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FY23 BUDGET

Little room for trimming as austerity fails

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and JAMIL MAHMUD

In the end, was the government's austerity stance just lip service?

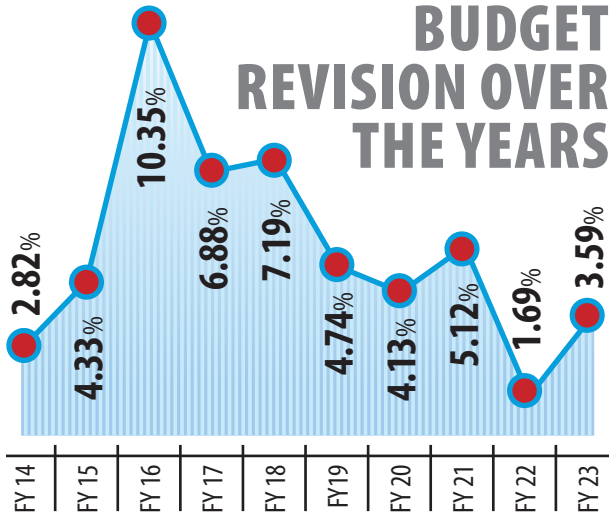
After rolling back most of the austerity measures earlier this month, the government's apathy towards prudence was reflected in the revised budget.

In the revised budget, more allocation has been made for interest payment and subsidies for food, agriculture and power, while funds were made available for resumption of normal service after the retraction of austerity measures.

As a result, the budget could be downsized by about 3.6 percent to Tk 654,537 crore, The Daily Star has learnt from finance ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

On the first day of the fiscal year, the government announced several austerity measures such as bans on vehicle purchases and foreign trips and reduced allowances for petrol, oil, fuel, lubricant and gas.

Now, vehicle purchase is allowed, while the ministries and divisions can spend up to 80 percent of their



allowance for petrol, oil, fuel, lubricant and gas. Only the ban on foreign tours by government officials remains.

As a result, Tk 11,500 crore has been made available for these purposes in the revised budget, down from Tk 18,000 crore in the original budget.

In other words, it can be assumed that the austerity measures yielded savings of about Tk 6,500 crore.

"Although the allocation is there in the revised budget, the total amount might not be spent at the end of the year," said one of the officials on the condition of anonymity.

For instance, the ban on foreign tours remains but some officials need to go abroad out of extreme necessity. "So an allocation was kept to accommodate such trips," the official added.

In the revised budget, the government's subsidy for the power sector has increased by a staggering 59 percent to Tk 27,000 crore despite the recent increases in the electricity price.

At a time when fuel and energy prices are on the decline around the world, the government thrice increased the electricity price by 5 percent each time this year.

However, the subsidy for liquefied natural gas purchase has been slashed by a third to Tk 4,000 crore as LNG prices plunged more than 70 percent since the start of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Smoke emitting from a large earthen stove in which bricks are being burned in the Chenchuri area of Khulna's Dumuria upazila yesterday. At least 12,000 bricks are burned every day in one of these stoves and the process requires almost 100 maunds of wood. The whole process lasts at least 25-30 hours, with massive amounts of smoke spreading throughout the area, posing health hazards for the locals and causing harm to the environment.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

'We'll deliver justice'

Says HC voicing concern that state hasn't filed case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has expressed grave concern and resentment as the state has not filed any case after the death of Sultana Jasmine in Rab custody.

"Her death in law enforcers' custody after sustaining injury in the head has become a burning issue in the country. A case has to be filed in connection with the incident.

"If her family cannot lodge the case, the state has the responsibility of filing one. The people of the country want justice to be delivered on the matter. We will deliver justice," the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Ahmed Sohail told Assistant Attorney General Md Abul Kalam Khan Daud during a hearing on the issue yesterday.

The bench made the observation on its own

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SULTANA'S DEATH IN CUSTODY
She had head injury, cause still unknown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Sultana Jasmine, a union-level land employee in Naogaon who died in the custody of Rapid Action Battalion on Friday, had suffered a head injury along with brain haemorrhages but what caused it all remains unexplained.

Forensic doctors at Rajshahi Medical College (RMC) conducted an autopsy a day after her death that triggered a barrage of criticism from human rights groups with the High Court asking questions.

"Sultana Jasmine suffered an injury to her head apart from haemorrhages in her brain," said Associate Prof Kafil Uddin, who led a three-member board formed to conduct the autopsy.

The team sent her heart sample to RMC's pathology department for a histopathological report.

"We will know the ultimate cause of her death after the report is available," added Kafil Uddin, head of forensic medicine department at the

college.

Sultana, 38, an office assistant of Naogaon Municipality-Chandipur Union Land Office, was picked up by a Rab-5 patrol team on Wednesday while she was walking to her office from home.



Later in the day, she was taken to Naogaon Sadar Hospital and then to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, where she breathed her last on Friday, according to hospital authorities.

In her death certificate, the cause of death is stated as

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ROHINGYA CRISIS
US committed to long-term solutions

Biden writes to Hasina, says she set example of empathy for world

UNB, Dhaka

US President Joe Biden has said his country made a commitment to finding long-term solutions to the Rohingya refugee crisis and holding perpetrators of the atrocities accountable.

"You set an example for the world of empathy and generosity in practice," the US president wrote to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The US embassy in Dhaka shared the letter on Sunday which was originally sent on March 21.

The US president said Bangladesh has opened its arms and welcomed nearly one million Rohingya refugees.

In a message to Hasina, Biden on behalf of the United States wished her and the people of Bangladesh a happy Independence Day.

Bangladeshis understand deeply the value of freedom and independence, as they fought courageously in 1971

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

PM slams BNP's call for movement in Ramadan



BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday criticised the BNP's call for movement during Ramadan.

"They [BNP] have announced that they will continue movement even during the Ramadan. At least give people relief from the movement during Ramadan," she said.

The PM was addressing a discussion, organised by the Awami League marking

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BUSINESS

Focus on containing all risks: CPD

The budget for the next fiscal year should target containing risks stemming from global turbulence and the absence of discipline, good governance and reforms in macroeconomic management, said the Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday.

Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the CPD, termed Covid-19 and Russia-Ukraine war as external storms while a lack of good governance as internal storm. "Because of the storms, project implementation has become slower, jobs are not being created and corruption is rising."

STORY ON BI

Commodity prices soaring due to domestic reasons

Says CPD; rice, sugar, soybean oil pricier here compared to other developing countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prices of essentials are rising sharply and going beyond the people's reach due partly to domestic reasons, including market distortions by a small number of dominant firms and lax regulations, said the Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday.

The CPD made the observation at an event titled "CPD's Recommendations for the National Budget FY2023-24", held at its office in the capital's Dhanmondi.

There are some essentials such as rice, sugar, soybean oil and beef that are more expensive in Bangladesh than in other developing or industrialised countries, said Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the think-tank.

Many families, including those having minimum wage earners, are struggling to afford them. So, many of them are excluding meat and fish from their menus, she said.

Comparison of prices shows that the prices of essentials don't fall in Bangladesh even when the international prices decline. Moreover, the prices of some food items have remained consistently higher at home than those in the global markets, according to Fahmida.

At least 28 imported essential food items carry high incidence of tax, she observed.

"In the backdrop of the soaring inflation, the National Board of Revenue should reduce the duties and taxes both at the import and domestic levels in order to provide some respite to consumers with low and limited incomes."



People queue up in front of an OMS truck to buy rice and flour at subsidised price at Basila in the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday. Each of them was allowed to buy five kg of rice at Tk 30 per kg and two kg of flour at Tk 24 per kg.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

CLASH ON MAR 26
Police sue 265 BNP men in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police on Sunday evening sued 265 BNP men in two cases field in Netrakona's Durgapur upazila over alleged attack on police and obstructing police in performing their duties that morning.

Sub-Inspector Sanwar Hossain and Sub-Inspector Shuvashish Ganguly filed the cases with Durgapur Police Station, said the station's Office-in-Charge Shibirul Islam.

Of the accused, 35 were named and 13 people have already been arrested, said the OC.

After interrogation, they were produced before a Netrakona court this afternoon that sent them to jail, added the OC.

The detainees include ex-president of BNP Durgapur upazila unit Imam Hasan Abu Chan; convener of Durgapur municipality BNP Aatur

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7 injured in Sweeper Colony fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two children were among seven people who suffered burn injuries in a fire at an illegal slum under the Mayor Hanif Flyover near the Sweeper Colony in Dhaka’s Wari early yesterday.

They were rushed to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery and the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital with up to 10 percent burns, said hospital sources.

At least 40 shanties were burnt after the fire broke out at the slum near Joy Kali Temple around 3:15am.

Seven fire engines doused the blaze around 6:45am, said Rakibul Hasan, duty officer of Fire Service and Civil Defence control room.

The cause of the fire could not be known.

Fire officials the slum should be demolished as it threatens the safety of the flyover.

HAJJ REGISTRATION Deadline extended till Mar 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday extended the deadline for hajj registration until March 30 citing requests from the pilgrims.

The religious affairs ministry issued a notice in this regard.

The hajj registration will automatically stop once 1.27 lakh people register, it added.

A total of 15,000 people will be able to go to hajj under government management while 112,198 could go under private management this year.

Pilgrims who will perform hajj under the government management will have to pay Tk 6.71 lakh each this year.

Those who will go under private hajj management will have to pay Tk 6.60 lakh each.



Firemen try to douse a fire that broke out at the nine-storey Sheltech Sierra Computer City on Elephant Road in the capital yesterday evening. Ten fire engines eventually put the fire out at 9:23pm. There were no casualties.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Female shooter kills 6 in Nashville school attack

REUTERS, Tennessee

A female shooter killed three children and three adults at a private Christian school in Nashville of the US’s Tennessee state yesterday before police shot her dead. The assailant appeared to be a teenage girl, police said.

Police began receiving calls at 10:13am of a shooter at The Covenant School, which teaches children up to 6th grade. Officers could hear gunfire coming from the school’s second floor, Don Aaron, a spokesperson for Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, told reporters.

The shooter had at least two semi-automatic rifles and a handgun, Aaron said. Two officers from a five-member team shot at her in what Aaron described as a lobby area and she was dead by 10:27am.

“We do not know who she is at this juncture,” Aaron said.

Three students were pronounced dead after arriving at Monroe Carell Jr Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt with gunshot wounds, John Howser, a hospital spokesperson, said in a statement. Three

adult staff members were killed by the shooter, police said.

Besides the deceased, no one else was shot, Aaron said.

Students’ parents were told to gather at a nearby church.

The Covenant School, founded in 2001, is a ministry of Covenant Presbyterian Church in the Green Hills neighbourhood of Nashville with about 200 students, according to the school’s website. The school serves preschool through 6th graders and held an active shooter training program in 2022, WTVF-TV reported.

Nashville Mayor John Cooper expressed sympathy for the victims and wrote on social media that his city “joined the dreaded, long list of communities to experience a school shooting.”

Deadly mass shootings have become commonplace in the United States, but a female attacker is highly unusual. Only four of the 191 mass shootings since 1966 catalogued by The Violence Project, a nonprofit research centre, were carried out by a female attacker.

JP will take part in next nat’l polls Says Raushan

BSS, Dhaka

Jatiya Party chief patron Raushan Ershad yesterday said her party would take part in the next general election.

Raushan, also the leader of the opposition in parliament, called upon the party leaders and activists to be united and prepare for the election.

Speaking at a discussion marking the Independence and National Day at a city community centre, she said polls are an integral part of democracy.

“There is no division in Jatiya Party as all its activities are being run in line with the instructions given by late party chairman HM Ershad.”

Raushan called for fixing the party’s district level leadership from now on as the party will launch

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She had head injury, cause still unknown

FROM PAGE 1

“irreversible cardio-respiratory failure due to intra-cerebral haemorrhage” and the time of death is 10:00am.

Meanwhile on Thursday, she was sued under Digital Security Act with Rajpara Police Station in Rajshahi city.

‘BROUGHT UNCONSCIOUS’ TO RMCH

Sultana was admitted to the Naogaon hospital at 1:15pm on Wednesday, according to Dr Zahid Newaj, superintendent of the hospital, which means she was taken there within one hour and 25 minutes of her detention.

She was then showing symptoms like dizziness, nausea, physical weakness and vomiting. At 3:05pm, her condition started deteriorating when she developed breathing problems, the doctor said.

Doctors then referred her to RMCH or Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogura at 3:55pm, and she was taken out of the hospital for RMCH at 7:00pm.

During her admission to RMCH, Rab officials stated that she had suffered a head injury from a fall, said hospital officials.

According to RMCH Director Brig Gen FM Shamim Ahmed, Sultana was brought by Rab officials in an unconscious condition at 9:20pm on Wednesday.

“She was unconscious and was immediately rushed to the neurology ward. From there, she was transferred to the intensive care unit because her condition continued to deteriorate. We did a CT scan and found multiple intracranial bleeds in her head,” he said.

They also found an external bruise on her head and her health deteriorated too fast on Thursday, he said.

Sultana died in the ICU at 10:00am on Friday.

Though the RMCH director on Sunday said Sultana was brought to the hospital on Thursday, yesterday he told The Daily Star, “I stand corrected. I mistakenly said that. She was admitted on Wednesday.”

THE DSA CASE

A day before Sultana’s death, Enamul Haque, the local government director at the office of Rajshahi divisional commissioner, filed the case under DSA.

Sultana was the second accused in the case while the prime accused was Al Amin, 32, of Chandpur. The case document says she was picked up at

11:50am on Wednesday.

The two were made accused of hacking Enamul’s Facebook ID and using it to con people by luring them with jobs.

Enamul was present when a Rab-5 patrol team, led by Deputy Assistant Director Md Masud, detained Sultana.

Enamul in the case said he learnt from his assistant clerk named Md Jamal that the accused swindled some persons in front of his office in Rajshahi city on March 19.

He further stated that he went to Naogaon on an official tour on Wednesday.

On his way, he met the Rab-5 patrol team at the Naogaon Bus Stand and informed them that his Facebook ID was being used to swindle people.

Talking to this newspaper at his office yesterday, Enamul claimed he informed the Rab team that one Sheikh Arif of Barishal told him about Sultana’s bank account.

And Arif was asked from Enamul’s hacked ID to make a payment to that bank account for a government job.

The Rab team took Enamul with them and located Sultana at Muktir Mor in the town, read the case statement.

It also stated that Rab members interrogated her there and she admitted before Enamul, the officers and locals that she was involved in swindling people.

Rab also seized her smartphone in which evidence of transactions in her Sonali bank account was found, it added.

‘TAKEN TO UNKNOWN LOCATION’

Although the case stated that Sultana was interrogated by Rab members at Muktir Mor, her family members said she was picked up from the spot and taken to an unknown location.

“We heard about her arrest between 9:30am and 10:00am. Then we checked with the police and detectives and looked for her for several hours. We then found her at the Naogaon hospital,” said her maternal uncle Nazmul Haque Montu.

Montu said when he went to the Naogaon hospital to see her around noon, he found two female Rab members in uniform on both sides of her bed.

Rab men in plainclothes were surrounding her when she was unconscious and having breathing difficulty.

“She opened her eyes once but fainted soon after seeing the Rab

members,” he said yesterday.

Montu had asked the two female Rab officials why they were beside her bed. They told him to talk to their superiors. A Rab member in plainclothes showed him a photo saying he is a high official named Enamul and Sultana used his Facebook ID to con people.

“I left the hospital few moments later as I didn’t dare stay there alone.”

Montu said a sense of fear had been prevailing at Chalkdeb Jonokolyan Moholla in Naogaon town, where Sultana, a divorcee, lived with her only son in a rented house.

When a group of journalists visited the area on Monday, the house was found vacant. Even the house owner was unavailable.

None of the neighbours agreed to talk and Montu took the journalists to a distant location to speak with them.

He claimed to have received a call from a Rab official on Wednesday afternoon, and the caller asked him to visit her again at the Naogaon hospital.

He sent Aminul Islam, Sultana’s brother-in-law, to the hospital, hoping to join him after evening prayers.

As soon as Aminul reached there, Rab members left for RMCH with Sultana and Aminul. “They were trying to show that the treatment was going on in the presence of Sultana’s relatives,” Montu said.

He also claimed plainclothes Rab members have been guarding their area round-the-clock since her death.

RAB VERSION

Meanwhile, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of the legal and media wing of Rab, told The Daily Star that they had arrested the woman based on specific complaints. “We have found proof of transaction of around Tk 20 lakh from the woman’s account,” he said.

“Soon after the arrest, she fell sick and we rushed her to the Naogaon hospital. Later, she was shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for better treatment. She was not even taken to the Rab camp after the arrest,” he said.

She was provided treatment at the hospital under family’s observation, the director claimed.

“Still, if any Rab members are found involved in any irregularities, we will take action following proper investigation,” he added.

Little room for trimming

FROM PAGE 1

the year in the global market from the record high seen in August last year.

