



B3 Local firms show manufacturing capabilities



P11 Bangladesh face Iran in must-win game



P7 Key Xi ally Li Qiang named Chinese premier



P6 I've fed my family through rap: Black Zang

'Bangladesh always ready to welcome you'

PM tells foreign investors at Bangladesh Business Summit

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh Business Summit 2023 began yesterday to showcase the country's potentials to global investors.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the three-day event, urging the international business community to invest in Bangladesh as the country will be a developed, prosperous, and smart one by 2041, reports BSS.

"Bangladesh is always ready to welcome you. Invest in Bangladesh thinking that it is your country," she said.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) organised the event at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in the capital, marking its 50th founding anniversary.

The ministries of foreign affairs, commerce, and the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) have partnered with the FBCCI for the event.

The organisers are highlighting that Bangladesh's economy has been growing annually by around 6 percent for two decades. The country is set to graduate to a developing country by 2026. And it is expected to become the ninth largest consumer market by 2030.

A documentary screened at the event showed how Bangladesh aims to be an upper middle-income country by 2031 and a developed one by 2041.

Bangladesh's textiles and garments export will hit the \$100 billion by 2030. The country is also one of the most reliable sources for drugs of international standard. Local drugmakers export to 150 countries and meet 98 percent of the demand at home while the leather industry is the second largest export earner.

The country is the world's largest exporter of jute and jute products. To make economic advancement pick up pace and to become a developed nation, the government's target is to establish 100 economic zones.

The prime minister said improving the investment environment was the government's priority, according to a FBCCI statement.

She said the BIDA is implementing the Bangladesh Investment Climate Improvement Programme mainly to put an end to red tape.

People around the globe have been suffering amid rising prices of essentials and high inflation rates due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war, and economic sanctions and counter-sanctions, she said.

"Bangladesh, like many other developing countries, is now facing serious trouble due to the global economic recession. Even the developed

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Bangladesh's textiles and garments export will hit the \$100 billion by 2030. The country is also one of the most reliable sources for drugs of international standard. Local drugmakers export to 150 countries and meet 98 percent of the demand at home while the leather industry is the second largest export earner.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and dignitaries at the Bangladesh Business Summit 2023 organised yesterday at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

PHOTO: PID

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

RU students, locals clash; over 220 hurt

University suspends classes, exams for 2 days; police outpost, 50 shops set on fire; fight broke out over argument on a bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 220 people were injured after students of Rajshahi University fought running battles with locals and police in Binodpur area near the campus yesterday evening over trifles.

At least 20 students suffered shotgun pellet injuries as police fired teargas and rubber bullets to control the situation.

Witnesses and law enforcers said the students vandalised and set ablaze some 50 shops in the area.

A police outpost was also set on fire and officials could not tell who set it ablaze.

The university authorities suspended all classes and exams for two days.

The clashes were still going on when this report was filed around 1:15am today.

At least seven platoons of BGB were deployed in the area, said Lt Col Shabbir Ahmed of BGB Battalion-1.

According to law enforcers and locals, a student of the university was travelling to Rajshahi from Bogura by bus when he had an argument with the bus driver and his assistant over taking a seat in the bus.

When the bus stopped at the Binodpur gate of the university around 6:00pm, their argument reignited.

At that time, a local shopkeeper

intervened, taking the side of the bus driver and helper.

There was pushing and shoving between the shopkeeper and the student. The situation soon escalated as more students and locals engaged in the fight and chased each other.

Several motorcycles were vandalised during the clash.

Prof Sultan-ul-Islam, pro vice-chancellor of the university, told The Daily Star around 10:00pm that 150-200 students were injured in the

incident.

They were treated at the university medical centre and Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

At least 86 people were admitted to the RMCH, officials said.

Most of the injuries were caused by police charging truncheons and locals and students throwing brick chunks and stones at each other.

Rayhan Islam, RU correspondent of Bangladesh Protidin, Mir Kadir and Jaber Ahmed, RU

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Transmitting Adani's power to get costlier

Project is one of six seeking revision today

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The overall cost for transmitting electricity from the Adani power plant in Godda, Jharkhand is set to increase further as two projects meant for that end are eyeing cost and time revisions.

In today's meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, one of the 12 proposals that would be placed for approval involves the revision of a project on setting up the transmission network for the electricity generated at the Adani power plant.

"If the project is implemented, the power imported from India (Adani) can be fed into the national grid through the northern region," said the revised proposal from the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, the implementing agency.

PGCB is now seeking an additional Tk 1,048.5 crore and another year for completion of the project called the Southwest Transmission Grid Expansion Project.

The revision is to accommodate route expansion and build new substations, according to the proposal.

Some transmission lines related to bringing in power from India have been added and some need to be reconstructed such as the east-west interconnector along with transmission lines from Gaibandha's Palashbari to Bagura's Mahashangar and from Pabna's Ishwardi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

BUSINESS

Bangladesh not heading towards Chinese debt trap

STORY ON B1

Biz Summit attracting investments

STORY ON B1

Local firms show manufacturing capabilities

STORY ON B3



Two men pouring kerosene in a barrel by the side of a street in the capital's Tejgaon, oblivious to the serious risks of a fire. Besides, they were doing this next to a plant of Linde, which makes gasses for industrial and medical use.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
সড়ক পরিবহন ও সেতু মন্ত্রণালয়
সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ
ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ
ডিটিসিএ ভবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা ১২০৮

স্মারক নং - ৩৫.০২.০০০০.০১৭.১৪.০১৩.২২-৫৬ তারিখ: ০৫/০৩/২০২৩

খানা জরিপ (Household Interview Survey) বিজ্ঞপ্তি ২০২৩

ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ (ডিটিসিএ) এর উদ্যোগে কৌশলগত পরিবহন পরিকল্পনা (Strategic Transport Plan, STP) হালনাগাদ কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে।

এ প্রেক্ষাপটে, ডিটিসিএ-এর অধিক্ষেত্রে (ঢাকা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ, গাজীপুর, নরসিংদী, মুন্সীগঞ্জ ও মানিকগঞ্জ জেলা) কৌশলগত পরিবহন পরিকল্পনা হালনাগাদের জন্য খানা জরিপ কার্যক্রম মার্চ থেকে ডিসেম্বর ২০২৩ পর্যন্ত চলবে। জরিপ কর্মীগণ দৈবচয়নের ভিত্তিতে বাড়ি-বাড়ি গিয়ে তথ্য সংগ্রহ করবেন। এ জরিপ কার্যক্রমে সঠিক তথ্য ও মতামত প্রদান করে একটি উপযোগী পরিবহন পরিকল্পনা তৈরিতে সহযোগিতা করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হল।

মোহাম্মদ রবিউল আলম
অতিরিক্ত নির্বাহী পরিচালক (টিএমপিটিআই), ডিটিসিএ
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Woman killed in Jatrabari road accident

STAR REPORT

A 45-year-old woman was killed after being hit by a human haulier, locally known as leguna, at Nayanagar More in the capital's Jatrabari area yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Priti Rani Das of Brahmanbaria. She used to live with her family at Kazla in Jatrabari.

Witnesses said the accident occurred around 12:30 pm when the Jatrabari-bound human haulier from Matuail hit her while she and her daughter were waiting for a vehicle.

They were returning home after she took her daughter to a physician, said family members.

Priti was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries around 2:30pm, said Md Bachchu Miah, in charge of the DMCH police outpost.

The body has been kept

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Without proper safety measures, this shop in the capital's Tejgaon area is storing gas cylinders stacking them on top of each other. Experts continue to urge the authorities concerned to ensure proper storage and handling of such cylinders as the risk of explosion is high. Over the years, the country witnessed many such fatal accidents due to negligence. The photos were taken yesterday.



MAKING ANTI-MOSQUITO DRIVES EFFICIENT

DNCC to conduct research work

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) is planning to conduct research from April to May to make anti-mosquito drives more

effective. "In the US, they do research work before going for action at the field level. We are taking action without any research work, which is a systematic error. So, we do not understand which types of

We are planning to take help either from the lab of Jahangirnagar University or the one under Communicable Disease Control of Directorate General of Health Services. We have already held two meetings in this regard.

ATIQUUL ISLAM, DNCC Mayor



pesticides are required in which area," said the mayor.

He said the US experts suggested building a lab along with necessary experts and technicians to make anti-mosquito activities more effective.

"We are planning to take help either from the lab of Jahangirnagar University or the one under Communicable Disease Control of Directorate General of Health Services. We have already held two meetings in this regard."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Please call me baba one last time'

Says father of the latest victim in Gulistan blast, death toll reaches 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The air inside the Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery was heavy with grief. Shah Jahan, the grieving father of Mirza Azam, could not hold back his tears as he longed to hear his son's voice one last time.

"Please call me baba just once... my dear son, talk to me," he cried out in anguish.

