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\$4.7B IMF LOAN On course to meet most of March targets

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh is poised to meet five of the six targets set by the International Monetary Fund for March as part of the \$4.7 billion loan programme.

There is uncertainty about whether the condition of maintaining a minimum net international reserves (NIR) of \$22.95 billion at the end of March could be met, according to Bangladesh Bank and finance ministry officials familiar with the issue.

The IMF will do the calculation for NIR at the end of March, so it is not possible to say whether the target will be achieved, they said.

"There is uncertainty on just this. The rest of the conditions will be met easily," said a finance ministry official on the condition of anonymity.

All six targets for March are not mandatory for the release of the next tranche of about \$476.27 million; it will be based on how Bangladesh fares with the targets for June.

The first review of the programme will take place in the second half of 2023, when the IMF staff team will assess the programme's quantitative targets and progress of

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A motorcycle driver, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, and a rickshaw puller – all three of whom have to toil under the scorching sun – trying to cool down by splashing on their faces some water from a roadside tap in Old Dhaka. The ongoing heatwave across the country has been causing immense sufferings, and is expected to last at least another week and intensify. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

IMF maintains 5.5pc growth forecast for Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At this point, it is becoming apparent that GDP growth this year would not be hitting 6 percent, a feature in pre-pandemic years under the current Awami League-led government.

Yesterday, in its flagship World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund maintained that growth would be at best 5.5 percent in 2023 and 6.5 percent next year.

This comes after the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank last week made growth forecasts of 5.2 percent and 5.3 percent respectively for this fiscal year, which ends on June 30.

The government though is maintaining the growth this fiscal year would be 6.5 percent.

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People's doctor no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder and valiant freedom fighter Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury passed away at the Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in the capital last night.

He was 81.

Dr Zafrullah, the recipient of Swadhinata Padak, the highest civilian award of Bangladesh, was taken to the hospital in Dhanmondi after he fell seriously ill on April 5.

Prof Brig Gen (retd) Mamun Mostafi, who led the medical board formed for Zafrullah's treatment, declared his death at 11:00pm.

Zafrullah was suffering various health complications with dysfunctional immune system leading to many infections, Mohibullah

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Dr Zafrullah
Chowdhury
(1941 – 2023)

A revolutionary's JOURNEY

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

The first time I saw Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury was in 2007, for a story in our weekend magazine in The Daily Star, on his Nagar Hospital on Mirpur Road, where anyone, no matter how poor could get medical care at subsidised costs. I was not expecting to see a clean, organised, fully-equipped, seven-storey hospital where

patients could see a doctor for a mere Tk 20. The place was busy but organised, not chaotic like our understaffed, overcrowded public hospitals. Strikingly apparent was the presence of mostly female staffers -- the receptionist, paramedics, pathologists, nurses, on-duty doctors, and even the drivers of the hospital vehicles. Among

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US reiterates need for free, fair polls

Blinken tells Momen,
says intimidation of
media worrisome

DIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday expressed concerns about intimidation of the media and civil society through different means, including the Digital Security Act, in Bangladesh.

During a meeting with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen in Washington, Blinken underscored that free and fair elections and respect for human rights in Bangladesh are critical as the US seeks to deepen the bilateral relationship, said State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel in a statement.

He told Momen the world is looking to Bangladesh for its next election.

He reiterated US commitment to promoting inclusive economic growth, free and fair elections, human and labour rights, and freedom of expression in Bangladesh.

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Govt makes U-turn on fertiliser price

Hikes it by Tk 5 per kg citing
global market situation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has increased fertiliser prices by Tk 5 per kg just a week after the National Coordination and Advisory Committee on Fertiliser announced it has no plan to hike the prices for the sake of agriculture production.

Expressing concerns, farmers said the vegetable cultivation expenditure will shoot up and so will the risk of loss.

"Fertiliser is widely used in vegetable production. This year, I incurred a loss cultivating cauliflower, cabbage and legumes as there was bumper production and the market was flooded with vegetables," said Moslem Uddin of Deol village in Shyamnagar of Satkhira.

Replying to a question, he said, "The risk of loss will increase ... I may shrink from vegetable cultivation and expand rice cultivation where the chance of loss is low as the rice price is fixed by the government."

Experts suggest the government should readjust the fertiliser price in line with the drop in price in the international market and take measures to protect both farmers and consumers.

Dealers and farmers will have to pay an additional Tk 5 per kg as the government has increased the prices of urea, DAP, TSP and MOP fertilisers.

An order, signed by Sheikh Badiul Alam, deputy chief for fertiliser management and monitoring at the Ministry of Agriculture, came into effect from Monday.

"The sale price of fertiliser has been revised to keep the import of fertiliser at a reasonable level and ensure its best use because of the increase in the fertiliser prices in the international market amid the ongoing economic situation," reads the order.

At dealers' end, urea fertiliser will have to be purchased at Tk 25 per kg, DAP at Tk 19, TSP at Tk 25 and MOP at Tk 18 per kg.

Farmers will buy urea at Tk 27 per kg, DAP Tk 21, TSP Tk 27 and MOP Tk 20 per kg.

On April 3, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque mentioned that the government has no plan to raise the prices of fertiliser so that agriculture production is not hampered.

"In the last four years, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina did not increase fertiliser prices. The finance ministry keeps pressuring us to increase the fertiliser prices ... The prime minister is strict and will not hike fertiliser prices by any means," he said following a meeting of National Coordination and Advisory Committee on Fertiliser at the Secretariat.

Talking to journalists at a briefing the same day, he also said, "Against this backdrop, we had a discussion. I want to tell you that we do not have any plan to increase fertiliser prices. Fertiliser prices will not be increased."

The government has set the fertiliser demand for fiscal 2023-24 at 68.42 lakh tonnes -- including 27 lakh tonnes of

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AL wants to use DSA to win nat'l polls Alleges Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League wants to overcome the hurdle of national election using the Digital Security Act, the BNP said yesterday.

"This government is not an elected one. As the election is nearing, the government is using the Digital Security Act to gag voices of dissent. They [the ruling party] want to win keeping their opponents completely out of the election," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Addressing a seminar titled "Digital Security Act, democracy and constitutional scheme" organised by the party at a city hotel, he demanded repeal of all "black laws" and the DSA.

Fakhrul said that the main goal of the government now is gagging the people and the DSA is the tool to do that.

"The only way is to oust the government. There is no alternative to it," he said.

BNP standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said the DSA is contradictory to the constitution, democracy, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He said that the UN human rights commission chief asked the government to suspend the DSA and the people of the country also want its repeal.

Presenting the keynote paper, BNP Human Rights

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An excavator cutting hills to make way for a building for the Education Engineering Department in the port city's Khulshi area. This goes on even though the environment department had stopped all illegal hill-cutting activities there around two years ago. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

12 parties picked for registration EC to finalise the list by June

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has primarily selected 12 new parties for registration with the commission.

The commission, led by Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal, initiated the registration process in May last year. Ninety-three political parties had applied.

Of the 12 political parties, Amar Bangladesh Party is founded by former leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami.

The 11 others are Bangladesh Nationalist Movement (BNM), Bangladesh Humanist Party (BHP), Gono Odhikar Parishad, Nagorik Oikya, Bangladesh Sanatan Party, Bangladesh Supreme Party (BSP), Bangladesh Labour Party, Bangladesh Minority Janata Party (BMJP),

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5 rules set for importing Hindi films

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The information and broadcasting ministry on Monday green-lighted the import of 10 Hindi films this year under certain conditions.

In a notice, it also stated that around eight more Hindi films would be imported next year.

Based on the positive response from the Ministry of Commerce, in compliance with certain conditions of the existing Import Policy Order 2021-2024, the import of films from South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) countries has been granted on an experimental basis.

The conditions are: Legitimate film producers and distributors of Bangladesh will have the opportunity to import films made in sub-continental languages; films produced in sub-continental languages with subtitles shall be allowed to be imported against export, only on an experimental basis for two years; producers may import 10 foreign films against the export of 10 Bangladeshi films in the first year; imported subcontinental language films must obtain a certificate from the Bangladesh Film Censor Board, prior to screening; and films imported under this order cannot be screened during the week of Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha and Durga Puja.

For the next two years, these regulations will have to be strictly adhered to in order for a sub-continental language film to be imported to Bangladesh.

At the same time, all the cinema halls where Hindi movies will be screened will have to run an e-ticketing system.

Many artistes have opposed the release of Hindi movies in the country,

Monowar Hossain Dipjol, producer and actor, said the consequences of the decision will be detrimental while giving the example of Nepal, whose film industry has been on the brink of destruction after allowing Hindi films to be released in their country.



Members of the Ukrainian White Angels Special Police Team look at debris of a residential building, destroyed following an air strike in the frontline town of Avdiivka, Donetsk region on Monday, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. PHOTO: AFP

50 killed in Myanmar military's attack on rebel gathering

REUTERS

At least 50 people were killed in central Myanmar yesterday in an air strike by the military on an event attended by opponents to its rule, according to media and members of a local resistance movement.

Citing residents in the Sagaing region, BBC Burmese, Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Irrawaddy news portal reported between 50 and 100 people, including civilians, had died in the attack.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since a 2021 coup, with attacks by ethnic minority armies and resistance fighters challenging the rule of the military, which has responded with air strikes and heavy weapons, including in civilian areas.

A member of the local People's Defence Force (PDF), an anti-junta militia, told Reuters fighter jets had fired on a ceremony

held to open their local office.

"So far, the exact number of casualties is still unknown. We cannot retrieve all the bodies yet," said the PDF member, who declined to be identified.

At least 1.2 million people have been

A member of PDF said fighter jets had fired on a ceremony held to open their local office.

displaced by post-coup fighting, according to the United Nations.

Yesterday's incident could be one of the deadliest among a string of air strikes since a jet attacked a concert in October, killing at least 50 civilians, local singers and members of an armed ethnic minority group in Kachin State.

Myanmar's pro-democracy government-in-exile, the National Unity Government, condemned the attack, calling it "yet another example of (the military's) indiscriminate use of extreme force against civilians".

Last month, at least eight civilians including children were killed in an air strike on a village in northwest Myanmar, according to a human rights group, ethnic minority rebels and media.

The military has denied international allegations it has committed atrocities against civilians and says it is fighting "terrorists" determined to destabilise the country.

Western countries have imposed sanctions on the junta and its vast business network to try to choke off its revenue and access to arms from key suppliers like Russia.

Shahabuddin to take oath as president April 24

BSS, Dhaka

President-elect Md Shahabuddin is scheduled to take oath as the country's 22nd President at 11:00am on April 24.

Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossain yesterday apprised Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury of the date and time of the swearing-in ceremony.

The cabinet secretary met the Speaker at her JS office yesterday to apprise her of the matter, read a press release.

The Speaker will administer the oath.

4 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed and another was injured in three road crashes in Rangpur and Dinajpur yesterday.

Two were killed after a bus hit a battery-run three-wheeler on Rangpur-Pirganj highway in Rangpur's Pirganj.

Three-wheeler driver Mokhlesur Rahman, 50, and passenger Rezwana Islam, 16, died on the spot, said Solaiman Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Borodargah Highway Police.

In Dinajpur, a school student was killed after a truck hit his bicycle on Dinajpur-Rangpur highway near Ichhamati College in Chirirbandar upazila around 7:00am.

Proshanta Roy, 15, was a class-X student of JB High School in the upazila, said Bazlur Rashid, officer-in-charge of Chirirbandar Police Station.

Meanwhile, Kabir Hasan, 20, died on the spot after a bus rammed his motorcycle in front of Nawabganj Pilot High School in Nawabganj upazila of Dinajpur, said Ferdous Wahid, officer-in-charge of Nawabganj Police Station.

BNP will join city polls wearing veil Says Obaidul Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said although the BNP does not directly participate in the upcoming city elections, it will participate in the polls wearing a veil, which is the hypocrisy of its politics.

"The BNP did not participate in local government elections at different levels with the party symbol (sheaf of paddy), but the party had its candidates wearing veils. Candidates wearing veils will also participate in the upcoming city polls," he said while speaking at a view-exchange meeting at the AL Bangabandhu Avenue central office in the capital.

A revolutionary's journey

FROM PAGE 1

the patients were labourers, domestic workers, teachers, civil servants and beggars. It was the first time I heard that patients could get an insurance card -- for Tk 150. Insurance holders did not have to pay to see an on-duty doctor, and to see a specialist the fee was only Tk 200. The most innovative part of the insurance scheme was that it was designed to provide healthcare to people according to their ability to pay. So, for someone who was destitute, the treatment would be free, for a poor person, it would be highly subsidised, for an upper middle-class person the cost would be higher. It was hard not to be floored by the foresight of the individual behind what seemed to me, a fantasy world where poor people had access to affordable, efficient medical attention.

But that is what Zafrullah Chowdhury is -- a larger-than-life figure who had the vision to realise that it was the lack of access to affordable healthcare that condemned the poor to a life of continuous ill health. His fierce determination to break this vicious cycle led to the creation of an institution like Gonoshasthaya that has made revolutionary changes not only in healthcare but in public perception of women as vital nation builders.

When my team and I went to interview him at the hospital, I was a little taken aback by his appearance; longish white hair and clad in a batik Hawaiian shirt and khaki trousers, sandals half worn, he looked more like an eccentric artist than the founder of a mammoth development organisation. It was hard to gauge his mood as he went on his inspection of the wards, blasting the nervous staff at the top of his voice for some inefficiency and then suddenly cracking a joke to make them laugh, his hawkish eyes twinkling. His staff called him Boro Bhai, no "sir" or "doctor" for this no-nonsense man. But the respect and love he evoked among patients, paramedics, doctors and the staff, was obvious.

And when he met patients, he was extremely gentle and kind.

At present, Nagar Hospital has among other facilities, a burn and plastic surgery unit, cardiac unit, dental unit, surgery, counselling, physiotherapy, Ayurveda, Yoga and of course 24 hour emergency services.

So how did a vascular surgeon looking towards an ascending medical career in the UK end up being the founder of a multidisciplinary organisation in his home country that would be committed to the welfare of the poor and marginalised? The Liberation War of 1971 changed the trajectory of his life. He and his

friend Dr MA Mobin left their studies in London to join the resistance by treating wounded freedom fighters. It was pure patriotism that laid the foundation for Gonoshasthaya Kendra. Zafrullah and his fellow doctors set up a 480-bed field hospital near the border with India to treat the wounded and sick. The young surgeon realised that while there were doctors in this hospital, the facility didn't have any nurses. So girls and young women in the refugee camps were invited to learn first aid and assist in operations.

"I realised that it was not the amount of training that was important in this context but the access to training," he said during the interview. When the war was over, the Field Hospital was renamed Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK) which relocated to Savar with sub centres in surrounding areas and other districts. From his experience at the Field Hospital, Zafrullah knew how he could build a team of paramedics. GK started training girls and women who had completed their SSC (Secondary School Certificate). Soon it was a common sight to see these young women in the villages, going on foot or bicycle to visit households, telling them about basic healthcare, sometimes giving vaccines, even assisting in deliveries. The presence of these female paramedics gave women a new status. Villagers began to realise their importance and appreciate their work. GK's involvement with the community had a major role in the success of national family planning, immunisation and ORS campaigns.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK), which is a multidimensional development programme, involves the community as a whole. It includes projects ranging from primary healthcare centres and hospitals, community schools, agricultural cooperatives, women's vocational training centres, training women drivers, to economic enterprises to help finance GK Trust activities. But GK's most obvious success is its primary healthcare programme (mainly in the villages) that benefits over a million people.

GK has proved that primary healthcare can be a successful, sustainable system. In 1982, GK's pioneering effort in forming a National Drugs Policy allowed local companies to produce essential drugs at much lower prices than multinationals did. GK itself produces essential drugs at subsidised prices. GK's Gono Bishwabidyalaya (People's University) trains doctors, paramedics and physiotherapists who will provide primary and tertiary care to poor communities.

The accolades he has received are many. Among them are a 'Certificate of

Commendation' for his contributions during the Liberation War in 1971, the Swedish Youth Peace Prize, Sweden for founding Gonoshasthaya Kendra providing primary healthcare to rural communities, Maulana Bhashani Award, Ramon Magsaysay Award, The Right to Livelihood Award, Sweden, One World Action Award, UK, Public health Heroes Award, UK, Fr.Tong Memorial Award, India, Doctor of Humanitarian Sciences Award, Canada.