Also, there will be no subsidy for the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation on fuel imports this fiscal year, said a finance ministry official asking not to be named.

Similarly, in the revised budget the subsidy for the agriculture sector has increased by about 62 percent to Tk 26,000 crore as the government looks to ramp up production by incentivising farmers.

Last fiscal year, Tk 12,000 crore has been provided as subsidy for the agriculture sector and Tk 9,500 crore the year before.

After the subsidy increase, the outstanding liabilities in the power and agriculture sectors will be Tk 70,000 crore.

Another Tk 1,000 crore has been extended as food subsidy to take the total to about Tk 7,000 crore.

Given the elevated inflation level, the

‘We’ll deliver justice’

FROM PAGE 1

initiative (suo motu) after Supreme Court lawyer Manoj Kumar Bhowmik placed a report run by The Daily Star on Sultana’s death.

The HC raised some questions about the death of Sultana, who died in the custody of Rapid Action Battalion on March 24.

A union-level land office employee in Naogaon, Sultana suffered brain haemorrhages after being detained by Rab on March 22.

The HC judges questioned why she was arrested, who arrested her, where she was taken to after the arrest, where and under whose presence she was interrogated, who interrogated her, whether she sustained any fresh injury after her arrest and whether any law was violated during her stay in custody.

“After getting complete information, we will start work to ensure justice,” Justice Farah Mahbub said.

The bench ordered AAG Abul Kamal to produce relevant papers containing the details of Rab personnel involved in arresting and interrogating Sultana, and her inquest and post-mortem reports before it this morning.

The AAG informed the court that no case was filed in this connection and the body was handed over to the family after an inquest and an autopsy.

Lawyer Manoj Kumar told the HC bench that a case was filed against Sultana under the Digital Security Act more than 31 hours after she was detained, and that she was not

produced before any court during this period which is illegal.

He prayed to the HC bench to pass necessary directives on this matter.

The court asked the lawyer to move a writ petition before this court in this regard and fixed today for its hearing and passing orders on the matter.

Meanwhile, different human rights organisations yesterday expressed grave concern over Sultana’s death and demanded a fair and neutral probe into the incident.

They also demanded appropriate legal action against those responsible for the death and ensuring their accountability.

In a statement, Ain O Salish Kendra said it is evident from the family’s allegation, doctor’s statement and media reports that the provisions of the constitution and related laws have been violated in detaining and interrogating Sultana in Rab custody.

Though this is not the first allegation against the law enforcers, allegations of torturing people and deaths in custody are raised very often, the rights body said.

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh in another statement said though the Rab claimed that Sultana died while receiving treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital after suffering a brain haemorrhage, her family members alleged that she died of torture in custody.

The allegations brought by the family have to be looked into and justice must be ensured, it said.

Sultana was detained before a case

on interest payments rose about 22 percent to Tk 40,792 crore in the first half of the fiscal year.

“This happened not just because of devaluation of taka against the US dollar but also because of higher expenditure on treasury bills,” said the finance ministry official.

The interest rate for government securities increased, according to the quarterly debt bulletin of the finance ministry.

Treasury bills and bonds are one of the major tools the government uses when it comes to borrowing. The interest on the securities has gone up recently owing to the liquidity shortage in the banking system. The sharp depreciation of the taka was one of the factors behind the liquidity shortage.

The revenue budget has been revised downwards by 1.16 percent to Tk 426,971 crore and the development budget by 7.51 percent to Tk 227,566 crore.

was filed against her; she was illegally interrogated and police were not informed about the actions which is an example of violation of the constitution, fundamental principle of human rights, Supreme Court directives, and existing laws, the statement added.

Police sue 265 BNP men in Netrakona

FROM PAGE 1

Rahman Farid and Durgapur municipality Jubo Dal convener Abu Siddique Rukku.

Johirul Alam Bhuiyan, convener of Durgapur upazila BNP, alleged that when the BNP men were on their way to the municipality memorial to place floral wreaths on Independence Day, police stopped them around 10:00am.

At one stage, police attacked the BNP men, resulting chases and counter chases, alleged Bhuiyan. Police fired shots in the air during the incident.

Abu Chan, Rukku, and Chhatra Dal activist Shishir were injured and they were admitted to Durgapur Upazila Health Complex.

Soon after the incident, police detained seven BNP men and six others early yesterday, said police.

Two killed as lightning strikes fishing boat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Two men were killed when lightning struck their fishing boat on the Gazaria river in Mehendiganj upazila of Barishal early yesterday.

in Sadar union under

The deceased were identified as Shaheed Biswas, 69 and his son-in-law Russel Bepari, 32.

Rafiq Dafadar, village police of Char Ekaria Union, said Shaheed and Russel went to the river to catch fish after performing Tarabi prayers on Sunday night.

A little after midnight, lightning struck their boat, leaving both dead on the spot, he said.

Police recovered the bodies in the morning and handed them over to their family members upon their request.

Elderly man dies after pickup hits him

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

An elderly pedestrian died yesterday after being hit by a pickup on Phulbari-Nageshwari road in Kurigram’s Phulbari upazila.

Kanu Chandra Sen, 66, from Dharmapur village of Kashipur union, was on his way to a local bazaar.

Witnesses said a speeding pickup, headed towards Nageshwari from Phulbari, hit the elderly man in Dharmapur.

Locals took the victim to a hospital where the doctor declared him dead.

Police seized the pickup but its driver fled the scene, said Phulbari Police Station OC Fazlur Rahman.

Man to die for killing wife in Satkhira

BSS, Satkhira

A Satkhira court yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing his wife in the district’s Tala upazila in 2009.

Satkhira Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal Judge MG Azam pronounced the verdict in the afternoon.

The convict Mostafa Biswas, of the upazila’s Chandkati village, beat and strangled his wife Shiuli Khatun to death for dowry on the night of August 17, 2009, according to case details.

The next day, Shiuli’s father Abdus Sabur filed a murder case with Tala Police Station accusing Mustafa and his father Amjed Biswas.

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Draw beyond censorship

Say cartoonists and experts addressing discussion at exhibition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political cartoons have slowly been lifted off from the face of print and digital media due to a growing intolerance toward them.

Many cartoonists need to resort to self censorship, although the country had once witnessed a glorious history of such caricatures, said cartoonists at a panel discussion yesterday.

The discussion was organised as part of an exhibition of political cartoons in Dhaka.

Earki, a satire platform, in collaboration with Bangladesh Cartoonists Association and EMK Center, held the three-day exhibition at the EMK Centre in Dhanmondi.

More than 150 cartoons were placed to highlight the tradition of political cartoons in the country.

Joint General Secretary of Bangladesh Cartoonists Association and one of the organisers of the programme cartoonist Mehedi Haque said, "Political cartoons played an important role during the language and the freedom movement."

"Cartoons were important in every political turn of independent Bangladesh, starting from the movement against autocracy. But under the pressure of the government, the number of political cartoons is decreasing," he added.

Artist and Cartoonist Rafiqun Nabi said, "Political tolerance in our country has significantly decreased, and

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To highlight art form's history and significance, more than 150 political cartoons are on display at a three-day exhibition organised by Earki, a satire platform, in collaboration with Bangladesh Cartoonists Association and EMK Center. The exhibition, being held at EMK Center, will be open from 10:00am to 4:00pm till tomorrow.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

DSA CASE

Inspector fined Tk 5 lakh for remarks against JS whip

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday fined a suspended police inspector Tk 5 lakh in a case filed over remarks on social media against parliament whip Shamsul Haque Chowdhury in September 2019.

Judge AM Zulfiker Hayet of Dhaka Cyber Tribunal found Mahmud Saiful Karim alias Saif Amin guilty and pronounced the punishment, said Special Public Prosecutor Nazrul Islam Shamim.

"If the inspector fails to pay the fine, he will have to serve 18 months in jail," the judge said in his judgment.

Soon after the verdict, the convict submitted two applications, seeking bail and seven days for payment of the fine. Both were granted by the judge.

On September 25 of 2019, Shamsul Haque, also the general secretary of

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Police arrests 2 DU students on assault charges

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested two members of "Proloy Gang", a group based at Dhaka University, yesterday for allegedly assaulting a fellow student on campus on Saturday evening.

The arrestees -- Naimur Rahman Durjoy and Faysal Ahmed Sakib -- were sent to jail after being charged by victim Zubaer Ibne Humayun's mother, who filed a case against 19 university students with Shahbagh Police Station on Sunday night.

Zubaer, a criminology department student and leader of the social science faculty's BCL unit, was reportedly beaten by the gang members.

Witnesses said the incident began when a speeding car splashed muddy water on Zubaer and his friends near the faculty building on Saturday evening. After chasing down the car near Tin Netar Mazar area for an explanation, a quarrel ensued with those inside the car.

About an hour later, Zubaer received a phone call asking him to come to the Kabi Jasimuddin Hall area. When he arrived, a group of around 15 students, some of whom are also BCL activists, allegedly attacked him with sticks, cricket stumps, and leather belts.

The incident was condemned by a group of teachers and students from the criminology department who demanded justice for Zubaer, standing in solidarity with him at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture yesterday.

PRAYER
TIMING

MARCH 28

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:45	12:45	4:45	6:20	7:45
JAMAAT 5:20	1:15	5:00	6:25	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR
5	28		6:16
6	29	4:33	6:17
7	30	4:31	6:17

LIBERATION WAR MUSEUM

Revisiting memories of struggle and sacrifice

ARAEAT RAHAMAN and DIPAN NANDY

You are looking at a large portrait of Bangabandhu, depicting his powerful speech on March 7, 1971. An audiovisual of the precise moment in history plays in the background, making you feel as if you are experiencing the historical moment in-person.

But your mood takes a sudden turn as you enter the next room. A dark tunnel leads you towards a bright light that momentarily blinds you. As you adjust your eyes, you realise the source of the brightness: a Pakistani soldier's jeep crashes through the wall, its headlights shining brightly.

You find transcripts that display conversations between Pakistani army personnel on how they planned operation searchlight.

You witness the violence and brutality the Pakistani army inflicted on innocent civilians on the night of March 25, 1971.

The Liberation War museum, situated in Dhaka's Agargaon, is where you can get this vivid experience.

The 3D visuals described above can be

witnessed in the second gallery named "Our Rights, Our Sacrifice".

In this gallery, the dark tunnel provides a haunting portrayal of the horrors of the night. It showcases the sheer devastation wrought upon the country, with countless homes and businesses burned to the ground.



Visitors can witness the tragedy through an elaborate collection of photographs, videos, and symbolic forms, which may elicit fear and discomfort. However, this is the harsh reality that Bangladesh had faced that night.

The museum boasts an impressive

collection of over 20,000 monuments showcased across four exhibition galleries, designed by the talented architects Tanzim Hasan Salim and Naheed Farzana.

The museum's exhibition halls feature large photographs, diaries written by freedom fighters detailing their experiences on the battlefield, and letters they wrote, weapons they used, and much more information on their struggle, presented through paper cuttings and historic documents.

The first gallery named "Our Tradition, Our Struggle" starts with displaying maps of ancient Bengal and the Indian independence movement against British rule. It features artefacts from prehistoric times to 1970, including relics from the Pal, Sen, and English periods, as well as items related to the Language Movement.

Then the exhibition gradually depicts the revolts, uprisings, and the various stages of the 1971 war through different displays and exhibits.

The third gallery -- "Our War, Our Allies" -- showcases the Bangalee's struggles and sacrifices during the Liberation War.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Liberation War Museum, situated in Dhaka's Agargaon, is where one can get a vivid experience of the Bangalee liberation struggle, as well as glimpses of the region's ancient history. The museum houses four galleries with distinct themes, housed with artefacts, photographs, 3D and audiovisual experiences, and much more.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

SATTOLA SLUM FIRE

Another tragedy, more stories of despair

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The fire that broke out at Sattola slum in Mohakhali yesterday morning was doused after around three hours.

While no one was physically hurt, the survivors of the fire will have to grapple with the mental trauma and physical loss of the fire in the days to come.

Every time a fire breaks out in Dhaka, which is all too often, it leaves behind a trail of destruction that is unfortunately forgotten much too soon by anyone who hasn't been directly affected.

JOBA RANT'S NEW SAREES BURN'T TO ASHES

"I wore old and torn clothes all the time, and I generally don't have the luxury to get myself things I like. But I saved up and a few months back

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



ARCHITECT IMTIAZ MURDER

'Blackmailing racket tortured him to death'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Architect Imtiaz Mohammad Bhuiyan was trapped by an app-based blackmailing racket and was tortured to death at a Kalabagan flat as he refused to pay money to them.

The Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police said this after arresting three persons from different areas in connection with the sensational murder.

They are Millat Hossain Munna, 19; Anwar Hossain, 38; and Ehsan alias Megh Hijra, Harun Or Rashid, chief of DMP's Detective Branch told reporters at his office in Dhaka yesterday.

Imtiaz went missing on March 7 after he went out of his Tejgaon residence. His wife Fahmida Akhter later filed a general diary with Kalabagan Police Station.

Meanwhile, Munshiganj police recovered his body from Chittrakot Kamarkanda Bridge area in Sirajdikhan on March 8. Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a voluntary organisation, buried him on March 9 as an unclaimed body.

The family following a media report later identified the body as that of Imtiaz.

Briefing reporters yesterday, Harun said at least five persons took part in the killing and they are trying to arrest two others.

Police from Narayanganj recovered a car that was used to carry the body to Munshiganj from Dhaka, he said.

The DB official said the racket used to run a dating app, and Imtiaz got acquainted with one of the racket members Alif, who is on the run, through the app.

As the Imtiaz called Alif on March 7, and Alif asked him to come to a flat in Kalabagan area.

The other accused then started blackmailing victim

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Another tragedy

FROM PAGE 3
got myself three new sarees,” said Joba Rani who watched her prized possessions burn down in the fire.

“You know, I never got a chance to wear them. I was keeping them stored away to wear on some special occasion. I was just happy knowing I had new clothes to wear and it was my little gift to myself,” says Joba.

The fire not only destroyed homes, but also took with it the little possessions the families had managed to collect.

Joba Rani has two sons, one of whom works as a day-labourer.

SALARY FOR HUSBAND’S TREATMENT DESTROYED
Shahida Begum lived in one of the tin-sheds in the slums for a rent of Tk 3,000.

“I was living in a room with my two children and my husband. I went to sleep after dinner when I suddenly heard people screaming. I woke up to see

flames closing in on us,” says Shahida who managed to get out of the house with her children and husband mostly unharmed.

But Shahida, who works as a domestic worker, lost Tk 10,000 that she had taken as advance salary for her husband’s treatment.

“Yesterday, I received an advance payment of Tk 10,000 due to my husband’s illness. That money was burnt in the fire,” said Shahida.

ALL BELONGINGS GONE
Usha Rani lived alone in a room in the slum. She works as a cleaner at a market in Mohakhali and with her income, managed to bear her expenses and also bought some belongings over time.

Her room was completely burnt down and with it, Usha has lost all her possessions and does not have any savings. “How will I start anew,” asks a visibly distraught Usha.

The cause of the fire remains to be known.

Teacher plotted

FROM PAGE 5
allegedly for raping the latter’s stepsister.

The incident came to light on March 25 night when a video clip of the torture went viral on social media.

Then, police started an investigation.

“When police took the girl for medical test, she told us that no one raped her. The school teacher taught her to follow the plan,” said the SP.

Contacted, Yamin said, “Lipi wants to take my daughter. Earlier, she took my daughter many times to her house without informing us.”

Contacted, Lipi denied the allegations and said she did not know anything about the torture.

Seven people have so far

been arrested in connection with the incident of torture, said Suman Kar, assistant superintendent of police in Faridpur, yesterday.

Sirajul Islam, primary education officer of Madukhali upazila, told The Daily Star, “A three-member investigation committee has been formed to probe the incident. Departmental action will be taken, if any the teacher is found guilty.”

Legal notice

FROM PAGE 5
not form the committee to investigate the irregularities.

He sent the legal notice following two separate reports published in The Daily Star on March 1 – which was updated on March 13 with the title “Biman paying for hiring unqualified Boeing 777 pilots” – and also on March 2 with the title “Life lost amid irregularities”.

Draw beyond censorship

FROM PAGE 3
Unfortunately, cartoons are undervalued. The political climate in our country isn’t supportive, which is necessary for a cartoonist to thrive.”

“We censor ourselves. However, we have to keep in mind that we cannot stop drawing. We have to find a way and wait for the perfect time, to hit the moment with the most fitting drawing,” he said.

As a cartoonist, the primary responsibility is

to depict the present time accurately, he added.

Writer and Journalist Afsan Chowdhury said, “Newspapers are no longer the only medium for cartoonists to work. Cartoons can come to people through various means. Cartoonists themselves can become a medium.”

He added, “This exhibition is a milestone, as it brings together cartoonists of many generations in one platform.”