Mirza Azam, only 35 years old, had been working as a dedicated employee at a sanitary shop located on the ground floor of a building in Siddikbazar for six long years. However, his life was cut short due to the tragic explosion that occurred there.

Despite the valiant efforts of the firefighters who rescued him from the wreckage, Mirza suffered from 80 percent burns and was rushed to the Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery. He



PHOTO: STAR

passed away yesterday morning around 9:30am, leaving behind a trail of shattered dreams and broken hearts.

Mirza's uncle, Nannu Mia, shared that Azam's six-year-old daughter is still unaware of the tragic news. Everyone is struggling to muster the courage to break it to her. The deceased was the eldest of two brothers and two sisters, and he used to reside with his parents, wife, daughter, and

siblings in a rented house in Moghbazar's Madhubar area. Their ancestral home is in Patuakhali's Baulful village.

The devastating blast in Gulistan on Tuesday has claimed the lives of 23 people so far and wounded over 100. Just like Azam's family, the tragic demise of the victims has left a deep void in the hearts of their loved ones, who will forever miss their presence, smile, and love.



There is less possibility of signing the agreement because the government is dependent on India to remain in power... I don't believe the government will take a hard stance to force India to sign since it depends on India rather than on the people.

Asked about the delay in signing and prospects of the treaty, Nazrul said, "First of all, there is less possibility of signing the agreement because the government is dependent on India to remain in power... I don't believe the government will take a hard stance to force India to sign since it depends on India rather than on the people."

"Even if the deal is signed, its implementation will be critical. You can put pressure for implementation when there is an agreement," he observed.

Nazrul, an expert on international river law, said the initiative of constructing two canals and expanding the Teesta barrage by West Bengal is certainly concerning for Bangladesh. "Getting water in the dry season will become uncertain for Bangladesh."

"It must not be seen as an issue between Bangladesh and West Bengal. Concerns should be raised before the Indian government... Bangladesh must not be bothered by the state government's stance," he said.

During an interview with the Indian newspaper The Telegraph last month, Bangladesh's National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) Chairman Manjur Ahmed Chowdhury said, "[West] Bengal will not be able to divert water to Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Women's math Olympiad held at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Ten female students from different universities won prizes at the Women's Math Olympiad that was held yesterday at Dhaka University, marking International Women's Day.

The competition was arranged by the Bangladesh Women's Mathematics Olympiad Committee, AF Mujibur Rahman Foundation of Math and DU Applied Math Department.

At least 120 female participants took part in it.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Brac, Meta digitally empowering women in Bangladesh



STAR REPORT

Facebook-parent Meta and Brac recently hosted an event titled "Empowering Women and Youth in Digital Spaces" to celebrate International Women's Day and share the results of their partnership on a digital awareness programme launched last year.

Facebook-parent Meta has been working with partners in Bangladesh to support programmes to empower women through economic and digital awareness.

So far, more than half a million Brac programme participants have learned about online safety, privacy tools and how to tackle misinformation; around 75 percent of the trainees are women, said organisers.

Moreover, around 10 million youth and women became acquainted with the safe and effective use of social media through a social media campaign, they added.

The impact measurement showed that 98 percent of participants say they now know how to maintain a positive digital footprint compared to 62 percent before they started the training programme.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhruul Islam Alamgir speaks at a human chain programme in front of the party's Nayapaltn central office yesterday. BNP held similar programmes in the capital and 77 organisational districts to press home its 10-point demand, which include resignation of the government and holding the next general election under a non-partisan one. The party also announced to hold rallies in all metropolitan cities on March 18 to realise their demands. Among others, the party standing committee member Mirza Abbas was also present.



PRAYER TIMING MARCH 12

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-05 12-45 4-30 6-12 7-30
JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-45 6-15 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

9 hurt in attack on Sirajganj baul event

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

At least nine artists were assaulted when a mob attacked a cultural programme featuring baul songs in Sirajganj on Friday night. Musical instruments, chairs and other valuables were also vandalised at the venue.

Sirajganj Baul Shilpi Goshthi organised the two-day event on the premises of Abdur Rouf town hall near Sirajganj Bazar station.

Talking to The Daily Star, Sanjib Kumar, president of the organisation, said they inaugurated the programme with songs and a discussion on Friday afternoon.

After the discussion, they resumed the cultural programme around 8:15pm, he said.

"A group of people suddenly got out from a local mosque and vandalised the venue,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

No country for bauls

They pass days in fear as attackers go unpunished



Left, the vandalised venue in Sirajganj on Friday. Baul Ronesh Thakur standing in the middle of his torched music room in Sylhet in 2020. In the last seven years, fanatics mounted several attacks on the bauls' dens (akhra). Not a single attacker has been brought to book as of now.



PHOTO: STAR/COLLECTED

AMANUR AMAN, *Kushtia*

Bauls in the western part of the country continue to live in constant threat of attacks and humiliation as the attackers enjoy complete impunity.

To protect themselves, the victims had to settle with their attackers on multiple occasions. Even in their stronghold in Kushtia, they no longer feel safe.

In the last seven years, fanatics

mounted at least five attacks on the bauls' dens (akhra). Not a single attacker has been brought to book as of now.

On November 5 last year, attackers led by an imam of a local mosque swooped on a Baul akhra in Kushtia's Laubaria. Fazal Fakir, a baul who's in his 80s, was injured in the attack. The following day, a case was filed with Daulatpur police station, accusing 19. Of them,

18 were granted bail after they surrendered to the court.

Out of the five, Chuadanga saw four attacks on bauls, which involved hair cutting, setting akhras on fire, and even murder.

The latest incident took place on February 7, when miscreants attacked and set fire to a baul akhra in Belgachi Shewratala in Chuadanga's Sadar upazila.

Abdur Razzak Fakir, leader of the akhra, filed a case against

unknown people with Sadar Police Station on February 9. Police have not arrested anyone so far.

Zakaria Hossain, a baul organiser of Akundabarria village of Sadar upazila, told The Daily Star that a baul was hacked to death on his way to take part in an event around 11:30pm on December 10, 2015.

A case filed on December

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Another fire in Sitakunda
Flames at cotton depot could not be doused even after eleven hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chhota*

A fire broke out in a cotton warehouse in Chhoto Kumira area of Chhota Sitakunda around 10:30am yesterday.

As of filing this report at 9:30pm yesterday, eight units of firefighters from Sitakunda, Kumira and Agrabad fire stations have yet not managed to douse the flames, said Abdul Hamid Mia, deputy assistant director of Chhota Sitakunda Fire Service and Civil Defense.

Around 9:00pm yesterday, a team of army reached the spot to help firefighters douse the blaze, upon request from the Chhota Sitakunda district administration.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



7 lives lost on roads



Two persons were killed and 15 injured after this passenger bus overturned in Rangpur's Gangachara upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAR REPORT

At least seven people died and 21 were injured in road accidents across the country in the last two days, report our correspondents and a news agency.

In Rangpur, two persons were killed and 15 were injured after a speeding passenger bus overturned in Gangachara upazila yesterday, said police.

The deceased are Jahangir Alam, 35, of Gangachara upazila and Md Sumon Mia of Gaibandha Sadar upazila.

OC Dulal Hossain of Gangachara

Police Station said locals with the helper of firefighters rescued the injured and sent them to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

The driver and its helper fled after the accident, he added.

Meanwhile in Phulbari upazila, Mongli Kisku, 50, of Hakimpur upazila was killed after a speeding bus hit the van carrying her yesterday noon. Van puller Akher Ali was injured in the accident.

In Nawabganj upazila, Rashida Begum, 70, was killed after a speeding bus ran her over at Daudpur village of Daudpur-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Bhashani univ students demand safe roads

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Students of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University (MBSTU) in Tangail blocked the road in front of their university in Santosh demanding road safety yesterday. They also formed a human chain to press home their five-point demand.



On Wednesday, Md Emon, a student of the university, was seriously injured after being hit by a CNG-run three-wheeler in front of the university. Emon is currently undergoing treatment at Dhaka's Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

The demands include setting up of police boxes at the Kagmari intersection of Tangail-Nagarpar road

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Let's Build A Beautiful Tomorrow

Owners of land plots are invited to discuss their proposals

Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani, Old DOHS, Uttara, Banasree, Kalabagan, Pallabi, Mirpur DOHS, Shyamoli, Monipuripara, Green Road, Wari, Bashundhara, Shantinagar, Moghbazar, Eskaton, Segunbagicha, Paribagh, Indira Road, Mohammadpur, Lalmatia, Khilgaon, Malibagh, Bashabo & Siddheswari.



