2022, May/June 2022 and October/November 2022 gathered at the venue.

This year, 69 students who achieved the country's highest marks

and 19 who top-scored in the world in O-levels, and 36 who achieved the country's highest marks and three who top-scored in the world in A-levels were honoured. Apart from them, 1,843 O-level students and 647 A-level students received awards.

Eminent poet and Bangla Academy's Director General Mohammad Nurul Huda graced the stage as the chief guest.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, and Robert Chatterton Dickson, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, also spoke at the programme.

It was also addressed by Manas Singh, the chief executive officer of STS Capital Ltd; AKM Golam Kibria, chairperson of AHZ Associates; Abdullah Al Mamun Liton, regional development manager for Pearson Edexcel Bangladesh and Nepal; and Shahin Reza, country manager, Bangladesh Cambridge Assessment International Education.

Priyonti Tabassum Haque, of SFX Greenherald International school, spoke on behalf of the students.



Zunaed Rabbani moderated the event.

The audience burst into applause as each student's name was announced. Students with the highest A grades were awarded with crests and certificates of excellence.

Yesterday's programme started with the singing of the national anthem and a video presentation on Language Movement and other struggles surrounding the emergence of Bangladesh.

To celebrate the multiplicity of religions in the country, the programme began with recitations from the Holy Quran, Bible, Geeta and Tripitak, delivered by Fuad Bin Sharif Toaha of Islamic International School and College, Juliet Yeasa Gomes of Cardiff International School, Arundhuti Bhattacharjee of Bangladesh International Tutorial, and Tathoi Barua from AG Church School respectively.

A cultural programme, comprising songs and dances by students, presented during intervals lent further festivity to the auspicious occasion.

Students of Mastermind English Medium School, DPS STS School, BAF Shaheen English Medium School, Scholastica, Mirpur, Oxford International School and Bangladesh International Tutorial Limited performed songs and dance at the programme.

The students portrayed traditions of the country, the Language Movement, Liberation War and waved flags during the cultural

performance.

Parents and students were seen taking pictures inside and outside the auditorium to preserve the cherished memories.

The five-hour event at the indoor stadium in Mirpur was sponsored by Universal College Bangladesh, AHZ Associates, Pearson – Edexcel, and Cambridge Assessment International Education.

Channel I was the broadcasting partner.

Since 1999, The Daily Star has been awarding students who secure at least six A grades in two consecutive sittings in O-level, and three A grades in the A-level.

This year's was the 22nd edition of awarding future leaders of the nation. Over the years, a one-of-a-kind programme has become a source of inspiration for many.

The newspaper could not host the event in 2021 and 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2020, A total of 1,504 O-level and 484 A-level achievers were hailed for their hard work and dedication.



Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers



Mohammad Nurul Huda
Poet and Director General, Bangla Academy

We just left behind the month of February, when the Language Movement took place, and now we are in March, when that Liberation War started. We have to talk about language as well as liberation. Bangladesh has been approaching becoming a developed country. We hope we will reach it soon.

My friend Mahfuz Anam spoke of knowledge and wisdom ... you will be the creator of that new knowledge. I am referring to Alfred Tennyson, who said, "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore, And the individual withers, and the world is more and more".

Today, we are arguing the same thing in a new format. We are arguing not only about the tangible, but also on intangible cultural expressions. The first instance of intangible cultural expression is language. So, everything comes from language ... the mother tongue."

As we have the highest respect for Bangla, we also have to have the same respect for other mother languages all over the world. This subcontinent is a land of plurality. Here in Bangladesh, there are many languages which have been dying. We have to protect them, and have to preserve them. If we can't preserve them, they will be lost. So we need immediate steps to preserve those languages.



Mahfuz Anam
Editor and Publisher, The Daily Star

We are so elated that the event is taking place after two years because of the Covid-19 situation. Why are we so happy? Because through this event, we celebrate success, brilliance and determination.

Number of achievers for this year is highest ever despite the pandemic. You have made us proud. I would like to thank and congratulate the schools, teachers and parents.

We pray that each of you become a symbol of success for humanity. I have to say to you that getting a certificate, getting an award is only but the end of your journey, but the journey is far more important.

Education means learning, it means a lifelong curiosity for knowledge. It never ends. Knowledge is very important. But along with knowledge, you must have courage.

Because knowledge without courage is just a skill. But knowledge with courage is wisdom, it is the change maker and is the future builder. You must value character, value ethics, value honesty, value truth. This can be the most important guiding light for your life.

I would like to say that each of you must aspire to be the most qualified person in your profession. You must also remember that however successful or famous you are, you have an obligation to your country, your society, your friends and your parents,

You must remember to build your country. The country, its people, Bangla language and culture must be in your heart.



Robert Chatterton Dickson
British High Commissioner in Dhaka

It's a huge pleasure to be here at the event to recognise students. Education is by far the best investment you can make.

And I know that your families have put a lot of effort into getting all of you here today.

But, I think the scale of what we're seeing here is really fantastic.

[There are] 1,843 O-level awardees and 647 A-level awardees; 69 highest mark holders for O-level in the country; 19 highest mark holders in the world for O-level; and three highest mark holders in the world for A-level.

I think it's fantastic to see what Bangladesh can achieve when the best schools have the best students and they are tested through the world's best exams.

So I would just like to say congratulations to all of you.

Best of luck and best wishes to all of the students as you go on to the next stage of your education.

Thank you very much indeed.



AKM Golam Kibria
Chairman, AHZ Associates

It's a great privilege to be a part of this celebration of success, brilliance and achievement of the young talents of our nation.

You made it possible through your dedication and hard work. You have started a new journey and a new chapter.

Now, the world lies in front of you. The time has come to set up your goal, a direction in life, and a career path that you are passionate about.

But you have to remember the career you choose should be useful for humanity.

Another thing you have to remember is that you have to believe in yourself.

If you don't believe in yourself, it will be very difficult and hard for you to get success.

Successes are delayed due to inadequate information. You can find our association as a partner in your new journey.

It is working with teams of experts and professionals who can guide you to reach your destinations. I would like to highlight the issue of migrating for education.

Sometimes we call it a brain drain or it is a game changer. We have to define it clearly and [here] media can play a role.



Shahin Reza
Country Manager, Bangladesh Cambridge Assessment International Education

You all are outstanding. Let's put our hands together for all these girls and boys.

We are here to recognise your outstanding results in O- and A-Level examinations.

Congratulations to you, your families, teachers, friends and everyone who has supported you on this journey.

This is a precious award ceremony for students in Bangladesh.

And I must say that you are one of the luckiest. I don't think there is any other organisation such as The Daily Star in any part of the world, that organises such an event to celebrate the success of students.

Education that is of truly international quality is key to overcoming global challenges that will help in the path to enlightenment and will encourage you to do your part in shaping the world to be a better place.

You need to be ready for the world. We design our programmes to help you become confident, responsible for yourself, for your community and for the planet.

I hope that truly international quality education and your Cambridge qualification, is key to overcoming global challenges.



Abdullah Al Mamun Liton
Regional Development Manager, Pearson Edexcel, Bangladesh and Nepal.

You should be proud of yourselves for achieving this success.

However, I would like to remind you that while academic success is important, being a good human being is equally or perhaps even more important.

While you celebrate your achievements, please take a moment to think about the children on the streets in our country. They not only lack education, but even just basic necessities.

So, it is your responsibility as privileged individuals to give back to society and help those in need. As you move forward, I encourage you to become an integral part in building this nation.

You were born in a country with many problems left to be resolved. Embrace these challenges and take up the responsibility of making changes in the country.

One thing you should remember is that being a citizen of Bangladesh comes with its own unique advantages and privileges. We have the longest sea beach in the world, and also natural resources.

We have sea ports and incredibly fertile land that can grow almost anything. Bangladesh has also produced many graduates who are currently working in global companies.

So, it is up to you to properly plan and utilise it [your talent and success]. Instead of hoping for a miracle, it is up to you to take on the challenges and make changes for yourself and for the country.



Manas Singh
Chief Executive Officer, STS Capital Ltd

This is a momentous occasion, a testament to your hard work, dedication and commitment towards academic excellence.

Your achievement is not just a reflection of your individual brilliance but also of the support and encouragement from your parents, schools, teachers and loved ones.

You should ideally look for three things now, an institution where you will gain knowledge, where you will get exposure and become employable.

You should aim for a good job or join your business or start your own venture. That should be the focus for everyone sitting here but also for all the youth in Bangladesh. Now imagine the world's top organisations, universities opening centres here.

And you getting an internationally recognised degree right here. I believe that is something you should explore.

The Daily Star's awards recognising high achievers in O- and A-level is a commendable initiative. Acknowledging and celebrating them inspires others to strive for excellence. This is also a great moment for me to introduce Universal College Bangladesh.

At UCB, we have top universities such as Monash University Pathway programme and the reputed London School of Economics, EMFS undergraduate programmes provided by University of London.



Priyonti Tabassum Haque,
O-Level graduate, SFX Greenherald International School.

Respected parents, teachers and all beloved graduates, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the class of 2022 at this platform that The Daily Star graciously organises every year.

Firstly, congratulations to all of us for having achieved this coveted success.

We have all been led to this day by the hope and angst with which we had to dive into our very first international examinations.

I still remember the stress and trepidation that everyone, including me, felt that day.

Having had to spend two precious years of our O-Level preparations in front of a screen, with no real motivation to think about the future that we ourselves would have to pave – it was a grueling triumph to reach this far and be able to claim this recognition.

For this, we have to thank the people around us – our parents, who are our biggest supporters; our teachers, who mentored us, and, of course, our friends, who never left our sides.

We must all be proud of ourselves but also realise that this is merely level one of the rest of our lives.

Hence, it is imperative that we hold on to the hope which we build in our hearts for the future, to nurture it and let it grow, to fully become the beautiful and inspiring people we can be.

I wish everyone the best of luck.

A day to cherish

High achievers vow to better themselves for country's betterment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students recognised for their brilliant results in O- and A-level were buzzing with excitement yesterday, and wanted to become good human beings working for the betterment of the country.

The Daily Star yesterday honoured 2,617 students for their extraordinary results in O- and A-level exams. Thirty-six students were recognised for achieving the best results in O-levels at the ceremony held at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium.

Their faces lit up when their names were called to receive the honours. They ran to get in line in front of the stage, where others were already standing to receive the awards.

Jannatul Bushra Sabah from ABC International School was one of the awardees, who achieved nine A-stars and one A in her O-level exams.

"This is a precious moment of achievement that I want to cherish for the rest of my life," she told this

correspondent.

She thanked her family for providing her with tremendous support and ensuring that she received a quality education.

Bushra said she wanted to pursue a career in medicine, with her ultimate goal to become a neurologist.

"I believe that to build my nation, I need to develop myself first. So, my first goal is to become a good human being, with a focus on kindness and compassion to help people. It will ultimately lead me to contribute to building a better nation in the future,"

Zawad Zaman, who achieved 10 A-stars from Academia School, said, "I did not imagine that I would receive an award from such a valuable platform. It was a long cherished dream come true for me."

He expressed his wish to go abroad to study physics and computer science. "But I don't wish to remain abroad. I aspire to become a computer scientist and work for my country, utilising my foreign

degrees and work experiences, once I return to Bangladesh."

Tirtha Kumar Dey, a student of Chances School, who earned 8 A-stars and 2 A grades, shared his ambition to become a neurologist specialising in the field of ICT.

Partha Sharma, one of the highest achievers in the O-level examinations from Willes Little Flower School, said he wants to be a bioeconomist.

He expressed concern about the negative environmental impacts of Bangladesh's development works, causing pollution, health issues, and a decline in life expectancy.

"I want to work towards reducing this damage by ensuring smooth development, so that we can benefit from progress without harming the environment."

Towsil Rahman, one of the highest scorers in physics in A-levels from HEED International School, aims to become a software engineer. But at the same time, he wants to devote himself to children's education.



A group of school principals who were present at yesterday's programme to honour the best O- and A-level achievers pose for photos at the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium.

PHOTO: STAR



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EXCELLING AT THE ARTS AS WELL

Students from different English-medium schools display their talents in the performing arts with one incredible dance piece after another during the ceremony held by The Daily Star to honour 2,617 O- and A-level students for their outstanding achievements at the capital's Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Bottom, The awardees pose for a photo with Bangla Academy Director General Mohammad Nurul Huda, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson, and Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam.

PHOTOS: SK ENAMUL HAQ, RASHED SHUMON, PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS





INSPIRING THEM TO DAZZLE EVEN BRIGHTER

Students, their families, friends and teachers stand in respect for the national anthem at the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium in the capital's Mirpur yesterday. The Daily Star hosted the 22nd edition of recognising and feting the best O- and A-level students and saluted the nation builders of tomorrow. A total of 2,617 students received accolades for their achievements. Beaming faces lined up to receive awards from Robert Chatterton Dickson, British high commissioner in Dhaka, and Mohammad Nurul Huda, director general of Bangla Academy. A festive atmosphere prevailed at the venue in the event arranged after a gap of two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the happy youth taking selfies with friends and family and enjoying the day devoted to celebrating their promise.

PHOTOS: SK ENAMUL HAQ, RASHED SHUMON, PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS





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\$500m at best from WB this fiscal

Govt fails to implement reforms to unlock more funds

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government can expect budget support of \$500 million at best from the World Bank this fiscal year after it failed to implement key reforms that would have unlocked the entire \$1 billion it was seeking.

As per the original plan, \$250 million was supposed to come from the Green, Resilient Inclusive Development (GRID) programme and another \$250 million from the Development Policy Credit (DPC) scheme.

Further amount would have been mobilised were the government able to meet more conditions, which would have been tangential to DPC's.

CONDITIONS FULFILLED FOR \$500M

- ➡ Set up a cell to coordinate the Delta Plan 2100
- ➡ Policies for energy efficiency, renewable energy and green procurement
- ➡ Lay foundational steps for establishing carbon pricing
- ➡ Adoption of the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan

The government has more or less met the conditions for the GRID but is yet to meet any of the 12 conditions for DPCs, which encompass reforms in fiscal policy and the financial sector and setting guardrails to future shocks.

The conditions for GRID include setting up a cell in the planning ministry to coordinate the Delta Plan 2100, policies for energy efficiency, renewable energy and green procurement and so on, foundational steps for establishing carbon pricing.

Adoption of the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan figures high, too.

This plan, which was recently passed in the parliament, includes retrofitting the built environment, following the National Building Code 2020, to ensure sustainability and

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The remains of Seema oxygen plant in Sitakunda next to the Dhaka-Chattogram highway after an explosion. The blast sent shards of metal hurtling across hundreds of metres. *Inset*, oxygen cylinders kept at the plant.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

6 killed as blast rips thru oxygen plant

At least 30 injured; many nearby buildings, parked vehicles damaged

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, SIFAYET ULLAH, and MD SUMAN

Six people were killed and at least 30 others injured in an explosion at an industrial oxygen plant in Sitakunda, Chattogram, yesterday afternoon.

The explosion at Seema Oxygen Plant in the Keshabpur area rocked nearby neighbourhoods around 4:40pm. The roof of the building of the main plant was blown off and large chunks of

steel and iron flew in all directions, damaging numerous buildings and vehicles.

A projectile from the plant killed a 60-year-old man at a market nearly a kilometre away from the facility, said Shahadat Hossain, upazila nirbahi officer of Sitakunda.

Residents of the area said there was no electricity in the area after the blast, and gas cylinders were seen strewn everywhere around the facility.

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A km away, yet a victim of the blast

SIFAYET ULLAH, *Ctg*

Sixty-year-old Shamsul Alam was at a firewood shop in Kadamarsul Bazar near his home in Sitakunda, Chattogram.

The unemployed man woke up late and went to the market just to hang out with people his age because he has nothing else to do.

The blast at Seema Oxygen Plant, almost a

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PM in Qatar for country's last LDC summit

Meets UN chief Guterres, UNGA president Korosi



STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reached Doha to attend Bangladesh's last summit of the Least Developed Countries that begins today.

Bangladesh will graduate out of LDC by 2026.

Reaching Qatar, Hasina urged the United Nations to take special and effective measures to stop the Ukraine-Russia war as soon as possible.

"We are suffering a lot as a result of the war. Inflation has increased, especially due to non-arrival of goods for sanctions. People are suffering a lot because of this [war], people are suffering all over the world. The war needs to stop as soon as possible," she said.

She made the call during a meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres at Qatar National Convention Centre yesterday afternoon.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

'Today's special 8-page tabloid focuses on country's accelerated journey towards a Smarter Bangladesh by utilising digital technology to enhance various sectors such as commerce, agriculture, transportation, healthcare, and many more.'



Veteran Freedom Fighter Mohammad Ali standing by the ruins of his fire-ravaged home. He was one of the victims of the attack launched by some Islamist parties on the Ahmadiyya community in at least three villages of Panchagarh Sadar on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR

Panic grips Panchagarh Ahmadiyya villages

Homes, businesses burnt to ground; tension still high as fresh rumours being spread

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, *Thakurgaon*

He spent his entire life savings to build a house for his family, and then he had to watch that house go up in flames in a matter of minutes.

It's all because he belongs to the Ahmadiyya community.

Around 11:00am yesterday, 80-year-old Shahid Ahmed was seen sitting speechless in front of his fire-ravaged home.