His undeterred commitment to the welfare of the disadvantaged was probably because of his unconventional upbringing. His mother, Hasina Begum, a courageous, self-educated woman, who believed in the equal rights of women and men, taught him the value of sharing with the less fortunate. His father, Humayan Murshed Chowdhury, was an honest police officer and instilled in him love for one's motherland. Zafrullah found his perfect match in his life partner Shireen Huq, a professor of English, a passionate human rights activist and one of the founders of Naripokkho, a women's rights organisation. Their children are Brishti and Bareesh.

The basic philosophy that Zafrullah modelled all his endeavours on was to come up with indigenous solutions for all problems. Thus Gonoshasthya's mission was to 'go to the village and build the village'. The GK Savar hospital serves the community and provides all the medical services as well as alternative medical treatment such as ayurveda and acupuncture.

In fact, he has been unequivocally, an advocate of local medical expertise. In 2019, GK inaugurated its second dialysis centre in the Savar hospital, the largest such centre in the country. During the pandemic, he tried to popularise a locally made antigen testing kit and was ready to help set up a 2,000 bed Covid hospital which did not receive the support it warranted during the most challenging moments of the crisis. For his own treatments which included regular dialysis he would come to his hospital even when he was on life support. There are few individuals who can display such conviction of their own principles.

Considered at times a controversial figure for his incendiary remarks in public, he remained unapologetic and brutally frank all throughout, a fighter till the end. Battling with formidable ailments, waging a war against crippling poverty and ill health of people, to bring some solace to the most vulnerable and neglected, his contributions to this country cannot be listed within the confines of this article.

[Some information has been taken from Star Weekend Magazine, published on November 30, 2007]

On course to meet

FROM PAGE 1

reform implementation, Rahul Anand, the IMF mission chief, told The Daily Star.

"The authorities are taking steps to meet programme objectives, such as reducing un-targeted subsidies by raising electricity and natural gas prices and gradually moving toward a unified market-determined exchange rate. Further, increasing exchange rate flexibility and strengthening the foreign exchange reserve management framework will enhance external resilience," he added.

An IMF staff team will visit Bangladesh from April 25 to May 2 to discuss recent economic developments and policy implementation under the IMF-supported programme, an IMF spokesperson told The Daily Star.

To this end, March's performance will lend the IMF staff team an indication of how the authorities are faring with the programme objectives. "We will be close to the March's floor for net reserves," Md. Mezbaul Haque, BB's spokesman, told The Daily Star.

NIR is calculated as gross international reserves minus short-term foreign currency drains. Short-term foreign currency drains include impending import bills and loan repayments.

As of March, gross international reserves (GIR) stand at \$31.14 billion, according to data from the BB.

But going by the IMF's balance of

payments and investment position manual (BPM6), which is followed faithfully by central banks around the world, GIR calculation does not include the various funds that the Bangladesh Bank has formed from the reserves as well as the loan guarantees provided for Biman, the currency swap with Sri Lanka, the loan to Payra Port Authority, deposits with the Islamic Development Bank and the below-investment-grade securities.

At present, these account for about \$6.9 billion.

So Bangladesh's GIR at the end of March was about \$24 billion, Haque added.

Another target for March is keeping the primary balance within Tk 148,340 crore.

For programme monitoring purposes, the primary balance is defined as the overall balance of the government excluding interest payments and including foreign grants.

As of December last year, the overall balance stood at Tk 10,166 crore.

By March, the government needs to collect at least Tk 207,380 crore in tax, as per the IMF's task sheet for Bangladesh.

As of February, the National Board of Revenue has collected Tk 196,037.5 crore. The non-NBR tax collection stands at Tk 3,563 crore in the first half of fiscal 2022-23, according to data from the finance ministry.

Medical College in 1964 and went to London to study FRCS. When the four-year FRCS course was about to be completed, the Liberation War broke out in Bangladesh.

He chose to abort the exams and dedicated himself in mobilising the people for the independence of the nation, setting an example of unparalleled patriotism.

Zafrullah also tore apart the Pakistani passport during a rally in London, protesting the massacre of Bangladeshis by the Pakistan occupation army. In May 1971, without any passport, Zafrullah and Dr MA Mobin decided to fly to Kolkata.

They collected travel permits and started for Kolkata on a Syrian Airlines flight. Damascus was their stopover. The Pakistan government was watching their every step and tried to arrest them with the help of the Syrian government.

All the passengers left the aircraft. However, sensing the danger, the duo did not move as they knew the police cannot arrest anyone from an international flight.

At the end of May, they reached Agartola. There, he built Bangladesh

Data on collections up to March is not available yet, but from the trends in NBR and non-NBR receipts, it is safe to infer that March's target would be met comfortably.

At the end of March, reserve money, which comprises currency in circulation issued by the BB and deposits banks hold with the central bank, cannot be more than Tk 357,500 crore.

As of February, reserve money stood at Tk 350,346.90 crore, according to data from BB.

There is a floor on development capital investment undertaken by the government, which would be monitored by the annual development programme.

By March, the expenditure must be at least Tk 38,990 crore.

As of February, Tk 82,170 crore has been spent under the ADP, according to data from the planning ministry.

There is also a minimum level of priority social spending stipulated by the Washington-based multilateral lender.

For programme monitoring purposes, priority social spending comprises all expenditures on education, health and social safety nets.

The minimum spend for this must be Tk 60,500 crore in the first nine months of the fiscal year. Data for this could not be obtained.

Field Hospital, which primarily took shape in Bisramganj village of Agartola, India.

It was the seed of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, which would revolutionise the public health sector after independence.

During the war, freedom fighters wounded in battle were treated in that field hospital -- a structure made of bamboo and grass that had 480 beds and an operation theatre.

Zafrullah and Mobin provided paramedical training to a group of volunteers who worked as nurses for the hospital.

In a heavily conservative society, Zafrullah took the challenge to break the stereotype by empowering women and engaging them in his workforce.

The total number of staffers at the Gonoshasthaya Kendra is now around 2,500. Of them, 40 percent are women.

Zafrullah's most remarkable contribution after the Liberation War was formulating the drug policy that served as a cornerstone of today's robust pharmaceutical industry.

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Another heritage site to bite the dust

125-year-old Railway Hospital being demolished

HELEMUL ALAM

After the demolition of century-old Neelam Ghar and Jahajbari, another heritage building – the old Railway Hospital, which was established 125 years ago – is set to be demolished.

A significant part of the Railway Hospital’s west side, now known as Shorkari Karmachari Hospital (Government Staffers Hospital) building, has already been demolished. The rest will crumble soon, as work has been ongoing for around 15 days.

The authorities have gone ahead with the decision despite the High Court’s directive in 2018 ordering them not to change, modify or demolish 2,200 British era heritage buildings in Old Dhaka, which includes the old Railway Hospital.

The two-storey building in Fulbaria remained functional as a hospital till

March this year. After that, hospital authorities issued a notice to empty all its wards and move them to an adjacent new building from March 19 to March 28. This newspaper has obtained a copy of the eviction notice.

Mamoon Mahbub, assistant secretary of Shorkari Karmachari Hospital, said they will construct a reservoir and green space at the site, as the old building has become fragile.

When asked about the HC directive, he said he was not aware of it.

Taimur Islam, chief executive of conservation organisation Urban Study Group, said this building was constructed as part of the new civil station from Fulbaria to Farmgate to make Dhaka the capital of the Eastern Bengal and Assam province during Bangabanga (the first partition of Bengal) in 1905.

“The building should be protected

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Yet another heritage building in Old Dhaka is being demolished. The western side of the old Railway Hospital building, a 125-year-old British-era structure at Fulbaria, has already been demolished to the ground, and the rest is soon to crumble. Conservationists have condemned the move and demanded the building be protected for its historical significance as per the HC directive. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

PM to visit Japan on April 25

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will pay an official visit to Japan from April 25 to 28 at the invitation of Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio.

She will be received by the Emperor of Japan, said the foreign ministry in a statement yesterday.

According to the foreign ministry, Fumio will hold a meeting with Hasina and then host a working dinner in her honour.

Hasina is scheduled to attend an investment summit and a community reception along with few bilateral meetings.

A number of memorandums of cooperation are expected to be signed during the visit.



MY DHAKA



An act of kindness by ALEYA HIJRA

RBR

She is in her mid-fifties. Sombrely dressed in a white-green sari, hair parted in the middle and tied in a bun, Aleya Hijra has a betel leaf-stained smile. She lives at Diabari, Uttara in a rented house with her disciples; she is their “Guruma” or leader.

“I take from the public and give back to society. The general people are like my father-mother; they’re my guardian, my sole source of living. I salute the fact that they give us charity and in turn, we try to make contributions when the need arises. Kindness is the cycle of life,” said Aleya.

Recently, she came into the limelight after donating her hajj savings to stand beside the calamity-stricken traders of Dhaka’s Bangabazar. Her gesture made the headlines because she thought about the traders who were empowered only a few days ago and are now on the streets with the stroke of bad luck.

“If Allah wishes, I’ll go to hajj someday, but for now, this is my hajj. Deep down, I feel happy and proud that I could do something for them. If I had more, I would’ve happily shared my savings with them. This is my Eid,” she says.

Aleya is active in charity work. She donates to mosques and madrasas, and gives air conditioners to local mosques. During Eid, she pays her zakat and fitra. Aleya recently bought lungis and saris to be distributed among the needy.

Following the death of her parents, Aleya came to Dhaka at the tender age of nine from her village in Mymensingh. It was during the 1988 flood that she started working as a household help in an MP’s house. Her friends and family used to always tease Aleya for her feminine mannerisms, calling her a hijra. So, she decided to leave a particular way of life and join a hijra group.

About 25 years ago, she joined Rahela hijra’s group in Uttara, and

since then, she has been dancing on occasions like childbirth and weddings and collecting donations from shops.

“Everyone knows me in the Uttara sectors. I’m even invited to a cup of tea at police stations,” she says, smiling.

Straightforward and law-abiding Aleya feels obligated to stand against evil; she cannot be part of any misgivings.

“People are scared of us. It’s natural. They don’t know us and some hijras are undisciplined and disruptive; they take money from people on the streets but do not belong to any of our groups. There is good and bad in every community. We are also afraid of reporters

“ If Allah wishes, I’ll go to hajj someday, but for now, this is my hajj. Deep down, I feel happy and proud that I could do something for them. If I had more, I would’ve happily shared my savings with them. This is my Eid.

because some engage in yellow journalism,” she said, clarifying her stance.

People from the hijra community are a close-knit, simple clan of ill-treated citizens. They left their own homes because of rejection and embraced their Guruma as a guardian. Aleya Hijra has shown that in times of crisis, they too are willing to come forward and help people in distress.

Every nook and cranny of Dhaka has stories waiting to be told. “My Dhaka” gives interested writers the platform to share experiences of city life. Only selected stories will make it to our print edition and digital platform. Send your Dhaka story (within 450 words) to rajfat@thedailystar.net

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

DIGITAL SECURITY ACT ‘It’s creating an environment of terror’

Experts tell webinar, urge govt to repeal it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent jurists, academicians, and journalists yesterday underscored the need to come together and raise voice to make the government repeal the Digital Security Act (DSA).

In a webinar organised by Forum for Bangladesh Studies, they said any amendment to the law could exacerbate the already stifling situation in the country.

Ali Riaz, a distinguished professor of Illinois University, said DSA was enacted for immediate political gain. It serves as a protection tool for individuals and groups in power, and the ruling party.

Over the last four and half years, since the enactment of the law, citizens’ rights have been violated and an atmosphere of terror has been established, he said. “DSA

has set the stage for vigilante justice, where anyone can sue anybody. The situation has reached a point where no lawsuit is required to pick up anyone, and this is going to be severe in the coming days.”

Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shujan, a citizens’ platform, said DSA is a repressive law. The law itself is the problem. “DSA is hanging like a sword over our heads. It’s being used to create an environment of terror.”

He observed that the government will use the proposed three laws – including those centring OTT platforms and data protection – ahead of the election.

Eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik said that laws relating to defamation, and hurting anyone’s sentiment were removed from the criminal procedures in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Eid rush leads to soaring air ticket price

RASHIDUL HASAN

Monirul Hasan, who works at a private organisation, had planned to go to his village home for Eid by air to avoid the hassle of a time-consuming journey by road and railway.

But Monirul was forced to abandon his plan. Even after trying for two days, he did not see a ticket that was within his budget.

Like Monirul, many holidaymakers could not get air tickets due to the high price or unavailability.

Apart from domestic routes, demand for air tickets for popular holiday destinations – especially the Maldives, Dubai, Singapore, Thailand and India – have increased right before Eid holidays.

The country will enjoy a holiday for five days – from April 19 to April 23. If Eid is celebrated on April 23, people will get six days of holiday.

Sources at different airlines said the extended holiday has prompted people to take aerial routes for tourist destinations with their near and dear ones.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

‘Threat to press freedom’ Journalist orgs condemn attempt to attack Prothom Alo office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Various journalist organisations condemned and expressed concern over the attempt to attack Bangla daily Prothom Alo’s office, demanding the perpetrators be brought to book.


In a joint statement, Awami League-supported Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) expressed their shock and concern.

On Monday, a few miscreants infiltrated the Prothom Alo office in the capital’s Karwan Bazar and attempted to mount an attack, threatening security staff. They fled before police arrived at the scene.

“This type of action triggers terror within the journalist community. There are recognised norms for protest... There is no scope to flex muscle,” the statement read.

The statement urged the government to bring perpetrators to book and ensure safety and security of journalists and employees of Prothom Alo.


Meanwhile, BNP-supported BFUJ and DUJ leaders also issued



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On this auspicious occasion of the bank’s 41st anniversary, we wish to thank our customers, partners, stakeholders, regulators and well-wishers for being with us at all times, without whom none of our achievements would have been possible.



‘It’s creating an environment of terror’

FROM PAGE 3

1800 in the western world, in the wake of 200 years of abuse of such laws.

“There was no discussion or debate in the parliament over the DSA bill. How can one even expect a discussion when 60 to 70 percent of the assembly is filled with businessmen?” he said.

Barrister Sara Hossain, executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust (BLAST), said that ICT Act must be kept in discussion, as many cases are still being prosecuted under the law. “No reasonable debate was raised on DSA despite reservations of the UN.”

Monir Haider, founding member of Forum for Bangladesh Studies; Sultan Mohammed Zakaria, Pakistan and Bangladesh country specialist at Amnesty International; Faruq Feisal, regional director at Article 19, academician Shapan Adnan, and Golam Mortoza, Bangla editor at The Daily Star, also spoke.

Eid rush leads

FROM PAGE 3

Sources at the country’s four airlines – Biman, US-Bangla, Novoair and Air Astra – said tickets for domestic and outbound tourist destinations have become scarce due to the ongoing rush of holidaymakers.

Different airlines are counting profits, they said, adding that holidaymakers nowadays prefer travelling by air to avoid extra trouble.

“Almost all tickets on Saidpur, Jashore, Rajshahi and Barishal routes before five to six days of Eid day have already sold out,” Kamrul Islam, spokesperson of US Bangla Airlines, told The Daily Star.

Ticket prices on the routes have increased by around two to three times due to the high demand.

Tickets to different international destinations – including India, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia and the Maldives – have also been booked or sold out for that period, said the sources.

Demand for air tickets for Cox’s Bazar, a popular holiday destination, is also very high, Kamrul said.

“Improvement in people’s financial condition as well as competitive and reasonable prices of air tickets have considerably boosted domestic and international air traffic,” he said.

Kamrul said ticket prices are high as the price of jet fuel kept rising for the last one and a half years.

He said people who have bought tickets one or two months ago, got them at the regular prices. But as there are limited seats left now, prices shot up accordingly.

A Biman official, wishing anonymity, said, “It’s not true that we are increasing prices targeting Eid. It’s a normal trend in the aviation sector across the globe, that prices shoot up when demand is high.”

According to Kazi Wahidul Alam, an aviation expert, the number of domestic air passengers has increased by about 64.73 percent in the country in the last five years since 2019.

Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (Toab) said according to its estimate, around 15 lakh holidaymakers are likely to go on a trip to different domestic tourist destinations this Eid.

‘Threat to press freedom’

FROM PAGE 3

a statement terming the incident as a threat to press freedom and democracy.

They said the incident took place after the country’s premier slammed Prothom Alo in parliament.

“If anyone is aggrieved at the publication of any report, they can complain to the Press Council. But journalists are being threatened by implicating them in cases under repressive laws, which worries the journalist community,” the statement said.

In a separate statement, Dhaka Reporters Unity echoed the same.



EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Progoti Foundation for Education and Development
Permanent Sanad Holder

TENDER INVITATION

Tender is invited from the bonafide / intending suppliers /firms for the following items:

1. Making of Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for Data Center (DC) & Network Infrastructure for ICS Section of EWU
2. Procurement of Liveries (Shirt, Pant & Apron) for the supporting staffs of EWU
3. Supply and Installation of 02 sets LED English & 02 sets LED Bangla Signage of EWU
4. Renovation of MBA/EMBA Office and premise, EWU
5. Sub-Soil Investigation work at 20 Katha Land of EWU

The schedule of the items with terms and conditions (hard copy) can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (2nd floor) of the University up to **14.05.2023** during office hours (**up to 03:00 p.m.**) on working days. The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is **Tk.500/-** (excluding online service charge for e-tender process).

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule by 15.05.2023 within 02:00 p.m. Hard copy of the tender must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the Office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. Tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on the **same day (15.05.2023) at 02:30 p.m.** at the Conference Room (4th floor, Room No # 508) of East West University in presence of the bidders (if any) by ensuring health safety.

The University will remain closed from 19-27 April 2023 due to Shab-E-Qadr, Jumat-UI-Wida & Eid-UI-Fitr.

The bidders must mention the “**name of the item**” at the top of envelop. Otherwise, the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics



Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo: 46.207.007.17.02.2023-334
Date: 11-Apr-2023

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl. No.	Method of tender & tender ID, Ref. No.	Procurement item descriptions	Publishing date & time	Last selling date & time	Closing & opening date & time
1.	OTM (NCT) Tender ID. 806012 Ref. 46.207.007.17.01.2023-289	Supply of various types of flowers saplings, fertilizers and pesticides for gardening in the rainy season in the financial year 2022-2023.	10-Apr-2023 17.00.00	26-Apr-2023 17.00.00	27-Apr-2023 14.00.00
2.	OTM (NCT) Tender ID. 810061 Ref. 46.207.007.17.01.2022-42	Supply of Hand Trolley for use in waste management work of Dhaka South City Corporation in the financial year 2022-2023.	12-Apr-2023 17.00.00	26-Apr-2023 17.00.00	27-Apr-2023 14.00.00

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. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal.

Mohammad Bashirul Haque Bhuiyan
(Deputy Secretary)
Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department
Dhaka South City Corporation
E-mail: csपो@dhakasouthcity.gov.bd

ডিএসসি/পিআরডি/২৬১/২০২২-২০২৩
GD-675

Another heritage

FROM PAGE 3

for being part of a historic chain of development activities taken during the British period. The authorities have already demolished the western part of the building, but it is still possible to protect it by renovating the demolished part,” said Taimur.

He also mentioned that Rajuk, for the first time, prepared a list of 94 heritage buildings and 13 heritage zones in 2009 and the Railway Hospital building was in it. It was also in the 2017 list prepared by Rajuk.

However, the building’s name was mysteriously dropped from the list that mentioned the names of 75 heritage buildings in 2020, according to Taimur.

“We are observing that one after another, heritage buildings are being demolished. This is also a clear violation of the High Court’s directives,” he said.

During a human chain in front of the building protesting its demolition yesterday, Sazzadur Rasheed, associate professor and chairman of the Department of Architecture at Primeasia University, claimed the authorities have long tried to demolish the structure and took the chance when everyone got busy with the recent Bangabazar blaze.

Participating in the human chain, advocate Md Waliul Haque told this correspondent, “These buildings carry our history with them. History will be protected as long as these structures are protected.”

“If we can at least protect the part which has not yet been demolished, we will be able to preserve our history and pass it on to the next generations,” he added.

Who will save Karatoya?

FROM PAGE 5

orders has been implemented.

After the meeting, the organisers submitted a memorandum to the Bogura Deputy Commissioner Saiful Islam to save the river.

The Khulshi Three-Vent Regulator is a sluice-gate-like structure, built across the Karatoya River in Gobindaganj upazila in Gaibandha. Its purpose is to regulate the water flow of the river to prevent flooding in the surrounding areas during monsoon.

However, the regulator obstructs the natural flow of the river upstream, causing it to remain dry up for almost 9 months in a year, alleged environmentalists.

This obstruction prevents fish migration and causes pollution, as the stagnant water creates a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other disease-carrying organisms, they added.

85pc inland

FROM PAGE 5

unregistered vessels.

In the meeting, it was suggested that the number of seafarers (sailors) be increased through special programmes.

Meanwhile, in yesterday’s meeting, some complaints presented by the river commission in the previous meeting of the committee were refuted.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, a member of the committee, said that some statements of the National River Protection Commission are not in favour of the interests of the government and country.

It is necessary to take strict decisions in the parliamentary committee so that those who are with the government do not go beyond the law and the government’s directives,” the junior minister said.

According to the press release of the parliament secretariat, the committee also recommended a re-examination of the existing projects of the shipping ministry because of the revolutionary changes in the shipping communication system, especially in the southern region, due to the launch of the Padma Bridge.



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USAID Feed the Future Policy LINK Agriculture Policy Activity, DAI Bangladesh

DAI Policy LINK implements the USAID Feed the Future Bangladesh Agricultural Policy Activity (Policy Activity) with the goal of “strengthening the capacities of Bangladesh’s key agricultural actors and institutions, improving the policy environment and cultivating the policy-making processes that will enable inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led economic growth, strengthen resilience among people and systems, and create a well-nourished population, especially women and children.” We are now expanding our Dhaka team and seek individuals with a passion to forge alliances, facilitate complex policy dialogues, and directly impact on systemic institutions, to apply. We offer a rewarding compensation package and a progressive working environment. The following positions are open to recruitment:

Position: Director – Agriculture Policy (01 position)

Description: Working in complex and changing environments, under the supervision of the Country Lead and as a key member of the Senior Management Team, the Director will provide overall leadership to the Agriculture Policy team. The Director will guide the team to stay abreast of policy trends in the agricultural sector and strategize how the Policy Activity can most effectively engage, influence, and strengthen policies and systems that directly contribute to the growth of this sector. Primary functions include – developing working relationships with government, private-sector, and civil-society counterparts; partnering with influential coalitions; facilitating complex policy dialogues and strengthening the capacity of system actors.

Please refer to LINK for application submission: <https://fs23.formsite.com/OLJTgx/9rzjgr3eyk/index>

Position: Manager – Agriculture Policy (04 Positions)

Description: The Manager – Agriculture Policy, under the supervision of the Senior Manager – Agriculture Policy, will stay abreast of policy trends in the agricultural sector and will implement activities that can most effectively influence and strengthen policies and systems that directly contribute to the growth of this sector. Primary functions include – collaborating with partner coalitions and other key stakeholders, maintaining effective relations with government, private-sector and civil-society counterparts; and frequent field visits to develop and work with regional counterparts.

Please refer to LINK for application submission: <https://fs23.formsite.com/OLJTgx/9rzjgr3eyk/index>

Position: Senior Manager – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) (01 Position)

Description: The Senior Manager – MEL is responsible for providing leadership to the monitoring, evaluation, and learning efforts of the Policy Activity in Bangladesh. S/he will play a significant role in helping to manage and strengthen systems to assess and monitor Activity performance across interventions in different regions of Bangladesh, ensuring that data relevant to the Bangladesh context is integrated into country-specific as well as project-wide reporting and analysis. S/he will bring expert qualitative skills to support continuous data collection aligned to the prioritized learning questions and the Policy Activity program cycle and lead collaborative interpretation of data, to facilitate data-driven decisions and adaptations.

Please refer to LINK for application submission: <https://fs23.formsite.com/OLJTgx/9rzjgr3eyk/index>

For all the above positions, we seek candidates who will continually reinforce Policy LINK’s core purpose and principles, are critical thinkers, proactive when working independently or in a team, and solutions focused. S/he will contribute to fostering a learning environment in which personal and team growth is supported, with a shared understanding that the “team” always comes before the “individual.”

Deadline: The application will close on April 30, 2023. However, applications will be reviewed and interviewed on a rolling basis – so **early application is encouraged!**

SEARCHING FOR ICT EXPERT



Grameen Bank is a Leading Largest specialized Bank with 2568 branches over the country with a diverse and motivated workforce is seeking highly qualified and experienced candidates for IT Department for the Post of **Team Leader, System Analyst, Senior Programmer, Senior Database Expert, Programmer** role to guide the Bank to its next phase of innovation and growth.

Position: Team Leader
Vacancy: 02
Responsibilities and Qualifications of Team Leader
Responsibilities

1. Lead development of software solutions following the software development lifecycle and methodologies.
2. Report to Chief Software Architect.
3. Analysis and documenting detailed designed with UML, flowcharts, layouts, PERT chart.
4. Liaise with developers, designers and system administrators to identify new features.
5. Planning for various tests and identifying the best-suited testing tools for different projects and products.
6. Scaling up system, ensuring security and fault tolerant.
7. Develop software solutions quickly with rapid prototyping and later full featured systems d using latest software development stacks.

Qualifications

1. At least B.Sc. in Computer Science/Computer Science and Engineering from reputed University.
2. At least 10 (Ten) Years' working experience in related field.
3. Proficiency with the .NET Framework, React, Graph QL, Redis, Kubernetes, Oracle/MySQL/Postgres.
4. Competency with Python, NodeJS, React Native, JavaScript, Flutter, Java, C#, C++, Swift, Kotlin, SQL, Android and iOS development.
5. Experience in developing large-scale system which demands fast data processing, fault tolerant, high security of data and system.
6. Good control over an automated testing tool, DevOps, CI/CD.

Position: System Analyst
Vacancy: 01
Responsibilities and Qualifications of System Analyst
Responsibilities

1. Requirement analysis, design of software solutions following the software development lifecycle and methodologies.
2. Coordinate with Chief Software Architect and Project Manager.
3. Analysis and documenting detailed designed with UML, flowcharts, layouts, PERT chart.
4. Liaise with developers, designers and system administrators to identify new features.
5. Scaling up system, ensuring security of system.
6. Design software solutions quickly with rapid prototyping.

Qualifications

1. At least B.Sc. in Computer Science/Computer Science and Engineering from reputed University with at least 5 (Five) Years' working experience in related field.
2. Competency with Python, NodeJS, React Native, JavaScript, Redis, Kubernetes, SQL, Android and iOS development.
3. Experience in designing rapid prototyping system as well as large-scale system which demands fast data processing, fault tolerant, high security of data and system.
4. Good control over an automated testing tool, DevOps, CI/CD.

Position: Senior Programmer
Vacancy: 01
Responsibilities and Qualifications of Senior Programmer
Responsibilities

1. Coordinate with the Team Leader or Project Manager.
2. Planning for various tests and identifying the best-suited testing tools for different projects and products.
3. Scaling up system, ensuring security and fault tolerant.
4. Develop software solutions quickly with rapid prototyping.
5. Develop full featured software solutions using latest software development stacks.
6. Module a system, assign and review work done by the programmers.

Qualifications

1. At least B.Sc. in Computer Science/Computer Science and Engineering from reputed University with at least 5 (Five) Years' working experience in related field.
2. Competency with Python, NodeJS, React, JavaScript, Redis, Kubernetes, SQL, Android and iOS development.
3. Experience in developing rapid prototyping system as well as large-scale system which demands fast data processing, fault tolerant, high security of data and system.
4. Good control over an automated testing tool, DevOps, CI/CD.

Position: Senior Database Expert
Vacancy: 01
Responsibilities and Qualifications of Senior Database Expert
Responsibilities

1. Responsible for database design and implementation, database security implementation and monitoring, upgrades, performance monitoring, installations, managing replications, diagnosing system problems, disaster recovery testing and maintaining user accessibility.
2. Resolving complex issues involving: database performance, database capacity, resiliency, scaling up, stability, replication and other key aspects of distributed database technology.
3. Coordinate with Chief Software Architect and Team leader.

Qualifications

1. At least B.Sc. in Computer Science/Computer Science and Engineering from reputed University.
2. Minimum 5 years of direct DBA experience working with MySQL and Oracle Database for the post of senior level.
3. Oracle Certified Professional (OCP) ie. DBA desirable.
4. Experience with features such as Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC), ASM and Active Data Guard.
5. Good control over an automated testing tool, DevOps, CI/CD.

Position: Programmer
Vacancy: 01
Responsibilities and Qualifications of Programmer
Responsibilities

1. Develop software solutions quickly with rapid prototyping and full featured software solutions using latest software development stacks with well-organized, optimized and documented source code as directed by senior programmer.
2. Execute various tests and the best-suited testing tools for different projects and products.
3. Coordinate with project manager to finish the job assigned by senior programmer in due time.

Qualifications

1. At least B.Sc. in Computer Science/Computer Science and Engineering from reputed University with at least 2 (Two) Years' working experience in related field.
2. Competency with Python, NodeJS, React, JavaScript, Redis, SQL, Android and iOS development.
3. Good control over an automated testing tool, DevOps, CI/CD.

Compensation Package: NEGOTIABLE

Interested candidates who meet the requirements of the positions are encouraged to apply with their CV, early mentioning the role in cover letter and recent passport size photograph to the **Deputy Managing Director, Human Resources and Service Management, Grameen Bank, Head Office, Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216. The deadline for receiving applications is 25 April, 2023.**

Only Short-listed candidates will be called for interview.

The Bank Reserves the right to reject any application(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING			
RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR
20	12		6:23
21	13	4:17	6:23
22	14	4:15	6:23

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স্মারক নং-৪৬.৪১.৩৩০০.০০৮.১৭.০০১.২০২৩-১৩৪

তারিখঃ ২৬ চৈত্র ১৪২৯
০৯ এপ্রিল ২০২৩

ক্রম নং	বিবরণ	তফসিল 'ক'	বিস্তারিত তথ্য
০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ	স্থানীয় সরকার বিভাগ, স্থানীয় সরকার, পল্লী উন্নয়ন ও সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়।
০২	ক্রমিকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	ঃ	জেলা প্রশাসক, গাজীপুর।
০৩	দরপত্রের বিবরণ	ঃ	২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থবছরে গ্রাম পুলিশসের (দফাদার ও মহশ্রাদার) পোশাক ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জাম।
০৪	সরবরাহকারী/টিকাদারের সংযোগ	ঃ	পিপিআর-২০০৮ অনুসারে দরপত্রের প্রাপ্যতা অনুযায়ী এবং দরপত্র সিডিউল বর্ণিত শর্তানুযায়ী।
০৫	অর্থের উৎস	ঃ	২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থবছরের অনুন্নয়ন বাজেট মঞ্জুরী নং-৩৪, হিসাবের খাত নং-১৭৭০১০১/১২০০০১০৩৮/৩৩২১০৩৮।
০৬	দরপত্রের সূত্র ও নম্বর	ঃ	স্থানীয় সরকার বিভাগের ০৭/১১/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখের ৪৪.০০.০০০০.০১৮.০২.০০২.১৭(অংশ-১)-৭০৫ নং স্মারক।
০৭	ক্রম পদ্ধতি	ঃ	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (৫টিএম)।
০৮	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	ঃ	১২ এপ্রিল ২০২৩।
০৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় শুরু	ঃ	১৬ এপ্রিল ২০২৩ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)।
১০	দরপত্র বিক্রয় ও দাখিলের স্থান	ঃ	(ক) বিভাগীয় কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা। (খ) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, স্থানীয় সরকার শাখা, গাজীপুর। (গ) উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসারের কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর সদর, গাজীপুর।
১১	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ	১০ মে ২০২৩ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)।
১২	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১১ মে ২০২৩, দুপুর ১২.০০টা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	ঃ	১১ মে ২০২৩, বিকাল ৪.০০টা, জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর। উপস্থিত সদস্য/সদস্যদের প্রতিনিধির সম্মুখে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকে)।
১৪	দরপত্র সিডিউল এর মূল্য	ঃ	২০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা মাত্র (অফেন্ডারযোগ্য)।
১৫	পণ্য সরবরাহের মেয়াদ	ঃ	কার্যসম্পন্ন প্রাক্তির ৬০ (ষাট) দিনের মধ্যে।
১৬	দরপত্রের জামানত	ঃ	দরপত্রে উক্ত দর ৩% হারে জামানত বানদ যে কোন রকম/তফসিলী ব্যাংক হতে (ফেডারেশন) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার এর মাধ্যমে (জেলা প্রশাসক, গাজীপুর এর অনুমোদন) দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে।
১৭	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও টিকাদার	ঃ	স্থানীয় সরকার শাখা, জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর।