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Tea workers from different areas, belonging to different ethnic groups with their own language and culture, gathered to celebrate Fagua, a festival of colours. The event showcased at least 30 mesmerising performances from different cultures, including Patrasaora, Nriyayogi, Charaiya Nriya, and more. This photo was taken from Moulvibazar yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Finding joy, unity amid struggle

Tea workers come together to celebrate Fagua festival

MINTU DESHWARA

In the heart of the green Fulchhara tea garden, the air was filled with a riot of colours and joy as thousands of tea workers gathered to celebrate the Fagua festival yesterday. It was a rare moment of respite from their otherwise arduous and monotonous lives.

For tea workers in Bangladesh, life is riddled with struggles. They toil hard in the tea gardens, earning meagre wages to support their families. The work is back-breaking, and the hours are long. But once a year, all the tea garden workers come together to celebrate Fagua, a festival of colours.

This year's celebration was a sight to behold. People from different areas, belonging to different ethnic groups with their own language and culture, took part in the festival.

As the bright colours of the abir powder filled the air, people of all ages, children, teenagers and elderlies, danced and sang all day, forgetting their sorrow.

The festival was organised by the "Fagua Utshab Udjapon Parishad" to preserve the heritage of the tea workers. Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar Mir Nahid Ahsan inaugurated the programme, while Assistant High Commissioner of India Shri Niraj Kumar Jaiswal

attended the event as a guest of honour.

For Bidhan Roy, a tea worker at Phulchhara tea garden, the festival was a time to forget about the difficulties of life. "Our lives are difficult... But during this time of the year, we forget about everything and celebrate the diversity in different tea gardens, celebrate different cultures."

As the day drew to a close, the tea workers returned to their homes, their hearts filled with joy and their minds at peace. The festival of colours may be over, but the memories of this day will live on, reminding them of the power of community, culture, and celebration.



Pabna University of Science & Technology
Office of the PUST Treasurer Office, PUST, PABNA.

Memo No: PUST/PDW/e-GP/OTM/446/2023

Date: 11/03/2023

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Sl No	e-Tender ID	APP ID	Package No & Invitation Ref. No	Name of Works	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Method
01.	799426	190557	24448 & Memo No: PUST/PDW/e-GP/OTM/446/2023; Date: 11/03/2023	Supply, Installation, Configuration, Testing & Training Wi-Fi Access Point for Pabna University of Science and Technology, Pabna.	12 Mar, 2023 14:00 pm	28 Mar, 2023 12.00 pm	OTM

This is an online Tender where only e-tender will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



Md. Rafiqul Islam
Deputy Director

Planning, Development & Works
Pabna University of Science & Technology, Pabna.
Phone No: 025-888 444 51

Bomb attack kills guard in Afghan city Eight injured

REUTERS, Kabul

A blast hit a cultural centre during an event for journalists in northern Afghanistan yesterday, killing at least one security guard and wounding eight, according to authorities and journalists, a few days after the province's governor died in an explosion claimed by Islamic State.

"Today, at 11:30 am an explosion occurred at the Tabyan Cultural Centre, in the second police district of Mazar-i-Sharif in Balkh province ... the explosion happened due to a mine," said Abdul Nafi Takor, spokesperson for the Taliban administration's Ministry of Interior.

Takor added that five journalists and three children were among the injured and a security guard was killed. It was not immediately clear who was behind the explosion.



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida offers flowers at the memorial ceremony to mark the 12th anniversary of 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster, in Fukushima, Japan yesterday. A minute's silence was observed nationwide at 2:46 pm, the precise moment when a 9.0-magnitude quake devastated northeastern Japan 12 years ago.

PHOTO: AFP

China appoints Li Qiang as premier

AFP, Beijing



Li Qiang, one of Chinese President Xi Jinping's most trusted allies, was confirmed as premier yesterday, as Xi cements his influence on the country's top leadership.

Li, the former Shanghai party chief who oversaw the city's gruelling two-month lockdown last spring, was named the successor of outgoing premier

Li Keqiang at a meeting of the country's rubber stamp parliament.

The 63-year-old received nearly every vote from the more than 2,900 delegates at the National People's Congress, a day after Xi was unanimously selected by deputies for a norm-breaking third term as president.

Xi's motion nominating Li Qiang as premier was read out to the chamber yesterday morning.

Journalists were asked to leave the chamber as deputies, mostly dressed in dark suits, marked their ballots in a tightly choreographed process.

Delegates later applauded as Xi ceremoniously deposited his votes in the ballot box while cheerful traditional music played from speakers.

An electronic screen in the hall displayed 2,936 votes for Li, with only three delegates voting against his appointment and eight abstaining.

Li later took an oath, swearing to be loyal to China's constitution and to "work hard to build a prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious and great modern socialist country".

Bakhmut now a 'killing zone'

Says UK as Russians face Ukrainian counter-offensive

AGENCIES

Bakhmut has become a "killing zone" that is probably highly challenging for Russia's Wagner mercenary forces trying to continue their assault westward, the UK Ministry of Defence said yesterday.

Its latest intelligence update said that over the past four days, Wagner Group forces had taken control of most of eastern Bakhmut, while Ukrainian forces held its west and had demolished key bridges over the Bakhmutka River, "which now marks the front line".

The ministry said: "With Ukrainian units able to fire from fortified buildings to the west, this area has become a killing zone, likely making it highly challenging for Wagner forces attempting to continue their frontal assault westwards."

Russian mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin, meanwhile, said his Wagner private army had opened recruitment centres in 42 cities as he seeks to replenish its ranks after heavy losses in fighting for Bakhmut, reports Reuters.

In an upbeat audio message on Friday, Prigozhin said new fighters were coming forward but gave no indication of the numbers involved. He also said ammunition supplies had improved, but remained a concern.

"In spite of the colossal resistance of the Ukrainian armed forces, we will go forward," he said. "Despite the sticks in the wheels that are thrown at us at every step, we will overcome this together."

Wagner has led some of the fiercest fighting in Russia's attempt to take Bakhmut, where the Ukrainian army is still holding out after more than seven months of attritional warfare - a bloody campaign that Prigozhin calls "the meat grinder".

In a separate post on social media on Friday Prigozhin said Ukraine was preparing a counteroffensive near Bakhmut, adding: "Of course we are doing everything we can to prevent this from happening."

In another audio message on Friday, Prigozhin said he had thanked the government for a "heroic" increase in production of ammunition but said he was still worried about shortages for his fighters and the Russian army as a whole. He said ammunition was now being produced "in huge quantities, which cover all the necessary needs".

China role in Saudi, Iran deal a tricky test for US

REUTERS, Washington

The surprise deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore diplomatic ties offers much for the United States to be intrigued about, including a possible path to rein in Tehran's nuclear program and a chance to cement a ceasefire in Yemen.

It also contains an element sure to make officials in Washington deeply uneasy - the role of China as peace broker in a region where the US has long wielded influence.

The deal was announced after four days of previously undisclosed talks in Beijing between the Middle East rivals. White House spokesperson John Kirby said on Friday that while Washington was not directly involved, Saudi Arabia kept US officials informed of the talks with Iran.

Relations between the US and China have become highly contentious over issues ranging from trade to espionage and increasingly the two powers compete for influence in parts of the world far from their own borders.

Kirby appeared to downplay China's involvement in Friday's development, saying the White House believes internal and external pressure, including effective Saudi deterrence against attacks from Iran or its proxies, ultimately brought Tehran to the table.

But former senior US and UN official Jeffrey Feltman said China's role, rather than the re-opening of embassies after six years, was the most significant aspect of the agreement.

"This will be interpreted - probably accurately - as a slap at the Biden administration and as evidence that China is the rising power," said Feltman, a fellow at the Brookings Institution.

The agreement comes as Iran accelerates its nuclear program after two years of failed US attempts to revive a 2015 deal that aimed to stop Tehran producing a nuclear bomb.

Brian Katulis, of the Middle East Institute, said that for the US and Israel the agreement offers a "new possible pathway" for reviving stalled talks on the Iran nuclear issue, with a potential partner in Riyadh.



It also offers hope for more durable peace in Yemen, where a conflict sparked in 2014 has widely been seen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

China's involvement in brokering the deal could have "significant implications" for Washington, said Daniel Russel, the top US diplomat for East Asia under former President Barack Obama.

Russel said it was unusual for China to act on its own to help broker a diplomatic deal in a dispute to which it was not a party.

"The question is, whether this is the shape of things to come?" he

said. "Could it be a precursor to a Chinese mediation effort between Russia and Ukraine when Xi visits Moscow?"

When it comes to Iran, it is not clear that the results will be good for the US, said Naysan Rafati, senior Iran analyst at International Crisis Group.

"The drawback is that at a time when Washington and Western partners are increasing pressure against the Islamic Republic ... Tehran will believe it can break its isolation and, given the Chinese role, draw on major-power cover," said Rafati.

China's involvement has already drawn skepticism in Washington about Beijing's motives.

Republican Representative Michael McCaul, chairman of the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, rejected China's portrayal of itself as peace-broker.

Kirby said the US was closely monitoring Beijing's behavior in the Middle East and elsewhere.