He was one of the many from his community that came under attack by supporters of some Islamist outfits in Panchagarh Sadar on Friday.

A resident of Ahmednagar village, Shahid said, "My family and I were at the Jalsa Salana venue after Jum'a prayers when we suddenly heard that our house was torched. We rushed there and found our home set ablaze."

Akhi, Shahid's daughter, said, "We were lucky that we were not in the house at that time. I think the attackers would have killed us if we were."

Veteran freedom fighter Mohammad Ali's house too wasn't spared.

"We fought for the country in 1971. And this is how we are being rewarded at the end stage of our lives..."

"I was alone in the house as the others went to the Jalsa in the afternoon. A group of people suddenly attacked our house with sticks, iron rods and machetes. While I ran to safety, my house, including the furniture and everything else inside, was burnt to ashes."

His neighbour Md Hanif, also a freedom fighter, said, "The attackers first looted valuables and then torched my house."

Tanzila Akter, 32, another victim, said, "We used to earn living by

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TEESTA BARRAGE PROJECT West Bengal push for two more canals

If implemented, Bangladesh will get even less water

STAR REPORT

In a move that may raise more concerns in Dhaka, the Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal on Friday took possession of about 1,000 acres of land proposing to dig two canals to channel water from the Teesta Barrage Project for irrigation.

Bangladesh is waiting for the Teesta water-sharing deal with India for more than a decade to solve the water scarcity in the northern parts of the country. New Delhi and Dhaka couldn't clinch a pact to share the Teesta waters because of objections raised by West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee in 2011.

The move, ahead of panchayat polls and parliamentary elections in West

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Romania to take in 17,000 migrants

An 8-member consular mission arrives today

PORIMOL PALMA

An eight-member Romanian consular mission is arriving in Dhaka today for a six-month stay during which they will issue around 17,000 visas to Bangladeshis seeking employment in the East European nation.

The move comes after Bangladesh requested the Romanian government to send a consular mission here as the latter currently operated its consular services from its embassy in New Delhi.

Last year, a Romanian consular mission came to Bangladesh and stayed for three months.

“Some 17,000 work permits have been pending and more applications are in the pipeline. So, the number of visas to be issued by the consular mission maybe even more during its six to seven months of stay,” Bangladeshi Ambassador to Romania Daud Ali told The Daily Star yesterday. They are recruited mostly in the construction, restaurant, logistics, factories, and shipbuilding sectors.

“Undoubtedly, this is a good scope for Bangladeshi jobseekers as well as for businesses in Romania. The country needs foreign workers for its thriving economy,” he said.

According to foreign ministry officials, Bangladesh opened its embassy in Romania in 2020 when the recruitment formally started.

In that year, less than 500 Bangladeshis migrated to Romania for jobs, which increased to some 2,500 in 2021 and 14,500 in 2022.

The monthly salary range for foreign workers is equivalent to Tk 70,000 to Tk 100,000 depending on the skill level, while accommodation and food allowance are provided by the employers.

Migration to the east European nation costs Tk 4.22 lakh.

The good thing for Romania is that when foreign workers work for four years they can apply for permanent residency.

However, violation of immigration rules, arbitrarily changing employers, and leaving for other countries are punishable offences, ambassador Daud Ali said.

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Former UK prime minister and Executive Chairman of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change Sir Tony Blair meets Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

US sends \$400m ignoring Moscow’s warning on arms

Russian defence minister inspects front, asks Zelensky to abandon Bakhmut

AFP, Washington

Russia’s defence minister has inspected the frontline in east Ukraine, after the United States offered more military support to Kyiv, whose forces are struggling in eastern Bakhmut.

US President Joe Biden on Friday hosted German Chancellor Olaf Scholz for his first visit since the offensive, in a display of partnership after friction over supplying tanks to Ukraine.

Ahead of the meeting, the Kremlin warned weapon deliveries would only “prolong the conflict and have sad consequences for the Ukrainian people”.

The United States responded to Moscow’s warning against further arming Ukraine by offering another \$400 million in security assistance.

The new security package features

ammunition – including for the HIMARS precision rocket system that Ukrainian forces have used to devastating effect against Russian troops and supply dumps.

Yesterday, the Russian minister Sergei Shoigu “inspected a command post on the front” in the direction of the southern Donetsk region, the defence ministry said, without specifying exactly where or when.

It put out a rare video of Shoigu travelling in a helicopter and talking to a soldier in front of damaged buildings.

The visit came with fighting ongoing around Bakhmut, in the longest battle of the invasion that has revealed rivalries between the conventional army and the Wagner paramilitary group.

Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin said Friday his fighters had “practically encircled” Bakhmut, which has seen some

of the fiercest fighting of the conflict.

Well-versed in social media, Prigozhin has for weeks been publicising the advances of his men towards the eastern city, whose symbolic importance outstrips any military significance.

Prigozhin regularly posts videos of himself alongside mercenaries, on the ground or even in a fighter jet, in contrast with Russian generals criticised for shirking the frontline.

In the latest video Friday, Prigozhin directly called on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to abandon Bakhmut, which Russia is determined to seize as part of the wider aim of capturing the entire Donetsk region.

Zelensky has pledged to defend “fortress Bakhmut” for as long as possible, and called on allies to whip up their support to help his men do so.

\$500m at best from WB this fiscal

FROM PAGE 1

to make sure the buildings are safe against disasters and emergencies.

Now, to accommodate the government’s budget support needs for this fiscal year, the Washington-based multilateral lender has decided to make more funds available under the GRID programme.

Subsequently, at a tripartite meeting on March 2 involving the Economic Relations Division and the line ministries, it was decided that funds would be diverted from the WB-funded slow-moving projects to the GRID programme.

The implementation status of six projects was discussed, and it was decided that most of the funds for the GRID programme would be made available from two projects: operation for supporting rural bridges and investment promotion and financing facilities II project (IPFF II).

As is practice, when the WB sanctions amount for projects, that gets added to the foreign aid pipeline. Only when the implementing agencies furnish invoices against the projects do the lender release the funds.

The implementing agencies of the two projects have been able to present invoices amounting to only a fraction of the sanctioned amount.

The IPFF II is a \$356 million project that was taken up in April 2017 for completion by June last year. As of June 2021, only \$48 million was used.

So, the WB has decided to leave \$100 million for the project and re-route the remaining amount to the GRID programme.

Similarly, the operation for supporting rural bridges is a \$425 million project taken up in April 2017 for completion by August this year. As of June 2021, less than \$15 million was used.

Subsequently, the lender has decided to leave \$85 million for the project and channel the rest to GRID.

The proposal will be sent to WB board for final approval, according to officials involved with the proceedings.

As for the DPC programme, the government was hoping to meet the 12 conditions for the programme by January this year.

But it is unlikely that the conditions would be met before September.

One of the conditions is amendments to the Bank Company Act to strengthen the supervisory framework in line with good international practice, which is also a condition under the International Monetary Fund’s \$4.7 billion loan programme.

The WB has called for a recovery plan for undercapitalised banks and strengthening corporate governance in state banks in line with global best practices.

Another condition is getting the cabinet to approve the National Tariff Policy, which would bring down the tariffs and simplify the tariff structure.

The commerce ministry has approved the framework for the policy, including institutional responsibilities and implementation arrangements.

Rolling out the automated challan system for deducting income tax at source in all tax zones across the

country by fiscal 2023-24 is another condition put forth by the WB.

The WB also called for full implementation of the e-Government Procurement system, which would bring down the average procurement lead time (from invitation to contract award) to 50 days from 70 days at present.

For that to happen, the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) Act must be enacted to consolidate the responsibilities and authorities of the BPPA.

The Department of National Savings must adopt an automated system to link the issuance of the General Provident Fund and the Contributory Provident Fund instruments to national identity cards.

Modernising the financial system infrastructure to global standards by adopting the Payment and Settlement Systems Act 2021 and the Secured Transactions Act are the other triggers for the loan.

One of the conditions for budget support is expanding cash transfer programmes this fiscal year by more than five times to cushion the poor from the brunt of the elevated price levels at home and abroad.

Cash transfers of Tk 24,040 crore must be made to the mobile financial service accounts of the reclassified list of beneficiaries by the ministry of social welfare.

Another condition is the use of the National Household Database for beneficiary identification by major social protection programmes.

West Bengal push for two more canals

FROM PAGE 1

Bengal, is aimed at helping bring more farms under irrigation in Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar districts, reported out New Delhi correspondent.

The Jalpaiguri district administration on Friday transferred documents of 1,000 acres of land for the canals to the irrigation department in the presence of West Bengal Irrigation Minister Partha Bhowmik, reported Indian news outlet The Telegraph.

The land will help the administration create two canals on the left bank of the Teesta, an official of the state irrigation department told The Telegraph. Water from the Jaldhaka, another river which flows through the Jalpaiguri district, will be also diverted to the canals for irrigation.

According to the official, a 32km-long canal to draw water from the

Teesta and the Jaldhaka will be dug till Changrabandha of Cooch Behar district. Another canal, which will have a length of 15km, will be built on the left bank of the Teesta, said The Telegraph citing a source in the irrigation department, he added.

The Teesta Barrage Project was launched in 1975 with a plan to irrigate 9.22 lakh hectares of agricultural land in north Bengal. The plan was to route water from the Teesta through canals on either bank of the river. On the way, the canals would be fed by other rivers which flow through the region.

The proposed two canals would be a big political message from the Mamata government to the northern part of West Bengal, our correspondent said.

Mamata’s Trinamool Congress is desperately trying to make a greater inroad politically by showing it cares

for the farmers of the region ahead of the panchayat and parliamentary elections due in early 2024, he added.

If the proposed canals are built, it is certain to spark more anxiety in Dhaka over the availability of water downstream Teesta in the lean period.

A political observer pointed out that by extending the reach of the Teesta project, Mamata is trying to prove that north Bengal needs water from the river.

“Now that her government plans to extend the irrigation network, it is evident that more water from the Teesta will be routed through the new canals. This means less water will be available for Bangladesh during lean months,” a faculty member of the geography department at North Bengal University in Siliguri told The Telegraph.

PM in Qatar for country’s last LDC summit

FROM PAGE 1

After the meeting, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen briefed the newsmen.

Hasina said that the UN secretary general can take special initiative to end the ongoing Ukraine-Russia as soon as possible.

She, however, opined that the countries making profit from the war should help other countries lessen their sufferings.

While discussing the Rohingya issue, the prime minister urged the UN secretary general for undertaking special steps so that the Myanmar nationals can return to their homeland.

Referring to her government’s steps of relocating 30,000 Rohingyas to Bhashan Char, she requested the UN secretary general to cooperate in moving more Rohingyas there.

During the meeting, Guterres highly appreciated Hasina for her unprecedented successes in development, diplomacy and in tackling Covid pandemic.

Hasina also held talks with President of UNGA Csaba Korosi separately at

Qatar National Convention Center in the afternoon.

The foreign minister said Hasina in the meeting proposed to form an international forum involving the South-South countries to find the potentials and the things to be done for the welfare of the peoples as the developed nations do not help as per their promise.

She sought cooperation of the UNGA in holding an international conference on this issue for a day.

The UNGA president opined that the initiative should be taken before the next general assembly session.

Korosi also highly lauded the economic progress of Bangladesh under the leadership of Hasina, mentioning it as “just a miracle”.

The two leaders also held discussion on the issue of water management and impact of climate change.

Tony Blair meets PM

Before leaving for Doha, Hasina had a breakfast meeting with former UK prime minister Sir Tony Blair at the Gono Bhaban.

The executive chairman of the

Tony Blair Institute for Global Change arrived in Dhaka on Friday night for a private visit. Blair apprised Hasina of his institute’s activities, PM’s Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed the newsmen, reports BSS.

Sheikh Hasina and Tony Blair both reviewed Bangladesh-UK relations, while Hasina appreciated the Tony Blair Institute’s mission to enable leaders and governments for a global future.

They also talked about sports particularly cricket as England cricket team is touring Bangladesh right now.

Tony Blair also paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32.

He paid a courtesy call on Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury at her office. They discussed the UK’s contribution to the Liberation War, the country’s development and democracy, women’s empowerment.

He lauded Bangladesh’s graduation into a developing country and the Padma Bridge construction.

A km away, yet a victim of the blast

FROM PAGE 1

kilometre away, was felt in the area. And within moments, a projectile fell on his head, knocking him out.

By the time his children took him to Chattogram Medical College Hospital, he was dead.

“A piece of iron fell on his head and killed him,” his daughter Bibi Mariam told this correspondent at the hospital.

Pieces of metal and projectiles were found in neighbourhoods around the plant.

Shamsul had three daughters and a son. He had no earnings and his children and sons-in-law used to help him get by, said Mariam as she broke down in tears.

Belarus jails Nobel winner Bialiatski for 10 years

AFP, Moscow

Belarus handed a 10-year jail term to Nobel Prize winning activist Ales Bialiatski on Friday, drawing sweeping international condemnation.

Bialiatski, who founded the authoritarian nation’s most prominent rights group, has repeatedly run into trouble with security forces in Belarus, which is often described as “Europe’s last dictatorship”.

Woman’s body hanging from tree recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Police recovered the body of a woman hanging from a tree in Bagerhat’s Morrelganj on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Hawa Begum, 60, whose body was found hanging from a tree in the garden of Mizanur Rahman, former councilor of Morrelganj Municipality.

Police yesterday sent the body to Bagerhat District Hospital for autopsy.

Hawa was the only daughter of Hamid Uddin, of Badurtala village in the upazila.

According to family sources, she had taken up a job as domestic help in house of Mizanur, who works in Japan, for a monthly salary of Tk 2,000.

Saidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Morrelganj Police Station, said Hawa had been suffering from many physical and mental health complications, including high blood pressure and depression, adding that her cause of death will be found after the autopsy.

18-yr-old killed in mob beating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An 18-year-old boy was killed allegedly in a mob beating in Kishorgani’s Kularchar upazila on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Rabbi Mia, son of Mirjali Mia of Bajitpur upazila.

Quoting locals, Mohammad Gulam Mustafa, officer-in-charge of Kuliarchar Police Station, when Rabbi was waiting near a motorcycle on the Jam-e Masjid road around 11:30pm, a group suspecting he was a motorcycle thief began beating him indiscriminately. He was left critically injured.

The attackers took him to Kuliarchar Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead.

No case was filed or arrest made in this regard till the filing of the report at 6:40pm yesterday.

Earthquake caused direct damage of \$5.1b in Syria

Says World Bank

AFP, Washington

A massive earthquake and aftershocks in February caused an estimated \$5.1 billion in direct physical damage in Syria, the World Bank has said.

The earthquake that struck on February 6 hit Turkey and Syria, devastating scores of cities and killing more than 50,000 people in both countries.

Millions have been left needing urgent help with accommodation and medical care.

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Kidney patients more vulnerable during disasters

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kidney patients become more vulnerable during disasters like earthquakes, and preparations need to be taken so that they can get uninterrupted treatment at the time of such disasters, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

It is urgent to ensure that every structure in the cities, especially hospitals, is earthquake resilient, they said at the roundtable held at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Marking the upcoming World Kidney Day on Thursday, Kidney Awareness Monitoring and Prevention Society (Kamps) organised the event with support from Eskayef Pharmaceuticals Limited.

“When we talk about saving kidney patients during disasters, the major question is whether the dialysis centres are earthquake resilient,” said Prof Mehedi Ahmed Ansari of civil engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) while speaking at the event.

Abdul Latif Helali, project director of the Urban Resilient Project at Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), said they found 3,252 buildings in Dhaka vulnerable to earthquakes during their assessment. “Of those, 42 buildings, including hospitals and schools, need to be knocked down.”

Engineer Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, said Dhaka Medical College Hospital is one of the most vulnerable establishments in Dhaka.

“Our buildings are 20-30 times more vulnerable than

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Mud lathers on the hands of a potter as he gives form to a piece of clay on a pottery wheel. Once the clay is shaped into different kinds of earthenware, workers at the pottery station put them under the sun to dry. And after many phases, these pieces of intricate craftsmanship reach the shelves of markets in the city. This particular pottery workshop in Keraniganj's Fulachar area has 20 artisans who churn out at least 3,000 pieces of earthenware each day.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Revisiting the spirit of liberation

Razzaq Foundation launches 4-day event to commemorate Liberation War, freedom fighters



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

“We dissented from Pakistan because it ignored the rights of the people of our region. I’m blessed to be a part of a generation who did not think twice before fighting for the country, and a generation who loved the idea of a free nation,” said freedom fighter Nayeem Jahangir on Day 1 of “Muktijuddho: Pramanno Chitro”, a series of events organised by Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation.

The four-day event, which was launched on Friday at the Bengal Shilpalaya, will feature documentaries, songs, poems and discussions commemorating the Liberation War.

The inauguration included opening remarks by freedom fighter Shah Syed Kamal and recollections of the war shared by freedom fighters Commodore Abdul Wahid Chowdhury, Major Abdul Qayum Khan, Dr Kaiser Hamidul Haq, Syeda Kamal, and Nayeem Jahangir.

The second day of the event held yesterday screened the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

A new avenue for aspiring pilots

Emirates Flight Training Academy offering training for Bangladeshis



RASHIDUL HASAN, back from Dubai, UAE

Emirates Flight Training Academy (EFTA) has created an opportunity for Bangladeshi students to train to be pilots there.