During the discussion,

Shishir Battacharjee shared his interest in creating cartoons during the dictatorship and how he gradually transitioned into creating political cartoons.

He suggested the younger generation to centre their focus on the accused, rather than the victims, while drawing.

Political satirist Simu Naser said, “People often believe that the current time is the most difficult, but we must acknowledge

that reality may not always align with our desires.”

“As artists, it’s important to select our mediums of protest carefully, prioritising the ones that have the most impact, than one which discomforts us,” he said.

Associate Editor of The Daily Prothom Alo Anisul Hoque and cartoonist Nasreen Sultana Mitu also spoke at the discussion.

The exhibition will be open from 10:00am to 4:00pm till March 29 (Wednesday).

Breaking fast while

FROM PAGE 5
for their train with biryani packets to break their fast.

For many of these passengers, the railway station was not the ideal place to break their fast, but they had no other choice.

Despite the challenges they faced, their determination to fulfill their religious obligations and their love for their families made the experience all the more meaningful.

As the sun began to set, the passengers on the platform shared their iftar items, creating a sense of community in the most unlikely of places.

This moment of togetherness amidst difficult circumstances serves as a reminder that the spirit of Ramadan and the love for family and community can transcend even the most challenging of situations.

Inspector

FROM PAGE 3
Chattogram Abahani Club, filed a case against Saiful Karim with Dhaka Cyber Tribunal under the Digital Security Act.

The whip alleged that the then inspector Saiful Karim commented on Facebook on September 20, 2019, that Shamsul Haque earned Tk 180 crore from gambling, a false and fabricated claim that tarnished his image.

DMP’s Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit investigated the matter and found the allegations against the inspector true. They submitted the report to the tribunal on February 2 of 2020.

Following the report, the accused inspector was suspended from service. The tribunal framed charges against him on December 19, 2020.

Blackmailing

FROM PAGE 3
and threatening him for money. As Imtiaz refused to pay, the accused started beating him and killed him, Harun added.

The DB official said the accused after the murder fled to India illegally through Akhaura border of Brahmanbaria. Bangladeshi police informed its Indian counterpart who carried out a drive there. The accused then returned home.

‘Nestlé Bangladesh Limited’ renamed to ‘Nestlé Bangladesh PLC’

Nestlé Bangladesh Limited has changed its name to Nestlé Bangladesh PLC.

On 05/03/2023, the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms registered the change of the company name in compliance with the Companies Act, 1994 (2nd amendment 2020).

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL


Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh, is hereby inviting sealed Proposals from bonafide Seller, Trader, Importer, Reseller who can participate in the following Tender as defined in the Request For Proposal (RFP) documents of the under mentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

- Request for Proposal (RFP)** for incorporating **IT Service Management Solution (Help Desk)** of Pubali Bank Limited.

Please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for more details. Interested Consultants may purchase Request for Proposal documents by **06 April 2023** duly fulfilling all other requirements and submit their proposal on **09 April 2023** up to **11:00 AM** (BST).

(Md. Helal Uddin)
GM & Division Head

 **পুতালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**
PUBALI BANK LIMITED ICT Operation Division
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.



ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন
নগর ভবন, ঢাকা
www.dscc.gov.bd

“শেখ হাসিনার মূল্যবোধ
আম শহরের ভিত্তি”

১৩ চৈত্র ১৪২৯ বঙ্গাব্দ
তারিখঃ ২৭ মার্চ ২০২৩ খ্রিঃাব্দ

মারক নম্বরঃ ৪৬.২০৭.০০০.০৩.০১.৭৩৮.২০২২-২৭০

লিখিত পরীক্ষার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ০৫.১২.২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখের ৪৬.২০৭.০০০.০৩.০১.৭৩৮.২০২২-৯৬৫ নম্বর স্মারকমূলে দৈনিক জাতীয় পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে অনলাইনে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনকারীদের লিখিত পরীক্ষা স্বাস্থ্যবিধি অনুসরণপূর্বক নিম্নবর্ণিত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী গ্রহণ করা হবেঃ

ক্র. নং	পদের নাম	সময়সূচি	স্থান
১.	আবরিকালচার কর্মকর্তা	০৬.০৪.২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০টা হতে ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত	মেয়র মোহাম্মদ হানিফ
২.	বাগান তত্ত্বাবধায়ক	১১.০৪.২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০টা হতে ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত	মিলনায়তন, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন, নগর ভবন, ঢাকা-১০০০
৩.	ভিডিও ক্যামেরাম্যান	১১.০৪.২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০টা হতে ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত	
৪.	ফটোগ্রাফার	১৩.০৪.২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০টা হতে ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত	

০২। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য পরীক্ষার্থীগণ তাদের স্ব-স্ব প্রবেশপত্র এ ওয়েবসাইট <http://dscc.teletalk.com.bd> মাধ্যমে সজ্ঞাহ করতে পারবেন। প্রবেশপত্র ব্যতীত কোনো পরীক্ষার্থীকে পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে প্রবেশ করতে দেয়া হবে না।

০৩। আসন বিন্যাস এবং পরীক্ষার্থীদের জন্য অনুসরণীয় নির্দেশনা প্রবেশপত্রে উল্লেখ থাকবে।

০৪। Online-এ প্রবেশপত্র পেতে কোনো সমস্যা হলে ১২১ নম্বরে অথবা vas.query@teletalk.com.bd ইমেইলে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে।

০৫। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।

অক্ষরমুজ্জমান
সচিব

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসি/পিআরডি/২৫৪/২০২২-২০২৩
জিডি-৫৭৩

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
e-Zone
Servicing Change Managers

E-Zone HRM Limited is a management consulting group providing one-stop HR solutions.
We have a formal agreement with one of the UN agencies to provide outsourcing services under a third-party contract for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Coordination Centre (MOHFW CC), Cox's Bazar, and Dhaka. We are now seeking applications from Bangladeshi Nationals for the following vacancies. For a detailed Job Description, please visit the following website link to apply for the post.

Re-Advertisement
Duty Station : Dhaka
Title: 1. Public Health Officer: Line Director, HGS-CXB office, HSD, Dhaka
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un157.html>
Contract Duration: 8.5 Months (Possibility of extension)
Contract Type: Contract with E-Zone.
Last Date of Application: 3rd April, 2023

Duty Station : Cox's Bazar
Title: 2. Data Manager for MOHFW CC Cox's Bazar
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un158.html>
Title: 3. Monitoring and Reporting Officer for MOHFW CC Cox's Bazar
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un159.html>
Title: 4. Administrative Assistant for MOHFW CC Cox's Bazar
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un160.html>
Title: 5. Public Health Officer DDFP Office, Cox's Bazar
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un161.html>
Title: 6. Management Information Systems (MIS) Officer
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un162.html>
Title: 7. - Field Monitoring Supervisor (2 Positions)
Number of Vacancies: 02 (Two)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un163.html>
Title: 8. Messenger Coordination Cell, Cox's Bazar
Number of Vacancies: 01 (One)
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un164.html>
Contract Duration: 8.5 Months (Possibility of extension)
Contract Type: Contract with E-Zone.
Last Date of Application: 3rd April, 2023

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested firm/organization seeking technical and logistic assistance in organizing technical dialogue series on National Employment Policies across the country. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ILO Dhaka website under **Procurement Notices** at https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/WCMS_367536/lang-en/index.htm
The deadline for submission of proposal is **Monday, April 17, 2023, by 04:30 PM (BST time).**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh, is hereby inviting sealed Proposals from bonafide Seller, Trader, Importer, LAR who can participate in the following Tender as defined in the Request For Proposal (RFP) documents of the under mentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

- Request for Proposal (RFP)** for procuring **20 (Twenty) Servers for Core Zone, DMZ Zone and Partner Zone** and **Management Servers** to implement **SIEM-SOAR of Security Operation Center (SOC)** of Pubali Bank Limited.

Please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for more details. Interested Consultants may purchase Request For Proposal documents by **06 April 2023** duly fulfilling all other requirements and submit their proposal on **09 April 2023** up to **11:00 AM** (BST).

(Md. Helal Uddin)
GM & Division Head

**পুতালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**
PUBALI BANK LIMITED ICT Operation Division
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

INVITATION FOR TENDER



Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh, is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers who can participate in the following Tender as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

- Supplying **500 (Five Hundred) Email User Licenses for Zimbra Mailing System** of Pubali Bank Limited.

Please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for more details. Interested Parties may purchase Tender documents by **06 April 2023** duly fulfilling all other requirements and submit their proposal on **09 April 2023** up to **11:00 AM** (BST).

(Md. Helal Uddin)
GM & Division Head

**পুতালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**
PUBALI BANK LIMITED ICT Operation Division
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.



বাংলাদেশ স্যাটেলাইট কোম্পানি লিমিটেড
(রাষ্ট্রীয় মালিকানাধীন একটি প্রতিষ্ঠান)
১১৬ কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম আর্কিটেক্ট, ঢাকা- ১২০৫
www.bscl.gov.bd

স্মারক: ১৪.০৩.০০০০.০০২.১১.০৪২.১৯-৬৩৬

তারিখ: ২৩/০৩/২০২৩

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ স্যাটেলাইট কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (বিএসসিএল)-এর নিম্নোক্ত স্বাক্ষরিত নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে শর্ত সাপেক্ষে যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

নং	পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা	প্রাথমিক সাক্ষাৎ কেন্দ্র	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স সীমা	ন্যূনতম শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা
০১	এক্সিকিউটিভ অ্যানালিস্ট	০১	কোম্পানির বেকন কাঠামো অনুযায়ী	৩৫	সরকারি অনুমোদিত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে ন্যূনতম স্নাতক সনদসহ।	ইংরেজি ভাষায় পারদর্শী ও কম্পিউটার চালানায় অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন। টাইপিং গতি বাংলাদেশ প্রতি নির্দিষ্ট ২৫ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৩০ শব্দ।
০২	টেলিফোনিক (কলিংস্টার)	০১		৩৫	সরকারি অনুমোদিত প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞানে ডিপ্লোমা সমন্বয়।	কম্পিউটার হার্ডওয়্যার এবং নেটওয়ার্কিং এর কমন উন্নত ন্যূনতম ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন।

- বিঃ দ্রঃ স্যাটেলাইট সংক্রান্ত কাজে অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেওয়া হবে। প্রার্থীকে প্রয়োজন মতকি বিএসসিএল এর বেকন কর্মী কার্যকর (লোক/গার্মি/বেকন/নিয়ম) কাজ করতে আশ্রয়ী হতে হবে।
- অন্যপ্রদেশে জন্মগ্রহণের বিধি-১ শর্তাব ২২ সেকশনের ২০২২ তারিখের ০৫.০০.০০০০.১৭০.১১.০২৭.২০-২৪২ সংখ্যক সারক মূলে সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ২৫-০৩-২০২০ তারিখে নির্ধারিত হবে।
- পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি <http://BSCL.teletalk.com.bd> এ ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ করতে পারবেন। আবেদনের সময়সীমা নিম্নরূপ:
(অ) Online- এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণের পুরন্ব তারিখ ও সময়: ২৬ মার্চ ২০২৩ খ্রিঃ, সকাল ১০:০০ টা।
(ব্য) Online- এ আবেদনপত্র জমাধানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ২২ এপ্রিল ২০২৩ খ্রিঃ, বিকাল ৫:০০ টা।

অনলাইনে আবেদন করার পূর্ণ ও পঞ্জীয়ন অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে অনুসরণীয় পদ্ধতি এবং প্রার্থীর যোগ্যতা যাচাই সহ অন্যান্য শর্তাবলীর বিধিাবলি বিএসসিএল-এর ওয়েবসাইট www.bscl.gov.bd এ পাওয়া যাবে।

স্বাক্ষরিত
(মোঃ শফিকুল ইসলাম)
ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)
বিএসসিএল

ফোন: ০২ ৪২০৩০০১২-৯৩

GID-566

Breaking fast while catching a train

HELEMUL ALAM

Kaspia, a sixty-year-old woman, sat under a tree on a bench next to the platform at Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka, waiting for her son to return with iftar items. She had never broken her fast in a railway station before, but keeping the traffic situation in mind, she had no choice but to come early as she had to catch a return train from Dhaka shortly after iftar.

As she sat there, she noticed Syed Mahbub Alam, a man from Bogura, who was waiting with his wife and daughter to break their fast on the platform. Despite not being in the comfort of their home, they were determined to carry out their religious obligations.

Khadiza Aktar, a medical student from Bajitpur of Kishoreganj, was also waiting for her train with her father, having purchased boxes of iftar items from a nearby shop. She had been living in a hostel in Dhaka for several months for medical admission purposes and was now returning home.

The railway platform had turned into a makeshift iftar gathering, as many passengers sat on benches and waited for the azan of magrib to signal the breaking of their fast. Md Faruk Hossain, who had come to Dhaka for legal purposes with his elder brother, said that doing iftar with family members at home was a different experience altogether.

Golam Mostafa Chowdhury, a resident of Habiganj, had arrived at the station at 3:45pm, even though his train was not scheduled to leave until 8:00pm. He and his wife had just been discharged from Bangladesh Shishu Hospital with their two-year-old daughter, and they were waiting



Passengers were seen breaking their fast sitting inside the trains at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. They purchased iftar items from shops adjacent to the station and shared them amongst themselves, embodying the true spirit of Ramadan.

IRREGULARITIES IN BIMAN Legal notice asks govt to investigate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice asking the government to probe “irregularities” in pilot recruitment and flight operations by Biman Bangladesh Airlines through an independent committee.

Md Tanvir Ahmed sent the notice, asking the authorities concerned to form the committee in five days and inform him about it within seven days.

He sent the notice to the secretary at the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, the chairman of the civil aviation authority, the managing director and chief executive officer of Biman Bangladesh and its director (administration) and director (flight operations).

In the notice, the lawyer said he would take appropriate legal action against them if they do

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Sadar, Lakshmipur
www.lged.gov.bd



“দেশে হাসিনার মুক্তি
এবং শহরের উন্নতি”

Memo No-46.02.5143.000.14.001.23-476

Date: 27/03/2023

e-Tender Notice No-07/2022-23

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

Sl No.	Package No	Name of Work	Tender ID No.	Last Selling Date & Time	Last Date & Time of Tender Security Submission	Closing & Opening Date & Time
Tendering Method (NOTM)						
01.	e-Tender/PEDP4/L AX/SAD/2022-23/w14-1914	Construction of Boundary wall and Gate of a) Dakkhin Luxmipur Darogabari, b) Dighali and c) Jafarpur GPS under PEDP-4 at Sadar Lakshmipur	806750	11-04-2023 14:00	12-04-2023 14:00	12-04-2023 15:00
02.	e-Tender/PEDP4/L AX/SAD/2022-23/w14-1916	Construction of Boundary wall and Gate of a) Shankibhanga, and b) Uttar Lakshpur GPS under PEDP-4 at Sadar Lakshmipur	806751	11-04-2023 14:00	12-04-2023 14:00	12-04-2023 15.15

This is an online Tender. Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



(Md. Azizul Haque)
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Sadar, Lakshmipur.
e-mail:ue.laxmipur-s@lged.gov.bd

GID-568

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Teacher plotted torture of father, son: police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The incident of torturing a father and his son in a Faridpur school classroom “over rape” was a teacher's ploy to get custody of the man's girl, said police.

Israt Zahar Lipi, 44, an assistant teacher of Aruakandi Government Primary School under Faridpur's Madhukhali upazila, was the mastermind of the plot, said police.

“She [Lipi] incited the incident to take guardianship of the man's girl,” said Md Shahjahan, the district's superintendent of police (SP), in a press conference at his office.

However, Lipi denied the allegation.

The eight-year-old girl lives with her father Yamin Mridha, 40, and step brother at Majkandi area under Madhukhali upazila.

“The girl's mother died when she was born. Lipi does not have a child. The teacher liked the girl so much since she was admitted to the school. She often took the child to her residence,” the SP added.

But the girl's father did not like it. As a result, a feud grew between the teacher and the father.

On March 17, the teacher called the child's father and step brother to the school. Then, some locals along with the teacher confined them inside a classroom and brought a “false” allegation that the step brother raped the girl. Then, the people brutally tortured the father and son, said the SP.

On March 20, Yamin Mridha filed two cases with Madhukhali Police Station. One was field against 13 people for torturing him and against his son

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

‘Re-excavate Pakhimara canal’ Farmers demand at human chain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Hundreds of farmers staged a human chain yesterday demanding the re-excavation of Pakhimara canal in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila for agricultural purposes.

Farmer Zakir Hossain Gazi, development worker Iman Al Ahsan, farmer Quddus Hawladar and others spoke at the programme.

Farmer Zakir Hossain Gazi said about 20,000 farmers of 11 villages on both sides of the 10-kilometre-long and 500-foot-wide Pakhimara canal cultivate vegetables, aman and boro paddy, along with vegetables throughout the year by conserving fresh water. However, around half a kilometre of the Kumirmara section of the canal has been filled up.