"As for Chinese influence there or in Africa or Latin America, it's not like we have blinders on," he said. "We certainly continue to watch China as they try to gain influence and footholds elsewhere around the world in their own selfish interests."

Still, Beijing's involvement adds to a perception of growing Chinese power and influence that contributes to a narrative of a shrinking US global presence, said Jon Alterman, of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

MIGRANTS ON BOATS 1,000 brought to safety at Italy ports

AFP, Rome

More than 1,000 migrants were brought to safety at two Italian ports after the overcrowded boats they were on encountered problems in the Mediterranean, the coastguard said yesterday. The rescues came the same day as a body was discovered of the 74th victim of the deadly shipwreck nearly two weeks ago - that of a female child between five and six years of age, according to news agency AGI. Coastguard videos showed a large fishing boat pitching violently back and forth in nighttime rough seas with dozens of people visible on the deck. Other images showed inflatable rescue boats approaching another fishing vessel packed with people.

Man killed in Bihar for possessing beef

REUTERS, New Delhi

Police in India have arrested three men in eastern Bihar state in connection with the death of a Muslim man who was attacked because he was suspected of carrying beef, a police official said yesterday. The victim, Naseem Qureshi, 56, died earlier this week after being attacked by a mob on suspicion of carrying beef, the sale and consumption of which is restricted in some parts of the country by local governments. Hardline Hindu groups have been demanding a complete ban on cow slaughter across India. Bihar is currently ruled by a regional party, and Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party sits in the opposition. In the latest incident in the state, the victim was allegedly surrounded by over twenty people and attacked, according to a police statement in court. Police intervened but Qureshi died on the way to the hospital, according to the statement. Ramchandra Tiwari, head of Rasulpur police station in Bihar, where the crime took place, said by phone that three people were arrested.



Police investigators inspect a shell crater left by a Russian military strike in a supermarket car park, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kherson, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



"There is no doubt that the law on the registration of non-governmental organisations was used as an excuse to start, generally speaking, an attempt to change the government by force."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov denounces Georgia protests as coup attempt

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Barguna
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Memo No. 46.02.0400.000.14.001.23.504 Date: 09.03.2023

Corrigendum-2 for Tender Notice No. 28/2022-23

This is to notify for all concern that the Tender Notice No. 28/2022-23 invited vide Memo No. 46.02.0400.000.14.001.2023.364 Date: 16.02.2023 (Tender ID: 788556). Tender document last selling date & time will be 19.03.2023 & 16:00pm instead of 06.03.2023 & 16:00pm. This Notice will be stated as a part of the tender document. More information will be available at concern office. All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Suprio Mukherjee
Executive Engineer
LGED, Barguna

GD-447

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Don't normalise risky living

Dhaka's unsafe buildings pose too great a risk to be left unaddressed

Given how vulnerable the majority of buildings in Dhaka are to fires, explosions or collapses because of their questionable construction and maintenance practices, it seems almost natural that residents would go on reeling from one disaster to another. The question is not whether a tragedy will strike again, but how soon. Only the other day, we drew attention to the fact that three accidents took place in rapid succession – first in Gulshan, then near Science Lab intersection, and then in Gulistan, the latter killing 23 people so far. And now there is news of yet another tragedy, in Savar this time, where almost the entire roof of a 10-storey government building collapsed, injuring at least 16 workers. While the cause of the incident is yet to be determined, there is no doubt that questionable construction practices had some role to play in it.

Unfortunately, it's not just residential/commercial buildings that are at risk of accidents. As per a report by this daily, many of the city's kitchen markets are also in danger. Over the last two decades, a total of 19 kitchen market buildings were identified as risky, yet those continue to be in operation. Of them, nine are under the DNCC, and 10 under the DSCC. Despite promising to phase them out and relocate shops to new buildings, the city corporations have done little so far beyond putting up signboards. Millions continue to visit these establishments at great personal risk. Whose fault will it be if any of those buildings collapse or meet any other tragedy? Why do city authorities continue to ignore the red flags? Such reckless negligence is totally incomprehensible.

Risky living, risky shopping, risky breathing, risky commuting – there seems to be no end to the plight of residents, just as there is no end to the mismanagement perpetuating these risks. Just imagine: There hasn't been a single conviction in any of the cases related to major fire incidents over the past decade. Owners of factories or establishments who should have been held responsible for criminal negligence are dodging justice, with their businesses operating as before. More alarmingly, institutions whose corruption and negligence are allowing dangerous construction and maintenance practices are never held accountable either, although doing so is key to reverse the situation. Reportedly, there are 54 agencies under 11 ministries to ensure governance in the capital. And if they were held accountable for every fire or blast or collapse, along with the unscrupulous owners of buildings, the risk factor could have been largely neutralised.

All this points to the significance of enforcing existing building, construction and safety regulations, and of establishing accountability for any violation regardless of the individuals and institutions culpable. Some urgent reforms are in order. We urge the government to immediately demolish the dilapidated kitchen markets of Dhaka and other at-risk residential and commercial establishments. Those at risk of fires, explosions or collapses as a result of weak foundations or earthquakes should also be fortified. Recent events have shown the urgency of decisive actions to improve building safety. The authorities must not fail us again.

Rhetoric cannot save our rivers

State minister's words must be followed by proper action

The state minister for shipping has made a dire prediction saying that Bangladesh will not survive if our rivers stop flowing. He said this at a time when most of our rivers are facing an existential threat – while many have already died or are on the verge of death, those that still have some life left in them are also facing rampant pollution and encroachment. He further said that the government will rescue the rivers from encroachers, claiming they have made a list of river grabbers. While we appreciate the state minister's assurance, we think actions speak louder than words, and the government's performance in this regard so far leaves a lot to be desired.

Over the years, despite such promises and assurances, there has been little fruitful action to protect our rivers from pollution, encroachment and undue interventions leading to their loss of navigability. This is despite a High Court directive in 2019 awarding our rivers the legal status of "living entities". In it, the court gave the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) the responsibility to protect the rights of not only rivers but also canals, beels and other waterbodies. The HC also issued 17 specific directives to save the country's rivers and waterbodies from pollution and encroachment, including directing the authorities concerned to make a list of river grabbers and publish it in the media, declaring that river grabbers cannot run in any elections or get bank loans, etc.

Four years have passed since that landmark judgment. Has any of those directives been properly followed by the authorities concerned? Evidently not. We know that a list of 63,000 river grabbers was prepared by the NRCC in 2021. What happened to that list? The state minister has said that the list is being verified. The question is, why is it taking so long to verify it or take action based on it?

Meanwhile, the four rivers surrounding Dhaka – Buriganga, Turag, Balu and Shitalakkhya – have become so polluted by chemical, industrial, and household waste that their water is almost unusable now. The condition of the Buriganga is so bad that hardly any aquatic life can survive there. Back in 2009, the Department of Environment declared these four rivers Ecologically Critical Areas (ECAs), requiring urgent action to save them. Fourteen years later, these rivers are facing the same threats as before. The condition of other rivers across the country are pretty much the same, with many of them – Brahmaputra in Mymensingh, Dhaleshwari in Savar, Ichhamati in Pabna, Old Khowai in Habiganj, etc. – facing a slow death due to pollution, grabbing, sand lifting as well as mismanagement by the authorities.

This situation must change. We want to see action rather than promises that never really materialise. The authorities must take decisive actions to improve the condition of our rivers so that Bangladesh has a chance of surviving in the distant future.

How can Bangladesh avoid a middle-income trap?

Dr Sharjil Haque
is an economist based in
Washington DC. Views
expressed in the article are
the author's own.



SHARJIL HAQUE

In a recent visit to Bangladesh, the World Bank's leadership urged the country to take concrete steps to avoid falling into the so-called "middle-income trap". Similar concerns have been raised by economists in local think tanks such as the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). No doubt, this matter is increasingly coming to the forefront as Bangladesh is now all set to graduate from the Least Developed Country status.

The concept of a "middle-income trap" is usually credited to Indermit Gill, now chief economist at the World Bank, and Homi Kharas from the Brookings Institution. They argued that rapid transition from low income to middle-income country status which is often driven by cheap labour and export-driven economic models, is likely to be followed by prolonged low growth rates. Their intuition is simple. As wages rise, these "newly minted" middle-income nations suffer from reduced competitiveness in producing labour-intensive goods (e.g., garments) because their wages are now too high relative to other low-income countries, nor can they compete with high-income nations that have far greater levels of technology and innovation. As a result, these economies experience sustained growth slowdowns and rising informal economies. The economic struggles of countries in Latin America are often cited as proof of the middle-income trap.