According to aviation experts, only one or two flying academies currently exist in Bangladesh. However, they don't have any modern facilities there.

In contrast, EFTA has the most advanced pilot training courses in the world at its academy in Dubai, equipped with state-of-the-art technology and flight training in

advanced multiengine aircraft.

EFTA is offering a 21-month cadet pilot course, which a Bangladeshi student can avail of with the cost of around Tk 2 crore, Capt Abdulla A Al Hammadi, EFTA vice president, disclosed this information recently at a media briefing at his office in Dubai.

Emirates arranged a trip for aviation and tourism reporters from five media houses in Bangladesh to get a first-hand experience about the operations of the airlines, flight training academy and SkyCargo facilities of the airlines.

Located in proximity to Al

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Dhaka air most polluted for 3rd consecutive day

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka continued to occupy the top spot in the list of cities around the world with the worst air quality for the third consecutive day yesterday morning.

With an air quality index (AQI) score of 288 at 9:30am, the capital ranked first in the list of cities with the worst air quality.

An AQI between 151 and 200 is considered “unhealthy,” 201 and 300 “very unhealthy,” and 301 to 400 is considered “hazardous,” posing serious health risks to residents.

India’s Mumbai, China’s Beijing and Thailand’s Chiang Mai occupied the second, third and fourth spots in the list, with AQI scores of 203, 198 and 192, respectively.

Dhaka air was also the most polluted in the world on Friday morning with an AQI of 221.

In Bangladesh, the AQI is based on five criteria pollutants – particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), NO2, CO, SO2 and ozone.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



Two burnt in AC explosion in Niketan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two employees of a recruiting agency suffered burn injuries after an air conditioner (AC) exploded at an office in the capital's Niketan area yesterday morning.

The injured are -- Gopal Mallik, 28, an office executive, and Mizanur Rahman, 20, an office assistant, of KM International.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Traffic movement through this U-loop near Satrasta intersection has been restricted using barricades. Many such U-loops were constructed in the city in a bid to reduce gridlocks. However, they either have been demolished or made inaccessible due to their failure to serve the purpose. This photo was taken yesterday in Tejaon's BG press area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Student dies as microbus hits bike in Arambagh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college student was killed after a microbus hit his motorcycle in capital's Arambagh area yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Arafat Islam Tanvir, 20, son of Md Alamin. He was a first-year student at Abudharr Ghifari College.

He died while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 9:30am.

Confirming the incident, Assistant In-Charge of DMCH police outpost Md Masud Mia said the body has been kept in the morgue for autopsy.

The accident took place near the Arambagh Royal Deluxe bus counter around

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

‘Tanzim Sir’s role was praiseworthy’ DU international relations students stand beside their professor

DU CORRESPONDENT

Ehsan Dhrubo, a Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader and a student at Dhaka University's Department of International Relations, tried to smear Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan's reputation by spreading misinformation, his classmates said in a statement yesterday.

SM Ehsan Ullah Dhrubo, also deputy training affairs secretary of BCL's Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall unit, made a Facebook post around 8:30pm on Thursday, accusing Prof Tanzimuddin of “insulting” him. He reportedly went missing after making the post.

At least 53 students signed the statement. Most of them were present in the class during the incident.

“Prof Tanzimuddin Khan's role in that incident was responsible and praiseworthy. He did what every conscious teacher should do to protect a female student from harassment,” the statement read.

“Exactly why Ehsan Dhrubo politicised the matter is incomprehensible to us. Prof Tanzim did not mention anything about Chhatra League or any political organisations,” it added.

Dhrubo was earlier accused of harassing his female classmate. After he went missing on Thursday night, around 500 BCL activists took position in front of the DU vice chancellor's residence, shouting slogans against the professor.

Ehsan was found near Shahidullah Hall pond on the campus around 1:30am and was taken to the emergency department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for a check-up. He was released from the facility soon after.

MYMENSINGH MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Menace of private ambulances continues



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Private ambulances parked beside the emergency entrance of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) has become a serious nuisance for the hospital's emergency ward patients and their attendants.

Around 3,000 patients from Mymensingh region and adjacent Gazipur and Tangail districts come to the hospital regularly. Besides, there are also the regular huge rush of outdoor patients.

Attendants said not only private ambulances, CNG and battery-run auto-rickshaws remain parked at the emergency entrance gate to get passengers.

Besides, private ambulances parked on both sides of the hospital's main gate often occupy a good portion of the four-lane highway in Charpara area, causing gridlock during rush period.

Locals also alleged that this illegal parking has continued for years now, resulting in a long-term suffering for the city's commuters, patients, and their attendants. Even when the authorities take steps against illegal parking and

brokers of different clinics on the hospital premises, the situation remains unchanged.

When this correspondent visited the hospital recently, it was seen that around 20 ambulances were parked beside the emergency entrance inside the hospital. Patients were having trouble getting in with ease.

"What's ridiculous is that there are stickers forbidding illegal parking on the premises but the place is packed with vehicles -- especially during busy hours," said Ahsan Ali, an attendant of a patient.

The patients and their attendants have little scope for free movement on the hospital premises due to these vehicles, said Salma Akter, a patient. The hospital has a limited capacity to provide ambulance services for critical patients. There are five ambulances at the hospital now, one with life support facilities, said Dr Motiur Rahman Bhuiyan, president of Bangladesh Medical Association, Mymensingh unit.

Contacted, Dr Md Zakiul Islam, assistant director (admin) of MMCH, said they have started taking action against the illegal parking of private ambulances on hospital premises.

A new avenue

FROM PAGE 3

"If Bangladesh wants, EFTA can help Bangladesh's flight academy for its improvement," said Capt Hammadi.

Capt Hammadi said any Bangladeshi students who passed from A level with mathematics and physics as mandatory subjects can apply for receiving training from EFTA.

Hammadi also mentioned that the FTA has a 1,800-metre runway, along with five aircraft simulators and 50 experienced flight and ground instructors. The runway is capable of accommodating over 400 flights a day. There is also an air traffic control tower dedicated to the usage of its trainee pilots in EFTA.

There are at least 27 aircraft under EFTA, including Cirrus SR22 G6, which is the backbone of the EFTA fleet.

The Cirrus SR22 G6 incorporates a modern composite airframe; two large 12" flight displays, and a flight management system, making it an ideal choice for ab-initio pilot training. The Emirates Flight Training Academy fleet includes 22 Cirrus SR22 G6 aircraft.

Besides, EFTA has five Embraer Phenom 100EV aircraft. An evolution of the Phenom 100 business jet, which is considered an obvious choice by

airlines for preparing cadets for multi-engine jet operations, the Phenom 100EV incorporates three interchangeable glass displays -- state-of-the-art avionics, smart automation systems, and graphical flight planning capabilities.

"The training begins with two weeks of classroom-based instruction on the Cirrus SR22 G6 aircraft, followed by more than 196 hours of simulator and aircraft flying instruction. After which a trainee will be ready to take the Commercial Pilot License (CPL) flying skills test," added Capt Hammadi.

"Our continuously advancing technology and progressive curriculum empower cadets to go beyond the extraordinary and become world-class pilots," Hammadi said.

He said their fully-operational flight operations centre is dedicated to EFTA cadets only, making flight training part of everyday life at the academy.

"This implies that you will have the opportunity to gain a complete operational experience in one holistic environment," he added.

The Emirates started its journey in 1985 when it launched operations with only two aircraft. Today, Emirates flies the world's biggest fleets of Airbus A380s and Boeing 777s.

Kidney patients more vulnerable

FROM PAGE 3

those in Turkey and Syria. We, however, can bounce back within 3-5 years if steps are taken accordingly. The government has an action plan in hand, but implementation has been due over the years," he added.

Brig Gen (Retd) Engineer Ali Ahammed Khan, former director general of the Fire Service and Civil Defense Directorate, stressed decentralising the medical equipment and training the healthcare workers on how to rescue patients during disasters.

Prof Harun-Ur-Rashid, president of Kidney Foundation, emphasised making primary kidney disease screening at community clinics across the country.

While presenting a

Our buildings are 20-30 times more vulnerable than those in Turkey and Syria. We, however, can bounce back within 3-5 years if steps are taken accordingly. The government has an action plan in hand, but implementation has been due over the years.

IQBAL HABIB

keynote, Prof Dr MA Samad, founder and president of Kamps, said there are only 210-215 kidney dialysis beds in the country and nearly half (90) of those are in Dhaka city.

"Preparing a mobile dialysis bed can be a good option in times of disasters like earthquakes," he added.

He also suggested that kidney patients store necessary medicine, get information about alternative dialysis centres, build a network of friends, and relatives and neighbours for assistance during emergencies.

Renowned kidney transplant surgeon Prof Dr Kamrul Islam also echoed MA Samad.

Speaking at the event, Md Mizanur Rahman, director general of the Directorate of Disaster Management, highlighted different initiatives taken by the government in this regard. "However, the coordination gap is a major issue," he added.

Revisiting the spirit of liberation

FROM PAGE 3

second episode of the documentary and included musical performances by freedom fighters Naila Zaman, Sharmin Murshed, Daliya Nowshin, Debu Chowdhury, Shaheen Samad, Enamul Hoque and Milia Ali.

The next two days will see various freedom fighters, politicians, researchers, reciters and artists from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra share

their experiences.

"There will be musical performances and poetry recitations, and we will conclude the event with another panel discussion on March 6," Dr Ahrar Ahmed, director of the foundation, said during his welcome speech.

Commodore Abdul Wahid Chowdhury was serving as a submarine specialist for the Pakistani Navy in France at the time of Bangabandhu's

historic speech on March 7. Looking back on those days, he shared, "For the ones among us who were born during the British era, we know that we were unwritten slaves, waiting for independence. This saga continued even after 1947."

Commodore Chowdhury stayed connected to the liberation struggle through the radio -- Voice of America and BBC's broadcasting of stories from Bangladesh, Abdul Gaffar's song, and Bangabandhu's speech.

"Only India and Russia supported us after March 26. I, along with nine others, managed to reach Bangladesh and became a mutineer. I led to the initiation of Operation

Jackpot. I started the naval commando in Bangladesh and trained several fighters near the river banks. We, being a strong naval unit, stopped the entry of resources through water and thus Operation Jackpot became a huge success," he recalls.

Sayeeda Kamal, who was a student of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Dhaka University, shared her experience of helping with relief distribution and treating people.

"I worked tirelessly during this period and our collective efforts led to freedom," she said. "In the present time, we are moving away from the four pillars of the constitution. People now do not feel safe

in the nation we fought for. This is not the Bangladesh we dreamt of, and I really hope we can all work together towards creating the ideal nation."

Two burnt

FROM PAGE 3

The blast took place at the agency's branch office in the Niketan Society area on road 6 around 6:15am. The injured were admitted to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, Rashed Bin Khalid, duty officer of fire service headquarters, told The Daily Star.

He said three units from Teigaon Fire Station went to the six-storey building and doused the fire. The incident occurred on the fifth floor. The fire was extinguished at 6:53am.

He said initially it is believed that the AC exploded from an electric short circuit.

SM Ayub Hossain, resident doctor of the burn institute said Gopal's condition is very critical with 100 percent burns. Mizanur suffered minor burns.

An employee of the office said both the injured were sleeping at the office when the blast took place in the morning. Gopal stayed at office as he was supposed to change his house yesterday.

Student dies

FROM PAGE 3

12:30am, he added. Tanvir's elder brother Salman Islam Sakib said, "Tanvir's house is in South Kamalapur Graveyard road. Tanvir and two others were returning from an event last night on a motorcycle. Tanvir was driving the bike. They fell off the motorcycle after being hit by a microbus near the bus counter. Locals then took them to the emergency department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital."

Quader warns

FROM PAGE 5

organisation of the Awami League," he said.

Referring to the trials of the Biswajit murder case and Buet student Abrar Fahad murder case, he said, "Sheikh Hasina does not spare any criminals. Were the killers of Biswajit and Abrar spared because of their Chhatra League identity? No."

He also urged the young leaders in Chattogram not to involve in misdeeds.

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লালমোটিয়া আবাসিক এলাকায় ১০ কাঠা-ভূমিতে বর্নিজিক উদ্দেশ্যে ভড়া সেকেন্ডে নির্মিত আয় ক্রান্ত লক্ষে নির্মিত ৩ তলার মালের ১০ তলার সুড়িঙ এপার্টমেন্ট (মুগার হোস্টেল) ভবন। যার প্রতি ফ্লোর এটেলড বাল্কন সহ ২৪টি স্বতন্ত্র বস: নিম্নে পল্লি গভীর পাশ সহ ৪টি কমন বারান্দা, ৪টি কমন রিসেপ, ৪টি প্রায়ক ওয়া রয়েছে। ২টি লিফট, বৈদ্যুতিক সাব স্টেশন, ১০০ জনের নামায়েদ গ্রুপ বস ও ১৫০ জনের কার্টারিং প্রকল্পের পেমেন্ট সরবরাহ আছে। প্রতি ফ্লোর হতে মাসিক নিশ্চিত ভাড়া ২৫০ বঙ্গ টাকার। এই ভবনের অধীশ বিক্রয় হইবে। শুধুমাত্র স্থানীয়ভাবে ভাড়া থেকে আরো উচ্চদামে বিক্রয়যোগ্য অফিস ভেড়াপাশ-০১৩১২৮১২০২৪ নাম্বার এ যোগাযোগ করুন।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্ব সাধারণের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, **সী পার্স ইন্টারন্যাশনাল** এর মালিকানাধীন ফিশিং ট্রলার এফ.ভি বিবি-৩ (কাঠবিড়ি) (যাহার অফিসিয়াল নং- এফ- ৮৬৫৬) ট্রলারটির বর্তমানে মালিকানা পরিবর্তনের জন্য নৌ-বাণিজ্য অধিদপ্তর, আশ্রাবাদ চট্টগ্রামের অফিসে আবেদন করা হইবে। উক্ত ট্রলারের মালিকানা হস্তান্তরের ব্যাপারে কারো কোনো আপত্তি থাকিলে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল।

মোবাইল-০১৮১২৮১২০২৪

MANARAT DHAKA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL & COLLEGE (MDIC)

Plot (CEN) # 16, Road # 104, Gulshan, Dhaka-1212
Website : www.manaratcollege.edu.bd

ADMISSION TO PLAYGROUP & NURSERY

Forms for admission to Playgroup and Nursery for the academic session 2023-24 are available in the College Office. Forms will be available upto 23 March 2023 during working days between 9.00am and 4.00pm.

Age limit:

Playgroup : Between 3 and 4 years of age (as on 1st July 2023)
Nursery : Between 4 and 5 years of age (as on 1st July 2023)
Last date of submission: 23 March 2023

Requirements: Following documents are to be submitted with the admission forms:

- Two copies of passport sized coloured photograph of the candidate.
- A copy of birth certificate of the candidate issued by the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- Report card of last academic year (if any) for admission in Nursery.

Note: On the day of interview presence of father and mother is mandatory. Date of interview will be informed later. For further information please contact: 01949800800, 01842389650, 01556325932, 55060039-42, Ext-0/110

Brig Gen (Retd) Md Mehdi Hassan Pramanik, psc
Principal
Ex-Principal, Sylhet Cadet College, Sylhet & Adamjee Cantonment College, Dhaka

INVITATION TO BID

For printing of the 40 Reprint Titles
First Date of Publication Sunday 05 March 2023

ITB No: Rtr/2023/ITB/003

Room to Read Bangladesh invites sealed tender from reputable and eligible suppliers/manufacturers having experience of work with large organizations including UN agencies, INGO and other international organizations in printing of the 40 Reprint Titles. Bidding is open to all bidders/companies registered with Bangladesh Government.

Package	Description	Quantity	Estimated date of delivery
A	Printing of the 40 Reprint Titles Each title 3700 copiesX40 titles = 1,48,000 copies Specifications for 40 RTRBD Reprint Titles: 1.Paper Specification Cover Paper: 350 gsm Art card- both side print, Inner Paper: 150 gsm, Art card, All art papers shall be of Korean/Indonesian origin 2.Printing Specification Impression (Color): 4 colors, Lamination: Cover Lamination: Glossy (Both Side), Binding: Perfect binding (glue with stitch). You may find further details in the bid form	1,48,000 copies	By Thursday 15 June 2023. 75,132 Copies in Moulvibazar Office. 23,302 Copies in Dhaka Field Office. 49,566 Copies in Natore Office. Total 1,48,000 Copies.

Envelope containing sealed bids must be marked with the ITB reference number (top right corner) as indicated above.

Interested bidders must have the following qualifications

- At least 5 (five) years' experiences with large international organization/UN Agency/INGO
- Able to meet the timeline specified above
- Able to deliver the books in the specified location

Interested bidders who meet the above-mentioned criteria may collect the bid form for the tender at the address given below from **Sunday 05 March 2023 to Monday 20 March 2023 by 3.00pm** (except Govt. holiday) during work hours. **Pre-bid meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 11.00am** at Room to Read Country office, Conference Room (4th floor), House 31, Road 4, Block F, Banani.