১৮	পোশাক ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জামাদির বিবরণঃ	ঃ	পোশাকের বিবরণ
০১	পোশাক অন্যান্য সরঞ্জামাদির নাম	ঃ	
০২	ফুল শার্ট (নীল রং)	ঃ	৩৪৫টি; (নীল রং) মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক সরবরাহকৃত নীল রং, বুকের পার্শ্বে দুটি পকেট, বোতাম ও চাকনাসহ কাঁপে বোতাম ও সোভারসহ প্রত্যেকের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট মাপ অনুযায়ী।
০২	হাফ শার্ট (নীল রং)	ঃ	৩৪৫টি; (নীল রং) মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক সরবরাহকৃত নীল রং, বুকের পার্শ্বে দুটি পকেট, বোতাম ও চাকনাসহ কাঁপে বোতাম ও সোভারসহ প্রত্যেকের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট মাপ অনুযায়ী।
০৩	ফুল প্যান্ট (বাঁকী রং)	ঃ	৬৯০টি; (বাঁকী রং) মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক সরবরাহকৃত বাঁকী রং, কোমরে ২ ইঞ্চি চওড়া বেষ্ট পরিধানযোগ্য ৪টি লুপ সম্বলিত, প্রত্যেকের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট মাপ অনুযায়ী।
০৪	শাড়ী (নীল রং)	ঃ	৩৬টি; (নীল রং) মহিলা পুলিশের ন্যায় নীল রং।
০৫	ফুলহাতা ব্লাউজ (নীল রং)	ঃ	৩৬টি; (নীল রং) মহিলা পুলিশের ন্যায় নীল রং।
০৬	পেটিকোট	ঃ	৩৬টি; কালো রং।
০৭	চৌকিদারদের জন্য লাল রঙের সোভার ব্যাচ	ঃ	৩২৭ জোড়া।
০৮	ইউনিয়ন কমান্ডার/সদস্যদের জন্য সোভার ব্যাচে কালো কাপড়ের রিবন ২টি	ঃ	৩৬ জোড়া।
০৯	উন্নতমানের কাপড়ের জুতা (মোজাসহ)	ঃ	৩৬৩ জোড়া।
১০	উন্নতমানের চামড়ার জুতা (মোজাসহ)	ঃ	৩৬৩ জোড়া।
১১	পুরুষদের জন্য জ্যাকেট	ঃ	৩৪৫টি।
১২	পুরুষদের জন্য গলের জামা	ঃ	৩৪৫টি।
১৩	মহিলা গ্রাম পুলিশদের কার্টগান	ঃ	৩৬টি।
১৪	লায়নার বার্ন	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।
১৫	বেতের লাঠি	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।
১৬	৪.৫০ ডায়মিটার চার্জার টর্চ লাইট	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।
১৭	ঘাস্তা (গ্রাম পুলিশদের মনোমাসহ)	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।
১৮	বোমের ক্যাপ (গ্রাম পুলিশদের মনোমাসহ)	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।
১৯	মাস্টার	ঃ	৩৬৩টি।

dcgazipur@mop



বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

প্রধান কার্যালয়

ঢাকা

হিউম্যান রিসোর্সেস ডিপার্টমেন্ট-১
(রিক্রুটমেন্ট এন্ড আউটসোর্সিং উইং)

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নংঃ ১৩/২০২৩

তারিখঃ ২৬ চৈত্র, ১৪২৯
০৯ এপ্রিল, ২০২৩

দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিঃ-এ নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে
আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীদের নিয়োগ পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রবেশপত্র
ডাউনলোড করা প্রসঙ্গে

দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিঃ-এর ৯ম-২০তম গ্রেডের ১৭ ক্যাটাগরির পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে গত ১১/০১/২০২৩ তারিখে প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০২/২০২৩ এর সূত্রে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, উক্ত ১৭ ক্যাটাগরির পদের মধ্যে ‘সহকারী ব্যবস্থাপক (পরিকল্পনা), সহকারী ব্যবস্থাপক (উৎপাদন নিয়ন্ত্রণ), কারিগরী কর্মকর্তা (গবেষণা ও মান নিয়ন্ত্রণ), অফিসার (উৎপাদন), সহকারী কারিগরী কর্মকর্তা (গবেষণা ও মান নিয়ন্ত্রণ), অফিসার (অভ্যন্তরীণ নিয়ন্ত্রণ)/অফিসার (উৎপাদন নিয়ন্ত্রণ) ও ইমাম (পুরুষ)’ পদের নিয়োগ পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনলাইনে আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীদের মধ্য হতে প্রাথমিকভাবে যোগ্য বিবেচিত প্রার্থীদের প্রবেশপত্র বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত ওয়েবসাইটে (<https://erecruitment.bb.org.bd>) আপলোড করা হয়েছে।

০২। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণেচ্ছু প্রার্থীদেরকে আগামী ১০/০৪/২০২৩ তারিখ হতে ৩০/০৪/২০২৩ তারিখের মধ্যে উল্লিখিত ওয়েবসাইট হতে প্রবেশপত্র সংগ্রহের জন্য পরামর্শ দেয়া যাচ্ছে।

০৩। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোডের কোনো সুযোগ থাকবে না।

০৪। পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় এবং কেন্দ্রের নাম ও ঠিকানা পরবর্তীতে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইট, এসপিসিবিএলের ওয়েবসাইট এবং জাতীয় দৈনিক পত্রিকায় বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে

০৫। এছাড়া, অন্য ১০ ক্যাটাগরির পদের নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত কার্যক্রম পরবর্তীতে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইট, এসপিসিবিএলের ওয়েবসাইট এবং জাতীয় দৈনিক পত্রিকায় বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে।

ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৩-৯৭৮
তারিঃ ১১-০৪-২০২৩

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
মোঃ সিরাজুল ইসলাম
প্রিচালক (এইচআরডি-১)

ব্যাবহিক ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

জিডি-৬৭০



‘I never said no to any films’

MISHA SAWDAGAR

PHOTOS: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

“There are a lot of memories in my career. Once, I had a fatal accident while acting. Some even thought that I was dead, but the Almighty saved me. I continued shooting even when my ligament was torn, because I didn’t want to hamper the schedule of the film.”

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Misha Sawdagar is often considered to be one of the iconic villains of Dhallywood. He proved his acting prowess with his brilliant performances over three decades. The actor has worked in over 800 films during his eventful career and won three National Film Awards. Twice in his career, he was also president of the Bangladesh Film Artists Association. This upcoming Eid, three of his films—*Kill Him*, *Leader Amie Bangladesh* and *Prem Pritir Bandhan*—will be released in theaters. In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, the talented actor reflected on his journey in showbiz and much more. **How has this three-decade journey been so far?** In my opinion, the path of art is never easy. I have acted in so many films in my career. There were times when I was shooting all day and night. Back then, I couldn’t even spend time



Do you have any bad memories over your career?

There are a lot of memories in my career. Once, I had a fatal accident while acting. Some even thought that I was dead, but the Almighty saved me. I continued shooting even when my ligament was torn, because I didn’t want to hamper the schedule of the film. As I have back pain, I feel hurt whenever I am in action films, but I still love doing them. There was a hanging scene in the film, *Protigga*. I had never played such a role before. I almost died while doing the execution scene. At one point, I strangled myself in that scene,

but the Almighty saved me. Everyone thought I died that day. Even then, I didn’t stop acting because I loved it. While shooting for the film, *Amar Praner Shami*, my hands and legs were hurt. I was in tears due to the pain, but I still didn’t leave the shooting set. That’s how I have been acting for years and years, without taking any breaks. **When did you find time for your family?** My heart aches whenever I think about the fact that I didn’t get to spend a lot of quality time with my elder son. I don’t know how he grew up so fast. He is currently studying at an American university. I was so busy with shooting that I used to return home and he would be asleep. Our time schedules never matched. Sometimes I was abroad, shooting films. My wife was so helpful during those times. She manages my whole family. **How important has your wife been to your success?** She has made an enormous contribution to my life. We had a love marriage. Now, we have two sons. The elder one, named Hasan Mohammad Walid, is now in America finishing his studies, and the younger one is a student. We are very happy together.

Apu, Shariar Nazim Joy pair up for film ‘Shorge’



Dhallywood actor Apu Biswas is currently gearing up for the release of her films. Amidst this, she has signed up for another film, *Shorge*, directed by Shariar Nazim Joy. Besides directing the film, Joy will also be acting opposite Apu in the project. According to the director, the film is not hero-heroine based, rather, it is a story-based film where various social issues will be portrayed, which we don’t normally notice. Joy has plans to screen the film in different local and international platforms. Earlier, Apu worked in the Shahriar Nazim Joy directorial, *Priyo Komola*, in 2021.

‘Faraaz’ can’t be screened in Bangladesh: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting



While it has recently been reported that a few Bollywood films will be approved for import in Bangladesh, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has now sent a notice that *Faraaz*—a Bollywood film about the Holey Artisan attack on July 1, 2016—will not be allowed to screen in Bangladesh. The notice was issued in a circular signed by Md Shahinoor Miah, Chief Information Officer, Press Information Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Monday. In the circular, it is stated that the High Court has directed that *Faraaz* should not be made available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, other online platforms, television channels and film screenings in Bangladesh.

NEWS

Govt makes U-turn

FROM PAGE 1
urea, 16 lakh tonnes of DAP, 7.5 lakh tonnes of TSP and 9 lakh tonnes of MOP. Abdus Salam, a Boro farmer in Malanchi village of Pabna, said minimum 50kg of fertiliser is needed while planting crop on one bigha of land and another 40 to 50kg during the rest of the cultivation. “The fertiliser price is now up by Tk 5 per kg, but we will have to buy each kg at a price of Tk 7 to Tk 8 higher. The production cost on one bigha of land will increase by Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,200,” he added. Tarani Chandra Sarkar, a farmer of Narayanpur village in Nawabganj upazila of Dinajpur, is cultivating maize. “Still, I have to apply around 150kg fertiliser on the maize land. If the price increases by Tk 5 per kg, I will need another Tk 750,” he said. Quazi Shahabuddin, former director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said the government has to increase the fertiliser prices in line with the international market. “Otherwise, the government would need to increase the subsidy. There is a limit of providing subsidy,” he said. “My personal opinion is if I had resources, I would increase the subsidy rather than the price. If you do a comparative analysis, you will see farmers are being jailed for defaulting Tk 1,000 loan but there is no action against big loan defaulters. This is unfair.” Replying to a question, he suggested the government carry out survey to monitor the rise in production cost. Shahabuddin also said the farmers will pass on the burden of extra

expenditure to the consumers by charging high prices for the produce. “It will be fair if farmers pass on the burden to millers instead of consumers,” he said. Distinguished Fellow of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Mustafizur Rahman said farmers’ interests, the cost of production along with the pressure of subsidy, and government expenditure need to be considered. Compared to the increase of price of agriculture products, the rise of fertiliser price is not much. “Since the price of agricultural products has increased, I think farmers will be able to absorb the pressure,” he said. He suggested readjusting the price when there will be a fall in the fertiliser price in the international market. Talking to the media yesterday, Planning Minister MA Mannan said the production cost will surely go up after the rise in fertiliser prices. At the same event, State Minister for Planning Ministry Shamsul Alam said it will not have any impact on inflation because if the production increases, the fertiliser price hike will be adjusted. Meanwhile, Communist Party of Bangladesh has vehemently protested the price hike of fertiliser. Terming it an anti-people decision, the CPB said the government should have increased subsidy to ensure food security. But the government has increased the price instead for the benefit of middlemen and businessmen. It will pose threat to the country’s agricultural sector, said the left party in a statement. [Our Pabna and Dinajpur correspondents contributed to this report]

Tk 303cr lost

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purchase price. The probe body said the fire broke out in an embroidery factory on the second floor of Adarsha unit of Bangabazar Shopping Complex. Eight security members and an electrician used to live on the roof of the Adarsha unit. Cigarette butts from the roof might have fallen on the second floor and goods in the embroidery factory caught fire. Apart from this, the fire could have also ignited from a burning mosquito repellent coil in the place where the security personnel stayed, the investigators said. The probe committee recommended constructing concrete buildings for all markets with adequate fire

extinguishers, underground water reservoirs and fire hydrants. It also suggested protecting all water bodies under the city corporations. Meanwhile, shop owners of Bangabazar Shopping Complex can start their business in makeshift shops from today. The DSCC has already finished clearing the debris from the site. At a press conference yesterday, Zahurul Islam, general secretary of Bangabazar Complex Shop Owners’ Association, said Tk 2.12 crore has been deposited in the fund for the affected traders till Monday. “Hopefully, a big donation will come from the prime minister. In all, this money will be distributed among the traders,” he added.

C-sections

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indicators to guide policies and programmes aimed at improving the people’s health and well-being. The findings highlight significant improvements needed in maternal and child healthcare over the past five years. One of the achievements highlighted in the 2022 survey was the decline in the childhood mortality rate. The under-5 mortality rate decreased from 43 to 31 per 1,000 live births, and neonatal mortality rate declined from 27/1,000 to 20/1,000 live births between 2017 and 2022, reflecting a commendable 12 percent decrease. This decline can be attributed to increased access to quality health services, including facility deliveries and skilled birth attendance. The BDHS 2022 also showed a decrease in stunting among children under five – from 31 percent to 24 percent between 2017 and 2022, indicating improvements in child nutrition. However, the rate of underweight children remained unchanged at 22 percent, highlighting the need for continued efforts to address malnutrition. The survey also revealed positive trends in facility deliveries, with an increase from 51 percent in 2017 to 65 in 2022. Furthermore, the survey showed an improvement in equity in the use of facilities for delivery care among different economic groups. Some 88 percent of pregnant women are also receiving at least one antenatal care session from a trained provider – up from 2017’s 82 percent. However, the proportion of women receiving ANC4+ (four sessions of antenatal care) declined from 47 percent in 2017 to 41, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the survey, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) – the average number of children a woman would have by the end of her childbearing age – has remained static at 2.3 as same as the TFRs in the previous three BDHS.

Commander

FROM PAGE 12
in four murder cases, an APBn official told The Daily Star. Three suspected Arsa members were also arrested and a firearm and two bullets were recovered from the spot, said a statement signed by Md Faruk Ahmed, assistant superintendent of police (media) of APBn-8. The arrestees are Mohammad Taher, 45; Jamal Hossain, 20; and Liakat Ali, 25. All of them are residents of Camp-19 in Ukhiya. Two APBn members were injured in the “gunfight”, said the statement.

12 parties picked for registration

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh People’s Party (BPP), Democratic Party, and Bangladesh Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP). The registration of the political parties will be finalised by June, EC Secretary Jahangir Alam said yesterday. The secretary said in the first stage, a committee concerned recommended cancellation of applications of 14 out of 93 parties that sought registration. Two parties withdrew their applications. Later, the remaining 77 parties were given 15 days to provide additional documents. From there, the EC selected the 12 parties, he added. Asked about the finalisation process, the EC secretary stated that after verification, the commission decided to collect information about the 12 parties from the field level. For registration, a political party would need to meet at least one of three conditions. The first condition is securing at least one seat with its electoral symbol in any parliamentary election held since the independence of Bangladesh. The second condition is obtaining

five percent of total votes cast in the constituencies in which its candidates took part in any of the national elections. The third condition is having a functional central office, offices in at least one-third of the districts and offices in at least 100 upazilas or metropolitans. And the party must have a minimum of 200 members who are voters in each upazila. Since 2008, a total of 44 political parties got registration and registrations of five political parties were cancelled. Oikyabaddho Nagarik Andolan, Pragatashil Ganatantrik Party and Jatiya Ganatantrik Party lost their registrations as they failed to comply with the conditions of getting registration since 2018. Besides, registration of the Freedom Party was cancelled in 2009 as it failed to provide the party charter. Jamaat’s registration as a political party was declared illegal by the High Court in 2013. Following the verdict, the EC cancelled the party’s registration in October 2018.

In despair, farmer attempts suicide

FROM PAGE 12
Mardi, 36, and his cousin Robi Mardi, 27, – died by suicide in March last year after failing to get irrigation water. Abhinath’s wife filed a case over the deaths and police pressed charges against Shakhawat Hossain, the local deep tube-well operator, for provoking their deaths by not providing water to their paddy fields. Following the incident, the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority, which oversees the irrigation in the area, replaced Shakhawat with a new operator named Hashem Ali Babu. Under the same deep tube-well scheme, Mukul cultivated paddy on around 3.5 bighas in two plots this year. Mukul was being denied water at a time when the plants were at their flowering stage and the fields needed to be kept well-irrigated, Mukul’s mother Duli Hembrom said at the hospital yesterday. The deep tube-well operator was harassing him and returning him every day promising that he would be given water the next day, Duli quoted her son as saying.