As economists, we attempt to understand empirical patterns such as those observed in Latin America through formal economic theory. However, we continue to disagree on a convincing growth theory that would help policymakers better understand the transition from a middle to a high-income country. Perhaps this has led to different and somewhat arbitrarily defined approaches to measuring the existence of the middle-income trap for a given country while leaving some questions unanswered. For example, is a country caught in a middle-income trap if the factors that cause a slowdown in growth (e.g., higher wages, global recessions) are different from the factors that sustain slow growth (e.g., corruption, poor macroeconomic policies)? Does the middle-income trap even matter if a country's GDP growth is just enough to "technically" stay out of the trap, but the economy suffers from rampant inequality? After all, Bangladesh's statistical bodies are notorious for inflating growth figures, so staying

high-quality education, and careful macroeconomic management that is free of political intervention.

Bangladesh's tax-GDP ratio is among the lowest in the world, which naturally constrains private investment. The less said about the education sector, the better. Several industries such as information and technology, finance,

creation, technological progress, and skill acquisition. Herein lies the need for a more outward-looking trade policy that goes beyond thinking about ways to just protect inefficient domestic producers. Finally, we all know the domestic financial sector is severely underdeveloped while the banking system has suffered from numerous scams that exacerbated the



ILLUSTRATION: BIPOB CHAKRABORTY

out of a trap should not be too difficult from a purely mechanical sense.

The middle-income trap is meaningful if we think about it in terms of the structural factors preventing steady progress instead of just the number of years a (middle-income) country experiences slow growth. It reflects a fundamental inability to shift towards sustained levels of high growth rates because domestic productivity and technology relative to advanced countries are too low. Make no mistake: this is the defining feature. Even though global economic shocks can slow down progress, if an economy has high levels of productivity, it will always revert to its expected long-run trend. The absence of innovative capabilities that allow an economy to shift towards higher value-added activities is the key reason why many countries have failed to transition towards a high-income economy. As such, creative destruction is the way forward for Bangladesh as well.

So where does Bangladesh stand in charting a technology-driven journey towards high middle-income status in 2031 and developed country status by 2041? The short answer is we have a tough road ahead. If the economic transformation of South Korea is any guide, a true journey to higher income brackets must be characterised by far greater domestic resource mobilisation, rapid industrialisation,

real estate, and even garments suffer from lack of skilled human capital. As a result, foreign workers are hired to fill the void. A report by this daily suggests that these foreign workers remit approximately USD 6 billion back to their home country every year, which is about one-fifth of our foreign exchange reserves. It is astonishing considering how many workers Bangladesh sends abroad every year because they could not find jobs at home. This is nothing short of a market failure stemming from below-par education that fails to equip the domestic labour force with the appropriate skill set. Effective education will require a complete rethinking of the way we train our students, in addition to higher budgetary allocations.

But the story does not end there. Macroeconomic management, while overall prudent, still needs to be far more progressive to transform Bangladesh into a productivity-driven economy. Several years ago, I had written on the rising global trend of exporting intermediate goods ("Trade policy: World racing ahead, Bangladesh standing still", *The Daily Star*, 2015). Fueled by the fragmentation of production processes across different countries, many developing economies have substantially increased their exposure to global value chains (GVC). Participating in GVCs accelerates productivity, foreign investment, job

misallocation of resources.

One encouraging pattern I observed recently is the rising trend of venture capital (VC) investments in Bangladesh. VC investments typically come from seasoned global investment managers who spot promising opportunities in early-stage firms typically in sectors such as information and technology, consumer services, and health care. Moreover, VC investors typically bring institutional knowledge of best practices to grow a young business. Because young firms typically do not have the type of collateral needed to secure bank debt (e.g., machines, real estate), many promising startup ideas can never see the light of day. One must wonder if regulation can become more open to allow credit to flow to these sectors that carry tremendous long-term potential. For example, in the United States, banks can make direct private equity investments in startup tech firms, subject to careful credit appraisal of expected cash flows.

At the heart of it all, regulators must be willing to adopt a vision for Bangladesh that is more technology and productivity based. Not only do these challenges require new policies, but stronger institutions. Unless we accept that what worked before will not work in the future, achieving a sustainable growth path with shared prosperity will become a very daunting task.

Student evaluation is necessary to improve our public universities

Asmat Islam
is lecturer, Department of Philosophy,
Jagannath University.

ASMAT ISLAM

It is surprisingly depriving for our students that public universities in Bangladesh do not provide the scope of student evaluation. The relationship between student evaluation and protecting the autonomy of students is something that needs to be explored. In other words, it needs to be identified how the failure to provide a policy that supports student evaluation leads to institutional domination in public universities.

The global standard is for higher educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to assess their learning experience and outcomes through student evaluation. Student evaluations are necessary to ensure student-centred learning rather than teacher-centred learning. Nevertheless, there is a substantial lack of fostering student-centred learning in public universities in Bangladesh.

In general, student evaluation is important for a few reasons. First, student evaluation can help promote accountability and continuous improvement within the university.

Universities illustrate a commitment to meet the needs and expectations of their students by consistently pursuing and considering student feedback. This strategy is evidently proven to work continuously to improve the quality of their educational contributions.

Second, student evaluation often provides significant insights and feedback to instructors and administrators about the efficacy of a course or programme. It helps in identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement. Consequently, this scheme can inform decision-making and the development of innovative pedagogical approaches.

Third, student evaluation can provide a means for students to voice their opinions and concerns about their educational experiences – which protects their autonomy. In turn, such evaluation can help instructors and administrators understand how to better meet the needs of their students and also what they want. Unfortunately, public universities in Bangladesh do not execute a policy supporting student evaluation.

What is the relationship between depriving students in such a way and institutional oppression? Institutional oppression in public universities in Bangladesh refers to "systemic discrimination and

disadvantage" faced by certain groups. This systematic bias may occur due to societal structures and practices that favour certain groups over others. To be more explicit, institutional oppression involves favouring a policy for teacher-centred learning instead of student-centred learning.

The policy for an exclusive teacher-centred learning can be characterised by a distinct kind of institutional oppression. Institutional domination in the context of public universities due to the lack of a policy for student evaluation is different from economic and social discrimination.

In its simplest form, many students from marginalised groups, such as minorities, and the poor, face significant barriers to access to education and success in higher education leading to economic discrimination. Moreover, social discrimination is another form of institutional oppression that affects certain groups in public universities in Bangladesh. For example, students from minority groups may face stigma and discrimination in their daily lives. They may even be excluded from certain social activities or opportunities.

On the other hand, promoting a policy for teacher-centred learning only involves institutional coercion. Accordingly, students face systematic

discrimination, and the very nature of this domination is, clearly, distinct from social or economic discrimination in public universities.

However, the dominant policy of teacher-centred learning in public universities in Bangladesh indicates that institutional oppression in public universities is a complex issue. The lack of a policy for student evaluation affects students substantially. A just higher education system should incorporate a broader outlook that includes insights from students.

Public universities are autonomous and may have more flexibility in terms of their shared decision-making and functions. However, this autonomy also carries with it a responsibility to ensure that they are meeting the needs and expectations of their stakeholders, including students.

Therefore, executing a policy for student evaluation requires a rigorous effort to demolish the systems and practices that perpetuate discrimination and disadvantage in public universities. Any reasonable academic would recommend, thus, implementing a student-friendly policy immediately within public universities to foster student-centred learning. This will enable not only strengthening the voices of students, but also promoting equality and justice for all in our higher education.



More omega-3 fatty acids from seafood are associated with lower incidence of chronic renal disease

Dietary omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (ω -3 PUFAs) might help prevent chronic kidney disease (CKD) through potentially favorable vascular effects. But studies of this question, based mostly on cross-sectional analyses and self-reported ω -3 PUFA intake, have been inconclusive.

Researchers combined data from 19 prospective cohort studies (with 25,000 participants) in which baseline ω -3 PUFA biomarkers were measured in blood fractions or adipose tissue. Participants were divided in quintiles based on their levels of seafood-derived ω -3 PUFAs (i.e., EPA, DPA, and DHA) and plant-derived α -linolenic acid (ALA). During median follow-up of 11 years, patients in the highest quintile of total seafood ω -3 PUFAs had a significant 13% lower risk for incident CKD (defined as first estimated glomerular filtration rate (60 mL/minute/1.73 m²) than did participants in the lowest quintile. Each individual seafood-derived ω -3 PUFA had a protective effect, but plant-derived ALA did not. The results were consistent across various subgroups.

Measuring biomarkers permitted individual analysis of the various ω -3 PUFAs and presumably reflected bioavailable ω -3 PUFAs more accurately than self-reported dietary intake. Although the correlations reported here do not establish causation, they are consistent with consensus dietary guidelines that include regular intake of seafood.



A woman dies every two minutes due to pregnancy or childbirth

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Every two minutes, a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth, according to the latest estimates released in a recent report by United Nations agencies. This report, Trends in maternal mortality, reveals alarming setbacks for women's health over recent years, as maternal deaths either increased or stagnated in nearly all regions of the world.