A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be collected by interested bidders upon submission of a written application on bidder's letterhead. Bids must be delivered to the address below by **Monday 20 March 2023 no later than 3.00 pm**. Any bid after the deadline will be rejected. **All bids will be opened on Monday 20 March 2023 at 3.00 pm** in presence of bidders' representative & Room to Read purchase committee.

Room to Read Bangladesh reserves the right to accept or reject all bids without any reason whatsoever.

Administration
Room to Read, Bangladesh House-31 (4th-6th Floor), Road-4, Block-F, Banani Model town, Dhaka 1213
Phone # 02222271275, 02222270874 Fax 02222270952. Email: Bangladesh@roomtoread.org

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সিভিল সার্জনের কার্যালয়, সিলেট
E-mail: sylhet@cs.dghs.gov.bd

Ref. No. CSS/DRS/RE-TENDER/2023/557 Date: 02/03/2023

e-Tender Notice (Re-Tender)
(Open Tendering Method)

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details, please contract support desk contact numbers.

Re-Tender are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Dr. S. M. Shahreer, Sylhet Civil Surgeon Office, Sylhet, for the procurement of:

Tender Id	Name of goods	Tender/proposal publication date & time	Last date of tender submission
797655	Procurement of Surgical Instrument for the FY 2022-2023 at Sylhet Civil Surgeon Office, Sylhet.	05-Mar-2023 12:00	20-Mar-2023 12:00

Re-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursuer.

Re-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

Dr. S. M. Shahreer
Civil Surgeon, Sylhet

GD-407

Star Olympiad held in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dincipur

The selection round of The Daily Star Olympiad session-3 was held in Rangpur yesterday. The three-hour event started around 2:00pm at Rangpur Zilla School ground. Around 460 students of various educational institutes took part in the selection round. Of them, 50 were selected for the next round in Dhaka. Md Abdul Mannan, additional deputy commissioner (Education and IT) of Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Office, distributed crests and certificates among the participants.

WRONGDOINGS Quader warns BCL activists of consequences

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said Chhatra League activists involved in misdeeds will not be spared and stern action will be taken against them. He said this while addressing a mourning meeting of late AL leader and lawmaker Moslem Uddin Ahmed at a convention centre in the port city. “Those who are carrying out misdeeds using the identity of Chhatra League, they are miscreants ... They have no rights to be in any

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

A building bearing witness to resistance, heroism

Historic battleground lies abandoned in Pabna



AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

The old telephone exchange building in Pabna is currently in a state of despair, with weeds and parasites taking over the entire establishment, and plasters falling off its ceiling. All the doors and windows of the building have either been damaged or gone missing. At first sight, no one will be able to identify that this building has a historic value, as no plaques or signboards are found in front of the establishment. The old lamppost in front of the building is riddled with bullet holes, evidence of the March 1971 battle between the Pakistani Army and the people of Pabna. But the new generation is completely oblivious of the fact, as the authorities concerned took little to no initiatives to preserve this site. According to historians and freedom fighters, Pakistan army launched a crackdown in Pabna on March 25 night, just like elsewhere in the country. They murdered, tortured and kidnapped many patriotic people during this time, setting up torture cells in different parts of the town.



They selected the then telephone exchange building as their headquarter in Pabna. But the freedom loving locals refused to give up easily, and started fighting back with whatever they had. The resistance peaked on March 29, when hundreds of people surrounded the building and began throwing brick pellets inside, with the assistance of some police officers. They also had a few firearms, which they used to

shoot at will around the camp. “The police officials helping us supplied a few firearms from the police line. While some started firing, many threw brick pellets and handmade explosives targeting the camp,” said Baby Islam, a commander of the Liberation War. After a day-long battle, the Pakistan army retreated. The remaining troops withdrew from Pabna, freeing the city from the occupation army until April 10, according to Baby Islam. However, after independence, when the telephone office was relocated to a new building, this historic establishment was completely abandoned. Prof Shibojit Nag, an eminent scholar of Pabna, and Abdul Matin Khan, a social and cultural organiser, also demanded preservation of the site. Contacted, Md Abdul Malek, deputy general manager of Pabna Telephone Exchange, said they have no plans about the old building at this moment. “A plaque was placed in front of that building, but drug peddlers have damaged it,” he added.

Tk 44.5 lakh washing away Irregularities in Teesta dyke protection work

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Protection work of 2,450-metre section of the Teesta river embankment in Mahishkhocha union under Aditmari upazila is going on in full swing. Lalmonirhat Water Development Board (WDB) is implementing the project, divided in eight separate packages, spending Tk 44.5 lakh. Erosion-hit people living in different Teesta shoal villages, however, alleged that the construction firm is making the cement concrete (CC) blocks using low-quality cement, stones and sand, extracted from the Teesta river. If such substandard CC blocks are used in the Teesta dam protection work, they fear that those blocks will not be able to handle the huge pressure of the river water. Though WDB engineers are monitoring the CC block making work, they are not taking any action in this regard due to unknown reason, locals said. Lalmonirhat WDB sources said four different



PHOTO: STAR

Cement concrete (CC) blocks, meant to protect the Teesta river embankment in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila, were made allegedly using low-quality sand, extracted from the Teesta river.

construction firms -- Techbay International, Messrs Mostafa and Sons, Messrs Rupantor and MC-BC JV -- were given work orders of the eight packages. Of the packages, Rupantor got three, Techbay two, Mostafa and Sons two and MC-BC JV got one. However, APS Mizanur took subcontract of five out of the eight packages, including two from Techbay, two from Mostafa and Sons, and another one from Rupantor. WDB officials said the embankment protection

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়

ধুনট, বগুড়া

dahunot@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

স্মারক নং: উপঃস্বাস্থ্যকমঃ/ধুনট/বগু/২০২৩/২৭৮

তারিখঃ ০৪/০৩/২০২৩ইং

পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, ধুনট, বগুড়া এবং ইহার নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন উপ-স্বাস্থ্য কেন্দ্র সমূহের ২০২২-২৩ অর্থ বৎসরের এম.এস.আর সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে পিপিএ-২০০৬, পিপিআর-২০০৮ ও সংশোধনী-২০২১, পিপিএ-২০০৯, ২০১০ এবং ২০১৬, ২০১৯ এর আলোকে এম.এস.আর সামগ্রী সরবরাহের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী/প্রস্তুতকারী ও বিশ্বস্ত ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে গ্রুপ ওয়ারী পৃথক পৃথকভাবে শীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়/স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর।
২.	সমগ্রকারী সত্তার নাম	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তা, ধুনট, বগুড়া।
৩.	সমগ্রকারী সত্তার জেলা	বগুড়া।
৪.	যে জন্য দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হইয়াছে	এম.এস.আর সামগ্রী ক্রয়।
৫.	দরপত্র আহ্বানের সূত্র ও তারিখ	স্মারক নং: পরিঃ(স্বাস্থ্য)/হিসাব শাখা/২৩/২৯/২৮৮, তারিখঃ ০১/০২/২০২৩ইং মোতাবেক।
৬.	সমগ্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ওটিএম)।
৭.	বাজেট বরাদ্দের উৎস	রাজস্ব ও উন্নয়ন।
৮.	গ্রুপ ভিত্তিক কাজের বিবরণ	গ্রুপ নং- “১” ইডিসিএল বর্ধিত্ত ঔষধপত্র, গ্রুপ নং- “২” চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি, গ্রুপ নং- “৩” গজ, ব্যাজেজ ও তুলা, গ্রুপ নং- “৪” লিনেন সামগ্রী, গ্রুপ নং- “৫” এম.এস.আর যন্ত্রপাতি মেরামত (খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ/কাঁচামাল) গ্রুপ নং- “৬” কেমিক্যাল রি-এজেন্ট এবং গ্রুপ নং- “৭” আসবাবপত্র ও ক্রিনেন সামগ্রী
৯.	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	০৫/০৩/২০২৩ইং
১০.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শুরু ও শেষ তারিখ	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ হইতে ১৫/০৩/২০২৩ইং তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।
১১.	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৬/০৩/২০২৩ইং তারিখ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২.	দরপত্র বাত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	সিভিল সার্জন অফিস, বগুড়া ১৬/০৩/২০২৩ইং তারিখ বেলা ১.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩.	দরপত্র সিভিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, ধুনট, বগুড়া এবং সিভিল সার্জন অফিস, বগুড়া।
১৪.	দরপত্র সিভিউল গ্রহণের স্থান	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, ধুনট, বগুড়া এবং সিভিল সার্জন অফিস, বগুড়া।
১৫.	দরপত্রাদাতার যোগাযোগ	দরপত্র সিভিউলে উল্লিখিত শর্তাবলী মোতাবেক যোগাযোগ হইতে হইবে। দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত যে কোন সংশোধনী অত্র কার্যালয়ের নোটিশ বোর্ডে দেওয়া হইবে।

১৬. গ্রুপ নং	কাজের বিবরণ	দরপত্র সিভিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত (সেরতযোগ্য) দরপত্র দাখিলের সময় সংযুক্ত করিতে হইবে
১	ইডিসিএল বর্ধিত্ত ঔষধপত্র	১০০০/-	৪১,০০০/-
২	চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি	৫০০/-	২৩,০০০/-
৩	গজ, ব্যাজেজ ও তুলা	৫০০/-	১১,০০০/-
৪	লিনেন সামগ্রী	৫০০/-	১১,০০০/-
৫	এম.এস.আর যন্ত্রপাতি মেরামত (খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ/কাঁচামাল)	৫০০/-	৪,৭০০/-
৬	কেমিক্যাল রি-এজেন্ট	৫০০/-	৪,৭০০/-
৭	আসবাবপত্র ও ক্রিনেন সামগ্রী	৫০০/-	৪,৭০০/-

১৭. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম

১৮. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী

১৯. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর অফিস ঠিকানা

২০. স্ব-স্ব গ্রুপের দরপত্র সিভিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য) কোড নং- ১-২৭১১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ খাতে ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে বগুড়া জেলার সোনালী ব্যাংক এর যে কোন শাখায় জমা দিয়া নিজস্ব প্যাডে আবেদনপূর্বক চালানের মূলকপি উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, ধুনট, বগুড়া অথবা সিভিল সার্জন অফিস, বগুড়ার ক্যাশ শাখায় জমা দিয়া অনলাইনে বাচাই আপেক্ষে দরপত্র সিভিউল সংগ্রহ করিতে হইবে।

২১. দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন কমিটি/কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করিবার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। সর্বনিম্ন দরদাতার দরপত্র গ্রহণে কর্তৃপক্ষ বাধ্য নহেন। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ এই দরপত্রের তারিখ পরিবর্তন/পরিবর্তনযোগ্য। বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য নিম্নদাখলকারীর কার্যালয়ে যোগাযোগ করা যাইতে পারে।

২২. যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রশাসনিক অনুমোদন ও বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি আপেক্ষে কার্যাদেশ প্রদান করা হইবে এবং ব্যয় মঞ্জুরী প্রাপ্তির পর বিল পরিশোধ করা হইবে। সরকারি বিধি মোতাবেক বিল হইতে আয়কর ও ভ্যাট কর্তন করা হইবে।

ডাঃ মোঃ আশরাফুল ইসলাম

উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তা

ধুনট, বগুড়া

জিডি-৪০৬

3 held over stabbing of RU student

UNB, RU

Police yesterday arrested three persons in connection with the stabbing of a student of Rajshahi University on the campus. Police arrested them after conducting drives in different areas of the city till noon, said Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chandrima Police Station SM Masud Parvez. On Friday night, Abdullah Al Zaheed, a Bangla Department student of the university, was seriously injured after being stabbed by some miscreants on the Fine Arts faculty premises around 8:00pm. Currently, he is undergoing treatment at the emergency unit of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.


Symposium for children with special needs held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It's the right of every child to receive quality education to develop their skills and realise their full potential, regardless of all their challenges. More learning opportunities need to be created for children with special needs. Speakers made these comments at a symposium yesterday focusing on how schools can include more diverse learners in the classrooms. International School Dhaka in collaboration with Bangladesh Finance, organised the event. 25 workshops were conducted during the event, and representatives from several NGOs led these sessions along with ISD faculties.



Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center Project
Export Promotion Bureau
TCB Building (14th Floor), 01, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka



মুহাম্মদ রেজাউল করিম
Project Director (Additional Secretary)

Invitation for Expression of Interest

For Appointment of Electrical Engineering Consultant

Sealed Expressions of Interest (EOI)/Applications are hereby invited from competent candidates for appointment of an Electrical Engineering Consultant (Individual Consultant) to procure consultancy services for construction of new Infrastructures of Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center (BBCFEC) at Purbachal New Town, Rupganj, Narayanganj as per terms and conditions stated below:

Ministry/Division	: Ministry of Commerce
Agency Name	: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)
Procuring Entity Name	: Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center Project
Procuring Entity Code	: MOF Code (I-Base Code) : 1170101-224004100
Procuring Entity District	: Dhaka
Inviting Expression of Interest for Selection of	: an Electrical Engineering Consultant (Time-Based and National)
EOI Ref. No and Date	: 26.02.0000.006.14.160.23/1572, Date: 02-03-2023
Project/Programme Name	: Recruitment of an Electrical Engineering Consultant (Individual Consultant, Time-Based and National) for construction of new Infrastructures of BBCFEC.
Procurement Sub Method	: Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)
Source of Funds	: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)

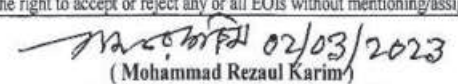
Applicants eligibility, experiences, assignments etc				
Title of Consultant	No. of Consultant	Minimum Educational Qualification	Professional Minimum Working Experience	Assignments
Electrical Engineering Consultant	01	B.Sc in Electrical Engineering	12 (Twelve) Years	(1) The responsibilities of the consultant are to provide consultancy services in connection with preparation of Electrical Engineering machinery/equipment plans, design, specifications, cost estimation, BOQ, equipment installation supervision and quality control for the construction of new infrastructures of the said center complying with specified technical standards, applicable codes and accepted engineering practices, quality and time-frame. (2) Details of the assignments have been described in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for recruiting the consultant.

Availability of Application Form/Format, Terms of Reference (TOR), Format of Request for Application (RFA)

: Complete set of Standard Request for Application (SRFA) documents including Terms of Reference (TOR), Application Submission Form/Format, CV Form, Remuneration Rate and Reimbursable Expenses Form etc will be available in the website address "http://epb.gov.bd/" of The Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) from 07/03/2023 to 28/03/2023. The hard copies of those may also be collected from the office of the undersigned during office hour from 07/03/2023 to 28/03/2023.

Expected duration of the Service Contract	: May be up to 05 (Five) Years and that is conditional
Location of Works	: TCB Building, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka and BBCFEC, Purbachal, Rupganj, Narayanganj.
Expected Commencement & Completion date of Contract	: The expected commencement date of works may be from 02 May, 2023 and Completion date of Contract may be up to 31 January, 2028.
Name of Official Inviting EOI with designation	: Mohammad Rezaul Karim, Project Director (Additional Secretary)
Address of Official Inviting Application	: Bangladesh- China Friendship Exhibition Center (BCFEC) Project Office, TCB Building (14th Floor), 01, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka
Contact details of Official Inviting EOI	: Telephone no: 02-55013884, 01724888910, E-mail Address : mamun_cuet77@yahoo.com
Development Partner	: China
Deadline/Last Date, Time and Place for EOI/Application Submission	: On or before 1.30 pm of 29 March, 2023 in the Office of the Project Director of the BCFEC Project, TCB Building (14th Floor), 01, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
EOI Opening Date, Time and Place	: 29/03/2023 at 2:30 PM at BCFEC Project Office, TCB Building (14th Floor), 01, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
Location of Construction Works	: Sector 04, Purbachal New Town, Rupganj, Narayanganj.
Special Notes/Other information:	: (1) EOI shall be submitted as per prescribed format, described in the (SRFA) documents. (2) EOI shall be submitted in sealed envelope and those shall be clearly marked as "Expressions of Interest for Selection of (Name of the Consultant/Position)" on the envelope. (3) Contact address with email and mobile number of the applicant should be written on the left side of the envelope. (4) The applicants need to submit Curriculum Vitae (CV) along with copies of academic, training and experience certificates and one passport size photograph. (5) 02 (two) sets of EOI (1 original + 1 copy) filled in the prescribed format with supporting documents shall be submitted. (6) Applicants shall provide information and submit documents indicating their competence to perform the expected/said services/works. (7) Experiences on similar nature of works specially experience on design and supervision on construction works will be given preference. (8) Delayed submission of application shall not be acceptable.

The Procuring Entity reserves the right to change or rectify any term and condition of the Standard Request for Application (SRFA) documents, Advertisement Notice and of the TOR. The Entity also reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without mentioning/assigning reason/reasons.



(Mohammad Rezaul Karim)
Project Director (Additional Secretary)

Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center Project, Export Promotion Bureau
1, Kawran Bazar, TCB Bhaban (14th Floor), Dhaka-1215. Phone: 02-55013884,

GD- 409

‘NEVER GAVE UP ONCE’

Safa Kabir completes 10 years of her career

ANTARA RAISA

Starting her career with the hit telefilm, *All Time Dourer Upor* in 2013, once ‘selfie queen’ Safa Kabir, slowly paved her way into showbiz with her versatility and charming personality. Over the years, she proved her acting prowess in OTT projects like *Boli* and *Niswas* and made people believe she could do serious roles too. The actress completed a momentous 10 years in the entertainment industry. She sits down with The Daily Star and talks about her aspirations, philosophy and more.