Mukul filed a complaint with the local union parishad chairman, but got no results. In the meantime, the ground of his fields started cracking and the plants turned yellow. Shamsul Wadud, additional director of Department of Agricultural Extension (Rajshahi region), said the paddy fields in the region should be under constant irrigation during this period. Speaking to The Daily Star in the hospital, Mukul said he became helpless as he was denied water repeatedly. “As I belong to the Santal community, I cannot force anyone [to provide water]. I felt helpless.” He said he took two bottles of pesticide from the tube-well room, and drank pesticide from one of those in front of the operator on Sunday afternoon. Operator Hashem then took away the other bottle. The farmer was admitted to the RMCH around 3:00am Monday, said a hospital staff. The Rajshahi DC said he ordered the authorities to circulate his mobile

Former state minister

FROM PAGE 12
April 4 directed the director general (inquiry and investigation) of the Anti-Corruption Commission in Dhaka to investigate the case, said the court’s Bench Assistant Shah Alam. According to the complaint, the irregularities took place in projects including completing the construction work of the vice-principal’s residence, repair and renovation of the principal’s residence, construction of an auditorium, and renovation of classroom furniture, a mosque, dormitory, and kitchen. They are also accused of selling a three-storey cyclone shelter and a usable two-storey tin-shed for Tk 17 lakh without an auction notice and misappropriating Tk 40 lakh belonging to different departments of the college and Tk 3.94 lakh in HSC exam centre fees. Contacted, former state minister Mahbubur said, “My political opponents are filing false cases against me. They are doing this to prevent me from getting the Awami League nomination in the next national election.”

phone number among all farmers so that they could directly inform him about their problems. “We will not allow any indiscipline in the distribution of irrigation water,” he said. Mukul’s brother-in-law Robi Kisku said the deep tube-well was designated for irrigating paddy fields on 250 bighas, but the operator supplied water to 450 bighas which resulted in the water crisis in the area. “Water crisis in summer is common in our area. But supplying water to additional fields deepens the scarcity,” Robi said. Operator Hashem said every farmer needs water as a heatwave was sweeping across the area. “How can I provide water to all farmers at a same time?” He denied the allegations of supplying water to additional fields and the farmer’s statement that he took pesticide in front of him. “When he threatened that he would take pesticide, I asked him to go to his field assuring him that I would give him water. But he went home instead,” Hashem said.

Chinese aircraft, ships remain around Taiwan

Says the island's defence ministry after drills end

REUTERS, Taipei

Chinese warplanes and navy ships were still in the waters around Taiwan, the island's defence ministry said yesterday after the end of three days of war games, as Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen criticised Beijing for its "irresponsible" behaviour.

China began the exercises on Saturday after Tsai returned to Taipei following a meeting in Los Angeles with US House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

China, which warned the US not to allow Tsai to visit or meet McCarthy, has never renounced the use of force to bring the democratically governed island under Beijing's control. Taiwan's government strongly disputes China's claims.

Although China said on Monday night the drills had



Filipino activists stage a protest against the annual Philippines-US joint military exercises or Balikatan, outside the Armed Forces of the Philippines headquarters, in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines yesterday. More than 17,000 Philippine and US soldiers began their largest ever joint military drills yesterday, as ties between the long-term allies warm over shared concerns about China's assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region. PHOTO: REUTERS

Leaked US intel document 'untrue'

Says South Korea amid spying allegations

REUTERS, Seoul

South Korea said yesterday that information contained in a purportedly leaked US confidential document that appeared to be based on internal discussions among top South Korean security officials was "untrue" and "altered".

Several documents have been recently posted on social media offering a partial, month-old snapshot of the war in Ukraine, sparking a diplomatic row between the US and some allies.

One of the documents gave details of internal discussions among South Korean officials about US pressure on Seoul to help supply weapons to Ukraine, suggesting the US could have been spying on South Korea, one of its most important allies, and inviting condemnation from the Asian nation's lawmakers.

The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said in a statement that suspicions his office in Seoul was monitored are "utterly false" and that any attempts to shake its alliance with the US is an act "compromising national interest".

US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin held phone talks with his South Korean counterpart yesterday during which the two sides agreed that much of the document on South Korea has been fabricated, Yoon's office said. It did not elaborate on which part of the document was untrue.

South Korea's defence ministry said that during the phone conversation that took place at the request of Austin, the Pentagon chief explained about recent media reports on the leak and vowed to closely communicate with South Korea on the issue.

The revelation comes just weeks before Yoon is scheduled to meet with US President Joe Biden in Washington, on April 26.

Some lawmakers of South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party expressed "strong regret" on Monday over the alleged surveillance, calling it a clear violation of national sovereignty and a major security failure of the Yoon administration.

Kim Tae-hyo, South Korea's Deputy National Security Adviser, said the latest controversy will not have an impact on South Korea's alliance with the US, as he departed for Washington ahead of Yoon's visit.

"The US is the country with the world's best intelligence capabilities and since (Yoon's) inauguration we have shared intelligence in almost every sector," Kim told reporters.

'Irresponsible'

Pakistan condemns India's decision to hold G20 meetings in J&K

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan yesterday condemned India's decision to hold Group of 20 meetings in the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir next month, calling the move "irresponsible". Kashmir is claimed in full but ruled in part by the two nuclear-armed neighbours who have fought two of their three wars over control of the region. India currently holds the rotating year-long presidency of the G20 and is set to host a leaders' summit in New Delhi in early September. On Friday, India released a full calendar of events leading up to the summit, which included G20 and Youth 20 meetings in Kashmir's summer capital of Srinagar and in Leh, in the neighbouring region of Ladakh, in April and May. Pakistan's foreign ministry issued a statement condemning the choice of venues in disputed territory. "India's irresponsible move is the latest in a series of self-serving measures to perpetuate its illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir," it said.



OCCUPIED WEST BANK

Israeli soldiers kill two Palestinians

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Israeli soldiers shot dead two Palestinian gunmen who opened fire at a military post near a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank yesterday, Israel's Defence Minister said. "Their successful operation prevented an attack against Israeli citizens," Defence Minister Gallant said in a statement. Earlier, the military had said its forces "neutralised" two gunmen and found rifles and handguns at the scene. There was no immediate comment from Palestinian officials. Israeli-Palestinian violence has surged this year, with frequent military raids amid a spate of Palestinian attacks. More than 90 Palestinians, most of them fighters in militant groups but some of them civilians, have been killed and at least 19 Israelis and foreigners have died since January. Tensions are running especially high as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the Jewish Passover coincide. An Israeli police raid on the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem last week triggered rocket attacks on Israel.

US reiterates need for free, fair polls

FROM PAGE 1
Washington has been critical of the last two parliamentary elections in Bangladesh and has repeatedly called for a free and fair election.

The national election is due late this year or early next year.

Momen reaffirmed Bangladesh government's commitment to a free, fair and credible election and welcomed election observers from the US.

In a separate briefing shortly after the meeting, Patel told reporters that Bangladesh's Digital Security Act (DSA) is one of the world's most draconian laws for journalists.

The latest World Press Freedom Index ranked Bangladesh 162 out of 180 countries, a drop of 10 places from the previous year, and one of the biggest reasons that Bangladesh scored that is the DSA, he said.

"As per our assessment, it is one of the world's most draconian laws for journalists. And we have made our concerns about this law quite

clear. A free press and an informed citizenry are key for any nation and its democratic future..."

Patel made the remarks when a journalist asked him about Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's comment on the US democracy and human rights. The journalist also sought the official's comment on a statement by Hasina's son and her ICT adviser that the US State Department is "nothing but a bunch of hypocrites".

The reporter also sought comment on the arrest of a man whose comment was used in a DW report on Rab's human rights violations and a group of people looking for the Prothom Alo editor to harm him.

Patel said, "Perpetrators of any human rights abuses should be held accountable."

The US will examine the allegations of gross human rights violations by Rab and also immensely hopes that the Bangladesh authorities will do the same, he added.

Asked if Washington

was considering withdrawal of sanctions on Rab, Patel said he would not preview or get into specifics of any actions or designations that Washington has taken from up here.

The reporter then asked about the US stance on BNP's demand for a caretaker polls-time government. Patel replied that the US supports the principle of free and fair elections in Bangladesh and around the world and was not there to endorse one political candidate or party over another.

"So let me say two things. First is that we want to and are looking forward to deepening our relationship with Bangladesh. That's why Secretary Blinken is meeting – had the opportunity to meet with Bangladesh's foreign minister today."

Momen hoped to develop, strengthen and solidify the bilateral relations, resolution of the Rohingya crisis, climate change, labour rights, civil liberty, and elections.

He apprised Blinken of

the ongoing and completed works in labour sector reforms in Bangladesh and hoped that Washington would appreciate these efforts, according to a foreign ministry statement.

Washington maintains that regulatory reforms, cutting red tapes and crack down on corruption were key to draw investments from the US, Blinken said.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Muhammad Imran, Deputy Head of Mission Ferdousi Shahriar, Director General (North America) Khandker Masudul Alam from the Bangladesh side were present at the meeting.

From the US side, Counselor Derek Chollet, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration Julieta Valls Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Kara McDonald, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Afreen Akhter accompanied Blinken in the meeting.

AL wants

FROM PAGE 1

Affairs Secretary Asaduzzaman Asad said the DSA is being used for suppressing critics and political opponents, and this affects not only the fundamental rights of the people, but also the democratic fabric of the country.

Ruhul Amin Gazi, former president of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), said the basic rights of citizens have been taken away with the DSA.

Sonia Akhter Smriti, a member of Rajbari district Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal, said, "As I spoke against the government, a case under the ICT act was filed against me. I was picked up from home and I don't know where I was kept for a few hours. There are many victims but people do not know about them."

Shafiqul Islam Kajol, who was sued under the DSA, said, "How free is our press? It seems to me that the media is dying."

IMF maintains 5.5pc

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh though will be logging in the third-highest GDP growth in South Asia, behind only the Maldives (7.2 percent) and India (5.9 percent), as per the IMF's forecasts.

Sri Lanka's economy will contract by 3 percent and Pakistan's will grow at just 0.5 percent.

Inflation will average 8.6 percent this year – bested only by the troubled South Asian neighbours Sri Lanka (15.2 percent) and Pakistan (27.4 percent) – driven by rising domestic food and fuel prices and the pass-through of large taka depreciation.

The current account deficit – a situation when imports exceed exports – would narrow to 2.1 percent of GDP this year from 4.1 percent last year. However, next year, it will widen to 4.2 percent of GDP.

The current account deficit this year is similar to neighbouring India (2.2

percent) and Pakistan (2.3 percent).

"A robust economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic was interrupted by Russia's war in Ukraine. Rising global commodity prices, supply disruptions and slowing external demand have led to a sharp widening of the current account deficit, depreciation of the taka and a large decline in foreign exchange reserves," said the IMF staff report earlier this year prepared for the \$4.7 loan programme.

While there is not a full-blown crisis, rising inflation, slowing economic activity, and strict austerity measures to deal with the shock are compressing demand, it said.

"The authorities have responded with stringent demand management measures."

The prices of fuel, fertiliser, gas and

electricity were raised. In addition, the government has imposed transitory restrictions on some non-essential imports, slowed the implementation of import-intensive development projects, closed diesel-fuelled power plants, introduced rolling blackouts, reduced in-office hours, shortened the school week and introduced other measures to curtail energy demand.

"While these measures have suppressed import demand, exchange rate pressures remain high and foreign exchange reserves continue to decline, albeit at a slower pace. These demand control measures could prolong the ongoing hardships and will likely hurt both near-term growth and medium-term economic potential."

High inflation, while adding to economic uncertainty, will reduce consumer spending, it added.

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JAMUNA BANK

Govt must improve road crash data

Reliable official data key to preventing crashes on our roads

Despite fatal road accidents becoming a regular phenomenon in the country, it is disturbing to see how casually this is being treated, with government agencies themselves having no uniform road crash data. Until January, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) used police data on road crashes, but then it started publishing its own. And according to its data, 636 people were killed and 752 others were injured in 630 road accidents in January and February. But this does not match with police data, which says that 542 people were killed and 420 others were injured in 557 road crashes during the same period.

Aside from contradicting each other, these numbers are also much lower than that provided by independent organisations, which puts a question mark on the former's initiatives. Lack of reliable official data could derail the government's plan to implement the National Road Safety Strategic Action Plan 2021-2024 to reduce 20 to 25 percent of casualties by 2024, and to halve the casualty number by 2030. But what number will that be? Besides road safety campaigners, different international organisations have also raised questions about the veracity of our accident data.

The World Bank, for example, which already approved a loan for a Tk 4,988.14 crore project on road safety – under which a road accident database will be developed, among other targets – said that the “poor quality and unreliable data on crashes, deaths, and injuries impede proper road safety management.” One may recall that, according to a World Health Organization's report published in 2018, at least 24,954 people were killed in road crashes in the country in 2016. According to the police, however, only 2,463 people were killed in 2016. The huge discrepancy between these figures shows how confusing policy-making can be in the absence of reliable data.

The reason given by the BRTA chairman for the difference between BRTA and police data is that the latter is based on the cases filed over accidents, but many injured died in hospitals later. Since the BRTA also includes hospital data, its number may be higher. But how will it explain the discrepancy between the numbers of accidents recorded? Either way, the data has to be accurate, which requires developing a uniform system of documentation. In the absence of that, it will be more difficult for the authorities to take proper measures to reduce road crashes.

It doesn't boost confidence when the authorities, far from seeing the error of their ways, criticise road safety campaigners for publishing “fabricated” reports on crashes, as the Road Transport and Highways Division secretary did early this year. Using the classic diversion tactic to cover up their own failure, he said such reports were “tarnishing the image” of the country. But what about the fact that responsible agencies have repeatedly failed to prevent loss of life due to road accidents? Why is it that the same government agencies that criticise data provided by safety campaigners are themselves failing to prepare accurate data? The government must hold them accountable for their failures so they can show better results.

Law alone cannot stop food hoarding

But it's a vital first step, and needs to be implemented regularly

It is heartening to know that the cabinet on Monday finally approved the draft of an act to tackle hoarding of food, among other illegal practices, which has been often responsible for destabilising the market. According to the proposed law, if a person stores more than the amount of food fixed by the government, or breaches any government instruction regarding stocking, it will be considered a criminal offence. The punishment for that will be life imprisonment or a maximum of 14 years' rigorous imprisonment as well as fines. Other crimes related to the production, storage, transfer, transportation, supply, distribution and marketing of food grains such as paddy, rice, wheat, flour and corn have also been brought under the purview of the law, and the punishment for those will vary depending on the magnitude of the crimes.

The development comes a year after the bill was approved in principle by the cabinet on April 19, 2022. We are told that it has been drafted by combining the Food (Special Court) Act-1956 and the Food Grains Supply (Prevention of Prejudicial Activity) Ordinance-1979. Admirably, the government has resisted the urge to introduce capital punishment for hoarding food, which was in the initial draft. This is important because capital punishment, while being something that we cannot condone from an ethical point of view, has also been known to be more of a distraction than a deterrent. In any case, there is already a provision of death penalty for hoarding food in the controversial Special Powers Act, 1974. In case of hoarding, as in case of any other crime, even the strictest punishment doesn't work if the law is not implemented properly.

This is where the challenge will be going forward: enforcement of the bill, when it is passed into law. We have often seen how mobile court drives have been conducted against hoarders, and fines slapped on them, but to little effect eventually. These drives are conducted so sparingly that any effect fizzles out before those could be meaningful. Also, lack of coordination among different government agencies – one of the main reasons why joint public-sector interventions have such poor track records – often gets in the way of those efforts. As well as ensuring regular drives and monitoring in every stage of food supplies, the influence exercised by powerful syndicates and market manipulators also needs to be checked for any law to be effective.

The food sector is going through a critical phase at the moment, with concerns about high prices of production and consumption taking centre stage in national discussion. Although the influence of external factors like the Russia-Ukraine war cannot be denied, poor policy and pre-existing governance issues have also been responsible for the present crisis in the market. We, therefore, urge the government to ensure that the proposed law doesn't meet the same fate as so many other ineffective laws in Bangladesh because of its failure to enforce it properly and evenly.