The report, which tracks maternal deaths nationally, regionally and globally from 2000 to 2020, shows there were an estimated 287,000 maternal deaths worldwide in 2020. This marks only a slight decrease from 309,000 in 2016 when the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into effect. While the report presents some significant progress in reducing maternal deaths between 2000 and 2015, gains largely stalled, or in some cases even reversed, after this point.

In total numbers, maternal deaths continue to be largely concentrated in the poorest parts of the world and in countries affected by conflict. In 2020, about 70% of all maternal deaths were in sub-Saharan Africa. In nine countries facing severe humanitarian crises, maternal mortality rates were more than double the world average (551 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to 223 globally).

Severe bleeding, high blood pressure, pregnancy-related infections, complications from unsafe abortion, and underlying conditions that can be aggravated by pregnancy (such as HIV/AIDS and malaria) are the leading causes of maternal deaths. These are all largely preventable and treatable with access to high-quality and respectful healthcare.

Community-centered primary health care can meet the needs of women, children and adolescents and enable equitable access to critical services such as assisted births and pre- and postnatal care, childhood



Ayesha Begum gave birth to her baby at Hope Hospital.

vaccinations, nutrition and family planning. However, underfunding of primary health care systems, a lack of trained health care workers, and weak supply chains for medical products are threatening progress.

Roughly a third of women do not have even four of a recommended eight antenatal checks or receive essential postnatal care, while some 270 million women lack access to modern family planning methods. Exercising control over their reproductive health – particularly decisions about if and when to have children – is critical to ensure that women can plan and space childbearing and protect their health. Inequities related to income, education, race or ethnicity further increase risks for marginalized pregnant women, who have the least access to essential maternity care but are most likely to experience underlying health problems in pregnancy.

"It is unacceptable that so many women continue to die needlessly in pregnancy and childbirth. Over 280,000 fatalities in a single year is unconscionable," said UNFPA

Executive Director Dr Natalia Kanem. "We can and must do better by urgently investing in family planning and filling the global shortage of 900,000 midwives so that every woman can get the lifesaving care she needs. We have the tools, knowledge and resources to end preventable maternal deaths; what we need now is the political will."

The COVID-19 pandemic may have further held back progress on maternal health. Noting the current data series ends in 2020, more data will be needed to show the true impacts of the pandemic on maternal deaths. However, COVID-19 infections can increase risks during pregnancy, so countries should take action to ensure pregnant women and those planning pregnancies have access to COVID-19 vaccines and effective antenatal care.

The report reveals that the world must significantly accelerate progress to meet global targets for reducing maternal deaths, or else risk the lives of over 1 million more women by 2030.

Source: World Health Organisation

HAVE A NICE DAY The importance of EQ is changing fast

DR RUBAUL MURSHED

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else: you are the one who gets burned" – this famous quotation came to my mind when I read psychologist Daniel Goleman's book "Emotional Intelligence – Why it can matter more than IQ".

Emotional intelligence or known as emotional quotient (EQ) is the ability to identify and regulate one's anger, and emotions and understand the emotions of others. A high EQ helps to build relationships, reduce tension and resolve conflicts. Goleman believes, "What matters for success, character, happiness, and lifelong achievements is a definite set of emotional skills – your EQ – not just purely cognitive abilities measured by conventional IQ tests."

EQ stands for 'intelligence quotient'. IQ tests are tools to measure intellectual abilities and potential. EQ is a skill too.

It is the ability to understand and manage our emotions better to relieve stress and anxiety, communicate affectionately, empathise with others, and overcome the social complexities we face in everyday life.

Today researchers are arguing, 'EQ testing is now an industry in itself, but is it fair to the creatively minded?' According to one recent study, IQ tests are misleading because a minimum of three different exams are needed to measure someone's brainpower.

However, studies found that there are more factors to achieve the feeling of happiness and fulfillment as Goleman indicated that lifetime success depends 20% on a person's Intelligence Quotient (IQ), 40% on their Emotional Quotient (EQ), and the last 40% on their Adversity Quotient (AQ).

E-mail: rubaulmurshed@shomman.org



Does masking prevent community-acquired respiratory viral infections?

A new meta-analysis raises questions about efficacy of respirators and masks despite known poor adherence and other limitations highlighted by a secondary analysis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the concept that N95 respirators and surgical masks can lower risk for respiratory virus infections (RVIs). A new Cochrane review on this topic has reported that masking is not beneficial despite the authors' cautions about study interpretation and limitations. In an update of four Cochrane Library meta-analyses on differing physical interventions to limit RVIs, Jefferson and colleagues analysed 78 randomised controlled trials (RCTs; 6 of which were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic). Study settings included suburban schools, inpatient hospital wards, and inner-city venues; adherence to interventions was often low.

Analysis of 19 trials of hand hygiene (71,210 participants) found a relative reduction of 11% in respiratory illness. Similar assessment of 12 trials (10 in a community setting) of surgical masks found no apparent benefit in preventing influenza-like illness (ILI) or laboratory-confirmed RVI. Analysis of 5 studies (all before the COVID-19 pandemic) comparing N95 respirators with surgical masks found a non-statistically significant benefit of N95 respirators in preventing ILI but not laboratory-confirmed illness. The authors note that, while the results showed no benefit of N95 respirators or masks, high risk for bias and low adherence to the interventions limited the conclusions.

Although the initial study found no efficacy difference for

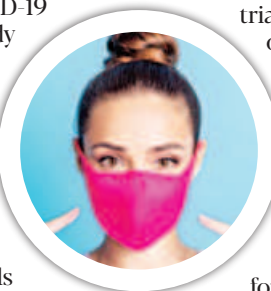
the two forms of protection, in this analysis, the researchers sought to determine if household exposure to preschool children could have affected risk for RVIs in the study population. In 4476 HCW seasons, while household exposure to preschool children had no effect on incidence of influenza infections, overall incidence of RVIs in HCWs progressively rose with exposure to 1 or \geq 2 preschool children.

The RCT is often considered the gold standard of clinical trials, but as the study by Most et al. shows, unrecognised factors can still affect the results – particularly for studies of RVIs, where individuals can be exposed to infection during other parts of their day and not simply in the controlled setting of a clinical trial. The conclusions of the Cochrane review by Jefferson et al. are further limited in that it only assessed the benefit of respiratory protection for the wearer, and not for preventing viral

transmission to others. Also, the review's design led to the exclusion of laboratory studies on mask efficacy and well-executed non-RCTs, including a test-negative case-control study of respiratory protection and a difference-in-differences analysis of the impact on COVID-19 incidence of discontinuing universal masking in public schools. Both studies found notable benefits of mask or respirator use for protection against COVID-19.

The body of evidence overwhelmingly supports the benefits of wearing masks; the Cochrane review might be best interpreted as showing that masks don't provide protection when they are not worn.

Source: Journal Watch



Intermittent fasting for insulin-treated patients with type 2 diabetes?

STAR HEALTH DESK

Intermittent fasting – and one of its variants, "time-restricted eating" – are increasingly popular approaches to weight management. But are these methods feasible and safe for people with diabetes, especially those who take insulin? To address this question, Austrian researchers conducted a study that involved 46 carefully selected insulin-treated patients with longstanding type 2 diabetes; at baseline, mean glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) was 8.3%, mean weight was 100 kg, and mean daily insulin dose was 56 units.

Patients were randomised to either 3 nonconsecutive days of intermittent fasting weekly or to usual care. In the intervention group, patients ingested only 25% of their recommended caloric intake on fasting days; that intake was limited to a single meal (either breakfast or lunch). Compared with the control group at 12 weeks, the intermittent fasting group had significantly greater weight reduction (mean, 5 kg), HbA1c reduction (mean, 0.7%), and insulin-dose reduction (mean, 11 units). Notably, patients in the fasting group were given detailed insulin adjustment protocols for fasting days, and no severe hypoglycemia occurred.

This study suggests that intermittent fasting is feasible in selected insulin-treated patients with type 2 diabetes – provided that the patient is capable of following protocols to adjust insulin doses carefully on days when calories are restricted. But we still need longer-term data to assess safety over many months or years and to determine whether improvement in glycaemic control and weight is sustained.

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ডায়ালাইসিস বা কিডনি সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো প্রয়োজনে
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Momentum in Hasan and Tigers' favour

SPORTS REPORTER

It was a young bunch that usurped England in the first T20I against England and the win in the very first game of the three-match sees Bangladesh go into the final two matches with momentum and hopes of a series win against the world champions. Hasan Mahmud, part of that young crop, had been key in wresting back control in the death overs and that momentum then helped batters assail the England score.

Hasan has been gaining momentum for a while now. Injuries had plagued his early career while playing the 2018 U-19 World Cup in New Zealand. Following return against Zimbabwe in 2020, the tour of New Zealand in 2021 saw him suffer another serious injury which saw him sidelined for another year.