How does it feel to have completed 10 years in showbiz?

It was a wonderful experience. After 10 years, the fact that people know my name and love me is what matters most to me. I don’t think in any other profession I would get that kind of love and respect from the people. I feel really great, honored, and loved.

I had many

ups and downs during these 10 years, but I never gave up once. I think it’s because of the strength and patience that I have, which helped me a lot.

What difference do you see in yourself now from 10 years ago?

I have changed a lot, physically and mentally. I looked very immature and childish 10 years ago due to my baby face. However, I think I look more mature now. I think that I have become more understanding, compassionate, and mature as I have grown older.

What was the most challenging part of your career?

I started my career with Airtel’s hit telefilm *All Time Dourer Upor*. People used to call me ‘Selfie queen’ and ‘girl next door’, due to this

telefilm. I had to work a lot to break this stereotype that I can only act in these types of dramas. I always wanted to do lead roles in single dramas. The transition from that phase to now was the most challenging part. Now, I feel happy when directors come to me and tell me that they have written the character for me. It means a lot to me.

What are your favorite projects so far?

At the beginning of my career, I did some projects because I wanted to work with that director or co-artist.

Now, I do projects which come from my heart. If I had to mention some of my favorite projects, I would say, *E Golper Nam Nei* directed by Anam Biswas, *Aguntuk* directed by Ashfaq Nipun, *Fagun Theke Fagune* directed by

Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, *Boli* directed by Shankha Das Gupta and *Niswas* directed by Raihan Rafi.

Do you have any plans to work on films?

My debut telefilm *All Time Dourer Upor* was the turning point of my career because I did only three sequences in that telefilm, but people still remember my character even now. So, if I work in a film, I want that film to be memorable – I am waiting for the right script and the right director.

What’s your career plan right now?

After all these years, I have realized one thing – that my fans want to see me more on-screen. So, I want to give my audience better projects from now on. I have done some OTT projects, because of which I started drifting away from the small screen. However, I am shooting for tele-fictions for the upcoming Eid. Apart from these, I am in talks with some film directors as well.

Sani-Moushumi celebrate 27th wedding anniversary



Yesterday marked the 27th marriage anniversary of the renowned celebrity couple Omar Sani and Moushumi. Sharing the joy of their union with everyone, Omar Sani took to his social media account, writing a sweet note on the occasion.

He wrote, “28 years ago, on this date, my late mother and grandmother-in-law had arranged our marriage on a sweet afternoon at our house. Since then, we have been ‘Omar Sani-Moushumi’. Later on, my parents and in-laws organised our marriage functions on August 2, at Sheraton Hotel and Raowa Club.”

“Please pray for us, so that we can spend the rest of our days together just as we are now,” added the actor.



Halls to close down if ‘Pathaan’ not permitted to release

Yesterday, the Exhibitors’ association, in a press conference in the capital, announced that they would close down the Cinema halls one by one, if *Pathaan* is not allowed release.

Lion Cinema owner Mirza Abdul Khaleque said, “Maybe the authorities don’t want us to stay open. We exhibited 40 films last year, of which only *Hawa* and *Poran* did decent business. Yesterday, a government granted film was released, which only 12 people watched.”

Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Pathaan*, which recently became the highest grossing Hindi movie ever, was initially granted permission for release on February, by the Ministry of Information. However, no written confirmation has been issued yet.

NEWS

Phulpori

FROM PAGE 12

Sheikh Hasina Hall. The HC also asked the university to allocate a seat for Phulpori at any dormitory of her choice.

The university will also issue letters to the five students, asking them to explain in seven working days why they should not be expelled from the university.

Phulpori, a first-year non-resident student, on February 14 alleged that Sanjida and several others tortured her for hours on the night of February 12 for staying at the Deshratna Sheikh Hasina Hall without their permission.

Three probe bodies formed to look into the allegation later found it to be true.

Meanwhile, the university’s vice-chancellor Professor Shaikh Abdus Salam, who was on leave for a week, yesterday joined work.

On February 16, three audio clips containing what many believe is a conversation between the VC and a job seeker went viral on social media. In the unverified clips, supposedly the VC was heard making promises of undue advantage to the job seeker, said the sources.

Three days later, the university postponed meetings for recruiting a medical officer and two teachers.

However, the VC had then told journalists that he is neither involved in corruption nor tried to provide extra benefit to anyone.

Japan just found

FROM PAGE 12

Kuril islands, which Tokyo calls the Northern Territories, a dispute that dates to the end of World War II, when Soviet troops seized them from Japan.

Japan also says it has a historical claim to the uninhabited Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which it currently administers, but China has repeatedly challenged that claim.

Meanwhile, Japan and South Korea remain locked in a more than 70-year dispute over the sovereignty of a group of islets known as Dokdo by Seoul and Takeshima by Tokyo in the Sea of Japan, which Korea calls the East Sea.

Doctors of Khulna resume

FROM PAGE 12

Protesting the attack and arrest of ASI Naim and his wife, BMA’s Khulna unit went on a work abstention from Wednesday to Friday. The emergency health service, however, was out of the purview of the strike.

Around 3,000 registered physicians in the district joined the strike, halting services in six major hospitals, nine upazila health complexes, and 367 private clinics and diagnostic centres.

Around 6,000 patients received treatment from the outdoor units of these hospitals every day.

Champa Bairagi, who has been waiting for her sister’s gallbladder surgery at the Khulna Medical College Hospital for the past 15 days, said, “We were getting worried. Now that the physicians have withdrawn their strike, we hope they will do the surgery as soon as possible.”

Rafiqul Islam, who went to the same hospital to admit his mother, said, “My mother fell sick two days ago, but we could not come to the hospital due to the strike. My mother

suffered a lot without treatment. Now, she has finally been admitted to the hospital.”

Meanwhile, Dr Baharul Alam, president of BMA’s Khulna unit, said they postponed the strike for seven days upon the assurance of action from the Khulna city mayor and local administration, including the arrest of the accused police officer.

Earlier, a meeting was held among physicians, the delegation of the Directorate General of Health Services, and the local administration last morning.

After the meeting, BMA leader Baharul came up with the announcement to postpone the strike around 11:40am.

On Friday, a series of meetings between the physicians and the DGHS delegation was held but no one could reach a point to call off or postpone the strike.

On Thursday, ASI Naim was attached to the Satkhira police lines after being withdrawn when the allegation of assaulting a physician surfaced.

North Korea’s state media backs Russian call for probe into pipeline blast

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korean state media yesterday weighed in on allegations that Western nations were involved in blasts that damaged Russia’s undersea Nord Stream gas pipelines last year, in the latest move by Pyongyang to express support for Moscow.

Moscow has maintained, without providing evidence, that the West was behind the blasts that damaged the pipelines in September and has called for an international investigation. Western officials have denied those accusations.

In an article carried by North Korean state news agency KCNA, international affairs critic An Chol Hyok backed Russian calls for an impartial investigation, saying the world needs to be aware of the “vicious coerciveness, war and conspiracy

maneuvers of the United States”.

Investigators from Sweden and Denmark – in whose exclusive economic zones the explosions occurred – have said the ruptures were a result of sabotage, but have not said who they believe was responsible.

North Korea has publicly supported Moscow since Russia invaded Ukraine a year ago and expressed support for Russia’s proclaimed annexation of parts of Ukraine, which most countries have rejected.

The United States has accused North Korea of providing weapons to Russia as well. Both Pyongyang and Moscow have denied that.

The ruptured Nord Stream pipelines are set to be sealed up and mothballed as there are no immediate plans to repair or reactivate them, sources familiar with the plans have told Reuters.

Six highway

FROM PAGE 12

way. They also beat some passengers after blindfolding them.

The robbers carried on till 6:30am in the morning when they left the bus with the injured passengers on the side of the road in Savar’s Kabirpur.

Following the incident, a case was filed with Darussalam Police Station.

Talking to The Daily Star, one of the victims – Shawon Chowdhury Joy, said, he had boarded the bus from Chankharpool to go to Jatrabari around 1:30am. The robbers beat him and took away his phones, cash, and other valuables.

He said that he had filed a general diary with Jatrabari Police Station.

Last year in January, a doctor from Tangail had a similar experience.

The victim filed a case three days after the incident as the police were first reluctant to record the case.

Law enforcers later arrested a gang of robbers over the incident.

Romania

FROM PAGE 2

Other European countries recruiting workers from Bangladesh include Italy and Greece, said industry insiders.

“If we can maintain discipline in the sector, improve our peoples’ skills, we have lots of opportunities for jobs in Europe,” said a foreign ministry official.

Ambassador Daud Ali said apart from jobs, the number of Bangladeshi students in Romania is also increasing because of its low tuition fees and part-time job opportunities.

Last year, a total of 609 Bangladeshi students were enrolled in Romanian universities and this year, the number is expected to be more than 1,600.

The average cost of universities (except for medical school) is around €2,500-3,000 (Tk 3.5-4 lakh) per year.

They can also work part-time jobs (20 hours per week) and cover food and living costs, Daud Ali said.

3 HK Tiananmen vigil organisers convicted

AFP, Hong Kong

Three former organisers of Hong Kong’s annual vigil to commemorate Beijing’s deadly Tiananmen crackdown were found guilty yesterday for refusing to submit information to national security police.

Panic grips Panchagarh

FROM PAGE 1

running a small grocery shop. But the attackers torched that too. We don’t know how we will survive now.”

During a visit to the area yesterday, this correspondent spoke to at least two dozen victims and all of them had similar things to say.

Newly planted 440 trees at a mango orchard, owned by Bashirur Rahman of Dangapara village, were cut down. His poultry farm was also torched and two cows were stolen.

Since the attack, members of the Ahmadiyya community in three villages – Ahmednagar, Phultala and Shalsheri – are living in fear.

“We want security and compensations from the administration so that we can survive,” said Jahangir Alam, 45, a resident of Ahmednagar.

Meanwhile, leaders of the community held a press conference in Panchagarh’s Ahmednagar, claiming the attack could have been avoided if the law enforcers had taken effective measures. They demanded punishment to the attackers.

One person was killed by the attackers, while some 150 houses were looted and vandalised before being torched.

At the press conference, Ahmad Tabshir Chowdhury, convener of the Jalsa Salana, a three-day event organised by the Ahmadiyyas at Ahmednagar in Panchagarh Sadar every year, said one Jahid Hasan was stabbed to death.

Jahid was tasked with maintaining discipline on the premises. When the western side of the Jalsa venue was attacked, he and several others were standing near the boundary wall to resist.

At one stage, the attackers caught him and beat him mercilessly.

“Once he was unconscious, they took him to the banks of Karatoa river, a few 100 yards away from the Jalsa premises, and stabbed him in the head and neck, resulting in his death,” Tabshir said.

SM Sirajul Huda, superintendent of police in Panchagarh, claimed the violence took place despite the law enforcers’ precautionary measures.

“We are investigating the matter thoroughly and will take legal action accordingly.”

Different rights bodies, including Ain O Salish Kendra, Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee

and Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad, in separate statements yesterday, condemned the attack and demanded punishment to the attackers.

Earlier on Friday, two people were killed and at least 30 others, including seven policemen, in a clash between law enforcers and supporters of the Islamist organisations, who were demonstrating against Ahmadiyya community.

The agitators set fire to several houses and four shops belonging to the members of the community. They also attacked a local police station, vehicles of law enforcers and a traffic police office.

Leaders and activists of several Islamist organisations, including the Islamic Andolon Bangladesh, were staging demonstrations since Thursday demanding cancellation of the Jalsa.

Due to the violence, the programme had to be postponed.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Around 8:00pm yesterday, some people were spreading rumours of an “Ahmadiyya man killing a Muslim” in Ahmednagar all throughout Panchagarh town.

Within half an hour, a procession, with several hundred supporters of different Islamist organisations, was brought out. Roads in Dhakkamara area, the entrance to the town, and truck terminal areas were blocked off.

Protesters vandalised and looted a footwear showroom, citing it was owned by an Ahmadiyya man.

They also set a vehicle ablaze. Police later went to the spot to remove the blockade.

Meanwhile, the district administration was urging people through loud speakers to stay alert to possibility of violence by the people spreading rumours and urged all to remain at home for the time being.

10 die on roads

FROM PAGE 12

The dead is Caesar Sarkar, 18, a first-year student of Bamihal Rahmat Iqbal College, said Singra Police Station OC Mizanur Rahman.

Caesar, who was riding the motorcycle, was critically injured in the accident. He was then taken to the Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, said the OC.

PHOTO: AFP

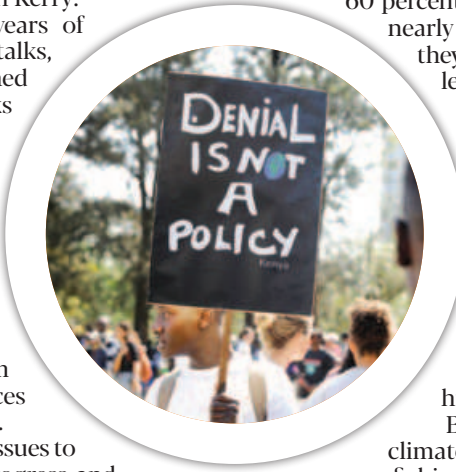
Says UN chief at LDC summit in Doha

AFP, Doha

Wealthy nations had failed to keep a promise to give 0.15-0.20 percent of their Gross National Income to LDCs, the UN chief said. With poorer states trapped in a "perfect storm for perpetuating poverty and injustice", Guterres said LDCs required a "minimum" \$500 billion a year to overcome their problems, build up job creating industries and repay debts.

AFP, United Nations

Disputes include the procedure for



If an agreement is reached, it remains to be seen whether the compromises made will result in a text robust enough to protect oceans effectively.

AFP, Jakarta

Vice President Ma'ruf Amin visited the scene and confirmed 17 people were killed and 60 more injured.



PHOTO: AFP

Israel minister's 'unfathomable' comment irks UN, US

AFP, Geneva

"Just as we condemn Palestinian incitement to violence, we condemn these provocative remarks that also amount to incitement to violence," he added.

AFP, Lahore

In 2020, groups of hardline Islamist men hurled stones at women participating in the Aurat March.

UN nuclear chief
Rafael Grossi as Iran
'enriches uranium to
near weapons-grade
level'





গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
 নির্বাচনী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ এর কার্যালয়
 সড়ক বিভাগ, শরীয়তপুর
 টি- ০৬০১-৬১৪০৬
 ই-মেইলঃ esgar@rhd.gov.bd



অফিস
নম্বর ১০০

স্মারক নং: ৩৫.০১.৮৬৬৯.৪৬৮.০৭.০০২-২২-৮২

তারিখ: ০১/০৩/২০২৩ই

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the below works.

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of work/package description	Last selling date & time	Opening date & time	Remarks
796667	e-GP/15/EE/SRD/2022-2023	Strengthening by base Type-II & DBS-Wearing course work at Mostafapur-Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur; Horina-Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R-860) from ch. 29+180 km to ch. 30+100 km under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022-2023.	16-03-2023 16:00am	19-03-2023 14:00pm	Only online tender
796773	e-GP/16/EE/SRD/2022-2023	DBS-Wearing course and Necessary Repair work at Mostafapur-Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur-Horina-Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R-860) from ch. 33+100 km to ch. 34+600 km under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022-2023.	16-03-2023 16:00am	19-03-2023 14:30pm	Only online tender
796782	e-GP/17/EE/SRD/2022-2023	Repair with Carpeting and Seal Coat work at ch. 22+500 km to ch. 23+200 km of Mostafapur-Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur-Horina-Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R-860) under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022-2023.	16-03-2023 16:00am	19-03-2023 15:00pm	Only online tender

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Bhuiya Redwanur Rahman
 ID No. 602254
 Executive Engineer (c.c.), RHD
 Road Division, Shariatpur

We must protect wildlife at any cost

With proper initiatives, it is not hard to stop or reverse biodiversity loss

In Bangladesh, nature has been at a crisis point for quite some time, and one only needs to look at the present state of our rivers, forests and hills to understand that. This destructive trend has extended to biodiversity as well. Over the last several decades, there has been a persistent drop in the country's wildlife population. Populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish are all also shrinking. This is a deeply troubling situation which we must address.

The threat to wildlife has come under renewed scrutiny on this year's World Wildlife Day. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, wildlife trade has been going on unabated in many parts of the country. The report cites a study done by a Cambridge University team which mentions 13 districts where illegal trade in live animals and animal parts is thriving. Often wild animals, including endangered species, are caught from these districts and brought to Dhaka and Chattogram. Live animals are most trafficked to neighbouring India and Myanmar, while Thailand, Singapore, China, Malaysia, Vietnam and Laos are also potential destinations.

According to sources, there has been an uptick in wildlife trafficking in recent months, suggesting the involvement of a powerful gang. As well as live animals, animal body parts including meat, bones, teeth, nails, skin and even blood are also reportedly sold or smuggled. The rarer and more endangered the animal, the higher its price. Although police occasionally seize consignments of animals and animal parts, clearly those haven't been enough to put a brake on this lucrative trade. Moreover, while low-level criminals are sometimes arrested in these drives, the ringleaders remain almost always untouched, thanks to the involvement of powerful patrons and lack of political support to stop this trade.