In times of crisis, journalists must double down on facts



OF MAGIC & MADNESS

Badiuzzaman Bay
is assistant editor at
The Daily Star.

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

Since this issue has rumbled on longer than most issues in Bangladesh are allowed to, with new players butting in every other day, let's revisit some facts to put things back into perspective.

Fact 1: A report by *Prothom Alo* correspondent Samsuzzaman Shams on the poor people's struggle to cope with high food prices was published online on March 26. Fact 2: A social media card based on the report caused a stir after an apparent photo quote mismatch was detected in it, which as a reporter he had nothing to do with. Fact 3: Plain-clothes CID officers picked him up at the dead of night for that which he had nothing to do with. Fact 4: He was charged under the Digital Security Act (DSA) for that which he had nothing to do with. Fact 5: He was hauled before a court, denied bail, and thrown into jail – all for that which he had nothing to do with.

These are all facts, and incontrovertibly so. Everything else about this story is just a reaction to events as they unfolded. You can question the authenticity of the quotes used in the report. You can take issue with the timing of the publication. But it will all be insinuations unsupported by facts, unless otherwise vindicated by a competent authority – the Press Council, for example – which is yet to happen. The truth, therefore, remains that a journalist was harassed and punished for no offence recognised by law.

What offence did he commit then? Why are some people still fixated on that minor, insignificant mismatch, when far more serious concerns have been left unaddressed? Why do they keep throwing shade at the supposed failure of one media organisation, while ignoring the very obvious failure of several state organisations to uphold vital human rights?

On Monday, in her sharpest criticism yet of *Prothom Alo*, and as the latest to weigh in on this issue, the prime minister called the paper “the enemy of Awami League, the enemy of democracy, and the enemy of the people of the country.” While addressing a special session of parliament, she questioned the motive behind the report, “To hand Tk 10 to a small child, to make him tell a lie, to get some words from the child's mouth... what were the words? [We] want the independence



VISUAL: STAR

of [having] rice, meat and fish.” This line of argument appears to support a theory misattributing said words to the child, although the report itself was crystal clear about whom those words belonged to: an adult day labourer.

Unfortunately, it is this theory, first peddled by a section of the media, that is now being used to endanger the more critical section of it. Soon after the prime minister's speech, a group of people tried to breach security at the *Prothom Alo* head office in Dhaka, threatened security guards, shouted slogans against its editor, and wrote “boycott” on its reception wall.

Monday's events capped off two weeks of what, in hindsight, appears to be a coordinated smear campaign in which the same message reverberated off the walls of party echo chambers. It started as a seemingly well-meaning critique of journalistic responsibility, but soon turned into a dizzying drumbeat of *Prothom Alo*-bashing before, finally, culminating with a call for a ban on the newspaper. From top Awami League leaders to loyal university teachers, cultural figures and media personalities – everyone jumped on the bandwagon.

This is where Fact No. 6 enters. For the detractors, Shams is nothing but

rights-shaming. Give the media some freedom, but make it feel guilty about it. Make it blame itself when those rights are compromised. It serves them when journalists are divided.

The enduring appeal of the DSA – which became evident once again when the law minister outright rejected calls by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to immediately suspend the law – is because it gives a legal cover to any violation of those rights. The Awami League intelligentsia, which needs to keep up the appearance of being pro-journalists, will tell you that being anti-*Prothom Alo* is not necessarily being pro-DSA. But right now, both are the same.

In a country that ranks at the bottom of the eight countries in South Asia on the global press freedom index, having slid from the 146th position in 2018 – when the DSA was unleashed – to 162nd in 2022, journalists require unconditional support and legal protection regardless of any journalistic transgression, true or imagined. There is no sugar-coating the lawfare (legal warfare) being waged against them, the extent of which has been revealed in a study by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS).

against journalists. As I commented in a previous column, “It has been like a political bonfire on which critics and rivals could be roasted, without a bitter aftertaste.”

Can journalists still afford to remain divided on the question of their rights? Often, as in the case of *Prothom Alo*, the crime that victims are accused of is not whether something was done right, but whether what was done right was done with the right motive. It's a slippery slope that can take anything, and anyone, downhill. And it's shocking how easily the whole legal infrastructure can be exploited to punish a journalist if enough “reactions” and interpretations can be manufactured.

Facts, once the prerogative of the media, used to be sacred. Now, they are just fodder in an increasingly hostile war of narratives. This is why journalists must support and protect each other. This is why Shams and all other victims of the DSA need to be brought back at the centre stage of discussion, because individual stories matter as much as collective narratives. Each of those accused and punished under the DSA represent not just their respective organisation, but also the wider journalist community as well as the people they give voice to.

The fundamental issues plaguing our higher education

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MD KAWSAR UDDIN

In recent years, most public and private universities in Bangladesh have been facing blistering criticism for producing unskilled graduates, accentuating grade inflation, and aggravating graduate unemployment. While public universities have regularly been in the news for political unrest, private universities have been under the spotlight for their poor education quality. Overall, our higher education sector seems to be headed in the wrong direction – for many reasons.

First, our curricula for honours and master's heavily rely on Western knowledge. A closer analysis reveals that our education system is either a mimicry of Western education or a tool for developing awareness among our students of scientific inventions and discoveries in the West. Our teachers and students follow Western scholars in every field of knowledge like science and technology, business, agriculture, sociology, psychology, philosophy, arts, and literature. Western knowledge and innovations are certainly the most advanced in the contemporary world. But while learning from western systems can be a positive, mimicking them debases the dignity of local knowledge and the significance of contextual approaches.

No nation can grow without cultivating contextual knowledge, research, and innovations. Our graduates find it difficult to relate their hard-earned knowledge to our context. And our education system fails to train them to solve problems in the context of our business, culture, and society. So, they either find themselves misfits or want to settle in Western countries.

Second, our universities have been promoting educational inflation. Consequently, our employers have been demanding credentialism. In this scenario, the young generation is caught in a maze of higher education in which they are compelled to pursue overqualification. They spend their money, time, and energy on degrees that they hardly get opportunities to use in practical life. A survey done by the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies (BIDS) found that 66 percent of National University graduates are unemployed. Though 21 percent managed to get jobs, they were underpaid. Only three percent became entrepreneurs. The rest of them were still pursuing post-graduation.

Third, there is a gap between graduates' skills and employers' requirements. Though millions of graduates are searching for suitable jobs, employers claim a shortage of skilled employees. And there seems to be no efficient entity to address this gap. Similarly, policymakers at universities usually show more interest in building infrastructures than in addressing skill gaps and investing in faculty development, research, and innovation. So, the

purpose of higher education remains ignored, and graduates fail to contribute effectively to our national economy.

Fourth, our universities are well known for producing innumerable graduates in certain popular fields like computer science and business administration. But we do not have any proper study on how many engineers, scientists, and business graduates will be essential in the upcoming years. In addition, our curricula are designed to focus heavily on theoretical and abstract elements, concentrating less on practical application. Students thus end up completing higher studies either in the nonessential fields or with irrelevant skills.

Fifth, we have a lack of research universities, research funds, and an overall lack of appreciation for researchers. Most of our universities offer course-based honours and master's programmes. These course-based programmes require students to complete only courses and sit for semester-end exams without a thesis or any research work. Though course-based programmes may sound promising for employability, they practically become devalued in actual jobs as most programmes are designed around theories and not based on practical aspects.

Regarding research funding, our universities fail to provide necessary funds and lack collaborations with potential fund providers. So, they neither offer research opportunities nor facilitate job-specific skills learning.

Worst of all, our researchers and scientists do not receive due respect

and appreciation from academic institutions and policymakers. Many Bangladeshi researchers and scholars perform outstandingly during their stay in developed countries, but they hardly get opportunities or respect here. In Bangladesh, government employees seem to be more appreciated and receive more opportunities than researchers, philosophers, and scholars.

The biggest asset of our country is its human assets. The number of students getting admission to universities is increasing impressively every year. But the country's policies seem to prioritise short-term success in business and remittance. We produced thousands of unskilled labourers abroad but are failing to strengthen our backbone through effective higher education, research, and innovation.

Universities must promote research and innovations. They should prioritise researchers, innovators, and scholars over administrators. They must collaborate with relevant industries for research funds and, at the same time, provide job-specific skills and contextual knowledge to students through internships and externships. They should also consider teaching generic skills that are useful for jobs through induction training and short courses. Our universities must generate knowledge that applies to our context, and our graduates must contribute to our society, culture, and economy. They should neither have to find themselves as misfits here nor seek an opportunity to settle in developed countries.

THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE PROJECT

Counselling: An urgent need for university students

Dr Syed Saad Andaleeb
is distinguished professor emeritus at Pennsylvania State University in the US, former faculty member of the IBA, Dhaka University, and former vice chancellor of Brac University.

M Fahmun Nabi
completed his MBA degree at the IBA, Dhaka University.

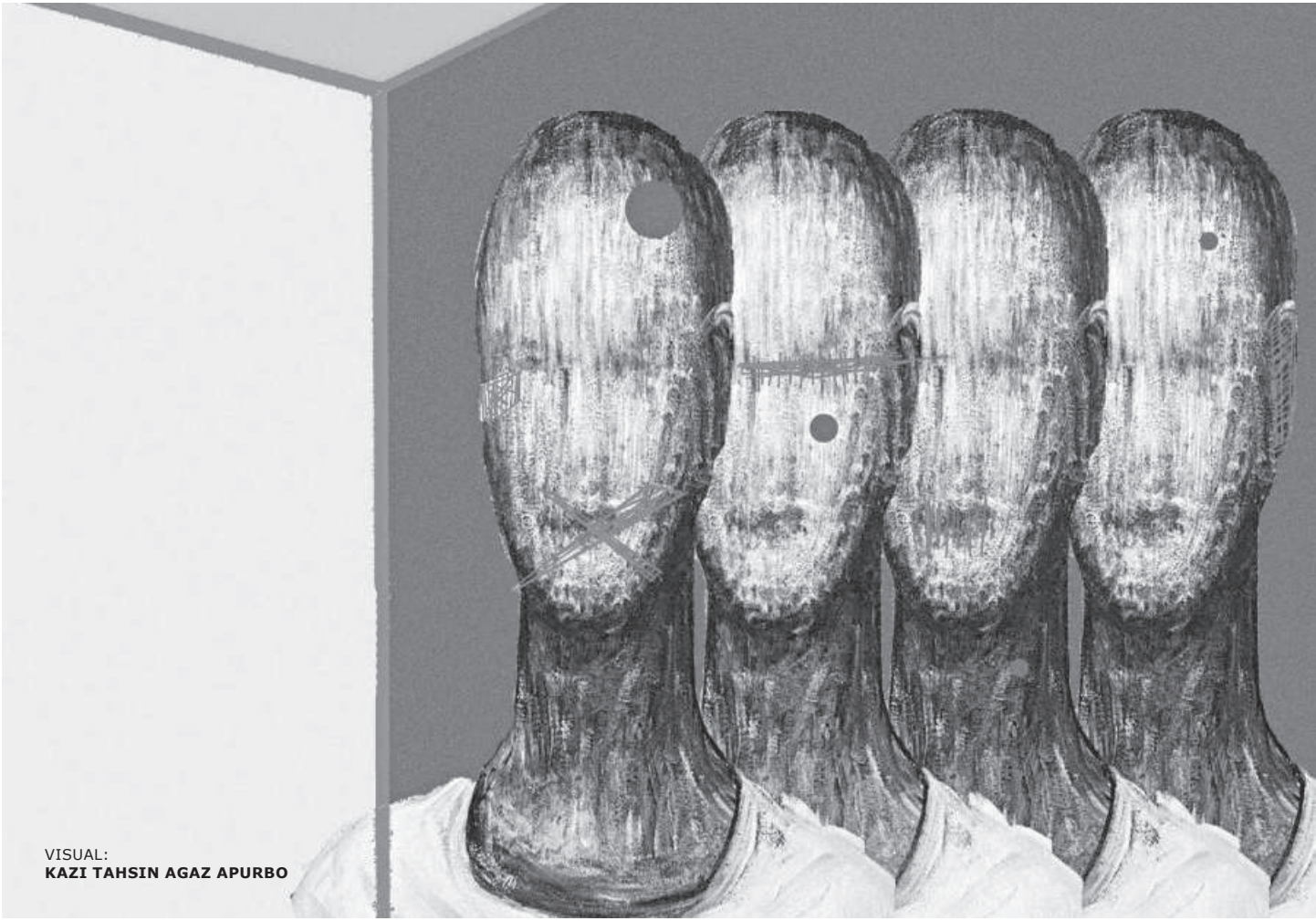
**SYED SAAD ANDALEEB and
M FAHMUN NABI**

Open discussion on mental health is largely ignored in Bangladesh primarily because of the stigma surrounding it. Most people still view mental illness as a taboo; those who are suffering are asked to simply “get over it” or told “it’s all in their head.” As a result, the burden of mental health continues to increase in the country.

As per the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), suicides are on an alarming rise and clearly represents a sign of deteriorating mental health. To focus on this growing crisis in academia, a nationwide study was conducted on students from higher educational institutions – both public and private. Three-fourth of the students were found to be suffering from varying degrees of depression. Using a globally validated scale (Beck’s Inventory – BDI III), 21 percent were found to have severe depression. Another 25 percent were suffering from moderate to severe depression, while 26 percent were showing symptoms of mild to moderate depression.

Students reported their daily struggle with issues such as interpersonal relationships and financial concerns. A majority of the students also seem anxious and uncertain regarding the future and added responsibilities of adulthood. “I don’t think I am prepared for the world of increased responsibilities,” one student wrote. Other students were struggling to find the right purpose in life.

On the academic front, dissatisfaction with their academic programmes and faculty members as well as increased academic pressure were also reported. Many worried about their employment, being stuck in a programme lacking decent job prospects. While the fear of unemployment is common for students nearing graduation, students in



their early years reported their transition to university life as intimidating or exhausting and “often contradictory to what I expected.” A number of students stated that the academic programme or career they were pursuing did not fit their personal interests or passion, but they had little choice in the matter.

The Covid pandemic exacerbated their situation. The limited scope for social interactions and on-campus activities was a frustrating experience for most students, leading to a life of loneliness and silent

suffering. Besides, the possibility of delayed graduation and increased unemployment prospects only added to their woes.

While depression takes a serious toll on students, the one aspect that needs our immediate attention is students’ suicidal inclinations, a condition said to be the second leading cause of death among the youth around the world, as per World Health Organization (WHO) reports. And major depression is often the factor behind suicidal attempts.

As per our study, at least 32 percent of the students reported that they had had suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives. But there’s more to be concerned about: 29 students (or about five percent) stated that they would have killed themselves if they could.

This leads us to suggest the importance of mental health counselling and having honest conversations with students about what they are experiencing.

Discussing mental health with family and near ones is not easy, especially in this part of

the world where mental illness is still viewed disparagingly. There are plenty of people who see mental illness and depression as an individual’s lacking; some probably even reject its existence – a primary reason why many feel discouraged to talk openly about their suffering and to seek help.

According to our study, 65 percent of the students felt a constant need to be able to discuss their mental health situation with someone. This is where educational institutions can play an important role. Establishing a counselling centre in the university and ensuring easy access is a desperate need of the hour. Some of the universities offer counselling sessions; however, one may argue about their functionality. A majority of the students who reported the need to have a healthy discussion regarding their mental health, in spite of being aware of these opportunities available in their respective campuses, stayed away from taking help. A trust gap was evident.

The way universities address students’ mental health needs serious attention. Professional counselling should be made available round the clock, and the staff and faculty members should be educated on this issue. Open classroom discussions also need to be considered to break the stigma, to make the students stay connected to each other, and help out their peers when needed, leading to the students’ overall well-being.

Mental health is vitally important but grossly ignored in the university space. The kind of indifference and apathy with which it is treated is appalling and poses a great threat to the future of our students. Thanks to social media, we learn about students’ mental health struggles, but surely this is not enough. The youth, our university students, are our future. Failure to recognise their mental health needs will diminish and even suffocate much of their potential. The sooner we realise this, the better. The sooner we act on it, even better.

This op-ed, the last of a four-part series, is the result of faculty-student collaboration designed to impact higher education in Bangladesh.

PROJECT ■ SYNDICATE

India’s democracy in detention



The sentencing of Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition Indian National Congress, to two years in prison, and his disqualification as a lawmaker in the Lok Sabha (the lower house), has sent shockwaves through India’s political system. Beyond reverberating through both houses of parliament, the episode has opened a new and sorry chapter in India’s political history, and cast serious doubt on the future of its democracy.