“It is now a football field. Motorcycles run in the area. Farmers on both banks are unable to cultivate crops in their fields. This is a disastrous situation for agriculture,” said Zakir.

Farmers also said if the government permits, they can continue agricultural production by digging and conserving fresh water on their own initiative. “We don't want relief. We just want fresh water from the canal for our work,” one demanded on behalf of others.

In this regard, Kalapara Upazila Agriculture Extension Officer ARM Saifullah said efforts are underway to dig the canal to conserve fresh water.

Contacted, Kalapara Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jahangir Hossain, said necessary measures will be taken to dig the canal for the benefit of farmers.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Directorate General of Health Services
COVID-19 Emergency Response and Pandemic Preparedness Project
28/8/C, Bir Uttam AK Khandekar Road, Gulshan, Dhaka.
www.dghs.gov.bd

Memo No- DGHS/ERPP/PUBLISH/41/2020-21/2864

Date: 27 March, 2023


e-Tender Notice

Open Tendering Method (ICT)

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following goods.

e-Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Goods	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing & Opening Date & Time
807128	GD-30.1	Cold Chain for COVID-19 Vaccine	15-May-2023 12:00	16-May-2023 15:00
745760	GD-35.1	Procurement of Equipment for 19 Modern Microbiology Laboratory with rt-PCR	15-May-2023 12:00	16-May-2023 15:00

- This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- To submit e-Tender, registration in the 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 up to Date & Time mention above.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).




Prof. Dr. Shah Golam Nabi
Project Director
Email: pdccovid19wb@ld.dghs.gov.bd

GID-571

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

BEATING OUR OWN SCORES


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“I have never worked with an actress as punctual as Bubly. She went above and beyond for her character. Bubly has an amazing sense of timing, punctuality, and dedication. I am impressed by her positive attitude.”

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Once upon a time, Mahfuz Ahmed ruled over TV screens. After a long hiatus, Mahfuz Ahmed is now back with a new film, **Prohelika**, opposite actress Shabnom Bubly. Directed by Chayanika Chowdhury, the film will soon be released in theatres.

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, Mahfuz Ahmed shared his experience of working on the film and more.

What is your reason for returning with ‘Prohelika’ after such a long hiatus?

I wanted to return with a project that would make the audience forget that I have been away from the screen for a long time. I was waiting for a good story and character, which I found in **Prohelika**. People will know why I had not returned for a while, after watching it. **Prohelika** is just the right film for me.

How much have you internalised the character, Mona?

After shooting the film, my character in the film, Mona, lived inside me for a long time. It was hard for me to get out of character. When I started the dubbing for the film, I was once

again involved with Mona. I even went abroad to get out of this character.

How was the experience of working with Chayanika Chowdhury?

From bringing me back on screen—or maybe even forcing me to get back after a long time—to waiting two and a half years just to do the film with me, it all happened because of her. **Prohelika** is the biggest gift for me, from Chayanika. The way she stuck with me and brought out the best in me, I will be forever grateful.

The audience will be the final judge about the kind of director Chayanika is. However, her storytelling is amazing. As a director, she did what was necessary for the story.

How was your experience with Bubly?

I have never worked with an actress as punctual as Bubly. She went above and beyond for her character. Bubly has an amazing sense of timing, punctuality, and dedication. I am impressed by her positive attitude.

What was your reason for staying away from the limelight?

I wanted to leave the showbiz world. I didn’t want the celebrity life. A star has to take a lot of pressure, which I don’t want. I only want to live a normal life. A star has to become someone else in front of the camera, which is something I didn’t want to do.

How was life before you were a star? Do you regret leaving it behind?

I grew up in the Jagatpur village of the Lakshmipur district. I still like to walk along the village path, wearing a lungi and I love to meet and talk with the people from the village. A school friend of mine still lives in the village, and is now a rickshaw puller.

When I became a star, he did not want to meet me anymore. However, I still go to his house and meet him. I don’t want to forget the life I left behind, I don’t want to lose it and that’s who I am. I still go to the village shop where I used to eat *jilapi*. I think a life that has no joy, is no life at all.



‘Ityadi’ brings Women’s National Teams for Eid special



On the occasion of the upcoming Eid, one of the most special episodes of **Ityadi** will be airing, highlighting the importance of patriotism. The Eid special of the show, **Desher Gaan**, will feature the voice of the wonderful Sabina Yasmin.

At the invitation of **Ityadi**, the current Bangladesh Women’s National Football Team, along with the Bangladesh Women’s National Cricket Team will be part of the filming with Sabina Yasmin.

The song has been written by renowned lyricist Mohammad Rafiquzzaman, while Akash Mahmud has composed the music.

Like every year, the **Ityadi** Eid special will be aired the day after Eid, on BTV and BTV world, simultaneously.

Filming of Kareena Kapoor Khan starrer ‘The Crew’ begins



Powerhouse actresses Kareena Kapoor Khan, Tabu, and Kriti Sanon will star together in **The Crew**. The project has started filming, the makers announced on Saturday. The film is produced by Rhea Kapoor and Ektaa R Kapoor.

It is described as an incredible laugh-riot and is set against the backdrop of the struggling airline business, according to the producers. It’s about three women who work hard and hustle to go ahead in life. But their fates bring them into some unexpected situations, and they become entangled in a web of lies.

The Crew marks the second collaboration between Ektaa and Rhea, after the success of the women-centric film, **Veere Di Wedding**.

NEWS

Asteroid
FROM PAGE 12

“There is no chance of this ‘city killer’ striking Earth, but its close approach offers a great opportunity for observations,” the European Space Agency’s planetary defense chief Richard Moissl said in a statement.

Astronomers with the International Asteroid Warning Network see it as good practice for planetary defense if and when a dangerous asteroid heads our way, according to Nasa.

The Virtual Telescope Project will provide a live webcast of the close approach.

The asteroid won’t be back our way again until 2026. Although there initially seemed to be a slight chance it might strike Earth then, scientists have since ruled that out.

BCL leader
FROM PAGE 12

Tamjidul Rashid Chowdhury, president of Faridpur district unit BCL president, said an organisational action will be taken in this regard after investigating the matter.

Yesterday, police detained the BCL leader from municipality area for quizzing him.

Tigers’ T20
FROM PAGE 12

Chasing the revised target of 104 from eight overs, Ireland ended up on 81 for five. Pacer Taskin Ahmed registered his career-best bowling figures of four for 16 from his two overs which is also the third-best bowling figure by a Bangladeshi pacer in the format.

The tall seamer bagged three Irish wickets in the fourth over to break the backbone of the visitors’ top order as Taskin continued to impress with his consistency in the Tigers’ growing fast bowling unit.

Earlier, Liton Das and Rony Talukdar gave Bangladesh a blistering start after the Tigers were sent to bat on a gloomy day. The hosts scored a total of 81 runs in the Powerplay – the highest for Bangladesh in the first six overs in T20Is.

Rony smashed his maiden T20I fifty, scoring a 38-ball 67-run knock that included three sixes and seven fours, while Liton was dismissed after a 23-ball 47 to lay the foundation for a big total.

2 nurses ‘sexually harassed’

FROM PAGE 12

Bazar Sadar upazila on January 7.

“Dr Mahbubur and Dr Titu had arranged for our stay at a dormitory of Bangladesh Medical Association that night, saying many of our colleagues would also be there. But when we got there, we found we were the only ones staying over.”

“A little while later, Dr Titu called and said he and the civil surgeon would soon be coming to our room. As we didn’t want to be alone with them, we fled the dorm right away.

“Later, I got another call from Dr Titu. He said the civil surgeon was very angry because we left without meeting them.”

On January 30, the day the allegations came to light, Bangladesh Nurses Association and Bangladesh Diploma Nurses Association issued statements, condemning “the acts of sexual harassment committed by the officials using their position of authority.”

They also demanded the health ministry initiate an impartial investigation into the harassment allegations and remove the accused from their duties within 48 hours.

FORCED TO ST MARTIN’S

Talking to The Daily Star recently, Hena Parvin, nursing supervisor at the Teknaf Upazila Health Complex, said she wanted a written order from Dr Titu when he asked on January 24 for the nurses to go to the island.

“However, he threatened me saying it was a direct order from the civil surgeon. I had no alternative but to comply,” she claimed.

According to the complaint, after lunch on January 25, Dr Titu pressured the two nurses to go to the Parabar Beach Resort on the island, where the civil surgeon was staying.

“When we arrived, Dr Titu asked everyone there to leave except for us. At one stage, he started making lewd suggestions to us to entertain the civil surgeon and forced us to enter the latter’s room,” the complaint read.

The nurses left the place saying they needed to return to the hospital. The civil surgeon asked them to

come back in the evening (to join the party).

“When we went there in the evening as instructed, we found the civil surgeon and Dr Titu dancing and singing. When we tried to leave, Dr Titu got in the way. He grabbed one of us and said ‘you are here to entertain the civil surgeon’. He tried to force us to dance with the civil surgeon. But we managed to avoid it and leave the place,” the complaint read.

In the complaint submitted to the health ministry, the nurses also mentioned that they had audio and video clips of the incident.

The Daily Star has the video footage of the incident.

Contacted, Dr Titu Chandra Das said the allegations against him were baseless and intended to tarnish his reputation.

“As there was no nurse on the island, the civil surgeon wanted a nurse and a midwife to attend to the patients there. Why should I force them to go there? It was the upazila health and family planning officer of Teknaf who ordered them to go there,” Titu claimed.

However, Dr Ali Ahsan, the then upazila health and family planning officer of Teknaf, said the nurses did not go to St Martin’s Island on his orders. “They had to go there on the order of Dr Mahbubur and Dr Titu. And I was powerless to do anything about it.”

Moreover, Dr Ali said he has lately been transferred to Patuakhali as he did not take departmental action against the nurses upon Dr Mahbubur’s order.

When queried, Cox’s Bazar Civil Surgeon Mahbubur Rahman claimed he was unaware of any complaints lodged against him.

He also denied inviting any nurses to his room when he stayed at the Parabar Beach Resort on the night of January 25.

Md Saidur Rahman, additional secretary (administration) at Health Services Division of the health ministry, said they had received the complaints and would take necessary action after an investigation.

Avdiivka
FROM PAGE 12

Two people were killed and 32 wounded yesterday after Russian forces fired two S 300 missiles at the eastern Ukrainian city of Sloviansk northwest of Bakhmut, according to regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko.

President Volodymyr Zelensky posted a video of smouldering debris and vowed that “Ukraine will not forgive” such attacks. Moscow denies targeting civilians.

Zelensky visited the southeastern Zaporizhzhia region yesterday, his third trip to the front line in less than a week. He awarded soldiers and discussed nuclear safety with International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi, who also travelled to the area, home to Europe’s biggest nuclear power plant, which has been occupied by Russian forces for the past year.

Parliament
FROM PAGE 12

over comments made by Gandhi in Britain in early March that Indian democracy is “under attack”.

Opposition lawmakers from different parties also staged protests in New Delhi yesterday, the latest in a series of recent demonstrations.

Piyush Goyal, trade minister and a member of Modi’s ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), yesterday accused the opposition of “cheap politics” and “trying to mislead people”.

Gandhi “has no right to consider himself above the law of the country”, Goyal told reporters.

Gandhi, 52, is the leading face of the opposition Congress party, once the dominant force of Indian politics, and is the scion of India’s most famous political dynasty.

But Congress has for years been repeatedly crushed in elections by Modi’s BJP and its nationalist appeals to India’s Hindu majority.

JP will take part
FROM PAGE 2

organisational programmes after the Ramadan.

She added that the party would be strengthened if dedicated leaders and activists and old and new leadership worked together.

Raushan said the Bangladeshes achieved independence at the call of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and after overcoming many hurdles, Bangladesh is now established as a developing country in the world, she added.

Sonamasjid land

FROM PAGE 12

28.81 tonnes of goods were imported and 0.20 tonnes exported through the port in last fiscal year. The volume of goods being carried through Sonamasjid is the fourth highest among the 12 land ports operating in the country.

Besides, there are several archeological sites, including Chhoto Sona Masjid (mosque) in the area. But tourism there has not flourished due to the absence of a rail link. Moreover, the area is famous for mango production and rail communication will help transport the fruit.

BR sources said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, while visiting Chapainawabganj in May 2015, had announced that her government would build a new rail line to bring Sonamasjid under the rail network. Local lawmaker Abdul Wadud later requested BR to carry out the feasibility study for it.

The study was completed by BR last year, they added.

Apart from 36.74km main line, the authority has to build 12.26km loop and siding lines, documents show.

There will be five stations for the new line – Chapainawabganj Bypass,

Naya Nawbhanga, Shibganj, Kansat and Sonamasjid.

Additionally, there will be three major bridges, 39 RCC box culverts and 4.53km viaduct. The authority has to acquire 527.09 acres of land for the new line.

Of the estimated cost (Tk 6,114.48 crore), Tk 4,250.56 crore is expected to come from foreign funds, while the rest is to be paid by the government.

A BR official said the nearest rail line in the Indian side from Sonamasjid land port is around 12km from the border.

“If Indian Railway takes initiative to expand it towards the Bangladesh border, Sonamasjid and Mahadipur of West Bengal’s Maldah can be another railway interchange between the two neighbouring countries,” he said.

Currently five railway interchanges between the two countries are in operation – Darshana (Bangladesh)-Gede (India), Benapole (Bangladesh)-Petrapole (India), Rohanpur (Bangladesh)-Singhabad (India), Birol (Bangladesh)-Radhikapur (India), and Chilahati (Bangladesh)-Haldibari (India).

Rohanpur is situated in Chapainawabganj.

PM slams BNP’s call

FROM PAGE 1

the 53rd Independence and National Day, at the capital’s Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Hasina, also the AL president, urged the people to remain alert to any move against the country’s development.

She said “Khaleda Zia had shot dead” 17 labourers in the month of Ramadan for waging a movement demanding hike in salaries.

“How will those who shot people dead in Ramadan show respect to this month? So, they have called for a movement. They have no feeling for Ramadan and over the sufferings of the people”

On the contrary, the AL has decided not to hold any iftar party and instead, it would distribute money and food among the ordinary people to ease their sufferings, she added.

The AL chief came down heavily on the BNP leaders and some so-called intellectuals for not seeing democracy and development in the country despite the fact that the world community cannot but show

respect to Bangladesh after seeing its massive development.

She said Bangladesh has achieved huge development in the last 14 years since 2009 due to her successive government’s tireless efforts and continued democratic process.

The PM called upon the people to go ahead with the trust and confidence that the AL has achieved through the massive development for the welfare of the country and its people.

Referring to propaganda against the AL and the government by the BNP-Jamaat, the PM called upon the people not to be misled by any falsehood.

Hasina said there are many international powers alongside some so-called local intellectuals who don’t like to see democracy and development continue in Bangladesh.

Describing various measures taken for the overall development of the country, she said her government has made significant development in every sector such as infrastructure, education, health, electricity, agriculture, ICT, trade and commerce.

Migrants tortured in Libya: UN

AFP, Geneva

Migrants stuck in Libya while trying to reach Europe are being systematically tortured and forced into sexual slavery -- a crime against humanity, a United Nations investigation said yesterday.

The probe said it was deeply concerned at the deteriorating human rights situation in the conflict-torn North African country.

"There are grounds to believe a wide array of war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed by state security forces and armed militia groups," the investigators concluded.

"Migrants, in particular, have been targeted and there is overwhelming evidence that they have been systematically tortured" in detention centres, the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya said.

US committed to long-term solutions

FROM PAGE 1

to choose their own fate and to speak their own language, Biden wrote in the letter that he concluded with "Joy Bangla".

As Bangladesh approaches its next election, the US president said he is reminded of the "deep value" both the nations place on "democracy, equality, respect for human rights, and free and fair elections".

He applauded Bangladesh's demonstrated commitment to protecting the most vulnerable as the largest contributor to peacekeeping operations.

"We thank Bangladesh for cohosting the Global Action Plan ministerial meeting that significantly elevated the political commitment to end the global pandemic," Biden said.

In over 50 years of diplomatic relations, the United States and Bangladesh have achieved a lot together -- advancing economic development, strengthening people-to-people ties, addressing global health and climate issues, partnering on the humanitarian response to Rohingya refugees, and committing to a prosperous, secure, democratic, and independent Bangladesh, said the US president.



A woman stands in front of a destroyed building after a deadly strike in the city of Sloviansk, eastern Ukraine yesterday. Russian shelling of the town killed at least two people and wounded more than two dozen others, authorities said.

PHOTO: AFP

POST-COUP MYANMAR No let-up in crackdown, then polls: junta chief

Britain targets suppliers in new sanctions

AGENCIES

Myanmar's junta chief, flanked by tanks and missile launchers, vowed no let-up in a crackdown on opponents and said yesterday elections would be held, weeks after the military conceded it did not control enough territory to allow a vote.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military deposed Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government more than two years ago after making unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud.