His performances in the Dhaka Premier League saw him return to the side for the tour of Zimbabwe last year. Three wickets against India in the World Cup may have flown under the radar, but his skills in the BPL, where he became the joint-highest wicket-taker, and his final two overs against England at Chattogram could not be ignored.

Having conceded 21 runs in his first two overs in that game, the Tigers counted on him and he returned to concede just five in his last two overs at the death, picking up two wickets. He was enjoying the challenge of putting in a defensive spell.

"I try to bowl ball by ball and all I think of is bowling a dot ball. Even if I am hit for a boundary, I try to stick to my strengths. I like to show my character during that stage. I



After registering their maiden T20I win against England in Chattogram last week, Bangladesh players had every reason to be in a jovial mood on Saturday ahead of the three-match series decider in Mirpur today. But so were the visitors as they too had a lively training session yesterday, indicating that the reigning world champions are not to be bogged down at the possibility of suffering a first-ever series loss to Bangladesh in the format.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



want to take that challenge," the pacer said during a press conference yesterday.

Jos Buttler had ruined his first spell with back-to-back sixes in the last two deliveries of his second over. He wanted to keep his process. "He hit two successive sixes but I didn't look at it and I was just focusing on what I want to do."

Younger players were allowed to express themselves this series; a cultivation of a different culture growing without baggage of fear of failure. Hasan was hopeful.

"The team we have at the moment has one of the best bunch of players," he said of the T20I outfit that had re-jigged after the BPL. "They are all very energetic and give a lot of effort. If we can stick with this batch, then we can go forward in any format," he said.

Hasan's impact has been felt from the team management's side as well. Skipper Shakib Al Hasan had praised his cricketing brain before the World Cup and allowed him to take on that pressure against England.

As Hasan put it yesterday, his plans vary 'according to the batters and the shots they like to play.' He read the England batters' intent of going for big shots and produced dot deliveries using that instinct. His impact will be needed once again as Tigers look to thwart the world champions today.

It will be a big game, but Hasan says the fear factor had already been overcome. "After the game against India, the fear factor went away," he said. "It became easier for me," he added.

"I am feeling good because I am providing the momentum that allows the team to win. It's a big responsibility for me and I am enjoying it," he said, perhaps aware that his death bowling will once again be key as Tigers face England in Mirpur today in the second T20I.

Time to step out of the Mirpur bubble?

MAZHAR UDDIN

Following a memorable six-wicket win over England in the first T20I on a sporting wicket in Chattogram last week, there remains a lot of focus on the nature of the Mirpur's surface on which the second T20I is set to be played today.

It will be interesting to see whether it will be a typical Mirpur surface – a low and slow one – or similar to the one used at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in the port city.

This is set to be the first-ever T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium for England, the reigning T20I and ODI champions. If history is anything to go by, a typical Mirpur pitch could well be Bangladesh's best bet today as it was the slow and low nature of the Mirpur surfaces that had played the crucial role in the Tigers registering their maiden series victories over Australia and New Zealand in 2021.

With the Tigers aiming the same – a first-ever T20I series victory over England – is walking down the same line the preferred way to go?

However, it must still be fresh in the memory of the Bangladesh players how gaining a false sense of achievement by beating the Kiwis and the Aussies had panned out for them in the 2021 T20 World Cup – the Tigers exited that tournament with no wins.

The Chattogram win was courtesy of a collective approach from a rejuvenated T20 side, and the momentum gained from that can only truly be utilised if the Tigers play on a sporting wicket at their favourite hunting ground today.

Earlier in the series, the first of the three-match ODI series on a sluggish Mirpur surface almost went in favour of the Tigers when Bangladesh managed to post a small total of 209 before forcing England to play till

the penultimate over to eek out a three-wicket victory.

In T20Is, the average first-innings total in Mirpur is 144. However, in the last five T20Is, the average total has been 126 while the last five Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) games produced 164 in the first innings – a fact reflecting how uncertain the venue can be.

However, skipper Shakib had previously talked about how they aim to emerge as a better T20 unit, and if that ideology is to be followed, the Bangladesh think tank could as well take the challenge of playing on a sporting Mirpur wicket.

"I think, as the game will be played in Mirpur, it will be a good wicket. Till now we have played well, having beaten England in Chattogram. We will try to beat them here," pacer Hasan Mahmud, who bowled brilliantly in the death overs in the first T20I, told the reporters ahead of the second game yesterday.

It is not like that Mirpur did not produce better surfaces in the past. Even in the recently concluded BPL, sporting Mirpur surfaces brought out the best in the players as it allowed the local cricketers to express themselves both with bat and ball.

"It was challenging for me and it was difficult to defend during the BPL. But we can learn playing on such wickets because it helps us to learn how to bowl well against good teams. We have a good pace unit and we can defend here as well," Hasan added.

Slow and low Mirpur surfaces had always been the Tigers' prime weapon to take down visitors – especially the ones from outside the subcontinent. While there is nothing wrong in taking full advantage of home conditions, as coach Chandika Hathurusingha had also mentioned before the England series, it may be the perfect time for the Tigers to finally step out of the Mirpur bubble if they truly seek to be a transformed T20 unit.



U-20s meet Iran in 'must-win' game

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh know they cannot afford anything but a victory when they face favourites Iran in the last match of the AFC U-20 Women's Asia Cup today.

A draw in the group-deciding match, which will kick off at 5:00 pm at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur, will see both Bangladesh and Iran end with six points each but the Iranians will, in that case, grab the direct qualifying spot as Group E champions.

The girls in red and green kicked off their campaign with a 4-0 win against Turkmenistan on Friday, but since Iran beat the same opposition 7-1 in the group opener, Bangladesh will be looking for a victory to seal a maiden appearance in the final round of the competition.

Bangladesh coach Golam Rabbani Choton was less than satisfied with the team's performance in the first match as he felt they could have got more goals. Now trailing Iran due to goal difference, Choton sees no alternative but to go for a victory.

"We don't have any option but to win this match because the group champions go through. There will be two best runners up going through, but that is a very difficult proposition," Choton told The Daily Star yesterday.

Neither team had any practice session yesterday as Bangladesh were busy recovering with light gym session. There was bad news for the hosts though as regular skipper Shamsunnahar is likely to sit out the second game as well after missing out on the first game due to a ligament injury.

"Shamsunnahar is unlikely to feature. It is our bad luck that we are not getting her services, but we can't do anything about it. Irene Khatun, who played in her position in the first match, will likely play again," Choton informed.

'Wonderful day' for Siddikur

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman described yesterday as a 'wonderful day' after shooting one of the lowest rounds of his 18-year professional career, an eight-under-par 64 in the International Series Thailand at the Black Mountain Golf Club in Hua Hin.

The two-time Asian Tour winner took a share of the lead in the two-million-dollar event with an aggregate score of 15-under-par alongside India's S Chikkarangappa, Zach Murray from Australia and Thailand's Jazz Janewattanamong.

With 28 players within three shots of the lead, the tournament is wide open and the stage set for a gripping final day, in what is the third International Series event of the season.

Siddikur looked like he was going to shoot an even lower round as six birdies on the front saw him turn in six-under-par 30 and when birdies followed on 12, 13 and 15 the course record of 62, set by American Sihwan Kim last year, looked within reach.

However, the 38-year-old made his only bogey of the day on 17.

"It was a wonderful day, I was so sound," Siddikur said. "My hitting was excellent and at the same time my putting was too good. So, all over it was a wonderful round for me, nine birdies and one bogey, the last two holes a little bit unlucky, but, again, I'm happy for today."

Siddikur is one of the shortest hitters on Tour, not suited to Black Mountain, which favours the long ball players, but the Bangladeshi countered that with a brilliant short stick display.

He said: "I especially enjoyed my putting today because the first two days I couldn't putt that good. The first day my hitting was excellent, but I couldn't putt honestly. But today, yeah, no complaints on the putting and my hitting was excellent too."



Captains of all the 12 teams participating in the upcoming edition of the Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League, set to begin from March 15, pose for a picture during the trophy unveiling ceremony at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Bournemouth shock Liverpool

AFP, Bournemouth

Mohamed Salah missed a penalty as Liverpool came back down to earth with a bump in their shock 1-0 defeat at struggling Bournemouth on Saturday.

Jürgen Klopp's side travelled to Dean Court in high spirits after their historic 7-0 thrashing of arch rivals Manchester United last weekend.

But Liverpool's hopes of using that remarkable result as a springboard to push for a top four finish in the Premier League were given a brutal reality check on the south coast.

Philip Billing punished woeful Liverpool defending to put the struggling hosts ahead early on and Salah blew the chance to equalise when he fired wide from a second half spot-kick.

Salah became Liverpool's record scorer in the Premier League era when he netted twice against United.

But the Egypt star's failure to add to his total of 130 condemned Liverpool to a first defeat in their last six league games.