Gandhi was targeted over comments he made during a 2019 campaign speech in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. After discussing India’s economic travails, Gandhi named six “thieves” who had contributed to them: Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi, Vijay Mallya, Lalit Modi, Anil Ambani, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. “One small question,” Gandhi quipped, “how are the names of all these thieves ‘Modi, Modi, Modi’? Nirav Modi, Lalit Modi, Narendra Modi, and if you search a little more, many more Modis will emerge.”

It is obvious that Gandhi was calling out specific individuals for allegedly looting India’s economy, before delivering an offhand observation that three of them happen to share a surname. You might say that there was no need for Gandhi to comment on their name at all. But politicians, including many from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), have said far worse in election speeches about all sorts of groups – from rival politicians to minorities – with no criminal case brought against them.

To claim, as BJP lawmaker Purnesh Modi did, that Gandhi’s quip defamed the entire “Modi community” as thieves is, at best, a stretch. And to rule, as a court in Surat in the western state of Gujarat did, that it constitutes criminal defamation meriting the maximum possible punishment is worse than suspicious.

The story gets murkier. The judge who first heard the complaint in 2019 mused aloud that it did not seem to have much substance. Rather than risk having his case dismissed, Purnesh Modi rushed off to the High Court to secure a stay of his own petition. Then, two years later, Gandhi made a speech in parliament (largely expunged from the records) accusing the prime minister of crony capitalism, and Modi scurried back to the High Court to get his stay lifted.

How convenient that the judge in Surat was replaced just before Modi’s arrival, and the new judge was willing not only to revive the case, but also to deliver a guilty verdict in under three weeks. And how convenient that the two-year sentence the judge imposed is the minimum required to disqualify a lawmaker from parliament for an

additional six years.

The BJP was all too eager to implement the verdict: within 24 hours, the Lok Sabha Secretariat declared that Gandhi was no longer an MP, and on the next working day, he received a letter instructing him to vacate his government bungalow. But Congress politicians smell a rat, with many suggesting that the verdict resulted not from due process but from a deliberate decision, taken at the highest levels, to silence him until well after the next general election.

Gandhi has, of course, filed an appeal, and if the court should grant him a stay of conviction, even the disqualification will have to be reversed. In that case, he could return to the fray, on the streets and in parliament, with his image burnished as the stalwart the government tried to silence. Buoyed by public sympathy and enjoying the enthusiastic support of an energised Congress, Gandhi could prove a much bigger thorn in the BJP’s side than he was just a few weeks ago.

Already, the judgment has galvanised India’s opposition. Regional parties that traditionally oppose Congress in their states – including the Aam Aadmi Party in Delhi, the All India Trinamool Congress in West Bengal, Samajwadi in Uttar Pradesh, Bharat Rashtra Samithi in Telangana, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala – have expressed support for Gandhi. They seem to have realised that they, too, could find themselves being picked off by a vengeful government. As the adage goes, “United we stand; divided we fall.”

A more united opposition would be bad news for the BJP, which holds 60 percent of seats in parliament, but won just 37 percent of the vote in the 2019 elections. If a majority of the 35 other parties in parliament decided to work together, rather than divide the vote, the BJP would find it much harder to win a majority in 2024.

Some cynics suggest that none of this scares the BJP, because it is playing its own elaborate game to push Gandhi to the forefront of the opposition for the next election. A “Modi versus Gandhi” race, the logic goes, is one the BJP is sure it can win. But building up a major rival is an extremely high-risk strategy, which a party that is comfortably ahead in the polls – as the BJP currently is – is unlikely to pursue. The Gandhi debacle looks, instead, like a political own goal.

But the stakes are far higher than one man, one party, or even one election. As we wait for the curtain to open on the next act in this political drama, Indians should be asking themselves whether democracy benefits when the principal leader of the main opposition party is jailed and denied a voice in parliament for anything less than truly criminal malfeasance? The answer for many – even those who do not like Gandhi or support Congress – is that it does not.

Safeguarding democracy requires ensuring a level playing field for all. What happens to Gandhi, thus, has important implications for India’s future. One can only hope that Indians’ commitment to representative government will prevail.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিস

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Memo No. 38.01.9100.000.08.010.19- 879

Date: 11/04/2023

e-Tender Notice No: 01

e-Tenders are hereby invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the Goods stated as below:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of Works	Tender ID No.	Method of Tender	Closing date & time
1	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0059	Supplying of Furniture at 07 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Beanibazar 1 Nos. GPS /Golapgonj 1 Nos GPS / Jakigonj 3 Nos GPS / Kanaighat 2 Nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	784889	OTM	26.04.2023 14:00
2	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0060	Supplying of Furniture at 14 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Biswanath 4 Nos. GPS/ DakshinSurma 8 Nos. GPS/ Fenchugonj 2 Nos. GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	789556	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
3	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0061	Supplying of Furniture at 07 Nos. GPS of JaintapurUpazila of Sylhet District under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	789750	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
4	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0062	Supplying of Furniture at 07 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Gowainghat 1 Nos. / SylhetSadar 6 Nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	789369	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
5	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0384	Supplying of Furniture at 19 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Sylhet Sadar 4 Nos. / Jaintapur 9 Nos/ Companigonj 3 nos/ Goainghat 3 nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	793752	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
6	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0385	Supplying of Furniture at 18 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Dakshin Surma 3 Nos. / Golapgonj 2 Nos/ Bianibazar 13 nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	793753	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
7	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0386	Supplying of Furniture at 16 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Balagonj 2 Nos. / Osmaninagar 5 Nos/ Bishawnath 9 nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	793755	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
8	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0387	Supplying of Furniture at 16 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Fenchugonj 4 Nos. / Kanaighat 12 Nos GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	793756	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00
9	NBIDGPS-1/ G1.0388	Supplying of Furniture at 12 Nos. GPS of Sylhet District (Jakigonj 12 Nos. GPS) under NBIDGPS-1 Project.	793754	OTM	26.04.2023 14.00

This is an online Tender Notice, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no Offline/Hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender(s), registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online at any branch of registered banks.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.dpe.gov.bd, www.dpe.sylhet.gov.bd

Sakhawat Ershad

District Primary Education Officer

Sylhet

Phone: 02996633527

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বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট
(মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়)

শিল্প ও বাণিজ্য
স্বাধীনতা ভবন

৮৮, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০

**চট্টগ্রামের আত্মবাদস্থ “টাওয়ার-৭১” ও “জয়বাংলা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন”-এর
ফ্রেম/স্পেস ভাড়ার বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

দরপত্র নং:৮৮-৪৮.০১.০০০০.২০১.১৭.০০১.২২.৯০ তারিখ: ১১/০৪/২০২৩

বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট-এর মালিকানাধীন চট্টগ্রামের আত্মবাদস্থ “টাওয়ার-৭১” ও ৩৬নং গুলশানের “জয়বাংলা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন”-এর
ফ্রেম/স্পেস-এর ব্যাংক/বিমা/খবিস/ভাঙার চেম্বার/বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে ভাড়া প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক সর্বোচ্চ দরে
ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে নির্দিষ্ট সিডিউলে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। সিডিউল বিক্রয়, দাখিল এবং খোলার তারিখ ও সময় নিম্নে উল্লেখ
করা হলো:

ক্রম নং	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ	দরপ্রস্তাব খোলার তারিখ	মন্তব্য
১ম দফা	২৬/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: অফিস চলাকালীন	২৭/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	২৭/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	
২য় দফা	২৯/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: অফিস চলাকালীন	৩০/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	৩০/০৪/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	১ম দফায় সকল দরদাতা পাওয়া না গেলে প্রযোজ্য হবে।
৩য় দফা	২১/০৫/২০২৩ সময়: অফিস চলাকালীন	২২/০৫/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	২২/০৫/২০২৩ সময়: বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	২য় দফায় সকল দরদাতা পাওয়া না গেলে প্রযোজ্য হবে।

এ সকলকল্প বিস্তারিত শর্ত সর্বশর্ত টেন্ডার সিডিউল ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মূল্যে (ক) অর্থ বিভাগ, বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট,
৮৮, মতিঝিল, ঢাকা এবং (খ) প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (চট্টগ্রাম জোন), জয়বাংলা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৩৬, আত্মবাদ, চট্টগ্রাম হতে সংগ্রহ
করা যাবে। দরপত্র দাখিলের দিন (ক) শিল্প ও বাণিজ্য বিভাগ, ৮৮, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা এবং (খ) প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (চট্টগ্রাম
জোন) জয় বাংলা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৩৬, আত্মবাদ, চট্টগ্রামে জমা দিতে হবে। দরপত্র গ্রহণ দিন বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকার উপস্থিত
দরদাতা/দরদাতাদের সংখ্যে বেলা হবে। কোন কারণে নির্ধারিত ব্যতিক্রমে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র আবেদন অথবা সম্পূর্ণ গ্রহণ বা বাতিল
করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মোঃ খোরশেদ আলম
উপ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক (শিওবা) দায়িত্বে

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College Road, Barishal
Website: www.bmc.gov.bd

Memo No. cedp/bmc/otm/2022-23/03 Date: 12/04/2023

e-Tender Notice 03/2022-2023
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of following packages:

Tender ID No.	Name of works	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
815115	Procurement of Furniture & Fixtures for Library, Teachers Conference room, Female common room & Principal's room for Government BM College, Barishal	27-Apr-2023 13:00	27-Apr-2023 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 26-Apr-2023 14:00. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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College Road, Barishal
Website: www.bmc.gov.bd

Memo No. cedp/bmc/otm/2022-23/04 Date: 12/04/2023

Corrigendum Notice-01
Due to unavoidable circumstances the amendment has issued in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of following package:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Supply	Description	As per Tender Notice	As per Amendment Notice
1.	805741	Establishment of Campus Networking for Government BM College, Barishal	Document last selling date & time	10-April-2023 04:00pm	17-April-2023 04:00pm
			Closing date & time	11-April-2023 03:00pm	18-April-2023 03:00pm
			Opening date & time	11-April-2023 03:00pm	18-April-2023 03:00pm
			Last date & time for tender/proposal security submission	11-April-2023 02:00pm	18-April-2023 02:00pm

Further information are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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GD-673

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দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি)

ডি আর টাওয়ার (১৩ তলা)
বীর প্রতীক গাজী গোলাম দস্তগীর সড়ক
(বঙ্গ কালভার্ট রোড)
পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর: ০১/২০২৩/৩৫৮ তারিখ: ২৮ চৈত্র ১৪২৯
১১ এপ্রিল ২০২৩

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি)-এ নিম্নোক্ত বর্ণিত সংখ্যক শূন্য পদে বিধি মোতাবেক অন্যান্য ভাতাদিসহ নির্ধারিত বেতন স্কেলে যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থী প্রতিযোগিতামূলক পরীক্ষার মাধ্যমে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

(১) (ক)

পদের নাম	বেতন স্কেল (জাতীয় বেতন স্কেল ২০১৫ এর অনুরূপ)	পদ সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতা
অফিসার (আইটি)	টাকা ১৬,০০০-৩৮,৬৪০/- স্কেল এবং তৎসহ নিয়মানুযায়ী প্রদেয় অন্যান্য সুবিধাদি।	০১টি	কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স (সিএস)/কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (সিএসই)/ইনফরমেশন টেকনোলজি/ইনফরমেশন এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/সফটওয়্যার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড সফটওয়্যার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড টেলিকমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/বিষয়ে অনূন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণির স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি অথবা চার বছর মেয়াদী স্নাতক (সম্মান) ডিগ্রি থাকতে হবে, তবে শিক্ষাজীবনে কোনো ভুলে ভৃতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণী গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।

(খ) উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তক্রমে উপরোক্ত পদসংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পেতে পারে।

(২) প্রোভিড পদ্ধতিতে প্রকাশিত ফলাফলের ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের ০২/০৬/২০০৯ ও ০২/০৩/২০১০ তারিখের যথাক্রমে প্রজ্ঞাপন নং শিম/শাঃ১১/৫-১(অংশ)/৫৮২ ও শিম/শাঃ১১/১৯-১/২০০৭/১৭৪ অনুযায়ী বর্তমান প্রচলিত জিপিএ বা ক্ষেত্রমত সিজিপিএ এর বিপরীতে পূর্বের ১ম ও ২য় বিভাগ/শ্রেণী নিম্নরূপে নির্ধারিত হবে:

(ক) এসএসসি বা সমমান এবং এইচএসসি বা সমমান পরীক্ষার ফলাফলের ক্ষেত্রে:

জিপিএ ৩.০০ বা তদুর্ধ্ব	প্রথম বিভাগ
জিপিএ ২.০০ থেকে ৩.০০ এর কম	দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ

(খ) অনুমোদিত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সিজিপিএ এর ক্ষেত্রে:

অগ্রিত সিজিপিএ		সমতুল্য শ্রেণি/বিভাগ
৪.০০ পয়েন্ট স্কেলে	৫.০০ পয়েন্ট স্কেলে	
জিপিএ ৩.০০ বা তদুর্ধ্ব	৩.৭৫ বা তদুর্ধ্ব	প্রথম শ্রেণি/বিভাগ
জিপিএ ২.২৫ বা তদুর্ধ্ব কিন্তু ৩.০০ এর কম	২.৮১৩ বা তদুর্ধ্ব কিন্তু ৩.৭৫ এর কম	দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি/বিভাগ

(৩) বয়স (২৫/০৩/২০২০ তারিখের):

ক) মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তান ব্যতীত সকল প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বোচ্চ ৩০ বছর।
খ) মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানদের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বোচ্চ ৩২ বছর।

(৪) আবেদন ফি এর পরিমাণ: পরীক্ষার ফি বাবদ অফিসের যোগ্য টা, ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা) মাত্র ব্যাংক ড্রাকট/পেমেন্ট অর্ডার “মহাসচিব, আইবিবি” বরাবরে প্রেরণ করতে হবে।

(৫) আবেদনপত্র দাখিলের নিয়মাবলী:

(ক) স্বহস্তে লিখিত আবেদনপত্রে- (i) প্রার্থীর নাম (ii) পিতা/স্বামীর নাম (iii) মাতার নাম (iv) স্থায়ী ঠিকানা (v) বর্তমান ঠিকানা (vi) জন্ম তারিখ (vii) জাতীয়তা (viii) বয়স (২৫/০৩/২০২০ তারিখের) (ix) ধর্ম (x) শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা (যদি থাকে) (xi) মোবাইল নাম্বার, ই-মেইল (xii) পে অর্ডার নং উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে।

(খ) জাতীয়তা ও শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতার সকল সন্দেহের অনুলিপি প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা দ্বারা সত্যায়ন করতে হবে।

(গ) আবেদনপত্রের সাথে প্রার্থীর সদ্য তোলা চার কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবি প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা দ্বারা সত্যায়ন করে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।

(ঘ) মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানদের ক্ষেত্রে উপযুক্ত দলিল দাখিল করতে হবে।

(ঙ) প্রার্থীর সাথে পত্র যোগাযোগের লক্ষ্যে স্পষ্ট ঠিকানা সংশ্লিষ্ট ২টি খাম মুখ খোলা অবস্থায় প্রেরণ করতে হবে।

(চ) আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থীকে যথাযথভাবে স্বাক্ষর করতে হবে।

(ছ) অসম্পূর্ণ/ভুল তথ্য সংশ্লিষ্ট আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

(জ) চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীগণও খ-খ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতিক্রমে আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

(ঝ) প্রার্থীদেরকে নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে। পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান পরবর্তীতে জানানো হবে।

(৯) আবেদনপত্র এবং খামের উপরে আবেদনকৃত পদের নাম অবশ্যই স্পষ্টভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে।

(১০) আবেদনপত্র মহাসচিব, দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি) বরাবরে ৩০/০৪/২০২৩ তারিখ, বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ডাক/কুরিয়ারযোগে প্রেরণ করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পর কোনো আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

(১১) দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি) কর্তৃপক্ষ প্রার্থীদের কাউন্ট নিয়োগ প্রদান করা বা না করার ক্ষেত্রে চূড়ান্ত সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।

শেখ জাহাঙ্গীর হোসেন
সচিব, আইবিবি এবং
প্রিচালক, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

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Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Limited
(A JOINT VENTURE COMPANY OF BPDB AND NTPC LTD.)
WWW.BIFPCL.COM

Ref: BIFPCL/HRD/RECTT/Corrigendum/2023/114 Date: 11.04.2023

CORRIGENDUM

Subject : Cancellation of the Recruitment for the Post of Assistant Manager (Stores/Clearing & Forwarding)

Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Limited (BIFPCL) published an advertisement on 04.04.2023 in the national dailies vide Ref: BIFPCL/HRD/RECTT/2023/108, Dated 02.04.2023 wherein it was advertised for 03 (Three) nos. vacancies in the post of Assistant Manager (Stores/Clearing & Forwarding) and 04 (Four) nos. vacancies in the post of Junior Assistant Manager (Stores/Clearing & Forwarding).