The putsch sparked renewed fighting with ethnic rebels and birthed dozens of anti-junta "People's Defence Forces" (PDFs), with swaths of the country now ravaged by fighting and the economy in tatters.

The military will take "decisive action" against its opponents and ethnic rebels supporting them, Min Aung Hlaing told an audience of around 8,000 service members attending the annual Armed Forces Day parade in the capital Naypyidaw.

"The terror acts of NUG and its lackey so-called PDFs need to be tackled for good and all," he said, referring to the "National Unity Government", a body dominated by ousted lawmakers working to reverse the coup.

The junta would then hold "free and fair elections" upon

the completion of the state of emergency, he said.

The military announced last month a six-month extension of a two-year state of emergency and postponed elections it had promised to hold by August because it did not control enough of the country for a vote to take place, reports AFP.

"Serenity and stability are vital" before any election could go ahead, Min Aung Hlaing told the parade.



Meanwhile, Britain yesterday sanctioned two individuals and a company in Myanmar for supplying equipment used by the country's military junta, reports Reuters.

Those sanctioned include a company and its director supplying Myanmar's air force with aviation fuel and a director at a second company that supplies restricted goods and technology, Britain's foreign office said.

The sanctions bar any financial dealings with UK entities and any travel to Britain.

Armed Forces Day commemorates the start of resistance to the Japanese occupation during World War II. It usually features a military parade attended by foreign officers and diplomats.

Workers made last-minute inspections of the parade ground early yesterday, the hulking statues of three of Myanmar's empire-building kings looming out of the dark.

Planes later trailed smoke in the yellow, red and green of the national flag as Russian-made Yak and Sukoi Su-30 jets made several flyovers.

Marching bands played bagpipes and brass, at times duelling with each other, and state media images showed women lining the streets to garland marching soldiers with flowers.

New junta chief Min Aung Hlaing was inspecting the parade two years ago when troops launched a countrywide crackdown on those protesting against the coup that had ousted Suu Kyi's government.

Around 160 protesters were killed in the violence, according to a local monitoring group, sparking widespread international condemnation.

Rights groups and opponents have since accused the military of torching villages and using air and artillery strikes as collective punishment for opponents.

EU backs fossil fuel car ban, as Berlin lifts veto

AFP, Brussels

The 27 EU member states yesterday approved a deal between Brussels and Germany that lifted Berlin's block on a planned phase-out of sales of new fossil fuel cars by 2035.

A spokesman for Sweden, which holds the EU presidency, said ambassadors backed the agreement. Energy ministers are expected to give the final green light today during a meeting in Brussels.

Germany, one of the world's biggest car manufacturers, had irked its EU partners by blocking a deal that had already been approved under the bloc's standard legislative process.

The ban on internal combustion engines is key to the EU's ambitious push to become a "climate neutral" economy by 2050.

Germany blocked the deal at the 11th hour, calling for an exemption for cars that run on synthetic fuels.

The fuels for which Germany wanted an exemption are still under development and should be produced using low-carbon electricity, but environmentalists oppose them.

'Grim' criminal abuse of ChatGPT is coming: Europol

AFP, The Hague

Criminals are set to take advantage of artificial intelligence like ChatGPT to commit fraud and other cybercrimes, Europe's policing agency warned yesterday. From phishing to disinformation and malware, the rapidly evolving abilities of chatbots will be used not only to better mankind, but to scam it too, Europol said in a new report. Created by US startup OpenAI, ChatGPT appeared in November and was quickly seized upon by users amazed at its ability to answer difficult questions clearly, write sonnets or code, and even pass exams. "The potential exploitation of these types of AI systems by criminals provides a grim outlook," The Hague-based Europol said. Europol's new "Innovation Lab" looked at the use of chatbots as a whole but focused on ChatGPT during a series of workshops as it is the highest-profile and most widely used, it said. Criminals could use ChatGPT to "speed up the research process significantly" in areas they know nothing about, the agency found. This could include drafting text to commit fraud or give information on "how to break into a home, to terrorism, cybercrime and child sex abuse," it said. The chatbot's ability to impersonate speech styles made it particularly effective for phishing, in which users are tempted to click on fake email links that then try to steal their data, it said. ChatGPT's ability to quickly produce authentic sounding text makes it "ideal for propaganda and disinformation purposes, as it allows users... reflecting a specific narrative with relatively little effort."

ROHINGYA REFUGEES Nearly 200 land in Indonesia's Aceh

AFP, Peureulak

At least 184 Rohingya refugees, including many women and children, landed in Indonesia's westernmost province yesterday, officials said, after they were dropped at sea by boat and made to swim ashore.

Thousands of the mostly Muslim Rohingyas, heavily persecuted in Myanmar, risk their lives each year on long and expensive sea journeys, often in poor-quality boats, in an attempt to reach Malaysia or Indonesia.

Locals in the East Aceh town of Peureulak alerted police yesterday morning after discovering the group that officials said included 94 men, 70 women and 20 children.

"There was no boat on the beach when they arrived," Nasri, the head of Peureulak subdistrict who, like many Indonesians, has one name, told AFP.

"There are some refugees who look weak, they probably have not been eating for days."

At least five were taken to hospital, while others were taken to a mosque compound for shelter, food and medical treatment, he said.

An official from East Aceh social affairs agency, Saharani, confirmed the same arrival total to AFP.

A United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) spokesperson said it was still gathering information on the new arrivals.


According to one of the passengers, they were dropped offshore and told to swim to land by the boat's captain.

"After that, the ship we were on immediately left," Rohingya refugee Ali told state news agency Antara. The refugees were trying to reach Malaysia from Myanmar, Ali said.


Local officials are in talks with the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration about shelter for the refugees.

More than 2,000s Rohingya are believed to have attempted the risky journey to Southeast Asian countries in 2022, according to the UNHCR.





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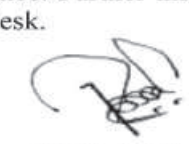


Memo no: 12.01.0000.500.42.201.23-1467
Date: 23-03-2023

E-GP Tender Notice


Tender ID	Brief Description of Goods and Related Service	Tender Publication	Last Selling	Tender Security Submission	Closing & Opening
807133	Supply of Fumigant Aluminium Phosphide 56% in tubes	23-Mar-2023 18:30	09-Apr-2023 12:00	09-Apr-2023 14:00	09-Apr-2023 14:30

The above mentioned tender is an online tender, where e tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline copies will be accepted. To Submit e-Tender register in the e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of the mentioned package from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank by up to particular date specified on the tender notice. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP portal and e-GP help desk.




23-03-2023
(Dr. Md. Rezaul Karim)
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GD-567



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[web: telecom.police.gov.bd](http://web.telecom.police.gov.bd)



Memo No-44.01.0000.057.11.049.22/1737/Betar
Date: 27-03-2023

Invitation for e-Tender

For the financial year 2022-2023, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following items.

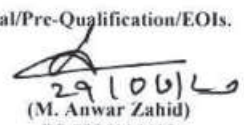
SL	Description	e-Tender ID	Procurement Method	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	Power Backup System (Without Battery Backup)	791911	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:00
2.	Purchase of Magnetic Base and Helical Antenna.	791912	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:05
3.	Purchase of Half Inch Foam Helix and RG-8/213 Feeder Cable.	791913	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:10
4.	Purchase of Solar Items.	791915	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:15
5.	Purchase of Parabolic Grid Dish Antenna.	791916	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:20
6.	Purchase of Linking Router, Switch and 12 U Glass Door Rack.	791917	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:25
7.	Purchase of Pack Battery for Motorola VHF DMR XIR P-6620i	807451	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:30

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

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd>).

The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders/Proposal/Pre-Qualification/EOIs.



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GD-570

We demand an independent probe

Rab’s way of operation needs an overhaul

The untimely and cruel death of a young woman who was in the custody of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) raises a number of questions and concerns. The woman, an employee of a Naogaon union parishad land office, died in the custody of Rab-5 after suffering haemorrhages of the brain. She was picked up at 10am on March 22 when she was on her way to Chandipur Union Land Office, where she worked as an office assistant. However, just 48 hours later, on March 24, she was declared to have died at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

According to Rab, the woman died after suffering a stroke. But her family members said she was in perfect health. So, why would she suffer from a stroke while in Rab’s custody? In fact, why is it that so many people who were apparently in perfect health, according to those who knew them, suffered from fatal health issues while in the custody of our law enforcement agencies? Shouldn’t that be a major concern? According to doctors, the woman in question had an external bruise on her head as well as multiple intracranial bleeds. Rab’s explanation for that was that she had fallen down. So again, we must ask, why do people so frequently fall ill, have accidental injuries, or suffer from fatal health problems suddenly while in Rab’s custody? How is the Rab handling its detainees that such incidents have become so common?

On that same topic, why did the Rab record her case – of syphoning off money from job seekers using a Facebook account, under the Digital Security Act (DSA) – more than 31 hours after she had been picked up and when she was unresponsive in a hospital bed? According to Rab, there were allegations of unusual transactions in her bank account, which it found to be authentic after scrutinising her bank statement. So why is it that the case was not filed earlier? The incident raises serious questions about Rab’s way of conducting its operations, as did another occurrence only a few days ago, on March 17, which had resulted in the death of a 65-year-old man during a shooting incidence; another victim was also shot in the leg. Neither of them, however, had any involvement with the case.

Needless to say, all such unexplained occurrences have resulted in a deep sense of injustice building up among the people – particularly because, in many cases, Rab’s version of the story differs substantially from that provided by witnesses and others. Unfortunately, we never see any independent investigation being conducted to find out the truth and clear the air, despite repeated calls to do so.

We are heartened by the High Court passing an order *suo moto*, wanting to know the details of Rab personnel involved in arresting and interrogating the woman. We would, however, like to plead to the court to launch an investigation into the incident. Given the numerous serious allegations against Rab, as well as the imposition of international sanctions, independent investigation is the only way of restoring the government’s already dwindling credibility when it comes to handling such deaths.

A riverine horror show

Saga of three rivers a reminder of how catastrophically mismanaged our rivers are

Not long ago, a study by the Rivers and Delta Research Centre (RDRC) revealed that 56 rivers across the country are suffering from extreme pollution. It was an alarming if not entirely shocking revelation. But new details of the year-long study, courtesy of a recent report, throw further light on the scale of the damage being wrought, which makes you sit up and take notice. Apparently, key pollutants including microplastics have been found in all the rivers surveyed, meaning that industrial and municipal wastes dumped in rivers near cities and towns are flowing into rivers in far-flung coastal areas. Which, in other words, means that if preventive steps are not taken, the pollution of these rivers will affect all other rivers as well.

Another important revelation is about three rivers which have been identified as the most polluted. These are Labandaha in Gazipur, Haridhowa in Narshingdi, and Sutang in Sylhet. Of them, the Labandaha river, once called “Labalong Sea” because of its size, has now been reduced to a canal through constant pollution and encroachment. Some 250 factories have been found on the banks of this river, and industrial waste generated by them, together with waste from the Sripur municipality, are all dumped in the river, choking it to death. The same thing has happened to Haridhowa, which was once used for fishing and agricultural purposes but is now little more than a dumping ground. The story of Sutang, a cross-border river in Sylhet, is no different; so polluted has its water become that it is no longer distinguishable as a river.

Plastic waste, household waste and industrial waste are all landing, untreated and unopposed, in these rivers and others, robbing them of their life. The question is, why are we allowing this to happen? A more worrying question is, are these rivers damaged irreversibly? Only the other day, the shipping minister warned that Bangladesh will not survive if our rivers stop flowing. Studies like the one by RDRC suggest that we may already be headed in that direction. Our country is a victim of not just negligent handling of its wastes by individuals and institutions but also of a development/urbanisation policy that pays little heed to environmental concerns. Just imagine: industries and EPZs are being constructed near rivers. Tanneries are being relocated near rivers. Urban authorities are using rivers as dumping grounds. How long can Bangladesh survive in such a toxic environment?

Because of unchecked pollution, not only are the ecosystems of rivers being damaged, but the lives and livelihoods of people living near rivers, as well as our agriculture, public health and sources of clean water are also being threatened. Such catastrophic mismanagement can no longer continue. We urge the authorities to take stern actions in this regard.

Why does the EC want to talk with the BNP anyway?

The sudden invitation for dialogue seems to be for lip service



THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla
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The Daily Star.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

When the top leadership of the Awami League and BNP, the two major political parties in Bangladesh, ruled out any possibility of talks ahead of the next parliamentary election, the Election Commission appeared in the scene by inviting the BNP to a dialogue.

Suspicious about the sudden invitation, the BNP rejected it outright, calling it “meaningless.” Although the EC roadmap, announced late last year, did not say anything about talks with the political parties, it did mention that gaining their trust was a major challenge. But it did not spell out how that trust would be earned.

The EC invitation to BNP came at a time when Awami League and BNP leaders were both meeting with diplomats about the next election. It was widely reported that Western diplomats emphasised holding a free and fair election. To add to the context, the US Department of State has published its annual flagship human rights report where it was mentioned for the first time that the 2018 election was neither free nor fair. Charles Whiteley, the European Union ambassador to Bangladesh, said the EU would not send observers to the next election if it is not participatory. Now, if the international observers don’t come, the election’s credibility as well as the EC’s role will remain under question.

It could be said that the election authorities only acted responsibly when they invited the main opposition, seeing as the issue of a participatory election is under discussion right now. On the surface, at least, the EC has demonstrated their willingness to hold an inclusive, free and fair election. But one ought to ask what the EC is looking to achieve through these talks. Other than the commission gaining some mileage by showing their attempts, and the political parties playing to the gallery, there is not much that these talks would gain. In that respect, talks with the EC would be rather infructuous.

The invitation letter to the BNP also clarifies some things. While the Election Commission is fully aware of BNP’s position regarding

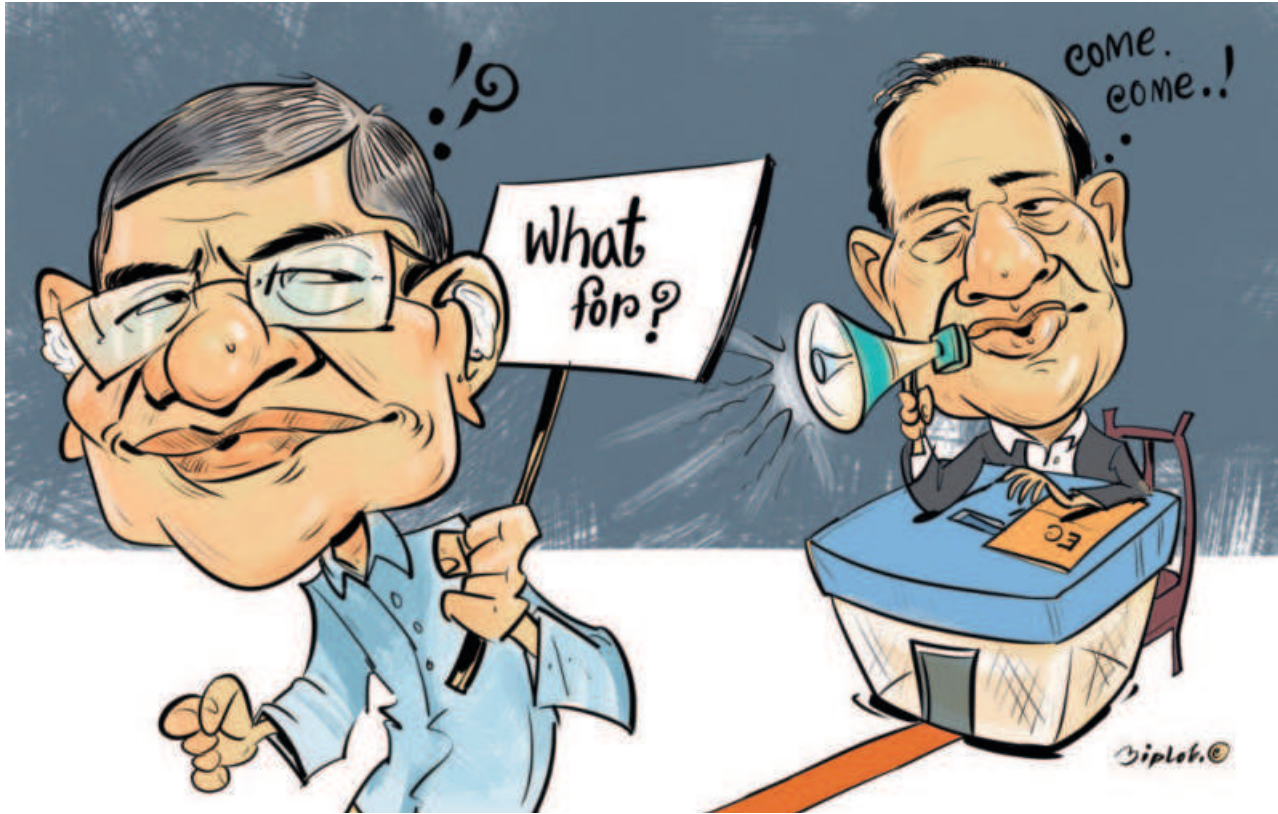


ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

an election-time government, there is no comment related to that in the letter. To make any progress with the election, the stumbling blocks must be dealt with, and the commission must have a specific agenda for the talks – for instance, whether to use electronic voting machines (EVMs) or not. The invitation letter does not carry any such details. Then why hold these talks?