Sadly, trafficking is only a part of the problem facing wildlife in Bangladesh. Often the threat also comes from irresponsible conduct by state officials. For example, not long ago, we have seen how open electrical lines have been allowed to go through the Lawachhara forest, leading to many animals getting electrocuted. At Lawachhara, as well as live wires, wild animals have also been exposed to the risk of being run over by incoming trains. According to an estimate, at least 35 wild animals were killed in train accidents in the last five years at the Lawachara National Park. What's worse, the railway authorities have yet to act even after a month has passed since all trains were instructed to run at a maximum speed of 20 kph to ensure the safety of wildlife. More alarmingly, wild animals are also suffering from increasing habitat loss due to destruction and degradation of forests.

These developments only symptomatise the ongoing neglect of wildlife in Bangladesh. Officially, the government retains the policy of supporting biodiversity conservation, but the reality is totally different. Given the grave, multidimensional risks that wildlife and our natural world face, we need to critically rethink our approach to this issue. We urge the authorities to ensure that all threats to wildlife are eradicated. They must take firmer action in this regard.

Why are we allowing single-use plastic?

Government must implement the ban to stop plastic pollution

Three years have passed since the High Court's directive to the Department of Environment (DoE) to put an end to the use of single-use plastic in hotels, motels, and restaurants in coastal areas, but very little progress has been made in implementing it. Similarly, the use of polythene and throwaway plastic bags continues to be rampant despite a ban imposed on polythene bags in 2002. Lack of initiative from the government agencies responsible is mostly to blame for the non-implementation of these vital directives. The result? Single-use plastics, including polythene bags, have emerged as one of the major environmental threats for the country.

Reportedly, Bangladesh generates around 3,000 tonnes of plastic waste every day. It ranks 10th in mismanaging plastic waste in the world, according to a report. Meanwhile, a study has found that in Bangladesh, 36 percent of plastic waste is formally recycled while 39 percent is dumped in landfills. The remaining 25 percent leaks into the environment, eventually flowing into the Bay of Bengal through the rivers.

Plastic waste, dumped into the rivers, has reportedly polluted them so badly that many of them are now on the verge of death. Buriganga River is a case in point. With indiscriminate plastic and industrial pollution, its water has now become poisonous for fish and other aquatic animals to survive there. Karnaphuli, Kirtankhola, Meghna, Kaliganga and scores of other rivers are also choking from plastic pollution. A recent study has also found that at least 17 species of fish and three species of shellfish in three key rivers flowing through the Sundarbans are contaminated with microplastics. This is an alarming situation, and requires urgent intervention from the authorities.

Bangladesh, we must admit, is not the only country to be grappling with plastic pollution. Single-use plastics have emerged as one of the most pressing environmental threats for humanity. But while other countries in the world are taking steps to curb this pollution, Bangladesh lags far behind in this regard. Despite there being bans, laws and HC directives galore, nothing has changed in all these years. Polythene bags and single-use plastics are being used indiscriminately right under the nose of the law enforcers. This needs to change.

It is good to know, however, that the environment ministry has recently asked all government offices at the district level and coastal areas to take necessary measures to stop the use of single-use plastic and polythene. It has requested all relevant offices to hold regular meetings with stakeholders to increase awareness in this regard. While raising awareness and conducting regular drives will definitely make some improvement, the government must do more to effect change. It must fully enforce the bans on plastics, and make sure to strongly implement the relevant law to stop illegal production, marketing and usage of plastic to prevent further environmental pollution.

Role of developmental propaganda in politics



Kallol Mustafa is an engineer and writer who focuses on power, energy, environment and development economics.

KALLOL MUSTAFA

Development refers to the overall improvement of people's quality of life. As such, the development of a country means safe food and water, affordable quality education and health care for all, adequate public transport, safe roads free from traffic jams and accidents, pollution-free environment, safety of life, adequate employment, proper labour rights, democracy, freedom of expression, etc. But it is interesting to note that when Bangladesh's ruling party claims that massive development is taking place in the country, instead of emphasising on the improvement of the quality of life, it usually shows examples of infrastructure development, and cites statistics of economic growth.

Infrastructural development is important for those in power because, on the one hand, it can be quickly and easily visualised and, on the other hand, it is easy to distribute rents to vested interest groups in the name of infrastructure contracts. It is not that these infrastructures are of no use to the people, but since these projects are taken up mostly for the purpose of exhibition and looting, in many cases these are executed using resources that would be better utilised in important sectors like education and healthcare. The risks toward the people and the environment are not taken into account for the sake of development, the projects are often rife with corruption and wastefulness due to the lack of transparency and accountability, and often they pose huge risks to the economy due to their reliance on foreign debts.

Many like to think that these infrastructural developments are only possible when there is long-term economic stability under an authoritarian regime. In reality, authoritarian regimes themselves need these kinds of visible development projects to gain legitimacy for their long-term survival. Conversely, the development of safe food and clean water supply systems are not easily visible, the tasks of building universal healthcare and non-discriminatory education systems are long-term and not easily visible and, above all, these initiatives are not business-friendly per se. To make the transport system pro-people, the transport mafia must be eliminated. If corruption and looting are to be stopped, the interests of the cronies will be undermined. If the rule of law is to be established, the ruling elites must judge themselves, which is impossible. Rather, it is easier and more profitable to build some infrastructure like in western developed countries and promote them as symbols of development and embed that idea into the minds of citizens through propaganda.

The additional benefit accrued by ruling elites through this type of infrastructure-based development model is that government spending on large infrastructure projects increases GDP on the one hand, and creates opportunities for corruption and looting for ruling elites on the other hand. But the problem is, there is a limit to the increase in GDP through such debt-dependent infrastructure projects. After a certain period when the economy no longer has the capacity to borrow more, when these costly infrastructure projects do not generate the advertised benefits, when

the repayment of the loan in foreign currency becomes difficult, then these visible development projects, which were once used to compare the country to Bangkok, Singapore, Los Angeles, etc., appear as a burden for the whole economy.

The growth and crisis of Turkey's economy under the authoritarian leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a good example of the impact of such developmental propaganda. Turkey is currently in such an economic crisis that it makes global headlines on a regular basis. Last year, the Turkish lira lost more than 27 percent of its value against the dollar, inflation officially surpassed 80 percent (and unofficially 180 percent) and it only keeps rising as Erdogan refuses to let Turkey's central bank raise interest rates. But the situation was not always like this. Erdogan rose to power in 2002 on a promise to deliver economic prosperity, and became Turkey's longest-serving ruler thanks

bridge built over the Gulf of Izmit which was one of the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) campaign promises in the 2011 election period. The construction of the bridge started in 2013 and was ceremoniously opened to services on June 30, 2016. Aykut Ozturk described how, on this occasion, TV channels made live broadcasts from the bridge throughout the entire week, dubbing June 30 as "a historic day" and "the day of pride". Driving over the bridge was free for everyone for the next seven days and many people living in cities around the bridge took this chance to have a "historic experience". They joined the celebrations, took photos, danced, recorded videos, and uploaded them to social media to share their excitement.

The megaprojects which were once showcased to justify authoritarianism in the name of economic development have become a burden for Turkey's economy. The projects enjoyed huge government incentives such as land allocation and loan guarantees as well as long-term service purchase and turnover guarantees for the contractors, which are mostly business groups close to the ruling AKP or foreign companies. Rather than investing in factories, which is the conventional way for an emerging economy to prosper, Turkey emphasised on construction-

Metro Rail, Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, Karnaphuli Tunnel, flyovers, four-lane highways, etc. have been shown as evidence of realisation of that dream. After analysing 20 such major projects, the Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD) warned that Bangladesh will be in for a big shock between 2024 and 2026 from the debt liabilities of the mega projects, as the time of foreign loan repayment is nearing. Around Tk 5,569.55 billion is being spent to implement these mega projects, and foreign loans compose of 62 percent of the total spending. During this time, annual instalment for Rooppur will be \$565 million, \$178 million for Padma Bridge Rail Link project, and \$53 million for the Karnaphuli Tunnel. As revenue from these projects will be generated in the local currency, these additional debt servicing in dollar terms will increase pressure on our foreign reserves which already seem to be in continuous decline.

Because of the importance given to debt-funded infrastructure-based development, the country's economy is being burdened by increasing unsustainable foreign debt and import dependence – as it's becoming quite evident from the recent reserve crisis. On the other hand, the quality of people's life has deteriorated, and the disparity between the rich and the poor has increased.



ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

to the country's GDP tripling under his leadership. As researcher Aykut Ozturk explains, instrumentalisation of the national developmentalist narrative by Erdogan's authoritarian regime in Turkey was an important factor behind his long rule. This narrative has been characterised by the promise of meteoric economic development, the articulation of mega infrastructural projects as symbols of realising this promise, etc. This promise of economic development was spread among the masses using slogans like: "Turkey is ready, Target: 2023", "National Will, National Power, Target 2023", "New Turkey, New Power, Target 2023," etc. The year 2023 was carefully selected for its high symbolic and aesthetic significance, as it marks the centenary of the foundation of the Turkish Republic.

The mega construction projects on which the symbolic realisation of the developmental propaganda of the Erdogan regime relied on were two suspension bridges in Istanbul, a new airport in Istanbul, an artificial water leeway between the Marmara Sea and Black Sea, as well as two new "cities" in Istanbul. This became evident in the celebration of the Osmangazi Bridge construction – a suspension

led development. As a result, since the late 1990s, manufacturing has shrunk from more than 22 percent of the economy to about 16 percent, while construction and real estate have grown swiftly and now account for about as large a share of national output as manufacturing. And these megaprojects were mainly funded by foreign currency loans which enjoy government financial guarantees. Now the problem is that Turkish companies are facing a mismatch between their debts and their revenue, because they borrowed in dollars while their customers pay them in lira. The severe deprecation of the Turkish lira in the past several years has gravely exacerbated the liabilities of both the contractors and the government, while pushing up service prices for consumers at facilities where such prices were denominated in dollars.

The same kind of infrastructure-based development discourse has been used for a long time to justify the current oppressive conditions in Bangladesh. That's why catchy slogans like "Vision 2021" or "Digital Bangladesh" have been used to create aspirations for development among the people. And the Padma Bridge,

As a result, in the midst of high GDP growth and with the country having the fastest growth of rich people, the share for the poor in the national income is decreasing, workers are not getting living wages and dying regularly in unsafe working conditions, migrant workers are returning home prematurely (oftentimes dead), unemployed youth are not getting dignified jobs and are dying on desperate journeys abroad, and citizens are not getting affordable quality education and health care. There is an epidemic of death on our expensively built highways that are under complete control of the transport mafia. The statistics of growth and development cannot guarantee clean water, safe food and protection of our environment. The air quality in the country, water supply and sanitation, biodiversity, forestry and rivers are all deteriorating day by day.

To overcome this situation, we have to challenge the discourse of development set by the ruling class. The criteria of development created by them should be rejected, and the concept of the overall improvement of the quality of peoples' lives should be adopted in the development narrative.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net

Sexual offenders should be severely punished

Rape is without a doubt one of the worst crimes anyone could commit against another human being. Unfortunately, we have barely seen any meaningful steps taken to combat this crime in Bangladesh over the years. Not only has victim shaming, marital rape, and even the rape of

children become commonplace in Bangladesh, but it seems like we are becoming increasingly desensitised to such horrific crimes. Oftentimes, the perpetrators are also powerful individuals, whose connections with influential quarters can get them off the hook easily.

It is true that we have laws in place to support rape victims, as well as laws to punish the perpetrators. But how sincerely are those laws being implemented? Without proper implementation, any law can become useless. That is why, it is high time the authorities took

the matter seriously. No matter who the perpetrator is, sexual offenders must be severely punished. Ultimately, proper implementation of laws relating to such serious crimes is a must for any just society.

Rim Badal Sikder, Dhaka.



VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

How to not ‘be a woman’ on Bangladeshi public buses



Afia Jahin is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star.

AFIA JAHIN

Picture this: In late October of last year, it's the night of the Sitrang cyclone. It has been raining in Dhaka city since morning, and in the evening that turns into a storm. I don't feel relieved like I usually do as my time to leave the office draws nearer. But head out I must. Predictably, my go-to bus for Mirpur is nowhere to be seen that night, just as the other public buses which occupy every square foot of the Farmgate intersection. Miraculously, though, armed with my going-going-gone umbrella, I only have to stand on the roadside for a couple of minutes before a bus appears – a single-decker, accordion-style, red BRTC bus carrying (and this will shock you) all women. It won't take me as close to home as I would like, but that will have to do. I rush to the entrance and hop on.

This was also when I first noticed the frustration of the men on the roadside as they realised that this is one bus they cannot board. So much so that, at a later stop, when myself and the other passengers were habitually stopping men from

mohila uthais na!" ("Don't let women get on!").

Alas, women's side of reality is even less rosy. The five to nine (depending on the bus' size) reserved seats that male passengers seem to covet are really no prize. They are usually placed on top of the engine, making the seats too hot to sit on comfortably. Moreover, the women's seating area is usually more cramped, with leg space being slim to nil. Then there's the proximity to the driver, who is often no more a gentleman than the male passengers whose gaze (and touch) the reserved seats are supposed to protect women from.

And while I openly admit that women passengers are really not as good at standing on a moving and swerving bus as their male counterparts, one really cannot expect them to be, either. Childhood may be a different story, but starting from puberty, girls are discouraged from being active or agile. Beyond their studies, most are taught to shelter themselves from the male-

women-only buses, too, has not met fruition. Now, the four buses only offer two trips, operating on one single route.

It is unfortunate that what really stands between women and affordable transportation is a lack of profitability. Still, nowadays, the ratio between male and female passengers on any given bus is much closer to being equal than what it used to be even a decade ago. More students and working women now use public transport within the capital, given the mode's affordability.

But the exclusionary "rules" imposed by transport companies – coupled with the deficient supply of public buses themselves – mean that many women, especially during the rush hours, are unable to board a bus even if they want to, and might ultimately decide to use a different, more expensive mode of transport. For them, the rare sighting of a women-only bus is always a welcome blessing. When I boarded that all-women BRTC bus in October, for instance, I felt relieved in equal parts because I had found a ride home during a storm and because I wasn't having to be alert about men standing too close to me and touching me inappropriately. More importantly, I felt that I was occupying my place on a city bus as a dignified and deserving citizen, not as a social pariah who inconvenienced men simply by existing.

As such, a feasible solution might be for our government to subsidise the operation of women-only buses to make up for the alleged low occupancy rate of non-peak hours. This would also bring the country closer to achieving a number of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030, such as Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 10 (Reduce Inequalities), and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

All things said and done, travelling on public buses is one experience I have never been able to romanticise. It is obvious that women and their mobility are something our society actively opposes (and will continue to oppose for a long time), and that public transport is where this is best exemplified.

But beyond the technicalities of laws, regulations, and The System, my suggestion to women would be to simply take up space. If you can walk, do so briskly and surely, no matter how many men are crowding the footpath that is also rightfully yours. When a man is seated next to you on the bus, don't cower into the corner. Instead, claim your half of the seat (that you are paying for) physically and, if needed, verbally. And when you see a man occupying a seat reserved for you by law, demand that he leaves it. Be coarse when needed. Plant your feet firmly onto the bus floor and try to keep steady against the impractical system given to you. Even having a patriarchal mob practically pressed against you, stand tall and occupy *your* square foot or so of space.

After all, in the words of womanist writer and activist Audre Lorde, survival "is learning how to stand alone, unpopular and sometimes reviled... to make common cause with those others identified as outside the structures in order to define and seek a world in which we can all flourish."

Shabbir Ahmed Shuvo: An inspiration for future (and all) generations



Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and works for Change Healthcare, Inc., an information technology company. He also serves as senior research fellow at the US based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

Shabbir Ahmed Shuvo, a Bangladeshi scholar of international repute, has left his legacy for many generations to come. His untimely death three years ago created a void in the emerging field of stochastic optimisation theory, where Shuvo established his indelible mark within a very short span, but an incredibly frenetic life filled with unbounded achievements.

Shabbir Ahmed was the Anderson-Interface Chair and Professor in the H Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISyE) at Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, USA, when he passed away on June 19, 2019, after a short bout with cancer. He truly was a polymath, and his contributions to stochastic optimisation theory, methodology, algorithms, and their application furthered our knowledge and advancement in the field of energy, logistics and supply chain, chemical engineering, power system design and operations, and healthcare.

Shuvo was an alumnus of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), where he became a lecturer in the Department of Engineering and Technology after he graduated in 1993. Soon after that, he enrolled in the graduate programme of the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign where he received his MS and PhD in 1997 and 2000, respectively, in Industrial Engineering with a concentration in Operations Research. Accolades

and recognition for his pioneering work in his field of expertise rapidly followed.