In line with the General Conditions (SL. No. 13) of the published advertisement, BIFPCL authority has decided to cancel the recruitment for the post of Assistant Manager (Stores/Clearing & Forwarding) due to unavoidable reasons. Application fee shall be reimbursed to the candidates who have already paid the same and the process of reimbursement shall be notified separately on <http://bifpcl.teletalk.com.bd> and www.bifpcl.com

We sincerely regret for the inconveniences.


(H.M. Ziauddin)
Chief Human Resources Officer
Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Limited

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ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208

Local Press Tender notice

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from Genuine Manufacturers/ Importers/ Authorised dealers/ (engaged in related Business) for supply of following items to EDCL, 3rd Plant Gopalganj on urgent basis:

S.L No.	Tender No. Date	Name of the Item	Cost of Tender schedule	Last date of Closing & opening
01.	EDCL(Gopalganj)/ PUR/LT/2023/178 Dt. 11/04/2023	Supply of Lead Acid (DC) Battery for Sub-Station of EDCL, 3rd Plant Gopalganj Project. (Deatils as per Tender Schedule & enclosed Sheet)	Tk. 750.00/set Non-refundable	Closing : 07/05/2023 at 12.00 PM Opening : 07/05/2023 at 12.30 PM

Tender schedule will be sold from the Accounts Department of Essential Drugs Company Limited (EDCL), Dhaka on payment as stated above during office hours on all working days (except Friday, Saturday and Govt. Holidays). No tender schedule will be sold on the opening date of the tender.

The Tender will be accompanied by an amount of Earnest Money as mentioned above in the form of Bank Draft/Pay order from any schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of “ Essential Drugs Company Ltd”without which the Tender will be considered as non-responsive.

EDCL authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

General Manager,
Procurement Deptt.
For: Managing Director.

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PIU Office of the Manikganj Pourashava

District: Manikganj

Memo No. MPS/Eng. 2023-257 Date: 10.04.2023

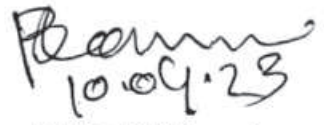
e-Tender Notice-18/2022-2023(OTM)

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Procuring Entity (PE), PIU Office of Manikganj Pourashava, District: Manikganj for the procurement of:

SL. No.	Package No.	Name of works	e-Tender ID No.	Date of tender scheduled published	Last date of selling	Last date of receiving
01.	LGCRPP/ Manikganj/ 2022-23/w-01	Rehabilitation of Ramjan Ali Road & Construction of 900mm dia RCC Pipe drain from LGED gate to Manikganj Singair Road Launch Ghat Ch-50-910m.	808116	13-April-2023 till 10:00am	07-May-2023 till 12:00pm	07-May-2023 till 02:00pm

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 branch up to **07/05/2023 till 12.00pm**. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Md. Bellal Hossain
Executive Engineer & (PE, TOC/POC, TEC/PEC)
Manikganj Pourashava, District: Manikganj

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‘Busy’ Shakib hardly following IPL

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh’s premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said Tuesday that he is hardly watching the matches of the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) and joked about being in the Tigers’ squad for their upcoming Ireland series in the United Kingdom.

“I am not following IPL. that much...I am busy with the [Dhaka] Premier League (DPL),” Shakib, who is featuring for Mohammedan in the DPL, told the reporters during the opening of a coffee shop in the capital yesterday.

Shakib, who was roped in by Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), had earlier opted out of the tournament citing ‘family reasons’.

Asked whether he gave any advice to Liton, who already joined KKR, Shakib said: “No, I didn’t give him any advice. I didn’t even talk about IPL with him. What I want is for Liton to enjoy his game if he gets a chance.”

“Is it? No, I didn’t know,” Shakib joked when reminded he is in the team for Ireland series.



Even though Shakib Al Hasan is yet to turn up with a performance matching his outstanding standards, it seems his mere presence has lifted the spirits of his Mohammedan teammates. Mohammedan’s 10-run win over Brothers Union in Fatullah yesterday was their fourth victory on the trot, all since star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan joined the side following the Ireland series. [Bottom] Mahmudullah Riyad, who struck a fifty yesterday for Mohammedan, puts a wet towel on his head as scorching heat provides players with a different kind of challenge in the ongoing Dhaka Premier League.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Mohammedan stars need to assemble after Shakib leaves

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan had begun their Dhaka Premier League (DPL) campaign with four defeats in five games, with one being abandoned, but after a thrilling win at Fatullah yesterday, the momentum seems to have finally gathered in their sail with yesterday’s win seeing them clinch four matches back-to-back.

Star players often do not have the desired effect, but all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan’s return to the dugout has turned the tide although he has not been the biggest contributor with either bat or ball.

Courtesy of yesterday’s 10-run win, Mohammedan are still in with a shout to play the Super League phase. But given the team they have, such a turnaround



should not have been necessary to be in contention.

Mohammedan had failed to make the Super League last season despite having star players such as Shakib, Taskin Ahmed, Mushfiqur Rahim and Mehedi Hasan Miraz in the squad. But national assignments denied Mohammedan from getting their service in crucial matches and Shakib later played for Legends of Rugganj in the Super League phase.

This season, they have again gone for stars in Shakib, Riyad, Miraz, Soumya Sarkar and Rony Talukdar but availability remains an issue.

Shakib’s contribution with the bat and ball turned out to be meaningful in the end in a low-scoring affair yesterday.

Mohammedan lost three wickets inside nine overs with Soumya Sarkar failing to shine once more before Miraz departed

cheaply as well.

Shakib, along with veteran Riyad, strung together a 53-run stand and despite Shakib’s departure for 37, Riyad’s 68-ball 58 and Jake Lintott’s 28 saw them reach 190 before being bowled out with more than four overs to spare.

After the exchange, Shakib bagged two while left-arm leg spinner Lintott bagged a fiver to thwart Brothers Union.

Mohammedan officials informed that they hoped Shakib would be available till the April 17, the date of the final round of the first league phase. But if him staying increases their chance of making the Super League, there is concern regarding what happens afterwards.

The DPL has been a major testing ground for players harbouring hopes of making it to the national team. Soumya and Riyad are two looking to make a return and

their performances will not only be vital for Mohammedan but their futures too.

However, Soumya has clearly not impressed selectors. “Not getting what is expected of Soumya. He is still in our thoughts. If he does well in domestic cricket, our pool of players will be bigger. There is no doubt about his ability but also a little disappointed,” selector Habibul Bashar told the media yesterday at Fatullah.

“Everyone is talking to him. He is being given the mental support he needs but sometimes, a cricketer has to save himself,” the selector said.

Soumya and Mahmudullah have scored a few runs this DPL, but the impact has not been felt. Bashar believed Soumya’s batting plan needed to improve. “He has to decide on his batting plan. There is nothing to tell him, he will have to get it himself,” Bashar said.

That plan will have to come through for others if the pool of players for the national team is to get bigger. Afif Hossain has been amongst the runs for Abahani, another looking to return after being dropped.

“Afif is doing what was asked of him. When someone is outside national team, the expectation is they will score runs in domestic cricket and return with confidence,” Bashar said.

Soumya too needs to take the cue and score big runs to change his fortune and Mohammedan will be hoping it comes when Shakib will not be there to inspire. But first, they still need to make the Super League. They are currently sixth in the table, with their last title coming in 2009-10 season.

Augusto steers Abahani to semifinals

SPORTS REPORTER

A late header from Raphael Augusto powered defending champions Abahani to a 1-0 win over Sheikh Jamal in the second quarterfinal of the Federation Cup at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj yesterday.

Brazilian midfielder Augusto, who missed Abahani’s previous fixture due to a knee injury, managed to take the field and turned hero after heading home a corner kick from Daniel Colindres in the 82nd minute of an intense battle.

Although Sheikh Jamal have been struggling in the Bangladesh Premier league and came into the Fed Cup match on the back of a goalless draw against Rahmatganj, the three-time Fed Cup champions gave the Sky Blues a run for their money.

Both sides showed a fighting spirit, but neither could capitalise on opportunities in the first half, during which Sheikh Jamal had the upper hand. Raihan Hasan had threatened Abahani with his usual long throw-ins but Nodirbeck Mavlonov squandered the chance.

Abahani also had some chances but Colindres and Peter Nworah failed to cash in on opportunities, even one in front of an open net.

That pattern continued in the second half until Raphael Augusto finally broke the deadlock and sealed a victory with a header to meet Colindres’ corner kick.

Brothers return to BPL after two seasons

SPORTS REPORTER

Traditional outfits Brothers Union returned to top-flight football after two seasons with a 1-0 win over Uttara Football Club in a Bangladesh Championship League (BCL) fixture in Kamalapur yesterday.

With two matches in hand, Brothers Union ensured a top-two spot and thus confirmed their Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) berth. Brothers’ 45 points from 18 matches now place them two and nine points ahead of BFF Elite Academy and Gopalganj Sporting Club, respectively. However, BFF Elite Academy will not be advancing to BPL.

After getting promoted to the first division in 1975, Brothers Union stayed at the top-flight for 45 years before being relegated from BPL to BCL in the 2020-21 season. Once hailed as the country’s third force in football, Brothers had skipped the last season by citing financial crisis before resuming action this season in the BCL.

“The journey was challenging and difficult because of a lack of training facilities and injury problems. However, I was hopeful to take Brothers to the premier division,” said head coach Zahidul Islam Milon yesterday.

“A different motivation worked inside me as I once played for Brothers Union for five to seven years to earn bread and butter, so it was an opportunity for me to give back something to Brothers Union.

“I’m really happy to take Brothers Union to the Bangladesh Premier League,” said Milon, who had guided Fortis FC to become the BCL champions last season, adding that his ultimate target is to see his charges finish on top of the league.

Real hope for ‘another magical night at Bernabeu’

AGENCIES

For the third consecutive season, Real Madrid and Chelsea are facing off in the knockout stages of the UEFA Champions League. And defending champions Real Madrid will have a point to prove against The Blues in Wednesday’s quarterfinal first leg at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Despite Chelsea’s poor run of form in the Premier League, Real Madrid must be wary of the English club, who have faced Real in the knockout stages of the last two Champions League seasons and beaten them twice in four games.

It was Chelsea who landed the first blow at the semifinal stage in 2020-21, before Real responded in the quarterfinals last season. But Real lost the second leg of last season’s quarterfinal at home and progressed only on aggregate following two late goals from Rodrygo and Benzema. Another interesting thing from the two sides’ Champions League ties is that in the last two seasons, both times the side that progressed went on to win the UCL title.

Chelsea have only lost one of



their seven games against Real Madrid in European competition and seem to have taken great pleasure on their trips to Spain, having lost one of their last nine UEFA Champions League knockout-stage matches away to Spanish opposition (W3 D5).

And it seemed logical that Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti hoped for another magical night at the Bernabeu against Chelsea, who have dropped to 11th in the Premier League after a run of poor results, and have also been knocked out

of the FA Cup and League Cup, despite spending almost 300 million pounds (\$373 million) on new players in January. “We suffered a lot last year,” Ancelotti told reporters on Monday.

“We have to respect the team and the club, they have very good players and even if they are not in a good moment they have great motivation and will bring out the best. It’s a squad of a very high level.

“The team is excited and motivated to return to the Champions League and experience

another magical night at the Bernabeu. We have to take advantage of the fact that we play the first game at home.”

Chelsea’s current predicament also saw them sack coach Graham Potter at the start of April and hire their former coach Frank Lampard on an interim basis. The Champions League is the English club’s last chance for silverware this season.

“I feel sad (looking at Chelsea’s position in the table). I have a fantastic memory of this club, of the people that are still working there. I’m a supporter of Chelsea, because I spent two years there,” Ancelotti, who managed The Blues between 2009-2011 and also had Lampard as a player, added.

Ancelotti, however, ruled out a move back to Chelsea.

“Will I go back (as coach to Chelsea)? No, I hope Lampard will be able to do a fantastic job with them... Lampard has been a great player who I coached for two years.

“He knows these kind of games well and how to prepare his team. He has been here for a week, but he will do well in the time he is at Chelsea.”



Just over a week ago, AC Milan came into the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium and stunned Napoli 4-0. Milan are set to host Serie A leaders in the first leg of the Champions League quarterfinals today and will hope that Olivier Giroud turns up with yet another crucial performance for them this season.

PHOTO: AFP



Shows govt survey

The number of C-sections performed in the country has increased to at least 45 percent in the two years preceding 2022.

According to a key indicator report of Bangladesh Health and Demographic Survey (BDHS) published yesterday, the percentage of caesareans, mostly unnecessary, was 34 in 2017-2018 and 18 in 2011.

Since 1985, the international healthcare community has considered the “ideal rate” for C-sections to be between 10 to 15 percent, according to the World Health Organization.

Of the C-sections performed, private facilities accounted for around 84 percent, according to the survey, unveiled at an event in a hotel in the capital.

Survey Period	Percentage
2011 BDHS	18
2014 BDHS	24
2017-18 BDHS	34
2022 BDHS	45

83 % of child birth at private facilities were C-section followed by 36% in public and NGO facilities each; Of all C-sections, 84% happen in private facilities

“Unnecessary C sections put both the mothers and the children at unnecessary health risks. But it is booming uncontrollably in the country every day.” Dr Setara Rahman, a gynecologist and Country Director of Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics, told The Daily Star.

In the two years preceding the 2022 survey, a total of 36.03 lakh children were born.

Conducted by the National Institute of Population Research and Training, with technical assistance from partners, the survey provides crucial data on key health

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

IRRIGATION WATER CRISIS

A farmer has tried to take his life by taking pesticide after failing to get irrigation water for his paddy field in Rajshahi's Godagari upazila.

Mukul Soren, 35, a sharecropper from the Santal community in Golai village, is undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital since early Monday, said his family.

Rajshahi DC Shamim Ahmed said

Mukul's family members informed him about his difficulties in getting water on Monday night when he visited him at the hospital.

The DC said he formed a three-member probe committee, led by the Godagari UNO, to investigate the incident and submit a report in seven days.

In the neighbouring Nimghutu village, two farmers -- Abhinath

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'Commander of Arsa' killed in 'gunfight' with APBn

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Cox's Bazar

A "commander of Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army" was killed in a "gunfight" with Armed Police Battalion at a Rohingya refugee camp in Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Dead Abdul Mazid alias Lalaiya, 34, was accused

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Former state minister sued for embezzling college fund

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

A former state minister and several others were accused of misappropriating Tk 10 crore in a case filed with a court in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali.

Mahbubur Rahman, a former state minister and president of Kalapara Upazila Awami League, and the other accused were charged with embezzlement of funds meant for development projects in Khepupara Govt Mozahar Uddin Biswas College and irregularities committed during selling properties of the college.

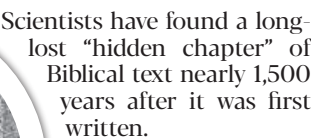
The case was filed on March 22 by a graduate student of the college named Mizanur Rahman who also accused Principal Liaquat Molla, former principal Delowar Hossain, a upazila secondary academic supervisor and 8-9 unknown others.

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UV LIGHT STUDY

Long-hidden ancient Bible chapter found

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



The lost section represents one of the earliest translations of the Gospels, according to the study published recently in the journal *New Testament Studies*.

Ultraviolet photography was later hidden underneath three researchers, including Grigory Ivan Academy of Sciences.

"Until recently, only two manuscripts were known to contain the Old Syriac translation of the gospels," Dr Kessel said.

One of these is in the British Library in London and another was discovered in St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai.

Researchers said the newly discovered text is an interpretation of the Bible's Matthew chapter 12 that was originally translated as part of the Old Syriac translations about 1,500 years ago.

They said the fragment is so far the only known remnant of the fourth manuscript that attests to the Old Syriac version, offering a "unique gateway" to the early phase in the history of the textual transmission of the Gospels.