The Election Commission may claim that their goal is to ensure an inclusive 12th parliamentary election. But simply saying that is not enough, given the previous EC’s complete failure to hold a credible election in 2018, and then even admitting that publicly.

The incumbent EC could claim that they are different from their predecessors. But then, one could ask what this commission has done to earn the trust of all political parties. The commission’s activities so far

that the EC would not be able to hold a free, fair and participatory general election.

The lack of trust for the Election Commission deepened when it went ahead with the decision to use EVMs in the upcoming general election, ignoring the objection of many political parties, including the BNP. That decision, while embracing modernity and change, was aligned with the desire of the ruling party.

Undoubtedly, rejecting the dialogue would be a setback for the BNP as it would garner criticism from the ruling party. The EC would be able to say that they tried, but could not bring BNP to the table. BNP leaders would have to remain busy for a few days parrying all the criticism. The party may even face questions from the international community.

The BNP should have taken time to deliberate over their decision before rejecting the EC invitation. Now

Having said all that, the political parties can take advantage of the situation as it suits their strategy, but not the Election Commission, which is a constitutional body and assigned to hold a free, fair and participatory election. Lip service or mere show of effort may not be enough.

Listening to the trials and tribulations of this political reporter, and learning that the EC had invited the opposition to the table, a relative recounted an anecdote about the stingy hosts of a certain part of the country, where guests would often arrive on boats. The story goes like this: in this certain region, the hosts keep mum as the guests get ready to leave and get on their boat to return home, and just when the hosts push off the boat, they say, “I wish you had stayed a few more days with us.” But by then the boat is already sailing, and the guests have nothing but to say, “Next time!”

Terminal 3 alone can’t turn Dhaka into an ‘aviation hub’



Manazir Islam
is an urban planner, traveller
and photographer.

MANAZIR ISLAM

Recently some images have been circulating of the under-construction third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in Dhaka, which shows what we can expect the interior of the terminal to look like. Most netizens and experts were vastly impressed.

Many believe that the third terminal megaproject will be a game changer for the country’s aviation sector. At a recent conference, the prime minister herself expressed her wish to turn Bangladesh into an aviation hub. On the other hand, Biman Bangladesh has reportedly been in discussion with Airbus to purchase new aircraft, admittedly a step in the right direction because only a shiny new terminal will not be enough to transform Bangladesh’s aviation sector. Biman, our national flag carrier, must grow, expand, and possibly revamp itself to complement the whole project.

The question remains as to whether Bangladesh can truly be an aviation hub in the region when there are already big players such as Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Delhi. The

third terminal project does include auxiliary projects such as high-speed taxiways and a large cargo village. But frankly speaking, there are several highly important elements that are still missing. It is quite surprising and disappointing that no one yet has pointed out these missing elements in the megaproject – all of which are so crucial!

The first and most important of these is the need for a new ATC (Air Traffic Control) tower. HSIA currently lacks not only a proper ATC tower, but also the right equipment and technology to control air traffic. A new airport would practically be useless without modern navigation and communication systems. So, one can’t fathom why a new ATC tower and radar system have not been included as part of this megaproject. Radio communication between Dhaka’s air traffic controllers and pilots is easily listenable online and one can hear how unclear the communication seems to be due to the airport’s old and outdated equipment. One could be forgiven for wondering how foreign

airlines still fly into the HSIA.

Secondly, there has always been a debate over whether a second parallel runway would be feasible. Every major airport around the world has at least two operational runways. Therefore, it is only fitting that HSIA should also have another runway not only as backup but also to handle increasing passenger and aircraft movement, as the taxiways and the sole current runway get busier. However, the lack of space for a second runway might be an issue here. The authorities have allowed illegal constructions and settlements around the airport’s perimeter to such a degree that a significant threat is posed to flight safety while landing or taking off from Dhaka. This is an issue that needs urgent attention from relevant authorities. Once the safety concerns are duly addressed, a second runway would still be possible, with certain adjustments.

Then there is the matter of ground handling and the quality of airport services. As a major gateway to Bangladesh, the HSIA reflects the image of our country. No matter how shiny an airport is, if the passenger experience is still sub-par, our aviation sector can never progress forward. Incompetency, mismanagement, and corruption have plagued passenger experiences and ground handling services for too long at the Dhaka airport. Many are still worried that, despite a new terminal, these unpleasantly familiar scenarios will remain.

Internationally reputable ground

handling agencies such as Dnata, Swissport, and Celebi have previously offered to invest in Dhaka’s ground handling. But these offers were unfortunately denied due to Biman’s monopoly. And we have all witnessed and experienced what good this has done.

But no more. New changes are necessary for the benefit of all and it is time for a more competent entity to take over the day-to-day operation of the HSIA once the third terminal is fully operational.

Finally, branding is a vital tool to market almost anything these days. All major airports across the world have their own logo and branding, but none of the airports in Bangladesh practice any form of branding. This must not be overlooked. After the completion of the third terminal, the HSIA will need to brand itself with at least an appealing logo. And the red neon signs displaying the name of the airport on top of the present terminals just won’t do. No other internationally renowned airport has such signs displayed on the facade of the landside terminals given that everyone knows where an airport is located and what it could look like. Bangladesh cannot become an aviation hub overnight, but the completion of the third terminal (along with the additional projects to transform the HSIA into a 21st century airport) could be the first step in that direction. And for that, this roadmap, with all the elements of a modern functioning airport, will be necessary for the Dhaka airport.



VISUAL: STAR

Managing the politics of budget-making



Dr Sadiq Ahmed
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SADIQ AHMED

The presentation of the national budget is an important annual event. The government conducts numerous consultation sessions with a wide-ranging group of stakeholders. Many views, hopes, aspirations, and criticisms are exchanged through this consultation process. In the end, the budget that is approved by the parliament is a political document. In an election year, the politically-determined contents of the budget get added prominence. This is not unique to Bangladesh.

Yet, the forthcoming national budget for FY2023-24 cannot be a business-as-usual budget and needs some deft management in view of the ongoing macroeconomic instability, the requirements of the IMF loan, the uncertain global economic and financial environment, and the risk of derailing medium-term growth prospects.

Being political in nature, budget-making is an art and not a science. Even so, it must take into account the prevailing socioeconomic realities and the implementation experience of the recent budgets.

The budget means different things to different people. In the process, there is a risk that the focus and core messages of the budget might get diluted. The current macroeconomic situation is uncomfortable. Inflation is high, difficulties regarding balance of payments persist with a continued loss of foreign exchange reserves, volume of import is constrained, tax revenues as a share of GDP are low, and fiscal deficits have been increasing. These factors suggest that the main focus of the FY24 budget must be on economic stabilisation.

In this environment, doing an expansive budget financed by rising fiscal deficits using bank borrowings will be a hugely negative approach. While there are many unmet development needs owing to resource constraints, the prevailing macroeconomic instability requires an austere budget that is focused on reducing the demand pressure on inflation and balance of payments.

Target for fiscal deficit: Research shows that fiscal deficit as a share of GDP has been rising steadily from a low of 1.1 percent of GDP in FY14 to an estimated 5.3 percent of GDP in FY23. While the fiscal deficit of 5.3 percent of GDP is not excessively high, in the present context of high inflation, a rising fiscal deficit is not consistent with the task of reducing demand. Given this situation, it will be prudent to limit the fiscal deficit within five percent of GDP in the forthcoming FY24 budget.

Financing of fiscal deficit: Data shows that over the past two fiscal years, there was a progressive increase in the recourse to bank financing of the fiscal deficit. Indeed, the average growth of credit to the government has been in the 30 percent range since June 2021. This has added to

the growth of total credit at a time when the rate of credit expansion should be curbed to fight inflation. For the FY24 budget, all efforts should be made to use low-cost domestic and foreign borrowing to finance the deficit. Establishing a well-functioning T-bill market with access to the general public will help reduce the demand pressure of the budget deficit.

Resource mobilisation: The inability to introduce meaningful tax reforms over the past several years has constrained tax revenue mobilisation. Tax revenue as a share of GDP has been virtually stagnant at around 7-7.5 percent of GDP. Ad-hoc tax measures announced during the budget seasons have failed to make a dent in the resource mobilisation effort.

Meaningful reforms require an overhaul of the tax system that involves major institutional changes in tax planning and tax administration. These reforms include separation of tax planning

In this environment, doing an expansive budget financed by rising fiscal deficits using bank borrowings will be a hugely negative approach. While there are many unmet development needs owing to resource constraints, the prevailing macroeconomic instability requires an austere budget that is focused on reducing the demand pressure on inflation and balance of payments.

from tax collection; modernisation of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) through simplification and digitisation of tax administration; eliminating expenditure accounting requirement in tax filing; removing the interface between taxpayer and tax collector; adopting a true self-assessment system with enforcement through selective and productive computer-based audits; converting the NBR from a tax policing department to a tax service agency; introducing a proper property tax system; and full implementation of the 2012 VAT law. These are far-reaching reforms and can be best introduced through a detailed workout of a modern tax system designed by an Expert Tax Reform Commission (TRC). Similar TRC-based reforms have helped to modernise the Indian tax system and raise the tax-GDP ratio.

In the meantime, for FY2023-24 budget, some of the easy reforms can be introduced by doing away with the expenditure accounting requirement of the tax form, introducing online tax submission and payments, and conducting selective but productive audits

focused mainly on the large taxpayer units. All efforts to eliminate rent-seeking venues for tax collectors and avoid harassment of taxpayers will substantially boost tax revenues by providing incentives for voluntary tax compliance and reducing revenue leakages.

Some minimal state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms can also be introduced to improve their financial performance by implementing a hard budget constraint, improving the pricing policies for SOEs, and strengthening corporate governance.

With these reforms, it should be possible to increase the tax effort from 7.1 percent of GDP estimated for FY23 to 7.6 percent of GDP in FY24. Non-tax revenues can be increased from one percent to 1.2 percent of GDP.

Size of the budget: It may be politically appealing to announce a large budget in an election year. However, it would be imprudent from the standpoint of macroeconomic management and would undermine the political value of a large budget by increasing inflationary pressure. The size of the budget should depend upon a realistic assessment of the likely magnitude of tax and non-tax resources and the size of the fiscal deficit. As noted, with some minimal reforms, the total revenue can be increased from 8.1 percent of GDP in FY23 to 8.8 percent of GDP in FY24.

Applying a budget deficit target of five percent of GDP, total size of the FY24 budget would amount to about 13.8 percent of GDP. Converting this in terms of taka by using the projected GDP for FY24, this amounts to about Tk 7 trillion. This will be about 19 percent higher than the estimated budget implementation for FY23.

It is important to note that this size of the budget is contingent upon implementing the suggested reforms for strengthening revenue mobilisation. If, for example, the proposed reforms are not implemented and total revenues in FY24 remain unchanged at 8.1 percent of GDP as in FY23, the size of a prudent budget would fall to Tk 6.7 trillion, which is about 13 percent higher than the estimated budget outcome for FY23.

Expenditure priorities: Since some 50 percent of the budget is already committed to fixed spending items (wages and salaries, civil service pensions, materials and supplies, security spending, and interest cost), the flexibility for strengthening expenditure priorities is rather limited. Even so, the government must make an effort to curb subsidies and phase the implementation of capital-intensive large infrastructure projects, while increasing allocations for health, education, irrigation and flood control, water supply, and social protection. Along with efforts to lower inflation, these spending can also help the government politically by improving the income levels of the poor and vulnerable.

The tendency to accelerate spending on large, visible and long gestational infrastructure projects may appear politically appealing in an election year, but in reality, they do not create immediate benefits for the common citizens. Income transfers from social protection programmes, and spending on irrigation, flood control and water supply are where benefits are more direct and immediate.

My memories of Prof Abdur Razzaq

Md Syeduzzaman
is former finance secretary and
finance minister of Bangladesh.

MD SYEDUZZAMAN

About 72 years ago, Prof Abdur Razzaq completed his thesis paper titled "Political Parties in India," which is now in the public domain, thanks to the University Press Limited (UPL). Submitted to the London School of Economics in 1950, the paper delves into contemporary political realities and ideas that were tested in their own time. The writer posited that a sovereign state was essential for the political parties to function. He believed that India needed Westminster-style liberal politics where political parties would be equally invested, whether in government or in opposition. At that time, however, the environment in South Asian countries was not conducive to any Westminster-style politics. Power was concentrated in the hands of a few leaders, while dynasty politics was a dominant influence. Issues like this and much more were explored through the paper.

The belated publication in the form of a book of this now historic paper offers an opportunity to take a look at the man that Razzaq Sir would go on to become, and the long shadow that he would cast over not just his students, peers, the academia and intelligentsia, but also anyone who would come into contact with him, like me.

Prof Abdur Razzaq was known as "Gyantapas" because, in the words of historian Prof Salahuddin, "he spent his entire life learning and pursuing knowledge." Salahuddin further said, "It will not be an exaggeration to call him one of the best symbols of Bangalee intellectualism. He could be called a living encyclopaedia because of his extensive reading of history, social science, economics and so on."

He was a humanist and a progressive thinker. Although he didn't like politics, he was drawn to the separatist movement in his early life because he believed that a separatist agenda supporting the establishment of Pakistan was the only way out for the backward Muslim community. But those who subscribed to this view would be in for a rude awakening after the 1947 Partition. Events of those days would profoundly shape the worldview of Abdur Razzaq, who tried to make politicians see the error of their thoughts. During the 1971 war, he didn't leave the country. He was hiding in his village home, and was tried in absentia by the Pakistan military court that sentenced him to 14 years of rigorous imprisonment. After independence, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman designated him as a national professor.

I met Prof Razzaq for the first time at the Dhaka University teachers' lounge, courtesy of my late friend ZM Obaidullah. He was playing chess then. In 1961, I was appointed as a section officer at the finance ministry in East Pakistan. I remember that I went to visit him one day. He wanted to know about my work, so I told him, "Sir, it's quite interesting, although, frankly, I don't understand it much." He said, "Why don't you study economics then?"

He encouraged me to pursue higher studies abroad by taking a study leave. This completely changed my career path in later life.

In 1969, between March and October, I was in London on a fellowship. There, I had the chance to meet him again and we grew close. During our conversations, he would often share his thoughts about politics, especially the future of Pakistan. He would say that we needed independence, but he was against having an active military force in an independent Bangladesh. In later life, I went to visit him every time I got the opportunity, sometimes with my friends, including Anisuzzaman, Nurul Huq and Justice Habibur Rahman. Meeting him was a chance to learn. He encouraged us to read. He talked about many things, but was also curious to know our thoughts.

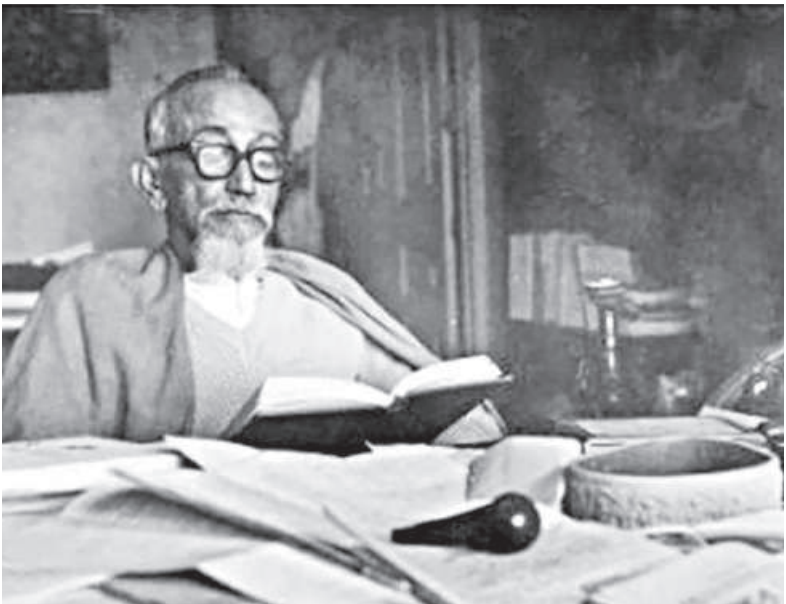
Once, after Sir Fazle Hasan Abed decided to establish Brac University, he thought it would be better to get first-hand knowledge of the university system. So, the three of us visited different American universities to learn about their

decided that India's capital would be shifted to New Delhi, although that decision couldn't be implemented immediately.