As a lifelong student of the ever-evolving discipline of decision-making under uncertainty, I can appreciate the challenges and scholarship that Shuvo faced when he started his career at Georgia Tech. Decision-making in every business sector – from energy distribution, transportation, and production planning, to finance, engineering design, and health



Shabbir Ahmed Shuvo

As a lifelong student of the ever-evolving discipline of decision-making under uncertainty, I can appreciate the challenges and scholarship that Shuvo faced when he started his career at Georgia Tech. Decision-making in every business sector – from energy distribution, transportation, and production planning, to finance, engineering design, and health care – involves decisions to be made in the presence of uncertainty. Shuvo's life is an example of his determination to continuously move forward and leave his imprint on a multitude of scholarly areas.

During his PhD studies, Shuvo conducted research work on multi-stage stochastic optimisation at the prestigious IBM's TJ Watson Research Center leading to his appointment as an assistant professor in the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering at Georgia Tech.

Shuvo achieved global recognition for his ground-breaking ideas from the earliest days of his academic career. He received the INFORMS Dantzig Dissertation Award (First Prize) in 2000. INFORMS is the leading international association for professionals in operations research, analytics, management science, economics, behavioural science, statistics, artificial intelligence, data science, applied mathematics, and other relevant fields. He subsequently received the CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation in 2002; the IBM Faculty Award in both 2002 and 2005; the 2017 INFORMS Computing Society Prize; and the 2018 Farkas Prize from the INFORMS Optimization Society for outstanding contributions to the field of optimisation. In 2014, he was appointed both as an ISyE Stewart Faculty Fellow and a College of Engineering Dean's Professor. He was a Senior Member of the Institute of

Nemhauser added.

"Shabbir was a superb scientist and person, he had many things to contribute to the world, and he left us way too early. Words cannot express the sadness I feel," said Dr Dimitris Bertsimas, Boeing Leaders for Global Operations Professor, MIT Operations Research Center.

To honour Dr Ahmed's legacy, Georgia Tech has established a graduate fellowship in his name to support PhD students to inspire the next generations of leaders in the area of optimisation. His cohort at BUET also launched a scholarship programme in his memory. "Stand by the Humanity – BUET 87 Foundation", a US-based non-profit organisation, launched the "Optimization Under Uncertainty" scholarship programme for students of BUET. The mission is to carry on Dr Shabbir Ahmed's vision and commitment to excellence, and to inspire innovative research and worthy achievements. It will motivate students of acumen to pursue higher studies and propel young minds in Bangladesh to embark on their journey ahead with indomitable spirit and fierce efforts. His family, friends, and admirers hope that the scholarship will enable the recipients to make their imprint in the global paradigm of "Unbounded Achievements", which was Shuvo's life-long guiding principle.

From what I have observed within the capital at least, most men seem to harbour a negative attitude towards women receiving "special treatment" on public transportation. It starts, of course, with some men acting as if buses having "reserved seats" for women is somehow the same as depriving the former of their human rights. More recently, some buses have also been refusing to let women on if there are no seats available and if they will have to stand during the journey. Much kudos for such performative chivalry, I say!

getting on, one man screwed up his face into a half-leer, half-frown and demanded, "Ken? Apnera ki amader bus e uthen na?" ("Why? Do you not use our buses?") Mon dieu, the brother had put me in my place!

Self-soothing sarcasm aside, where is a Bangladeshi woman to go, then, if she is supposedly undeserving even of the place specifically reserved for her?

From what I have observed within the capital at least, most men seem to harbour a negative attitude towards women receiving "special treatment" on public transportation. It starts, of course, with some men acting as if buses having "reserved seats" for women is somehow the same as depriving the former of their human rights. More recently, some buses have also been refusing to let women on if there are no seats available and if they will have to stand during the journey. Much kudos for such performative chivalry, I say!

If only this sentiment was consistent and men didn't loudly express their discontent at women sitting on regular, non-reserved seats. Men's complaints even take them to the point of demanding, "Ai

dominated outside world. As such, even in a country that is half theirs by law, girls and young women grow up practising being as anonymous as possible, so as to avoid commonplace sexual harassment or violence.

So, how can women travel on public transport without feeling like sub humans?

The most realistic and provenly effective solution is women-only buses. However, they are a sight rarer than a bi-yearly blood moon. The first women-only buses were introduced in the capital in 2010 by the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC). Rangs Motors followed along with their own Dolonchapa buses in 2018. And while the number of these buses plying our roads was never able to meet commuter demands adequately, the situation worsened during the pandemic recovery period.

According to a report by *The Business Standard* from October 2022, of the original 22 women-only buses from the BRTC, 18 have been phased out for various reasons over the years. The four that remain only operate on four routes. Dolonchapa's plan of expanding from four to 60

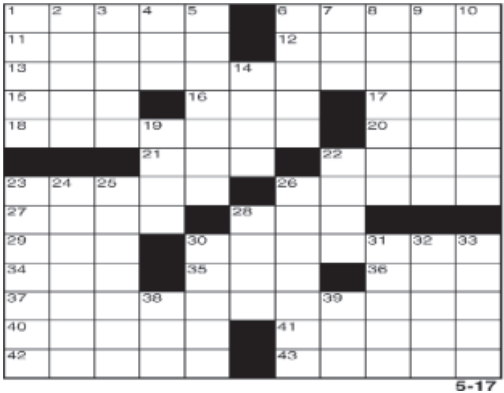
CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 "The Lion King" hero
- 6 Diamond covers
- 11 Musical chord
- 12 Love, to Luigi
- 13 Long Island resort town
- 15 Lawyer: Abbr.
- 16 Ram's mate
- 17 Verb for you
- 18 Craves
- 20 Luggage ID
- 21 Nap site
- 22 Greek cheese
- 23 Fathers
- 26 Bike part
- 27 Raging's Grand-
- 28 Sheep call
- 29 Roulette bet
- 30 Fast fish
- 34 Gorilla or

- gibbon
- 35 Oscar winner
- Mahershala
- 36 Badminton need
- 37 Area of central London
- 40 Caesar's language
- 41 Honking birds
- 42 Halts
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- DOWN
- 1 Place
- 2 Steaming
- 3 View obscurers
- 4 Sluggish's need
- 5 Sticks
- 6 Domesticates
- 7 Band blaster
- 8 Took turns
- 9 In fair shares

- 10 West African nation
- 14 Really impressed
- 19 Alpine goat
- 22 Accomplishment
- 23 Stretches out
- 24 Words of emphasis
- 25 Reaches by bike
- 26 Kitchen waste
- 28 Island east of Java
- 30 Denounces strongly
- 31 Door sign
- 32 Baseball's Pee Wee
- 33 Scatter
- 38 Pointer
- 39 Brief time



MONDAY'S ANSWERS

S	K	I	E	D		S	P	A	S
H	E	N	R	I		H	A	V	O
R	A	G	E	S		E	R	A	S
U	N	O		S	E	A	R	U	N
B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	I	E
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I	C	E	D		T	O	E		
C	H	E	E	S	E	F	R	I	E
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Common walking mistakes and how to fix them

Walking is a great way to get exercise and improve your overall health, but there are some common mistakes people make that can lead to discomfort or injury.

Here are some tips to help you avoid these issues:

Choose the right shoes: Avoid high heels and stiff court shoes. Look for a well-padded, light, breathable, and water-resistant shoe. A running shoe may work well for walking too.

Make sure your shoes fit properly: They should be comfortable and snug, but not too tight or loose. Shop later in the afternoon when your feet are slightly swollen to get an accurate size.

Change up your route: Walking the same route every day can get boring and cause you to lose interest. Look for hills to add intensity and variety to your walk.

Stay aware of your surroundings: Avoid listening to music or podcasts at a high volume and use headphones that let in sounds from the outside. Always be aware of your surroundings, especially when crossing the street.



Avoid distractions: Don't use your phone while walking. It can be dangerous and lead to injuries.

Wear appropriate clothing: Choose loose, comfortable, and breathable clothing that can be adjusted as you get warmer or cooler. Bring rain gear and wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen to protect yourself from the sun.

Track your progress: Use a pedometer or an app to track your steps, miles, or minutes walked. This can help motivate you and ensure you're meeting your exercise goals.

Stretch afterward: Give your muscles a gentle stretch after your walk, especially your calves. Hold each stretch for 10-20 seconds and use a chair or wall for balance if needed.

Why women get emotional during PMS: factors & strategies for coping

DR NUR-A-SAFRINA RAHMAN

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a common condition that affects many women of reproductive age. While physical symptoms such as bloating and cramping are well-known, emotional symptoms during PMS are often overlooked. Emotional symptoms can include irritability, mood swings, anxiety, and depression, and they can have a significant impact on a woman's quality of life.

Why do women get emotional during PMS? Following are some points you can note that might help you understand the reasons.

- **Hormonal changes** are thought to play a significant role in the development of emotional symptoms during PMS. During the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle, which is the second half of the cycle after ovulation, levels of oestrogen and progesterone fluctuate. These hormonal changes can affect neurotransmitters, such as serotonin, which are involved in regulating mood.

Studies have shown that women with PMS may have lower levels of serotonin during the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle, which may contribute to the development of mood disorders such as depression and anxiety.

- In addition to hormonal changes, there are several other factors that may contribute to emotional symptoms during PMS. For example, stress can exacerbate PMS symptoms and lead to emotional distress. Lack of sleep and poor nutrition can also contribute to mood changes during PMS.

Certain lifestyle factors, such as smoking and alcohol consumption, may also contribute to emotional symptoms during PMS.

- Psychological factors may also play a role in the development of emotional symptoms during PMS. Some women may feel overwhelmed or anxious about their menstrual cycle and the impact it has on their



daily lives, which can contribute to emotional symptoms.

Overall, the emotional symptoms of PMS are likely caused by a complex interplay of hormonal, psychological, and environmental factors. While the exact causes may vary between individuals, there are several strategies that can help to alleviate emotional symptoms during PMS.

- **Regular exercise:** Regular physical activity has been shown to improve mood and reduce stress, which may help alleviate emotional symptoms during PMS. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking or cycling, most days of the week.

- **Stress management:** High levels of stress can exacerbate PMS symptoms and lead to emotional distress. Stress management techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, and yoga, may help to reduce stress and promote relaxation.

- **Healthy diet:** Eating a healthy, balanced diet can help to support overall health and reduce the severity of PMS symptoms. Focus on whole foods, such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains, and limit processed and high-fat foods.

- **Sleep hygiene:** Getting enough restful sleep is important for overall health and may help reduce emotional symptoms during PMS. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep per night

and practice good sleep hygiene, such as establishing a regular sleep schedule and limiting exposure to screens before bedtime.

- **Supplements:** Certain supplements, such as calcium, magnesium, and vitamin B6, may help reduce PMS symptoms, including emotional symptoms. Consult with a healthcare provider before starting any supplements.

- **Therapy:** Talking to a mental health professional, such as a therapist, may be helpful for managing emotional symptoms during PMS. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) has been shown to be effective in treating PMS-related mood disorders.

- **Medications:** In some cases, medications may be necessary to manage severe emotional symptoms during PMS. Antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications may be prescribed by a healthcare provider to help alleviate emotional symptoms.

It is important to remember that PMS symptoms can vary greatly between individuals, and what works for one person may not work for another. If emotional symptoms are severe or disruptive, it is recommended to consult with a healthcare provider for further evaluation and treatment.

The writer is a public health specialist.
E-mail: safrinarahman16@gmail.com

HAVE A NICE DAY

Numbness of senses

DR RUBAUL MURSHED

"Content is fire. Social media is gasoline." It is said that this media emphasises sociology, psychology and marketology over technology. Switching from current news to hungry people to war and calamities to a comedy show on the screen in minutes, makes us insensitive to social values.

Eventually, social media numbs our senses and turns us into humanoids more than human beings. We have forgotten how to be kind and do good in this social media-driven age. Research has shown that increasing screen time is associated with negative self-concept and an increased risk of obesity as well as insufficient levels of physical activity.

This 'online frontline' has benefits, but unless media regulators and policy makers monitor, it will harm society. Its unrealistic expectations and sources and cheap popularity can harm mental health. It can make people emotionally numb and less kind toward each other. People who make comments online, would never speak in front of someone; and when they do this frequently, they will begin to become less compassionate in real life.

Studies have found strong associations between excessive use of social media and an increased risk for depression, anxiety and even suicidal thoughts. Social media may promote negative experiences easily. It affects behaviour negatively by depriving children of important social norms that would normally learn through in-person communication. This can cause them to be more emotionless and insecure.

Sitting or lying in front of any type of screen for extended periods of time can ultimately cause brain fog and vision problems, among other health issues because it changes the brain, both behaviorally and structurally.

E-mail: rubaيلمurshed@shomman.org



Artificial lab-based blood transfusion: the future of medicine

DR OPURBO CHOWDHURY

Blood transfusions have been a crucial part of modern medicine. A blood transfusion transfers healthy blood from a donor to a recipient. It replaces blood lost during surgery or injury or treats certain medical conditions.

However, the demand for blood transfusions often exceeds the supply. There are also concerns about the safety of blood transfusions, as donated blood can carry infectious diseases. These encounters have directed researchers to look into the opportunity of creating artificial blood for transfusion purposes.

In recent years, there has been substantial progress in lab-grown blood, also known as 'in vitro' or 'artificial blood'.

Artificial blood, also known as lab-grown blood, is the blood that is produced in a laboratory setting using stem cells or other cells as a starting material. Stem cells are a type of cell that could develop into many different types of cells in the body.

There are several different approaches to producing artificial blood. One method involves using stem cells to produce red blood cells. Another process consists of using cells from the uterine lining to produce blood cells.

The goal of artificial blood research is to produce a product that can be used in transfusions that is safe, effective, and widely available. If successful, artificial blood could potentially address the shortage of donated blood and eliminate the risk of transmitting infectious diseases through transfusions.

There have been several promising developments in

artificial blood research in recent years. For example, in 2018, researchers at the University of Bristol in the UK announced that they had successfully produced red blood cells in the lab using stem cells.

In 2019, researchers at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) announced that they had developed a method for producing red blood cells from endometrial cells. Moreover, these cells could make red blood cells in large quantities.

There have also been several clinical trials of artificial blood products. For example, a clinical trial of a synthetic red blood cell product called 'PolyHeme' was completed. This trial involved patients who had lost significant blood due to injury or surgery. The test results showed that the artificial red blood cells were safe and effective in increasing the oxygen levels in the patient's blood.

Another clinical trial of an artificial red blood cell product called 'HBOC-201' was completed in 2018.

There are several potential benefits of artificial blood transfusions. One of the main benefits is that it could potentially address the shortage of donated blood. According to the World Health Organisation, there is a constant need for donated blood, and the demand often exceeds the supply. This can lead to delays in treatment and can be particularly problematic in low-income countries where the supply of donated blood is often limited.

The writer is a physician in the UK.
E-mail: opurbo.chowdhury@gmail.com



Ear and hearing care for all!

STAR HEALTH DESK

World Hearing Day is held on 3 March each year to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care across the world.

Each year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) decides the theme and develops evidence-based advocacy materials such as brochures, flyers, posters, banners, infographics and presentations, among others. At its headquarters in Geneva, WHO organises an annual World Hearing Day event.

The theme of the World Hearing Day this year is "Ear and hearing care for all! Let's make it a reality."

World Hearing Day 2023 will highlight the importance of integrating ear and hearing care within primary care, as an essential component of universal health coverage

Key messages:
• Ear and hearing problems are among the most common problems encountered in the community.

- Over 60% of these can be identified and addressed at the primary level of care.

- Integration of ear and hearing care into primary care services is possible through training and capacity building at this level.

- Such integration will benefit people and help countries move towards the goal of universal health coverage.

This year, WHO launched a Primary ear and hearing care training manual. The manual will be accompanied with trainer's handbook and other community resources.

Appointment
02 22 22 62 466
10666

Save Your Heart!

Dr. Sayedur Rahman Khan

Dr. Rezaul Hassan

Dr. Mirza Abul Kalam Mohiuddin

OPEN HEART SURGERY

Starts from **BDT 2.5 LAC**

Dr. Afreed Jahan

Dr. Samsun Nahar

Dr. Tunaggina Afrin Khan

CAG ANGIOGRAM

Starts from **BDT 20 THOUSAND**

PTCA STENTING

Starts from **BDT 95 THOUSAND**

United Healthcare brands

Observation period over for Hathurusingha?

NABID YEASIN

Chandika Hathurusingha's reappointment as Bangladesh's coach for a second stint could not have come at a more agreeable time.

The Sri Lankan took over Bangladesh as they were about to host England for a white-ball tour, beginning with an ODI series -- the Tigers' favoured format. Although facing the versatile English side poses a threat in any condition and any format for any side, the thing that boded well for Bangladesh was that they were on a hot streak of seven consecutive home series wins dating back to October 2016, with the latest being a 2-1 win over India in December last year.

Another factor that might have boosted Hathurusingha's confidence was that the first two matches of the series were to be played at the Tigers' favourite hunting ground: the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

However, within just over a fortnight of his arrival in the country, the 54-year-old can see that things are not as upbeat as they may have appeared in the beginning. Bangladesh's hot streak has been dented by England, who were also the last team to have won an ODI series in Bangladesh.

For Hathurusingha, what seems more concerning than avoiding the humiliation of an ODI series whitewash at home for the first time since being swept in February 2014 by Sri Lanka are the flaws that were exposed during those defeats in the first two ODIs.



PHOTO:RAJIB RAIHAN

Even after setting a modest 210-run target, the Tigers almost clawed their way back into the first ODI before giving in to the patience and skills of a determined Dawid Malan, who saw his side home from a precarious situation with an unbeaten century.