Fifth-placed Liverpool appeared to use up all their goals in the United demolition and their toothless display left them three points behind Tottenham ahead of the north Londoners' game against Nottingham Forest later on Saturday. Apart from the damage done to Liverpool's top four bid, it was hardly ideal preparation for Wednesday's Champions League last 16 second leg at Real Madrid, where the Reds need a miracle in the Spanish capital to overturn a 5-2 deficit.

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Tigers eye landmark win today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will be eying a maiden bilateral T20I series win over England when they meet for the second of the three-match T20I series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

The match is scheduled to start at 3:00pm local time.

Shakib Al Hasan and Co. surprised the world champions in Chattogram, coming out with an aggressive mindset and registering a first-ever win against England in the shortest format. The hosts will hope to bring that momentum to Dhaka and seal the series.

The Tigers ticked almost all the boxes in the first T20I, displaying a collective approach in all three departments and that will once again be needed. It is expected that the hosts will not tinker with their winning combination today.

The change in venue could also be on the back of the minds of the visitors since they will be featuring in their first-ever T20I in Mirpur -- a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Firefighters trying to douse the flames at a cotton warehouse in Chhoto Kumira area of Sitakunda, Chattogram, yesterday. The fire raged on for hours and the firefighters could not extinguish it. The authorities eventually asked for the army's help. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Rajuk to move to raze 42 risky buildings

HELEMUL ALAM

The Rajdhani Unnyan Katripakkha (Rajuk) will take steps to demolish 42 buildings in Dhaka, Gazipur, and Narayanganj within a short time, as these structures are in precarious conditions and are at risk of collapsing and causing casualties.

As part of the plan, Rajuk will ask the building authorities to vacate the structures within the next seven days and tear them down within the following three months.

It will notify the owners of 187 additional risky buildings that fall under its jurisdiction to take the necessary renovation (retrofitting) measures to reinforce their structures.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Nagar Unnayan Committee, a high-powered committee of the Housing and Public Works Ministry, held at Osmani Smriti Milonayoton yesterday.

The 42 buildings belong to eight government and autonomous bodies, namely -- the Education Engineering Department, the Department of Health Education, the Local Government Engineering Department, Jagannath University, Dhaka University, the Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board, the Institute of Leather Technology, and the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital.

These buildings were identified during a survey of 3,252 structures conducted as part of Rajuk's Urban Resilience Project, Abdul Latif Helaly, the project director, told The Daily Star.

He said they also identified 187 other buildings with structural weaknesses that required renovation (retrofitting) work.

Among the 3,252 buildings, 2,705 are educational institutes, 207 are hospitals, 36 are police stations, and 304 are other structures.

"As educational institutes and hospitals play a vital role after earthquakes, we brought them under the survey with priority," said Helaly.

"We have decided to ask its owners to vacate the buildings within seven days and demolish them within three months. We will also take steps to address the issues of other risky buildings," Kazi Wasi Uddin, secretary of the housing and public works ministry, told The Daily Star.

He said that the owners of the 187 other risky buildings would be informed about where retrofitting was required

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

HIGH SALINITY Neighbourhoods in Ctg can't use supply water

MD NAZRUL ISLAM, Ctg

The Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority is in trouble as tidal saline water has entered the Halda river, water of which Chattogram Wasa uses to supply the city.

Due to the salinity, the water has become unusable, which is being supplied to different areas of the port city, as claimed by city dwellers.

water for more than 15 days. "Despite lodging a complaint, the problem is yet to be solved."

Maksud Alam, chief engineer of Wasa, claimed the use of saline water will not have any harmful effects on human health.

He also said the water supplied to the city from Wasa is 100 percent sterile as per the WHO guidelines.

Asked, Idris Ali, former prof of



Residents in Kattali, City Gate, Halishahar, and Patenga areas of the city have complained about the high salinity levels in the water supplied by Wasa for more than 15 days.

Rajib Raihan, of City Gate area, alleged that the water supplied by Wasa is not drinkable at all. "We are left with no other option but to collect tube well water from a nearby house."

Abdus Sabur, of Halishahar area, said they could not use the Wasa

Chittagong Government College's chemistry department, said, "350 to 400 mg per litre of salinity is definitely harmful to the human body, especially for children and older people."

Idris, who is also a water researcher of the Karnaphuli river, said the salt water can harm those with weak immune systems and cause digestive problems.

He also mentioned that the Wasa

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

BNP to hold rallies in all cities on March 18

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will hold rallies in all metropolitan cities on March 18 to press home its 10-point demand, including that the government steps down.

Party Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday made the announcement at a programme in front of the party's Nayapaltan central office in Dhaka.

The party held a one-hour human chain programme in the capital from Jatrabari to Abdullahpur Bridge that ended around noon.

Apart from Dhaka, the human chain was also held in all the districts and cities.

In the capital, BNP standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain took part in the event in the North Badda area.

Dhaka city unit BNP (north) organised the programme from Abdullahpur to Airport-Jamuna Future Park-Badda-Rampura to Malibagh Rail gate. At the same time, the Dhaka city unit BNP (south) formed the human chain from Malibagh rail gate to Jatrabari via Mouchak-Shantinagar-Kakrail-Nayapaltan-Fakirapul-Arambah-Motijheel's Shapla Chattar-Ittefaq-Tikatuli.

The human chain was

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Opposition out to undermine nation's success PM tells Mymensingh rally

UNB, Mymensingh

Making an obvious reference to the BNP, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said a so-called opposition party wants to undermine the nation's success by spreading falsehoods, but they won't succeed.

"Unfortunately, we have a so-called opposition party which wants to spoil the success of our independence by spreading falsehoods. But they won't succeed, Insha'Allah," she said.

The premier was addressing a mammoth rally at the Circuit House ground in Mymensingh city.

Hasina, also the Awami League president, said Bangladesh is marching forward and it will continue to do so. "We will build a developed and smart Bangladesh by 2041."

The PM said a BNP leader sits before a microphone the whole day and says that the AL has destroyed Bangladesh.

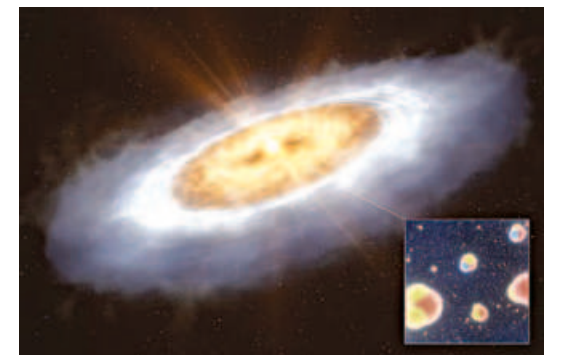
Noting that she inaugurated 103 projects yesterday, Hasina asked the people of Mymensingh if those were examples of destruction.

In an oblique reference to BNP leader Tarique Rahman, Hasina said anyone can now speak, and do politics staying far away from home due to the transformation of the country into Digital Bangladesh.

PHOTO ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Earth's water may be older than the sun: study



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists believe they have uncovered new evidence that water on Earth may be older than the sun.

An international team of researchers used data from ground-based telescopes to ascertain the chemical composition of a young star, known as V883 Orionis, in the Orion constellation.

They detected chemical signatures of heavy water -- which is around 10 percent denser than ordinary water -- in the star's rotating disc of gas and dust.

The researcher said their work, published in the journal Nature, suggests V883 Orionis may be the "missing link" scientists have been waiting for to understand more about how the solar system -- and Earth -- got its water.

John J Tobin, an astronomer at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in the US and lead author of the study, said: "We can now trace the origins of water in our solar system to before the formation of the Sun."

He added: "The composition of the water in the disc is very similar to that of comets in our own solar system."

The researchers used the Atacama Large Millimeter/Submillimeter Array (ALMA) -- made up of 66 radio telescopes in the Atacama Desert of northern Chile -- to observe V883 Orionis, which is 1,300 light-years away from Earth.

V883 Orionis is a protostar, which means it is still gathering mass in the form of rotating discs of gas and dust from its parent molecular cloud.

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ক্রাউন সিমেন্ট

স্থায়ী বুনியাদ

রপ্তানিতে

শীর্ষে ২০ বছর

সিমেন্ট রপ্তানিতে ২০ বছর শীর্ষে থাকার মাইলফলক অর্জন করলো ক্রাউন সিমেন্ট। বাংলাদেশে একমাত্র ক্রাউন সিমেন্টেরই আছে পরপর ২ বার স্বর্ণপদকসহ মোট ৩ বার জাতীয় রপ্তানি পদক অর্জনের গৌরব। সিমেন্ট রপ্তানির মাধ্যমে বৈদেশিক মুদ্রা অর্জন করে জাতীয় উন্নয়নে বিশেষ অবদান রাখছে ক্রাউন সিমেন্ট। এ গর্ব বাংলাদেশের।