Infrastructure development and other changes befitting a capital were halted because of World War I. The capital remained in Calcutta, and was finally shifted to Delhi in 1931, he said.

I also remember that Razzaq Sir once presented a written speech titled "State of the Nation" in 1980. It was his only written speech, later published in 1981. I had the good fortune of listening to his speech live. It was divided into two parts, the first involving a discussion on economics and politics. In it, Razzaq Sir said Bangladesh's assets were its land, people, unique geographical location, rivers as well as their effects in agricultural production. The present government's Delta Plan 2100 is, in a way, a reflection of Prof Razzaq's thoughts shared in his 1980 speech.

In the speech, he also talked about the divisions brewing in politics ever since independence, saying, "What holds us together, makes us



Gyantapas Prof Abdur Razzaq

systems. Upon returning to Bangladesh, I learnt that Prof Razzaq was looking for me. So I visited his house, and told him about Fazle Hasan Abed's initiative. I still remember him saying, with a smile on his face, "Ask Abed to establish 100 good schools instead of one university. The country will be better served in this way." Many may not know that Razzaq Sir himself wanted to establish a school in Dhaka. He even selected three scholars who would join the school: Badruddin Umar, Sardar Fazlul Karim, and Anisuzzaman. But it didn't pass the planning stage for some reason.

I have so many memories like this of Prof Razzaq. He was truly a gold mine of knowledge and resources. He would often share his insights about the history of the subcontinent, especially major political events and trends that shaped its future. He was keenly aware of the socio-political history of Muslims in India. Once he was talking about the 1905 Partition of Bengal, a territorial reorganisation of the Bengal Presidency that was revoked a mere six years later. The short-lived break, according to Prof Razzaq, was part of the "divide and rule" policy of the British, which they sought to pursue in many other areas as well. In 1911, the British, in the face of protests, assented to reversing the decision. It was also

a nation, is the exclusive passion to identify ourselves with this nation – and nothing else." He also said, "The prosperity of Bengal was never dependent on its agriculture but its trade and commerce, and the products of handicrafts and small-sized industries." To further explain this idea, he asked, "Why did traders from the Middle East come to Bangladesh?" and then proceeded to answer: it was because of its trade and the economic benefits it offered to them.

Thus, in public interactions or private, Prof Razzaq spread his love of knowledge and passion for intellectual exercises, never hesitating to encourage us to read and think. It seemed only befitting that Badruddin Umar once proposed that we call him Bengal's Socrates. I asked him why, to which he replied, "Even though he didn't write, he spread knowledge by encouraging others to learn and think. Like Socrates, his teaching method was also verbal."

He truly was our Socrates.

This is based on a speech on Prof Abdur Razzaq presented on the occasion of the publication of his book "Political Parties in India."

Translated from Bangla by Badiuzzaman Bay.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

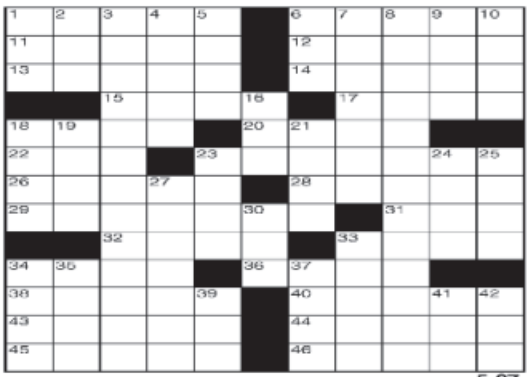
- 1 Untamed
- 6 Dark marten
- 11 Tuscan setting
- 12 Look forward to
- 13 Bring home, as a runner
- 14 Paris subway
- 15 Fare carrier
- 17 Sax great Getz
- 18 Salon supplies
- 20 Revered one
- 22 Broad st.
- 23 Elegant cat
- 26 Horse's cousin
- 28 Outdoes
- 29 Chores
- 31 Recipe amount
- 32 Staff member
- 33 Madcap
- 34 Goatee setting

- 36 Put on
- 38 Arrested
- 40 Like some online videos
- 43 Sports spot
- 44 Singer Cara
- 45 Shaped like a pie slice
- 46 Inspired

DOWN

- 1 Tell tales
- 2 Greek vowel
- 3 Flighty
- 4 Rap sheet name
- 5 Bobcat's kin
- 6 Texas's Houston
- 7 Impressive
- 8 Showing the effects of hard wear
- 9 Old Italian

- currency
- 10 School on the Thames
- 16 Clock numeral
- 18 Intent look
- 19 At any time
- 21 Bits of makeup
- 23 Beach cover
- 24 Catch off guard
- 25 Spot
- 27 Drizzly
- 30 Grog coating
- 33 Congo's former name
- 34 Bird's gullet
- 35 Rabbit's cousin
- 37 Malevolent
- 39 Veto vote
- 41 Busy worker
- 42 Summer sign



SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

P	A	L	S		W	A	L	L	O	W
A	H	A	T		I	G	U	A	N	A
P	E	T	A		R	A	S	P	E	D
A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T			
		R	U	E		S	E	W	E	D
O	R	D	E	R		I	R	A	T	E
S	E	A						T	R	E
L	A	T	C	H		S	P	E	E	D
O	P	E	R	A		S	P	A	R	
			I	N	D	A	N	G	E	R
A	V	E	N	G	E		D	A	T	A
R	E	A	G	A	N		A	T	O	P
M	E	T	E	R	S		S	E	N	T

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dsopin@n@gmail.com.



PHOTO: SYED MAHIN IRTEZA

What it takes to get into IBA, DU

One question most of my mentors used to ask me was, “What other places are you trying for besides IBA?” This question is built upon layers of societal and psychological realities. We tend to put a premium on certain institutions, which makes the DU-IBA admission test a high-stake situation. Stakes tend to be higher if you have invested all your time and effort into this one exam.

NOUSHIN NURI

When I look around my class at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University (DU), I see people with diverse admission journeys.

Some of them, like my friend Abdullah Al Faiaz, prepared only for the IBA entrance exam. Some, like me, wanted to play things safe and made sure we secured seats elsewhere like in DU's D-unit. Many went through the brunt of engineering admission tests before they started preparing for IBA. Then there's another bunch who didn't prepare for IBA at all but still managed to ace the admission test.

With the admission test being extremely competitive and the question pattern different from most other public admission tests, students are often left asking what it really takes to get into IBA, DU.

Based on my own experience and that of the people around me, here are some factors that can impact your odds of getting in.

Science, Commerce, and Arts – does it matter?

The IBA admission exam is basically an aptitude test. The exam topics – Math, English, and Analytical Ability – are not derived from any of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) curriculums. Instead, they focus on a student's core mathematical, language, and analytical skills. Hence, students from all backgrounds (Science, Arts, and Commerce) can apply and have an equal chance.

In practice, an overwhelming number of IBA students come from a Science background. Since science subjects tend to be comparatively math-heavy, there is a gap that exists between the mathematical skills of the average student in science and those in other curricula. Given the competitive nature of the exam, students

who haven't taken many quantitative subjects in the past few years should put in some extra effort to get comfortable in working with numbers. Being fast is particularly important because it helps tackle the biggest challenge in the IBA admission test.

The time constraint

Students get 90 minutes to answer around 75 MCQs followed by 30 minutes of descriptive writing. This leaves them with one minute for each question. But many of these questions, especially some from maths and analytical ability, will take longer. A common fix to this problem is being quicker in the English section to invest more time in the other two.

Having a plan about the order in which you will approach the section is important. Start with the subject you're most comfortable with and then get into the more difficult ones. Ample time should be allocated for all three sections as each of them need to be passed separately.

The passing bar differs yearly according to the difficulty level of the entrance exam.

Negative marks

For every wrong answer, 0.2 is deducted from your total obtained marks. So, avoid marking a question unless you're sure about it. However, educated guessing – used in moderation – can help elevate your score.

Practice

Practice will help you increase your speed and accuracy. It will also help recognise your mistake patterns and you can learn to minimise errors.

Sitting for mock exams is important. In addition to the MCQ sections, consider including the descriptive writing part in your mock exams. It will teach you to be more organised in the writing section.

Vocabulary

Being able to answer vocabulary-related

questions correctly gives you confidence. Since these require less thinking compared to the other question types, time is freed up to be invested elsewhere.

Rote memorisation of word meanings won't be useful. The questions are designed to test your knowledge of not only the meaning of the words but also their correct usage. This makes it important to be more involved with the new words you're learning. Constructing sentences with these words is a practice I and many others included in our IBA admission study routine.

The psychological aspect

One question most of my mentors used to ask me was, “What other places are you trying for besides IBA?” This question is built upon layers of societal and psychological realities. We tend to put a premium on certain institutions, which makes the IBA, DU admission test a high-stake situation. Stakes tend to be higher if you have invested all your time and effort into this one exam. The pressure to get in increases and can negatively impact your performance during the admission test.

Since the IBA, DU entrance exam takes place late in the admission phase, securing a place in some other university you might want to study in helps in being more confident going into the IBA admission test.

The secret ingredient

Despite all your efforts to increase the odds of getting into IBA, the odds can choose to not be in your favour. And there's nothing you can do about it.

So, besides a great deal of preparation, you need a bit of luck too.

Noushin Nuri is an early bird fighting the world to maintain her sleep schedule. Reach her at noushin2411@gmail.com

A definitive guide to the digital SAT

ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM

The SAT, or the Scholastic Assessment Test, is a standardised test conducted by the College Board that is needed for undergraduate university admissions in the United States. Until very recently, the SATs were taken by paper. However, a few years back, the College Board announced its intentions of fully digitalising the SATs and the very first digital SAT was administered internationally on March 11, 2023.

If you are thinking of applying to universities in the US and are confused about the new SATs, here are a few guiding points for you.

The key differences between the digital and paper SAT

While the previous SATs required students to physically solve the paper and write in the answers on an answer sheet, the digital SATs are conducted through an app named Bluebook where you can digitally access the paper and input your answers.

The paper SAT consisted of an English section and a Math section, with them being divided into two sub-sections each – Reading and Writing, and Calculator and Non-calculator. The digital SATs also consist of two sections but they are divided into two modules each and the two modules have no difference between them in regard to the pattern of questions. Both the English modules have 27 questions each and both are 32 minutes long. The Math modules have 22 questions each, and are both timed at 35 minutes.

A major reason behind students struggling with the previous SAT was its length of over three hours. The digital SAT is comparatively shorter at 2 hours and 14 minutes, and there is a 10-minute break between the Math and English sections.

The digital SAT also claims to be adaptive, which means how well you do on the first module for each section determines the difficulty level of your questions on the second module.

The style of questions is a little different now. Instead of focusing on Reading and Writing skills separately, the digital SAT tests your evidence-based reading and language skills simultaneously. The English section, which previously had long passages with multiple questions from each passage, has been altered so that it contains smaller passages and only one question per passage. This makes it easier for people who struggle to keep their attention perfectly attuned to stay focused and means that you will likely find the answer to your evidence-based question with less searching.

The Math section doesn't have many differences in terms of question pattern. The big change is



ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQBAL

the fact that students can use calculator in both the modules as opposed to before when its use was restricted to one module. The app, Bluebook, in fact has a built-in graphing calculator that students can use in addition to their own approved calculator. The percentage of student-generated responses as compared to multiple choice answers is also higher now in the Math section. The key skills required to excel at the SATs remain roughly the same as before.

How exactly do you sit for the SATs?

In order to register for the SATs, you have to head over to the College Board website, create an account, select a session and then proceed to fill in a form and pay a fee (USD 100 for the March session). A few different test centres are available and you get to choose a location which is convenient for you.

During registration, they provide you with the necessary information about your testing device. You have to bring your own testing device – a laptop or a tablet – to the physical testing centre. If you don't have a device of your own, you can request a device from College Board and the testing centre will arrange one for you. My testing centre had charging portals available, but it is advisable that you take a fully charged device with a battery life of at least three hours. You will be provided with scratch paper by the invigilator.

How can you prepare for the digital SATs?

The best way to prepare for a test that is as dependent on your time management skills as the SAT is to practise. Khan Academy, in collaboration with College Board, has an official digital SAT prep course that is free of cost. Four full-length mock tests are available on the Bluebook app. Once you take them, the app marks them digitally and provides you with a score from 400-1600. Doing these will give you a better idea of the question pattern as well as the areas where you may need to put in more effort.

Zaima hopes she did well on her SATs. Wish her luck at zaima2004adrita@gmail.com

Cambridge Majlis celebrates South Asians and Anti-Colonial history

The Cambridge Majlis is a student society at Cambridge founded in 1891 as a platform for discussion of social and political issues in South Asia. The Majlis moulded some of South Asia's most influential political figures and leaders like India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen. Figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, E.M. Forster, and Bertrand Russell also addressed the Majlis.

Over the past few years, Majlis members have uncovered much of the society's long-neglected history. An archival exhibition at the Wren Library in Trinity College showcases many of the region's leaders and thinkers. It highlights how Majlis members played an active role in the Indian independence struggle in the 1930s and 40s. Archives from the British Library show that the Majlis' "seditious activities" and "communist leanings" led the Metropolitan Police and Scotland Yard to begin monitoring its activities.

The Majlis debated and discussed issues such as the Government of India Act and Britain's policy of divide and rule and also engaged in political action to further the independence movement. Protests were held, petitions were signed, and money was raised to "Get the British out of India". In response to a proclamation



by Gandhi that Indian students should hold monthly demonstrations and meetings to demand the release of political prisoners, the Majlis held a gathering at St. John's College, Cambridge on February 10, 1945. The Cambridge Majlis received wires from both Gandhi and Nehru, thanking them for their contribution to the Indian Independence movement.

One of those under scrutiny in this period, Subrata Ray Chowdhury, went on to become a leading constitutional lawyer in India. Scotland Yard's recently declassified records include his correspondence with

Irish nationalist leaders expressing support for freedom fighters against the British Raj. Chowdhury also reportedly travelled to Ireland where he was expected to meet Seán O'Kelly, the new President of Ireland and De Valera, who had a leading role in introducing the 1937 Constitution of Ireland.

Chowdhury also met with both Seán and Irish republican, revolutionary and suffragette Maud Gonne MacBride on this visit. MacBride was also a long-time love interest of the poet W.B. Yeats. Her son Seán MacBride, the Irish independence activist and

later politician, founded Amnesty International. Interestingly, reinforcing the ties to South Asia, Seán MacBride later formed part of the "people's commission of enquiry" created in September 1980 to investigate the circumstances impeding the prosecution of those responsible for the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members.

In the 1950s, as ideas of state-building, economic policy and modes of government dominated discourse, the Majlis provided a way for South Asian students to directly engage with public and political life in the post-colonial, post-partitioned world. Majlis members during this period went on to become influential policymakers in their respective countries.

The Majlis stopped its activities after 1971, reportedly following the rising tensions between Indians and Pakistanis at Cambridge over Bangladesh's war of Independence. After almost five decades, following Mahid Qamar and Sahil Baid's rediscovery of the Archives, the Majlis returned to being a centre of South Asian intellectual and cultural life at Cambridge.

Since its revival, it has had presidents from India (Sara Saloo, 2021), Pakistan (Mahid 2019 and Sahil 2020) and now, Bangladesh (Laleh Bergman Hossain 2022).

Booters eye back-to-back victories

SPORTS REPORTER *from Sylhet*

Bangladesh are looking forward to tasting consecutive victories after a long time when they square off against Seychelles in the second FIFA friendly match at the Sylhet District Stadium today.

The match will get underway at 3:45pm, with satellite channel T Sports telecasting the game live from the venue.

Bangladesh won the first of the two matches 1-0 and they won't want to repeat the mistakes they made last September when they lost 3-1 against Nepal after beating Cambodia 1-0 in back-to-back friendly matches.

The last time the men in red and green tasted back-to-back victories was four years ago when they beat Bhutan 4-1 and 2-0 in two FIFA friendly matches in Dhaka under Jamie Day, who also guided the team to another back-to-back wins against Bhutan and Pakistan during the SAFF Championship in Dhaka in 2018.

"Everyone is aware of the whole objective which has not been achieved yet. We have come to Sylhet to win both matches but we are halfway there," Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera said yesterday.

"We don't want to make the same mistakes we made last September and everyone is aware of it and everyone knows we are going to face challenge again as we faced the day before yesterday," the Spaniard added.

Seychelles are expected to come stronger in the second match, especially given their second-half performance in the first match. Bangladesh are ready to deal with the challenge though.

"I think tomorrow's match is going to be more challenging and tough for us because Seychellois, who are ahead of us physically, will also come to win the match.



The last time the men in red and green tasted back-to-back victories was four years ago when they beat Bhutan 4-1 and 2-0 in two FIFA friendly matches in Dhaka under Jamie Day, who also guided the team to another back-to-back wins against Bhutan and Pakistan during the SAFF Championship in Dhaka in 2018.