But that closely-fought battle ultimately only served as a warning regarding the discernible lack in the Tigers' batting department, from which the Tamim Iqbal-led side failed to learn. They ended up paying a costly price in the following game, ending up on the wrong end of a 132-run hammering just a day later.

In the first ODI, all batters bar Najmul Hossain Shanto seemed to be far outside their element, a fact that was reflected in their scores. Shanto made 58, his maiden ODI fifty, but needed much more support than the scores of 23, 31, and 16 from Tamim, Mahmudullah Riyad, and Mushfiqur Rahim respectively had been able to provide.

The toss not going their way combined with below-average displays in the bowling and fielding departments exacerbated things for the Tigers in the second ODI as the destructive English batters piled up a 300-plus score. In reply, Bangladesh were bundled out for 194 in 44.4 overs, never looking like they had the right process for such a demanding chase.

Hathurusingha had said in his first official press conference that he would observe how things went in the first two ODIs before making any adjustments. Given how he had previously conformed to an authoritative style of leadership in his first stint, it would not be surprising if the final ODI at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram tomorrow sees more than just a few obvious changes in the line-up or even in the style of play.



Naim Sheikh of Khulna and Irene Akter of Rangpur stand on the podium, celebrating their victories in 100m sprint in boys' and girls' events respectively on the concluding day of the Sheikh Kamal 2nd Bangladesh Youth Games at the Army Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. Naim clocked 10.80 seconds while Irene took 12.20 seconds to finish the race. The week-long sporting extravaganza came to a conclusion with Chattogram Division topping the medals tally with 49 gold, 40 silver and 57 bronze medals. Dhaka Division finished second with 46 gold, 39 silver and 61 bronze medals.

PHOTO: BOA

‘Fizz stuck in T20 mindset in ODIs’

MAZHAR UDDIN

Despite being among the most experienced pacers in Bangladesh's bowling unit, Mustafizur Rahman's listless performances in the 50-over format have quickly become one of the biggest concerns for the Tigers in recent times.

The left-arm seamer has been struggling to live up to the expectations that were placed on his shoulders after his heroic entry to international cricket eight years ago, when the ‘Fizz’ became an overnight sensation in 2015.

His mysterious cutters and unpredictability impressed on the international stage against the likes of Pakistan, India and South Africa. But over the years, it seems that his arsenal has become stale and far too predictable. The 27-year-old was ordinary in the two ODIs against England and went wicketless but, more importantly, Mustafizur's lack of venom has made it difficult for the captain to exploit his expertise.

Mustafizur also struggled to contain runs and create pressure on the English batters, an aspect of bowling that was considered his forte when he emerged.

Despite pacer Taskin Ahmed bowling brilliantly from one end during the two ODIs against England, Mustafizur was unable to complement that partnership, leaking runs frequently. So far,

he has conceded 105 runs from 18 overs in the two ODIs against England at an economy of 5.83.

According to veteran pace-bowling coach Sarwar Imran, a lack of pace and consistency has made him predictable even in home conditions.

“I think Mustafizur has become too predictable; bowling slower right from the start. His slowness have become predictable because all the teams have done their homework. I think his ability to bowl quick around the off stump and allow the ball to cut away from right-handers has decreased compared to the past. I think his lack of control is also very crucial and I don't see consistency in terms of his line and length. That is important in ODI format,” Imran told The Daily Star yesterday.

But this has not developed during the England series. Since 2022, Mustafizur has managed 14 wickets in 16 ODIs at an average of over 35. In that time, his best bowling figures are four for 17 from 5.2 overs in Zimbabwe.

Mustafizur has been labelled a T20 bowler due to his inability to adapt to different formats and it seems the left-arm seamer is unsure of his role in the ODI format.

“I think he probably tried too many things at the same time and that backfired for him. He developed a delivery that comes

into the right-hander, but even that is missing these days. There is a difference between T20s and ODIs, where the captain could use his premier pacer in various situations.

“He needs to develop his stock deliveries since batters won't try to play over the top most of the time in ODIs like they do in T20s. I think Mustafizur's wicket-taking ability has decreased because he is bowling with a ‘T20 mindset in the 50-over format,” he added.

Questions have already started to be raised about whether the Fizz has become an ‘automatic choice’ for the team management despite his lack of improvement and consistency. Although skipper Tamim Iqbal defended Mustafizur, many others have used Taskin's transformation based around fitness and mindset compared to the lack thereof from Mustafizur.

Be it a lack of hunger or just as simple case of complacency, Mustafizur must realise that the likes of Hasan Mahmud, Shoriful Islam, Ebadot Hossain and other pacers are hot on his trail.

Given that the Tigers have already lost their series against England in new coach Chandika Hathurusingha's first assignment and considering the Sri Lankan's philosophy, it will not be easy for Mustafizur to continue for long without performing.

Shadman sets the tone for South

SPORTS REPORTER

South Zone opener Shadman Islam scored his 11th first-class ton on the first day of the Bangladesh Cricket League final against Central Zone to help his side to commanding position at stumps at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.



The left-handed batter smashed 18 fours and a six for his unbeaten 130 to take his team to 234 for three.

Having won the toss, South got off the blocks steadily, putting on a 46-run opening stand before Central's left-arm spinner Hasan

Murad trapped Pinak Ghosh LBW for 16 after the 24-year-old tried to sweep a full-length delivery.

Anamul Haque Bijoy hit four boundaries in his 23-run knock but was dismissed when he failed to resist a half-volley outside off-stump by left-arm seamer Abu Hider Rony. Anamul's eyes lit up when he saw a scoring opportunity but he slashed at the delivery, playing away from the body as the ball found the outside edge to first slip, who juggled it to second slip.

Right-handed batter Amite Hasan, who came in at four, didn't trouble the scorers as he went back to the pavilion for nought in the second over after lunch.

Murad did the job again as he fooled the batter with an arm-delivery that went through the bat-pad gap, leaving South three down for 97.

But Shadman motored on from his end and stitched a 137-run partnership with skipper Fazle Mahmud who remained not out on 55.



Manchester City's Bernardo Silva celebrates with Phil Foden, who put his side ahead in the 15th minute with his fourth goal in three games in all competitions, after scoring their second goal as City kept up the pressure on title-rivals Arsenal with a 2-0 victory over Newcastle United in the Premier League on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Buoyed MU ready for Anfield hostilities

AGENCIES

It has been a while since Manchester United made the trip to Liverpool with a justifiable sense of superiority but they head to Anfield on Sunday for their Premier League clash crowing.

United's struggles in recent seasons have coincided with Liverpool's rise under Jurgen Klopp and their fans have had to stomach watching the Merseysiders win the Champions League, Premier League, both domestic cups and more.

But what a difference a year makes. While Liverpool appear to be on the wane, Dutchman Erik Ten Hag has inspired a renaissance at Old Trafford.

United claimed their first silverware since 2017 last Sunday and have lost just one of their last 11 Premier League games. Since the resumption of the competition following the World Cup, no side has claimed more points (23).

Claiming a first Premier League title in 10 years remains a long shot but a win at Anfield would fuel belief that United are ready to pounce.

Ten Hag said his side were prepared to “suffer” and “sacrifice” at a hostile Anfield.

“It will be great, it will be hostile against us, but we like that,” said Ten Hag. “I know these players, my squad, my team, will be prepared to go there and fight and to go there with confidence. We know we will have to suffer and we will have to sacrifice to get

a good result.”

But the United boss sees no reason why they cannot win at a raucous Anfield this weekend and complete a league double over Liverpool this season. “We have to play and to make it our game,” said the Dutchman.

United were hammered 5-0 at home and 4-0 away in their two league meetings with Liverpool last season, but Klopp was wary of the Red Devils in their current iteration.

“They have turned into a results machine. They are squeezing results out with some really good performances. Top football, and if it is not going so well, they still get results,” Klopp said.

“This is a week where I would like to give the season a proper push,” said Klopp. “I said I would like to squeeze everything out of this season. That means to finish as high as we somehow can, but nobody knows where that will be. So we just have to make the next decisive step and we go from there.” Klopp also called on his team to work as a unit to contain the Marcus Rashford -- who has been in red-hot form this season with 25 goals in 39 matches.

“He had a very difficult last year. Now he is playing incredible. His speed, his technique -- it is a mix of everything. How calm he is in front of goal. He scores worldies, he scores the simple ones, he can put his head in. All these kinds of things. We have to defend against that collectively. He is not their only world-class player.”



Phulpori gets to stay in a dorm room

IU suspends 5 Chhatra League students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Phulpori Khatun, who was tortured by Chhatra League leaders and activists at the Islamic University, has sought residency at a dormitory of the university.

She wants to stay in room 501 of Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib Hall.

“The process to allocate her the seat may take a day or two,” said Prof Miah Rashiduzzaman, provost of the dormitory.

The university authorities yesterday suspended the five students who tortured Phulpori.

Of them, Sanjida Chowdhury Antora was the Chhatra League vice president at the university while Halima Akhtar Urmi, Ishrat Jahan Mim, Tabassum Islam, and Mawabia Jahan were activists.

The decision was made after the High Court on March 1 ordered the university to suspend them and to withdraw the provost at Deshratna

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



With their sick children, parents wait at the outpatient department of Khulna Shishu Hospital yesterday morning for doctors to return to work following the postponement of their strike in protest against the attack on a fellow physician.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Doctors of Khulna resume work, puts strike on hold

STAR REPORT

Physicians in the Khulna district yesterday postponed their strike and rejoined hospitals after observing three days of work abstention in protest of the attack on a fellow doctor.

Leaders of the Khulna unit of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) said they decided to put the strike on hold for a week after receiving assurances from the relevant authorities that action would be taken over the incident.

The strike caused immense public suffering as physicians halted services at all government and private hospitals in the district, except for emergency care.

On February 25, Dr Sheikh Nishat Abdullah, head of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Department of Sheikh Abu Naser Specialised Hospital, was assaulted, allegedly by a patient’s relatives including Assistant Sub-Inspector Naim at a nursing home in Sheikhpura of Khulna city during a surgery.

In a press conference at the Khulna Press Club on Thursday, ASI Naim alleged that the physician had tried to “seduce” his wife while she went to him for their child’s treatment. His wife also lodged a case against the physician at Sonadanga Police Station.

Talking to reporters on the same day, Dr Sheikh Nishat Abdullah, dismissed the allegation, demanding proof.

He also lodged another case accusing the ASI Naim, his wife, and their collaborators.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Five held for murder, rape of teen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Police have arrested five men in connection with the rape and murder of a teenage girl in Mymensingh’s Phulbaria.

A team of the Detective Branch arrested Shahid Mia, 38, Alamgir Hossain, 28, Shahjahan, 26, Masum Billah alias Fazar Ali, 22, and Rasel Mia, 19, in Mymensingh and Tangail on Friday, said police.

All of them are workers of a local brick kiln, said Masum Ahmed Bhuiyan, superintendent of Mymensingh police, at a press conference yesterday.

On February 24 evening, the 14-year-old victim went out of her home but did not return. Her body was found hanging from a tree adjacent to her home on the next day.

Her mother Hasna Begum lodged a case with Phulbaria Police Station against unnamed persons.

Of the arrestees, Rasel and Alamgir recorded their confessional statements before a Mymensingh court yesterday afternoon. The court then sent them to jail, said Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of the Detective Branch of Mymensingh police.

Police produced the rest of the arrestees before a court with a seven-day remand prayer, but the court granted two-day remand each. They were taken to police custody, the OC further said.

10 die on roads

STAR REPORT

At least 10 people, including two students, were killed and scores injured in six road accidents yesterday.

In Chakaria of Cox’s Bazar, five people were killed and four others injured when a bus of Border Guard Bangladesh collided with a pick-up yesterday morning.

The dead are Mohammad Hamid, 32, and Jahangir Alam, 25, and Nazrul Islam, 34, Nargis Akhter, 13, and Mohammad Russell, 30.

Eyewitnesses said the Cox’s Bazar-bound bus collided head-on with a pick-up around 9:45am at Jangalia gate, a border area between Chakaria of Cox’s Bazar and Lohagara of Chattogram.

Three people died on the spot and all the victims were passengers of the pick-up, they said, adding that Nargis and Russell died on their way to hospitals in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, UNB reports, the accident took place when the pick-up was trying to overtake a motorcycle and collided with the bus.

Emon Kanti Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Chiringa Highway Police Station, confirmed the incident. “Both the vehicles are in our custody. After completing the legal procedures, the bodies were handed over to families.”

In Boda and Debiganj upazilas of Panchagarh, at least three devotees were killed in two road accidents when they were returning home from congregations.

At least 77 were injured in the accidents. Of them, 15 were sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition, said police.

Tamiz Uddin, 60, of Baragach area, and Hasibul Islam, 32, of Pitha Khawa area in Tentulia, were killed and 51 others injured

when the front wheel of a bus burst in Chandanbari area of Boda, said Boda Police Station OC Sujoy Kumar.

Swapan Ali, 25, of Tentulia, was killed and 26 others injured when a truck hit their bus from behind in Laxmirhat area of Debiganj, said Debiganj Police Station OC Jamal Hossain.

They were returning home by bus from Debiganj yesterday afternoon after



The pickup truck involved in the accident in Cox’s Bazar that left three dead.

attending the final prayers of the three-day congregation, the OC added.

In the capital’s Arambagh area, a college student was killed after a microbus hit his motorcycle yesterday morning.

The dead is Arafat Islam Tanvir, 20. He was a first-year student at Abudharr Ghifari College.

He died while undergoing treatment at

Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 9:30am yesterday.

Assistant In-Charge of DMCH Police Outpost Masud Mia said the body was kept in the morgue for autopsy.

Tanvir’s elder brother Salman Islam Sakib said, “Tanvir and two others were returning from an event early yesterday on a motorcycle. Tanvir was driving the bike. They fell off the motorcycle after being hit



Japan just found 7,000 islands it didn’t know it had

CNN ONLINE

Japan has recounted its islands – and discovered it has 7,000 more than it previously thought.

Digital mapping by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan (GSI) recently found there to be 14,125 islands in Japanese territory, more than double the figure of 6,852 that has been in official use since a 1987 report by Japan’s Coast Guard.

However, the GSI this week stressed that the new figure reflected advances in surveying technology and the detail of the maps used for the count – it did not change the overall area of land in Japan’s possession.

It said that while there is no international agreement on how to count islands, it had used the same size criterion as the previous survey 35 years ago.

That entailed counting all naturally occurring land areas with a circumference of at least 100 meters (330 feet).

The new number does not include any artificially reclaimed land.

The islands surrounding Japan have been at the heart of several territorial disputes.

Japan lays claim to the Russian-held southern

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

DARING NIGHTLONG ROBBERY

Six highway robbers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six men have been arrested over last month’s shocking robbery incident, in which criminals held hostage the staff of a bus and drove it around Dhaka all night, picking up passengers – whose pockets they emptied along the way.

A team of the Detective Branch of police (Gulshan division) apprehended them from different parts of Savar on Friday, DB Chief Harun or Rashid told a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.

They are – Fakhrul Kabir Shanto, 29, Monir Hossain, 30, Imran, 22, Mujahid alias Babu, 28, Rajib alias Asif, 21, and Sunny, 26.

According to the DB chief, a bus of Risat Paribahan left Khulna’s Sonadanga with passengers on the morning of February 12 and reached Gazipur’s Shibbari in the afternoon.

From there it went to Nabinagar for a return trip. Due to lack of passengers, the driver parked the bus close to Parbata Cinema Hall and fell asleep in the back with his assistant and supervisor.

Around 12:30am, a group of 8-10 robbers entered the vehicle and beat up the staffers with iron pipes and stole their valuables. They were gagged, blindfolded, and had their limbs bound before being put in the back seat.

One of the gang members then took out the bus and drove it through Gabtali-Asadgate-Newmarket-Ajimpur-Jatrabari-Kachpur posing as passengers and staffers. They picked up passengers and robbed them along the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



A Ukrainian armoured personnel carrier (APC) rides by a road in Bakhmut, in the Donetsk region, on Friday. The head of Russia’s Wagner mercenary group said its forces had “practically encircled” the eastern Ukraine city, which has seen the fiercest fighting of Moscow’s invasion.

PHOTO: AFP

Fight at wedding leaves groom’s father dead

UNB, *Nilphamari*

A man was killed in Nilphamari on his son’s wedding day after a fight broke out between two sides of the wedding parties due to a shortage of meat dish served at the feast.

The incident happened in Jaldhaka upazila’s Bagulagari Ershad Bazar area under Nilphamari district.

The deceased, Nuru Mia, was a resident of Hajirhat area of Rangpur.

Police have arrested two people, including the bride’s father.

According to locals, the bride’s family invited a total of 100 guests, but 250 people attended the ceremony from the groom’s side, which led to a food shortage.

Quoting witnesses, police said that an argument started between the two parties due to a “shortage of meat” that escalated into a serious fight.

Nuru Mia fell to the ground at one point and died on his way to the hospital.

Firoz Kabir, officer-in-charge of Jaldhaka Police Station, said the body was sent to the morgue for an autopsy.

“Legal steps will be taken based on the results of the autopsy,” he said.

Both sides are preparing to file cases.