They are likely to play attacking football and in that case we should take chances on the break," said captain Jamal Bhuiyan.

Seychelles' coach and captain appeared more confident than their counterparts as they vowed to win the second match.

"We will definitely go for a win because the team spirit is quite high and we believe we can play much better than we played in the first match and we can win the game," said coach Neville Both, adding that they would bring three to four changes to their playing eleven.

The 53-year-old coach also explained how they want to win over Bangladesh.

"I think Bangladesh is a technical team and they have analysed our game and we also analysed their game. They have some strong points but they have some weak points too, so we will try to gain some advantages from their weakness. And I think if we try to play more aggressively, that will be one weapon to win the game," said Neville.

Captain Stenio Marie said, "We are not far behind them. The first half of the game was not kind of our play, maybe the second half was our identity of play. The defence is our strong point but if we go for goals like Bangladesh, we can do better than Bangladesh."



Cristiano Ronaldo continued to score goals for fun, netting twice during Portugal's 6-0 drubbing of Luxembourg in a Euro 2024 qualifier on Sunday. "Two games, two wins! Objective accomplished. Happy to have contributed to this very positive start. Let's go," CR7 wrote on Twitter afterwards.

PHOTO: TWITTER



Hasan Mahmud embraces Taskin Ahmed, who stood out with his career-best T20I figures of four for 16 in two overs in Bangladesh's 22-run victory against Ireland yesterday. The duo shared five wickets between them as the Tigers' pace-bowling unit continued to impress.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'If they can, so can we'

SPORTS REPORTER

T20 cricket has been Bangladesh's Achilles heel for a long time. The Tigers' record in the format has been way below par and their style of play, planning, mindset and approach in T20s have always left a lot to be desired.

However, things have changed in the past few weeks. Following a dominant 3-0 series sweep of world champions England earlier this month, Bangladesh began the three-match T20I series against Ireland in commanding fashion in Chattogram yesterday.

The 22-run victory [via DLS] in the rain-affected game at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium not only helped the Tigers take a 1-0 lead in the series and see them record their best winning streak in the format with four wins in a row, but also showed that the Shakib Al Hasan-led side could finally become a force to be reckoned with in the format.

In the past, even in the Tigers' rare wins in T20Is, Bangladesh's performances often did not include the elements that fans look for in a T20 contest. Rarely have the Tigers dominated things on the batting front in T20Is as they did during their 207 for five in 19.2 overs yesterday.

Openers Rony Talukdar and Liton Das starred in a blistering 91-run opening stand as the Tigers set a number of records. Liton began by taking on Harry Tector, using his feet to hit the off-spinner for a maximum over long on in the very

first over.

Bangladesh never slowed down since, with Rony joining in on the act and surpassing Liton when it came to putting away the Irish bowlers for boundaries. Courtesy of their carnage, Bangladesh recorded the fastest team fifty by any side in T20Is at the venue, crossing the 50-run mark in just 4.1 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH VS IRELAND

Bangladesh:
207 for five in 19.2 overs
(Rony 67, Liton 47; Young 2-45)

Ireland:
81 for five in eight overs
(Delany 21, Tector 19; Taskin 4-16, Hasan 1-20)

Result:
Bangladesh won by 22 runs
(DLS method)

Player-of-the-match:
Rony Talukdar

The duo also amassed 81 for no loss in the Powerplay -- the highest accumulation for Bangladesh in the first six overs in T20Is.

"It felt amazing [seeing Rony and Liton play]. We saw South Africa score over 100 [102] in the Powerplay in their game against West Indies yesterday [Sunday].

We were wondering if something similar was afoot here," Taskin Ahmed, who registered career-best T20I figures of four for 16 in two overs, said.

In a record T20I chase, the Proteas on Sunday got to the 259-run target set by the West Indies with six wickets in hand and seven balls to spare in Centurion -- a game that had plenty of entertainment in store for the T20 lovers.

Although it has not happened often in the past for Bangladesh, the Tigers now think that they too can pull off something like the Proteas in the coming days.

"After Liton got out and came to the dressing room, I asked him: 'Were you hitting like that after witnessing South Africa's game last night?' And he said: 'Yes, if they can do it, so can we,'" Taskin added.

What Liton said to Taskin only shows that the players have already imbibed head coach Chandika Hathurusingha's philosophy of aggressive and fearless cricket by disregarding the fear of failure.

And that is not only the case for batters as similar aggression was shown by Taskin himself with the ball in hand. Being set a revised target of 104 runs in eight overs, Ireland had gotten off to a great start, amassing 32 for no loss in the first two overs.

Pacer Hasan Mahmud broke the deadlock in the third over before Taskin buried Ireland with three wickets in the fourth over to see them reeling at 44 for four -- from where the visitors could not bounce back.

Flick promises to 'excite' Germany fans with new style

AFP, Berlin

Coach Hansi Flick promised Germany will play "a style and manner of football that excites the fans" as his side continue their post-World Cup redemption against Belgium on Tuesday.

Flick's Germany were booted out at the group stage in Qatar, their second-consecutive World Cup group exit, but the coach said on Monday his focus was on the way the team plays rather than just winning. "Wins always do us well, for self-confidence and self-worth. But I think the style and manner of football we play can excite the fans."

Germany qualify for the 2024 Euros as hosts and therefore will only play friendlies until the tournament takes place.

The four-time World Cup winners were dominant in defeating Peru 2-0 in a friendly on Saturday thanks to two goals from Niclas Füllkrug in their first match since their disappointing early return from Qatar.

Flick however admitted Belgium would be "another calibre of opponent" and could give Germany a chance to assess their comeback. "They have a new manager and a new spirit, you can see that they have outstanding footballers... Under pressure they find good solutions."

Mash aging like a fine wine

SPORTS REPORTER

He may not be in contention for a spot in the national team any longer, but former Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and the venom in his deliveries is still making life difficult for the batters that come up against Legends of Rupganj in the Dhaka Premier League.

Bowling with a short run-up yesterday, the 39-year-old single-handedly demolished Mohammedan's batting line-up as they were bundled out for just 80 runs in 22.4 overs. He ended with figures of five wickets for 17 runs in 8.4 overs, which included three maidens. In the process, he became the oldest Bangladeshi to pick up a five-wicket haul in List A cricket.

Courtesy of Mashrafe's seventh five-wicket haul in List A competition, Rupganj clinched a comprehensive 10-wicket win as Mohammedan continue to search for a first win after five games.

The charismatic cricketer showed his class with the ball despite not being as quick as he used to. Instead, he used slower and cutters to perfection. Using the angle of the crease to dismiss the left-handed Imrul Kayes was another example of how Mash employed his wiles.

He also became the first Bangladeshi to scalp 450 wickets in List A competition. Mashrafe now has 452 wickets in 324 games. With eleven wickets in four matches, the 'Narail Express' is also the leading wicket taker in the DPL so far.



Messi eyes 100th Int'l goal

STAR SPORTS DESK

Argentina captain Lionel Messi will go in search of his 100th international goal when the world champions host Curacao in Tuesday's friendly.

The PSG superstar led by example in Saturday's win over Panama, scoring his side's second with a trademark free kick on a night of unbridled celebration, which also marked his 800th career goal.

Victory over Panama marked Argentina's seventh win in a row across all competitions, with La Albiceleste scoring at least two goals in all of those successes since being shell-shocked by Saudi Arabia in their opening World Cup contest.

Each of Argentina's last five friendly matches has also ended in victory - with five clean sheets in tow - and Lionel Scaloni's charges can enjoy one final pressure-free contest before the qualifying cycle for the 2026 World Cup commences in six months' time.

While Argentina's 2022 was unforgettable for all the right reasons, Curacao's calendar year was a largely forgettable affair, and the world's 86th-ranked nation could not upset the apple cart in their Nations League group with Canada and Honduras.

Since the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010, Curacao have never tackled Argentina in competitive or non-competitive action, but few will expect the visitors to spoil the party mood on Tuesday.





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ANY SHAPE AND
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Sonamasjid land port to be brought under rail network

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway is looking to build a new rail line to bring Sonamasjid land port under the country's rail network.

Sonamasjid is one of the major land ports through which a huge amount of goods are imported annually from India.

BR has already carried out the feasibility study and estimated that Tk 6,114.48 crore would be required to build the 36.74-kilometre-long rail line between Chapainawabganj to Sonamasjid land port.

The proposed timeline for the project is July 2023 to June 2028, including a one-year defect liability period, BR sources said.

The agency held a meeting over the potential project with its Director General

NEW RAIL LINE

ESTIMATED COST
Tk 6,114.48cr

MAIN LINE
36.74km

TIMELINE
July 2023 to June 2028
(with a 1yr liability period)

Quamrul Ahsan in the chair at the Rail Bhaban yesterday, they said.

The meeting decided to send a Pre-Development Project Proposal (PDPP) to the railways ministry as the project requires a big amount of money. The ministry will send the PDPP to Economic Relations Division via the Planning Commission to find foreign financiers, they added.

Currently, Chapainawabganj, the western district, is currently linked with BR network through Rajshahi, but does not have any rail link with Sonamasjid land port.

Different types of goods are regularly being imported from India via the port and are later transported through roadways. According to the Bangladesh Land Port Authority's annual report-2021-22,

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The road at Chairmanbari in the capital's Banani is gridlocked around 2:30pm yesterday, the first working day in Ramadan. Many roads in the city were clogged with bumper-to-bumper traffic in the afternoon.

PHOTO: STAR

2 nurses 'sexually harassed' by civil surgeon, aide

They file complaints with health ministry, Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

Sexual harassment allegations have surfaced against a physician in Cox's Bazar who, according to a complaint, coerced two nurses into travelling to Saint Martin's Island so they could "entertain" the district's civil surgeon.

The nurses accused Dr Titu Chandra Das, upazila health and family planning officer of Cox's Bazar Sadar, of attempted rape and groping one of them at a resort on the island after they refused to dance with Cox's Bazar Civil Surgeon Dr Mahbubur Rahman.

Dr Titu also made a number of lewd suggestions to the nurses in an effort to please Dr Mahbubur, said a written complaint, submitted to the Health Services Division and Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery on January 30.

The incident occurred on January 25, the day a telemedicine centre was inaugurated at the 20-bed health centre on the island, added the complaint.

The health ministry officials confirmed receiving the complaint and said an investigation was already underway. The ministry will hold a hearing on the matter tomorrow. The accused physicians and the victims have been asked to appear.

This was not the only complaint of sexual harassment and intimidation against the duo that the ministry has received.

In a separate complaint, also filed on January 30, another nurse said she and her colleague had to leave their dormitory fearing for their safety, as Dr Mahbubur and Dr Titu expressed keen interest in spending time in their room during a government programme in Cox's

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Avdiivka becoming 'post-apocalyptic'

Says a top official of the Ukrainian city as Russian forces step up shelling along frontline

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine shut the eastern town of Avdiivka to non-military personnel yesterday, describing it as a post-apocalyptic wasteland, as Kyiv seeks to break the back of Russia's flagging winter offensive before a counterassault of its own.

A top Ukrainian general said Kyiv was planning its next move after Moscow appeared to shift focus from the small city of Bakhmut, which Russia has failed to capture after half a year of the war's bloodiest fighting, to Avdiivka further south.

Front lines in Ukraine have barely budged for more than four months despite a Russian winter offensive using hundreds of thousands of freshly called-up reservists and convicts recruited as mercenaries from jail. The Ukrainian military aims to wear down Russian forces before a counteroffensive in coming weeks or months.

Ukrainian ground forces commander Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi, who said last week that the counterattack could come "very soon", visited front line troops in the east and said his forces were still repelling Russian attacks on Bakhmut.

Defending the small city in the industrialised Donbas region that Russia has tried to seize for months was a "military necessity", said Syrskyi,

praising Ukrainian resilience in "extremely difficult conditions".

Last week, the Ukrainian military warned that Avdiivka, a smaller town 90 km further south, could become a "second Bakhmut" as Russia turns its attention there. Both towns have been reduced to rubble in fighting that both sides have called a "meat grinder".

"I am sad to say this, but Avdiivka is becoming more and more like a place from post-apocalyptic movies," said Vitaliy Barabash, head of the city's military administration. Only around

Ukrainian military warned that Avdiivka could become a "second Bakhmut" as Russia turns its attention there.

2,000 of a pre-war population of 30,000 remain and he urged them to leave.

Inside Russia, residents of Kireyevsk, in Tula region 220 km south of Moscow, reacted angrily to damage from what the defence ministry said was a Ukrainian drone it downed there on Sunday. The ministry said three people were injured and apartment blocks were hit. It was among the closest such incidents to the Russian capital so far.

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'PISTOL' IN WAIST BCL leader sued under the DSA

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A case was filed against a Bangladesh Chhatra League leader in Faridpur yesterday under Digital Security Act for posting a photo on his Facebook page with a pistol-like object in his waist.

Md Babul Hossain, sub-inspector of Boalmari Police Station, filed the case against Subhradev Singh, 25, the organising secretary of Boalmari upazila unit BCL, Abdul Wahab, officer-in-charge of Boalmari Police Station, told this correspondent.

Subhradev was produced before a district court with a five-day remand prayer, the police official said.

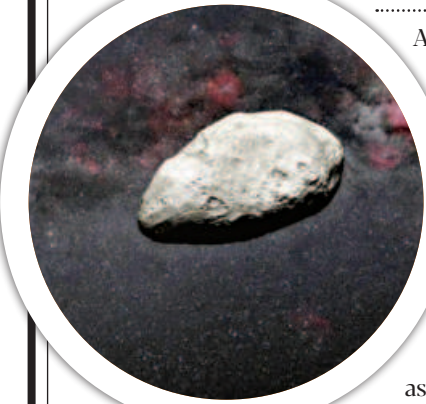
OC Wahab also said the BCL man could not produce the object. After searching a few places with him, whereabouts of the pistol like object could not be found.

"The police could not confirm whether it was a real pistol or a toy. For this, he will be interrogated on remand," added the OC.

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Asteroid big enough to destroy city flying close to Earth

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



A vast asteroid, big enough to destroy a whole city, is coming closer to Earth.

The space rock will fly between Earth and the Moon, marking an extraordinarily close approach for such a large asteroid. While objects fly so close with some regularity, they are

really this large.

Scientists say there is no chance that the asteroid will cause any harm to Earth. But it will provide an important opportunity for researchers to study it from relatively close-up.

Saturday's close encounter will offer astronomers the chance to study a space rock from just over 100,000 miles (168,000 kilometres) away. That's less than half the distance from here to the moon, making it visible through binoculars and small telescopes.

While asteroid flybys are common, Nasa said it's rare for one so big to come so close – about once a decade. Scientists estimate its size somewhere between 130 feet and 300 feet (40 metres and 90 metres).

Discovered a month ago, the asteroid known as 2023 DZ2 will pass within 320,000 miles (515,000 kilometres) of the moon on Saturday and, several hours later, buzz the Indian Ocean at about 17,500 mph (28,000 kph).

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Tigers' T20 dominance continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh continued their dominance in the shortest format as they registered a 22-run victory [via Duck Worth Lewis and Stern method] over Ireland in a rain-affected contest at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram on Monday.

After beating the world champions England 3-0 in T20Is at home earlier this month, Bangladesh now lead the three-match T20I series 1-0 against Ireland as the Tigers set the record for their best streak in the format with four wins on the trot.

Bangladesh posted 207 for five in 19.2 overs, their third highest total in T20Is, before rain halted play in the port city. It was also only the fourth time the Tigers crossed the 200-run mark in the shortest format.

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Rony Talukdar hit a blistering 38-ball 67, his first T20I fifty, and starred in a rapid 91-run opening stand with Liton Das to set the platform for Bangladesh's 207-run total in 19.2 overs during the first T20I against Ireland in Chattogram yesterday. The Tigers won the rain-affected contest by 22 runs (DLS).

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

RAHUL'S REMOVAL AS MP

Parliament adjourned after protests

AFP, New Delhi

India's parliament was adjourned twice yesterday after lawmakers held rowdy protests and threw paper at the Speaker following the expulsion from the house of top opposition figure Rahul Gandhi.

Gandhi lost his parliamentary seat on Friday after being convicted in a case that critics say shows how the rule of law is under threat in the world's largest democracy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Speaker called off proceedings less than a minute after opposition MPs wearing black erupted in shouting, some of them throwing bits of paper at him.

"I want to run the House with dignity," Speaker Om Birla said. The session resumed several hours later only to be abandoned again after about 10 minutes as opposition MPs chanted anti-Modi slogans and waved "Democracy in danger" placards.

It was the latest in a string of stoppages in recent weeks in India's often raucous parliament among lawmakers representing India's 1.4 billion people.

Opposition MPs have been demanding a probe into potential links between Modi and the business empire of tycoon Gautam Adani, which has been hit by allegations of accounting fraud.

Debates have also descended into shouting matches

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